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THE LITERARY DEVELOPMENT OF
JAMES HOGG

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INTRODUCTION

For most twentieth-century readers, the name of James Hogg, if it means anything at all, is inextricably linked with The Confessions of a Justified Sinner, which has been hailed as one of the most important of all Scottish novels. However, this was not always the case: in fact, his considerable reputation in his own day was won not by The Confessions, which was read by few of his contemporaries, but by his poems, such as The Queen's Wake or The Pilgrims of the Sun, and by songs such as "When the kye comes hame" and "The Skylark" which were the mainstay of many an Edinburgh social gathering, and maintained their popularity throughout the century. However, towards its end, prominent literary critics such as George Saintsbury and Andrew Lang were already giving The Confessions of a Justified Sinner the notice which was to raise it to the position of overwhelming dominance over the rest of Hogg's work which it enjoyed until the past few years. However, the recent publication after many years of absence from print of The Three Perils of Man and The Brownie of Bodsbeck, together with a volume of selected poems and one which reprints some of Hogg's best short stories, and the steady growth in the number of specialised articles on Hogg's work, notably ones by Douglas Gifford, Douglas Mack, and Alexander Scott, suggest that there is need to consider the rest of Hogg's output and the position The Confessions holds in his development.

It must seem to many present-day readers that Hogg's writing of The Confessions of a Justified Sinner was little short of miraculous, for to a reader who lacks any idea of the works that led up to it, The Confessions seems a surprising work to be produced by a fifty-five year old Border sheep farmer, who was confessedly illiterate

until the eighteenth year of his life. Earlier surveys of his career by Edith C Batho and Louis Simpson, while containing much interesting biographical detail and stimulating critical comment, have for the most part failed to discern any pattern in the author's career which can account for his achievement in this novel. The intention behind this thesis is to explain, by describing Hogg's literary development from the days of his illiteracy to the time when he could be treated as an equal by the foremost literary figures of his day, how far Hogg's success in The Confessions was the consequence of his experience in his earlier writing. This study will discuss to what extent the course of Hogg's career was affected by the unusual circumstances of his education, as he tackled in an acute form the problems faced by all writers in finding their own voice when under the influence of powerful literary examples.

The study is not meant to be a biography of Hogg, though certainly biographical details are included, and the discussion follows for the most part a chronological path: at all periods of Hogg's life the natural development of his talent came into conflict with the need to earn a living, while his confidence in his powers was frequently drained by the personal insecurity which arose from his unusual background. However, no new facts are presented, the details being taken in the main from Douglas S Mack's careful edition of Hogg's Memoir of the Author's Life, supplemented by some of the information contained in the Hogg letters to be found in the National Library of Scotland. Equally, this discussion is not meant to be an exhaustive survey of the sources of Hogg's works: no attempt has been made to identify every influence to which the author was exposed. It is the contention of this thesis that there is a self-evident model, about which the

author was seldom secretive, behind each of his more important writings, and that of much greater interest than any list of all Hogg's sources is the consideration of how he coped with the knowledge that he was following in the footsteps of a predecessor, and how far he succeeded in producing individual work while under those pressures. To that end, I have concentrated on the extent to which each of his most important poems and each of his longer stories is a consistent and coherent whole. This has involved me in a discussion of the form and content of each of these works in an attempt to establish whether the author has realised his intentions in it without being deflected by external pressures. A final chapter discusses the pieces he wrote for the less formal context of the literary magazines of his day and seeks to determine the value of these miscellaneous works, to which he devoted most of his attention in the last years of his life. Several other more peripheral discussions have been rendered necessary only because of the incomplete nature of Scottish Literature studies at the present time, when so much groundwork must be done before one can begin to concentrate on more specific subjects.

CHAPTER I

The Mountain Bard

James Hogg was born in November 1770 at the farm of Ettrick Hall in the former county of Selkirkshire. The exact date of his birth is not recorded, but we do know that the young James was christened in the local parish church on 9 December that year. His father, Robert Hogg, was, like other members of the family for generations back, a sheep farmer, tenant of two farms in the area. But the 1770s were years of sharply fluctuating prices and a sudden fall in the price of sheep forced him to give up the tenancy of his farms. Robert Hogg found himself employed as a shepherd on a farm where he had earlier been the master, trying to support a wife and four children on a greatly reduced income. His second boy James had therefore to be taken from school after only six months and to be sent out to work to supplement the family earnings. A local farmer offered the seven year old boy a job herding cows, a task reckoned to be the lowest in the agricultural hierarchy. For the remainder of his youth Hogg moved from farm to farm, employed in ever more responsible positions, until finally he arrived at the respected rank of shepherd. It had been an unsettled upbringing for the young man, but there had so far been nothing about it to mark him out from countless other inhabitants of the Ettrick Forest.

But Hogg was to show that he was no ordinary shepherd. In 1794 he published his first piece of verse, a comic narrative called "The Mistakes of a Night", which appeared anonymously in the pages of the Scots Magazine.¹ Seven years later he followed this up with a small pamphlet of miscellaneous poetry.² Succeeding years saw a steady trickle of his poems and prose pieces appearing in the maga-

zines, until, in 1807, he brought out his next volume, The Mountain Bard. Critics in Edinburgh and London noted this collection of ballads and songs with mild approval and in consequence Hogg was entered on his career as a writer. In the first thirty-seven years of his life he had already travelled far from his origins, but from then until his death in 1835 he was destined to develop in a still more surprising manner. In time he would be treated as an equal by men whose background was very different from his own, and would move easily among highly educated men of letters in the cultured Edinburgh society. As the author of a large number of popular poems, songs, and tales, he was to become one of the best-known names in the powerful Blackwood's Magazine. But the distance Hogg was to travel in the years following his first successful publication must have seemed scarcely greater to him than his progress in the years that led up to it, the world of Edinburgh society hardly more remote from him, a minor poet, than his boyhood in Ettrick, illiterate and poverty-stricken.

Yet it must not be thought that Ettrick was a district without any literature or that Hogg had to leave the rural life entirely behind him before he could become a poet. Of course, Ettrick could not offer the young Hogg the facilities of polite literary society, so that his acquaintance with books was, as a result, to remain cursory for a good many years. But he grew up surrounded by more songs and stories than would many an Edinburgh-born aristocrat, for the area was rich in ballads and folklore. As he wrote in his first published prose article, a description of the Ettrick Forest written for the Scots Magazine in 1802:

In no place are there so many old songs,
tales, and anecdotes preserved by tradition;
whilst the new ones are early introduced, being

fought for with such avidity, each one being fond of something new to divert the social circle. Many of Burns's songs, and M'Neil's, were sung and admired, long before we knew who were the authors; and with pride I relate it, many popular songs and tunes are indebted to the Forest for the first discovery of their excellence; yet we have not a noted composer of music amongst us, our best modern tunes being of Perthshire original.³

The Ettrick Forest was to prove a rich store of traditional song for the collectors of the early nineteenth century; it was in this district that Scott and his associates, "the Shirra an' his gang" as they became known among the shepherds, were to collect at first hand a great part of the material for the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border. Later, Scott would draw further on this store when he came to write his novels. Hogg was particularly close to these ballads and stories since his mother, Margaret Laidlaw Hogg, was one of the most noted sources of tradition in the district. Scott interviewed this formidable lady in an attempt to get some ballads for his collection and was soundly rebuked for his scepticism at her knowledge. Hogg tells us how he took Scott and his servant and amanuensis William Laidlaw to visit her:

They alighted and remained in our cottage for a space better than an hour, and my mother chanted the ballad of Old Maitlan' to them, with which Mr Scott was highly delighted. I had sent him a copy, (not a very perfect one, as I found afterwards, from the singing of another Laidlaw), but I thought Mr Scott had some dread of a part being forged, that had been the cause of his journey into the wilds of Ettrick. When he heard my mothersing it he was quite satisfied, and I remember he asked her if she thought it had ever been printed; and her answer was, "Oo, na, na, sir, it was never printed i' the world, for my brothers an' me learned it frae auld Andrew Moor, an' he learned it, an' mony mae, frae auld Baby Mettlin, that was housekeeper to the first laird o' Tushilaw."

"Then that must be a very auld story, indeed, Margaret," said he.

"Ay, it is that! It is an auld story!
 But mair nor that, except George Watson and
 James Steward, there was never ane o' my sangs
 prentit till ye prentit them yoursell, an' ye
 hae spoilt them a'thegither. They war made
 for singing, an' no for reading; and they're
 nouthar right spelled nor right setten down.⁴

Hogg was later to introduce Scott to other members of the family who were equally famous ballad singers. Hogg had therefore become acquainted with a vast amount of poetry and prose long before he moved in literary circles: however it was not the poetry and prose that most authors know, raised as they are on the great classics of world literature and on the latest literary sensations of their time. Hogg's early literary education was in the traditional culture of his district, learnt from the men and women among whom he lived.

His knowledge was confined to literature of this sort by the simple fact that he was, throughout childhood and adolescence, only partially literate. The unsettled nature of family finances allowed him only the minimum of formal education. He attended the local school for a short time before he was forced out to work by his father's bankruptcy, and returned there for another brief period while unemployed the following winter. He tells us in his Memoir that he had by that time "advanced so far as to get into the class who read in the Bible. I had likewise, for some time before my quarter was out, tried writing; and had horribly defiled several sheets of paper with copy-lines, every letter of which was nearly an inch in length."⁵ By his own account, those two periods, a total of six months, were the sum total of his education. Hogg is admittedly not averse to exaggeration whenever he writes about himself and may have reduced the time to make his later development seem more miraculous. But this seems unlikely, for in fact the

account he gives of his schooling is a boast more of how much he received than of how little. He was not to have an opportunity of improving on this unsatisfactory basis for many years, since the next years were spent continually on the move from one farm to another, never settling down for more than a season at a time, without any contact with books. Fortunately for him, in his eighteenth year he remained for two seasons with an educated master, who allowed him access to a number of books in his possession. Hogg tells us of his struggles with those two staples of Scottish popular culture, The Life and Adventures of Sir William Wallace and The Gentle Shepherd:

The truth is, I made exceedingly slow progress in reading them. The little reading that I had learned I had nearly lost, and the Scottish dialect quite confounded me; so that, before I got to the end of a line, I had commonly lost the rhyme of the preceding one; and if I came to a triplet, a thing of which I had no conception, I commonly read to the foot of the page without perceiving that I had lost the rhyme altogether. I thought the author had been straitened for rhymes, and had just made a part of it do as well as he could without them.⁶

When he left this congenial employment it was for a ten year stay with another educated master, Laidlaw of Black House. It was only then that Hogg became secure in his reading skills, and capable of reading the classics of literature.

We must therefore constantly bear in mind that Hogg did not come to what we know as literature until his mind was comparatively well-developed. The techniques of literary composition were not second nature to him, but had to be learnt and applied, so that as a result Hogg's progress would always be slower than it would have been had his education been more conventional. It is always tempting

to think of his first writings as those of a young man, but in fact simple arithmetic will remind us that he was twenty-four before he published anything and thirty-seven when he published his first important collection. One finds oneself looking on Scott's assistance to Hogg on setting out on his literary career as an older man's patronage for a younger one: in point of fact both men were born in the same year. The fact that Hogg came to literature so late, and that he had to learn its methods, had, as we shall see, a vital effect on his development as a writer. He was learning of literature throughout his career, not before he started on it, and each new work was allied to a confrontation with a new type of literature. He was, in consequence, continually struggling against a new set of influences every time he sat down to write: when we come to consider the later stages of his career we shall see that the extent to which he succeeded in mastering these influences determined to a very great extent the success or failure of the piece on which he was working.

His early dependence on traditional, at the expense of written, literature would affect his development not merely by delaying his acquaintance with conventional literary form. The attitude of a non-literate society towards its literature, and the type of literature this produces, is very different from that of most readers. Literate people find it difficult to conceive how uneducated peasant farmers are able, without reference to a printed text, to sing a ballad of many stanzas without once faltering, for by literate assumptions such a performance involves a prodigious feat of memory. But such assumptions do not hold good with regard to traditional literature, composed by a non-literate. The attitude of the traditional performer to the song he is singing is very different from that of a modern folk singer, who has probably learnt his songs out of a book or off a record.

Several modern folklorists, notably Milman Parry and Albert Lord in their work among the traditional singers of Yugoslavia and Bertrand Bronson and David Buchan in their studies of the ballads of late eighteenth-century Scotland, have attempted to describe the intention of these non-literate singers and the extent to which it conditions the form of the songs which they produce.⁷

The major difference between the literate and the traditional performer lies in the attitude of each to the text of the ballad he is singing. For the literate singer, brought up as he has been in a culture where print possesses the supreme authority, the text of the ballad is fixed and an authentic performance of it will repeat it in exactly the form in which he has learnt it. This respect for the printed text will also be granted a version learnt from the lips of another singer, if the source is thought to be an authoritative one. The ballad is handed down from one singer to another, but as a fixed form, to be interpreted, not created. It is moreover likely to deteriorate in the transmission, for the singer will not replace parts of the ballad which he has forgotten. Oral tradition does not pass on its ballads in this manner. An oral culture has no books which may be treated as authorities, so that there is no way of checking variations. All verbal culture must be held in the memory of the performer. But this is achieved in a fashion other than the painstaking rote-learning of the literate performer. The oral singer is not merely an interpreter, he is also a creator. Dr Buchan has described the process:

The traditional singer does not learn individual songs as fixed texts, but learns instead both a method of composition and a number of stories. By this method he re-composes each individual story every time he performs. While, however, he re-creates the story's narrative essence, he actually creates the individual lines and shapes

the individual structure at the moment of performance: he composes the text as he re-composes the story. Each rendering of the story is, then, an "original text". The nonliterate singer is able to compose poems in the traditional way because he has mastered the tradition's phrases and rhythmic patterns, which may be looked on - though the metaphor does not do full justice to the dynamism of the creative process - as many-layered moulds into which the story-idea is poured.⁸

The singer/composer learns not the words of the ballad but learns instead its story, its most striking incidents, and its characters. He learns too the traditional techniques for constructing a stanza and for fleshing out the skeleton of the story, assimilating these techniques through his contact with other singers, in the same way as a child learns a language by constructing the rules of the grammar from the utterances it hears. Using these assimilated techniques as a series of matrices he is able to recreate in ballad form the story he has learnt, giving shape to the essence of the ballad simultaneously with its expression as sound. As a result no two performances of any ballad will ever be given in the same words, for that has never been the singer's intention. The authentic version of any ballad is, to the singer, the story and characters of the ballad, not the words in which these are expressed; he considers inaccurate only a version in which the story is distorted, and so is at liberty to create anew the words that tell that story.

From this essential difference in attitude to the ballad stem the features which we have come to consider typical of ballads taken down from traditional singers. The so-called "ballad cliches", those verses which, in a large number of different ballads, give similar expression to similar situations, are not the result of confusion between texts but are one of the traditional ways of embroidering

There was twal an twal wi beer an wine,
An twal an twal wi muskadine:

An twall an twall wi bouted flowr,
An twall an twall wi paramour:

An twall an twall wi baken bread,
An twall an twall wi the goud sae red.
(Child 5A)

In the most elaborate ballads, such structures amplify or contrast the situations of the action until the patterning of lines and stanzas forms an elaborate counterpoint to parallelisms of plotting, of character grouping, and of narrative mode.

One would expect Hogg, as an illiterate poet exposed to the ballads from his earliest days, to be aware of such techniques and to use them in his early poetry, for one would assume that this, his poetic education, would form a basis for his rhyming similar to the lessons in poetic form a literate poet would extract from the books he read in youth. The fact that Hogg attained literacy in late adolescence should not prevent us from regarding him as orally educated, for the habits of oral creation, when learnt in early youth, are not lost should the singer later become literate. The ballads from which I have quoted my examples of oral style were taken down from the singing of the daughter of a Professor of Greek at Aberdeen University, Mrs Anna Brown, who was by no means illiterate, but who never lost the knowledge of ballad techniques which she had learnt from one of her aunts when a child in Aberdeen. If a person of conventional educational background could so preserve these skills, one would presume that Hogg, with far less education, would retain them to a much higher degree. We should expect therefore that The Mountain Bard, avowedly a collection of ballad imitations, should show plainly the author's intimate knowledge of authentic balladry. However, such assumptions are not borne out by the poetry itself, as an examination

of the volume will show.

The Mountain Bard arose from Hogg's pride in his abilities as a ballad scholar. He had assisted Scott enthusiastically in the collection of ballads and notes for the second edition of the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border and had been treated as a valuable collaborator. Out of their association over the Minstrelsy an occasional correspondence sprang up between the two men and Scott was quick to send his protege a presentation copy of the collection when it appeared.¹⁰ Hogg was not, however, overawed by the notice that had been taken of him and proceeded to find fault with part of the collection at least. As he writes in his Memoir:

On the appearance of "The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border," I was much dissatisfied with the imitations of the ancient ballads contained in it, and immediately set about imitating the ancient ballads myself - selected a number of traditionary stories, and put them in metre by chanting them to certain old tunes. In these I was more successful than in any thing I had hitherto tried, although they were still but rude pieces of composition.¹¹

It was four years later, in 1807, that his discontent bore fruit, when Scott's publisher, Archibald Constable, brought out The Mountain Bard, a two hundred page volume containing ten ballad imitations, a number of songs, a "Memoir of the Life of James Hogg" which was to form the basis for the Memoir from which I have been quoting, and many pages of notes on the history and folklore mentioned in the verse. The volume sold well, its sales boosted by subscription copies. The critics were appreciative, if condescending about Hogg's rank in society. The attitude of the Poetical Register was typical:

The labouring class of society has, of late years, teemed with poets, and would-be poets. If it should much longer display the same fertility, there will not be a single

trade or calling which will not have produced a bard. Mr Hogg is the poet of the Shepherds; and is really an honour to them. Shepherds, be it remembered, were always a poetical tribe. The Ballads of Mr Hogg are in the true style of that sort of writing. They are simple and natural, and contain many spirited and picturesque ideas and descriptions, and occasionally, strokes of genuine humour. The songs also are good. Prefixed to the poems is a well-written sketch of the author's life, from his own pen.¹²

It was a modest but successful entry into literary notice.

The traditional origins of the poems contained in The Mountain Bard are stressed throughout the volume. The very title-page proclaims the contents to be "Ballads and Songs, Founded on Facts and Legendary Tales". The "Memoir", in its account of Hogg's early struggles, makes its author out to be a true child of Nature. The traditional source of each of the ballads is given in a head note, or else in the detailed notes that follow. The note to "The Pedlar" claims:

This ballad is founded on a fact, which has been magnified by popular credulity and superstition into the terrible story which follows. It is here related, according to the best informed old people about Ettrick, as nearly as is consistent with the method pursued in telling it. I need not inform the reader, that every part of it is believed by them to be absolute truth.¹³

"The Fray of Elibank" is similarly described as "founded on a well known and well authenticated fact" (p.50). The notes are careful to point out the most important of the many legends touched on in the course of the ballads. The reader may be led by this account of The Mountain Bard to expect a series of accurate imitations of the traditional ballad, written with affection and vigour by an author with first-hand experience of the originals. This may indeed be what Hogg intends to persuade the reader by the apparatus of his book, but

the ballads themselves present a different impression, which suggests that our picture of Hogg's development must be modified to some extent.

There are certainly many elements of the traditional style present in the volume. For example, we find balanced pairs within a stanza:

The first wound that brave Milburn got,
 The tear of rage row'd in his ee;
 The next stroke that brave Milburn got,
 The blood ran dreeping to his knee.
 (p.147)

Or the familiar threefold repetition may be in evidence:

"I will not fly, I cannot fly;
 My heart is wonder sore;
 My brain it turns, my blood it burns,
 And all with me is o'er."
 (p.133)

On a larger scale, the balance may be extended over a pair of stanzas:

And lang they foucht, and sair they foucht,
 Wi' swords of mettyl kene,
 Till clotted blud, in mony a spot,
 Was sprynkelit on the grene.

And lang they foucht, and sair they foucht,
 For braiver there war nane;
 Brave Adam's thye was baithit in blud,
 And Harden's coller bane.
 (p.43)

In a number of the ballads it is even possible to discern traces of a patterned structure, similar to that which one might find in tradition, round which the poem has been constructed. This is perhaps most evident in the opening ballad of the collection, "Sir David Graeme", which, as the head note says, has as its original one of the most famous of all the Minstrelsy ballads, "The Twa Corbies". Hogg has written an account of the events leading up to the bleak picture of two crows discussing the dead body they have found which is contained in the text of the ballad as printed in Scott's collection. The five stanzas of that poem have acted as a germ for the thirty-seven of

which has persuaded her to give all her money to a beggar, all semblance of structure disappears. For nearly sixty stanzas action follows action in the inevitably jerky motion of the self-contained quatrains. No traditional singer would tell a story at such great length without structuring its stanzas in a way which would give the audience a point of concentration. "Gilmanscleuch" contains a huge cast of characters and covers a wide period of time, which necessitates halting the action periodically while a new scene is set up. There could not be a greater contrast with the economy of the traditional ballad, in which thirty stanzas or so can tell a story with perfect clarity and in which every word is charged with dramatic force.

It is not only in structure that Hogg's imitations seem at variance with traditional practice. The Ballad originals, while they move the reader, do so not by the artifice of the teller, but by the intrinsic emotion of the events being described. The ballads present the feelings of the characters without comment, describing their grief and suffering as expressed in action and gesture, so that the audience empathises directly with the situation:

Love Gregor tare his yellow hair,
 And made a heavy moan;
 Fair Annie's corpse lay at his feet,
 But his bonny young son was gone.
 (Child 76E)

The extreme states of emotion with which the ballads deal are more readily acceptable because they are told without the narrator's intervention or the obvious manipulation of response which results in sentimentality. Rarely does the picture seem overdrawn or the response of the characters too large, for the dispassionate clarity with which situation and reaction are depicted places the audience in a position with regard to the events narrated in the ballad

the diction of Hogg's verse. The Mountain Bard is nominally in the Scots which was Hogg's native tongue, and in which the ballad originals are invariably composed. Hogg is able to preserve this in action and dialogue, where the rhythms of the vernacular are subtly evoked, and the verses are fluent and coherent:

The mason he crackit, the mason he taukit,
 Of a' curiosities mighty an' mean;
 Then pu'd out the bane, an' declared there were nane
 Who in Britain had ever the marrow o't seen.
 ("The Pedlar", p.22)

"And since ye're sae keen o' my Elibank kye,
 Ye's ha'e each o' your drove ye can ken by the head;
 And if nae horned acquaintance should kythe to your eye,
 Ye shall wale half a score, and a bull for a breed."
 ("The Fray of Elibank", p.60)

However, when Hogg passes from action and comic dialogue to emotion, description, or heroic speeches he falls invariably into the worst forms of late eighteenth century poetic English, given a Scots appearance by non-standard spellings and a liberal sprinkling of apostrophes. The stanzas which have been quoted from "Sir David Graeme" are written for the most part in a form of Scots, or at least in a neutral dialect which partakes of both Scots and English. This generally consistent use renders only the more glaring such lapses into poeticism as:

"He sends me back the tokens true!
 Was ever maid perplexed like me?
 'Twould seem h'as rued o' ilka vow,
 But all is wrapt in mystery."
 (p.8)

The stanza from "The Pedlar" which was quoted above comes only a page after the following ranting moral:

Must the scene of iniquity cursed remain?
 Can this bear the stamp of the heavenly seal?
 Yet certain it is from that day to this,
 The millers of Thirlestane ne'er ha'e done weel.
 (p.21)

And Sir Gideon Murray, the Scots-speaking hero of "The Fray of Elibank",

although his utterances are most often presented in well-characterised vernacular such as the stanza quoted, cannot be kept from descending into English on occasion:

"There's nothing," he said, "I more highly
approve
Than a rich forest laird to come stealing
my kye."
(p.64)

Whatever Hogg has learnt of diction from the traditional ballad, it was plainly distorted by the conventions of a more literary type of verse.

In structure, in language, and in the treatment of their stories, Hogg's imitations are clearly not what we would expect from a writer of his background. The ballads of The Mountain Bard are not oral but literary, barely distinguishable from the sentimental imitations thrown off by countless poetasters in the years following the publication of Bishop Percy's Reliques of English Poetry. Our model of his development seems to break down at its first stage, for it would seem that Hogg was never as closely allied to oral tradition as his biography would suggest. His progress to literacy was, on the evidence of this collection, not as dramatic as was earlier suggested. However, two things need to be borne in mind; in the first place, the description given above of the traditional culture was a very idealised one, in which the oral ballads quoted were very much the product of the culture at its strongest, and secondly, even by 1807 Hogg had had experiences which would have introduced him to attitudes to balladry very different from those of tradition.

The change from an oral culture to a literate one is not sudden. As Dr Buchan has shown in The Ballad and the Folk there is a period in which the two co-exist. The oral techniques survive, in a less

sophisticated form certainly, but sufficient to enable singers to re-create ballads orally with some of the patterning of the earlier period. However, as literacy takes over, the complex associations of the traditional ballad are replaced by a linear organisation more typical of literate thought. Contact with the written word, with chapbooks and stall ballads, introduces the vocabulary of sub-literary verse, while the sentences in which the ballad is narrated take on a grammatically more complex form. Throughout this period the singers are still capable of creation in performance but the material on which they are working is less often that of tradition. Finally, when literacy has become the dominant feature of the culture of the area, the old skills are no longer practised. The singers who follow have a literate respect for the authenticity of the text and so memorise one version of the ballad word for word, usually choosing a transitional version for the purpose. Moreover, the nature of oral composition is so far forgotten that the new generation has no conception that there was ever a time when the ballads were not memorised but think that they have come down from ancient times in the text that is memorised. From this time on the survival of the ballads is at the mercy of the memories of those who sing them and corruptions and confusions inevitably enter the text, until frequently all that is left is garbled nonsense.

Hogg, from the comments he makes on the ballads he collects and from his general attitude to collection, seems to come from this last stage in the decline of the vitality of tradition. He firmly believed that only one text, the one sung by his mother, had validity, a view he hints at in a letter to Scott in 1802:

"I am surprized to find that the songs in your collection differ so widely from my mothers. Is Mr Herds MS geuine? I suspect it."¹⁴ The picture he gives of Ettrick singers in the Memoir supports this, for he suggests that one memorised text had become generally known throughout Ettrick. His practice as a collector of ballads also betrays his ignorance of oral tradition. His respect for the text of the ballads he heard was little short of slavish, and he copied down exactly what he heard regardless of whether it made sense or not. It is a characteristic which made him a valuable assistant for Scott but it is also a sign of how far he was from the realities of tradition. To Hogg the stanzas were something that was learnt and which had to be repeated exactly as heard. He does not think the ballad through and is not able to revive the lost meaning of another singer's words when his memory fails. The traditional singer would have no such difficulty, for, since every performance is given in his own words, all these words have a full weight of meaning behind them. An example of the absurdities which Hogg will preserve can be found in the fifth stanza of the version of "Erlinton" which he sent to Scott. As it stands it is virtually unintelligible:

"O in my bower, Willie, there is a wake,
 And in the wake there is a wan;
 But I'll come to the green wood the morn,
 To the green wood for thy name's sake."¹⁵

But a comparison with another version Scott received from the same area shows a simple solution to the confusion which makes, with due translation, perfect sense, and restores the rhyme:

"In my bower, Willie, there is a wane,
 And in the wane there is a wake;
 But I'll come to the green woods
 The morn, for my ain true love's sake."¹⁶

Hogg plainly never came to understand the passage, for a similar description in his poem "Kilmeny", written some ten years after this,

repeats the confusion.

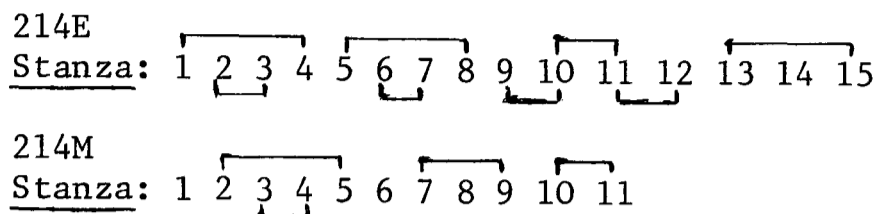
Moreover, when Hogg writes verses which he intends to be taken as part of an existing traditional ballad, it becomes obvious that he does not have the ability to create a sustained patterned structure. In 1802 Hogg sent Scott a version of "The Battle of Otterburn" (Child 161) which he had taken down from the dictation of two old people in Ettrick. Unfortunately, both had memorised the ballad inaccurately with the result that they could give the middle section of it only in fragmentary form, piecing out the story with a prose narrative. Hogg passed this on to Scott exactly as he had taken it down but felt that for publication purposes the ballad should be completed in verse. He therefore set to work to versify the prose sections, confident that he could produce verses which would be indistinguishable from their traditional surroundings. He wrote to Scott:

Not being able to get the letter away to the post, I have taken the opportunity of again pumping my old friends' memory, and have recovered some more lines and half lines of Otterburn, of which I am become somewhat enamoured. These I have been obliged to arrange somewhat myself, as you will see below; but so mixed are they with original lines and sentences that I think, if you pleased, they might pass without any acknowledgement. Sure no man will like an old song the worse of being somewhat harmonious.¹⁷

The stanzas which he concocted are individually satisfying, but there is no sense of a structure wider than the stanza covering the group, so that the ten stanzas Hogg composed are strung together like beads, unconnected by anything beyond their syntax and the chronological sequence of the actions they describe. Despite the appearance of authenticity to be found in each stanza, the length of the Douglas' dying speech singles them out as manufactured by someone who came from the last stages of the traditional culture.¹⁸

The folk culture of Ettrick seems to have been heterogeneous in the extent of its decline under the pressures of literacy. Hogg, as I have suggested, came from the final memorial phase, and no longer viewed the culture from inside. The two sources from which he collected "Otterburn" also seem to have relied very heavily on memory to reproduce their ballads. The close correspondence of the two versions of "Erlinton" gathered by different collectors from different sources would also seem to suggest that one version of that ballad had gained dominance over all others in the area, and that subsequent variations would result only from mistakes in performance. However, though such evidence would suggest that for a large proportion of the population of the area, oral tradition was a thing of the past, an examination of other ballads offered by Hogg for the Minstrelsy suggests that for some at least, who had perhaps received even less education than Hogg, the old skills lingered on. Hogg sent many ballads to Scott for inclusion in his collection and several are printed, either in whole or in part, in its later editions. Their complete texts can be found conveniently reprinted in the "Additions and Corrections" to Volume IV of Child's English and Scottish Popular Ballads. These show a surprising variety in structure. Some seem to come from singers who still possessed oral skills to quite a considerable degree. Thus, the version of "Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard" (Child 81) collected by Hogg, although it falters toward the end, progresses up to that point in strongly connected triads and balances which mark out the scenes of the ballad.¹⁹ The degree of variation between the two versions which Hogg collected of "The Braes o Yarrow" (Child 214E and 214M) shows how much remained of the ability to re-create in performance in some members of the community. More

important than the extent of the variation however is the fact that each has a consistent and complex narrative structure of its own, in which the stanzas are linked as in the following diagram:



However, sophisticated examples of this kind are comparatively rare in the ballads Hogg collected. In most of them the structure is localised, and techniques of oral expansion are used sporadically and inconsistently. The diction and the frequently sentimental characterisation betray some acquaintance with literature on the part of their singers. This becomes obvious if we contrast a version collected by Hogg with a truly oral version as sung by Anna Brown. Of the many versions of the ballad "Lamkin" (Child 93) which were received by Scott, the two he drew on most extensively were one which Hogg had found for him and another which was contained in a manuscript taken down from Anna Brown's singing by her young nephew. A comparison of the two texts, both to be found in Child, shows how much more expansive and ready to embroider the narrative was the oral singer. Even though the two singers came from opposite ends of the country, the story of the two versions is practically identical, but the baldness of the Border version contrasts unfavourably with the richness of the Aberdeenshire. In the version of "Lamkin" that Hogg collected (Child 93X) the initial situation is expounded bluntly and rapidly, giving all the information necessary to understand the story, but failing to expand it so that its full resonance is apparent:

Lamkin was as good a mason
 As ever liftit stane;

He built to the laird o Lariston,
But payment gat he nane.

Oft he came, an ay he came,
To that good lord's yett,
But neither at dor nor window
Ony entrance could get.

Characteristically, Mrs Brown lingers longer over the exposition, dealing more fully with the characterisation and motivation of the aggrieved Lamkin. Moreover, equally characteristically this extra detail is expressed in a patterned group of stanzas:

It's Lamkin was a mason good
as ever built wi stane;
He built Lord Wearie's castle,
but payment got he nane.

"O pay me, Lord Wearie,
come, pay me my fee:"
"I canna pay you, Lamkin,
for I maun gang oer the sea."

"O pay me now, Lord Wearie,
come, pay me out o hand:"
"I canna pay you, Lamkin,
unless I sell my land."

"O gin ye winna pay me,
I here sall mak a vow,
Before that ye come hame again,
ye sall hae cause to rue."

(Child 93A)

The basic subject matter is the same in both versions but Mrs Brown, with her mastery of oral techniques, can decorate it with traditional motifs. Later in the ballad we find a similar contrast between unadorned narrative in the Ettrick version and expansiveness in Anna Brown's version. In the former the conversation between Lamkin and his associate, the treacherous nurse, after they have broken into the laird's castle, while perfectly explicit, seems rushed through:

"O where's the lady o this house?"
Said cruel Lamkin;
She's up the stair sleepin,"
Said fause noorice then.

"How will we get her down the stair?"
 Said cruel Lamkin;
 "We'll stogg the baby i the cradle,"
 Said fause noorice then.
 (Child 93X)

Mrs Brown gives a fuller, if more oblique, account:

"O where's a' the men o this house,
 that ca me Lamkin?"
 "They're at the barn-well thrashing;
 't will be lang ere they come in."

"And whare's the women o this house,
 that ca me Lamkin?"
 "They're at the far well washing;
 't will be lang ere they come in."

"And whare's the bairns o this house,
 that ca me Lamkin?"
 "They're at the school reading;
 't will be night or they come hame."

"O whare's the lady o this house,
 that ca's me Lamkin?"
 "She's up in her bower sewing,
 but we soon can bring her down."
 (Child 93A)

Where the Border version expresses the dialogue in a balanced pair, the smallest unit of structure in the oral repertoire, Anna Brown employs an extended triad, in which three linked stanzas are capped with a fourth which chillingly sums up the dialogue in the preceding stanzas. We are still made fully aware of Lamkin's motive for murdering the baby, but Anna Brown achieves infinitely greater tension by merely hinting at the action. Hogg's version does show traces of the earlier expansiveness, for some of the triads in Anna Brown's version can be matched by the Border singer: at one later point, the balanced pair in which Anna Brown is content to convey an exchange of dialogue is doubled by Hogg's informant. However, despite such sporadic patches of expansion, the Ettrick version of "Lamkin" seems, in comparison to Mrs Brown's, much less consistent in structure and, what is more, much less

satisfying as a work of art, since less cunningly told. For the Ettrick singers, the techniques of oral composition were no longer natural and remained only in a distant form. The culture that produced this version of "Lamkin" was plainly well on the decline.

Therefore, it seems fair to say that the confusion within Hogg's imitations of the ballad reflects to a considerable extent the kind of ballads with which he was familiar. Though the ballad was the most important feature of the Ettrick culture, the individual examples of the tradition were far from uniform in style and in many instances showed the features we recognise in Hogg's early verse: the inconsistencies of structure and diction, the clumsiness with which the narrative is ordered, the frequent baldness with which important details are narrated. Even though Hogg and many of his fellow countrymen were barely literate, they were from earliest youth touched by the attitudes of literacy, and, certainly by the beginning of the nineteenth century, were no longer capable of composing in the traditional manner. Such traces of the oral style that remained in Hogg's imitations could easily have come from his contact with those members of the community who belonged to an earlier stage in tradition, but it is clear that for Hogg himself the oral style was no longer a living thing. For him, as for many another of the younger members of the community, the ballads were treated in the same way as the written verse which was beginning to dominate the culture.²⁰

Moreover, even if the tradition had been purer, Hogg's experiences in the early 1800s would have taught him to look at it through literate eyes. However natural and spontaneous the ballads may have been to him in early youth, by the time he came to

write The Mountain Bard he had begun to judge them by literary standards. His most recent contact with the ballad has been as an assistant to Scott and John Leyden, the compilers of the Minstrelsy, who were scholars and ballad enthusiasts but who were also highly literate. By their example and doubtless by their precepts too, they had given him a standard by which he might judge the ballads he knew. The extent to which these men respected traditional forms would affect Hogg's opinion of balladry and would influence him in how far he followed traditional examples in his verse writings. Insecure as he was in his attitude to tradition, he would be eager to do all he could to meet the approval of men whom he regarded as experts, both in the ballad and in literary composition.

His respect for Scott was at that time boundless. It was on Scott's suggestion that he started writing ballad imitations, as we learn from a letter Hogg sent his mentor at the beginning of 1803: "I never minded to inform you that after receiving your letter desiring me to try something on the death of Young Thirlstane I immediately proceeded and composed about a dozen stanzas but for want of some necessary intelligence I was obliged to stop and have since fallen through it altogether".²¹ To Scott he turned repeatedly for approval and advice, sending him copies of the imitations as each was written and altering them according to his criticisms. Though on occasion the pupil's pride would flare up in protest at the constant correction, Scott's authority on questions of grammar, style, and propriety of subject matter was final.²² In fact to Scott fell the responsibility of seeing the volume through the press, for Hogg could not leave his employment in the Borders to come up to Edinburgh. It will in addition be remembered that the Minstrelsy was the initial stimulus for the preparation of the volume of imit-

ations, and that the genesis of "Sir David Graeme" was a ballad found not in tradition but in the Minstrelsy. Since Scott's powerful personality looms so large over The Mountain Bard, his attitude to the ballad, as reflected in his writing, his editorial practice, and his own ballad imitations, was bound to affect the imitations Hogg wrote. One does not need to read far in Scott's writings to realise that the influence would not be one that would strengthen the traditional element in The Mountain Bard.

Scott's knowledge of the ballad must not be denied, for he was without doubt one of the foremost ballad scholars of his day. He had been exposed to the ballads of the Border region from earliest childhood when, confined by a lengthy period of illness to the farm of Ashestiel in Selkirkshire, not twenty miles from where Hogg was experiencing a very different childhood, Scott listened eagerly to the songs and tales of the servants. This early enthusiasm prompted him to the study of the history and folklore of Scotland and led him to read widely on these subjects, as well as on medieval romances and Norse sagas. He seems to have been blessed with an imagination which could collate the most disparate fragments of knowledge and a memory which could recall verses without effort, even though he had heard them only once.²³ To that extent therefore Scott was a man fully qualified to edit a collection of balladry. But no amount of reading could disguise the fact that he was not himself part of the tradition. He had all the knowledge of balladry possible for a literate man to have but it did not bring with it an understanding of the difference between ballad composition and the poetry to which he was used. As a would-be poet and literary connoisseur who had grown up in the closing years of the eighteenth century he could not conceal his opinion

that there were standards of taste by which all verse literature should be judged, standards drawn from the example of the great classics of British and European literature. Unfortunately, the ballads called for other criteria of judgement to which Scott, retrospective in literary taste as in much else, was not flexible enough to adapt. This shows in the principles on which he edited the Minstrelsy.

Scott was, by the standards of his time, a remarkably scholarly editor. A much higher standard of accuracy had come to be expected in the treatment of the ballad by the time Scott started his labours. Earlier ballad collections, Ramsay's Evergreen (1723-37) or Percy's Reliques of Ancient English Poetry (1765) for example, had printed versions which were considerably altered from the originals. The ballads were censored, translated, smoothed out, and generally improved to suit the standards of the time. Widespread ignorance of balladry allowed the acceptance of these adaptations by the reading public. However, the taste these collections engendered also led to a more scholarly consideration of the traditional ballad, with a consequent rise in the minimum level of accuracy expected: the attacks of a scholar such as Scott's friend Joseph Ritson on editors who fabricated and falsified ballads ensured that later collections would be more circumspect. The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border takes account of these higher standards. Nearly every stanza printed in Scott's collection comes from a source that he accepted as traditional, either copied down from recitation or found in a previous collection. However, this is far from saying that the ballads are printed exactly as found in tradition, for the texts that Scott finally printed are made up from stanzas from a number of different

versions, from widely separated parts of the country, put together to make a coherent story. Scott would not have felt that he was being false to the ballad in doing this, for, like most contemporary writers on the ballad, he was convinced that the ballads which were now to be found in tradition were corrupt versions of poems originally written by professional minstrels in the late medieval period. Since these original texts had unfortunately been lost in the passage of time, so that all that now remained of them were the attempts of uneducated people to remember them, it was the editor's duty to recover the lost original by removing the repetitions, the confusions, and the banalities that had crept in, and making up the ballad from the best stanzas to be found in the versions he examined. The resulting version would, it was argued with somewhat faulty logic, inevitably be as close as possible to the minstrel's original song. As Scott wrote in the Introduction to his collection:

No liberties have been taken, either with recited or written copies of these ballads, farther than that, where they disagreed, which is by no means unusual, the Editor, in justice to the author, has uniformly preserved what seemed to him the best or most poetical reading of the passage. Such discrepancies must very frequently occur, wherever poetry is preserved by oral tradition; for the reciter, making it a uniform principle to proceed at all hazards, is very often, when his memory fails him, apt to substitute large portions from some other tale, altogether distinct from that which he has commenced...With these freedoms, which were essentially necessary to remove obvious corruptions, and fit the ballads for the press, the Editor presents them to the public, under the complete assurance, that they carry with them the most indisputable marks of their authenticity.²⁴

It is possible to put up a defence for this editorial procedure, for ballad collections such as the Minstrelsy were meant for the general reader not the scholar and it was therefore perhaps a justifiable aim that the ballads should appear in the most coherently readable form possible. Unfortunately, it produced in practice

versions of the ballads which would give even the general reader a very falsified picture of the nature of balladry, for the standards by which Scott judged the stanzas most worthy of inclusion were very much those of his time. The principal criteria by which the choice was made seem to value artifice above naturalness and to look for a heightened and lofty form of poetry which is alien to the ballad.

This becomes clear when one looks at Scott's treatment of the ballads of Anna Brown. Not one of the many he received is printed exactly as she sang it, for in every case Scott found faults which offended his taste. Sometimes the alterations he felt obliged to make were small, merely the expurgation of a few words or the translation of a phrase which was too Scottish for most readers. But in many instances a desire to introduce a more obviously poetic stanza from another version of the ballad leads him to destroy totally the complex structures which are the essence of Mrs Brown's work, so giving to these ballads an unnecessary gloss of sophistication and sentimentality. By the standards of the time, which favoured variety of expression and loftiness of tone, the ballads of Anne Brown were repetitive and coarse. Scott therefore felt justified in assuming that the elements in them which produced those faults were adulterations which had entered in the course of the ballad's history, and that these impurities should be removed, either by excising them, or, where that was not possible, by substituting another version.

The balanced pairs and triads which are so characteristic of oral style must have struck Scott as redundant and repetitive. Generally only half of a balance is printed, as when he gives only the second half of the following pair in his version of "The Gay

Goshawk":

"An four-and-twenty ladies fair
 Will wash and go to kirk,
 But well shall ye my true-love ken,
 For she wears goud on her skirt.

"An four and twenty gay ladies
 Will to the mass repair,
 But well sal ye my true-love ken,
 For she wears goud on her hair."
 (Child 96A)

Triads in the original are usually concertinaed into pairs.

The triad describing the bridal procession in "Gil Brenton" which was quoted earlier suffers in this way. Anna Brown, it will be recalled, described it thus:

There was twal an twal wi beer an wine,
 An twal an twal wi muskadine:

An twall an twall wi bouted flour,
 An twall an twall wi paramour:

An twall an twall wi baken bread,
 An twall an twall wi the goud sae read.
 (Child 5A)

Scott, in the version he renamed "Cospatrick", reduces this to a pair:

There were twal' and twal' wi' baken bread,
 And twal' and twal' wi' gowd sae reid,
 And twal' and twal' wi' bouted flour,
 And twal' and twal' wi' the paramour.²⁵

Even when the repetition is essential to a particular effect, the Minstrely version will regularly destroy it by reducing its length or by substituting a more varied passage from another version. The stanza which caps the pleading triad in Mrs Brown's "The Twa Sisters" has a sense of crushing finality:

"O sister, sister, tak my han,
 An Ise mack you heir to a' my lan.

"O sister, sister, tak my middle,
 An yes get my goud and my gouden girdle.

"O sister, sister, save my life,
 An I swear Ise never be nae man's wife."

"Foul fa the han that I should tacke,
It twin'd me an my wardles make."
(Child 10B).

Scott inserts stanzas from another version with considerably less telling results:

"O sister, sister, reach your hand,
And ye shall be heir of half my land."

"O sister, I'll not reach my hand,
And I'll be heir of all your land.

"Shame fa the hand that I should take,
Its twin'd me, and my world's make."

"O sister, reach me but your glove,
And sweet William shall be your love."

"Sink on, nor hope for hand or glove!
And sweet William shall better be my love.

"Your cherry cheeks and your yellow hair
Garr'd me gang maiden evermair."²⁶

Insensitive to the effects of such structuring, Scott felt entitled to lengthen or shorten a ballad in this manner. Moreover, the stanzas chosen to replace those he omits are selected to give the maximum poetic effect, which means in most instances those stanzas that are written in a language most remote from the everyday and most heroic in tone. "The Twa Sisters" ends, in Mrs Brown's version, simply and evocatively, but does not use an obviously poetic diction:

^ An by there came a harper, fine,
That harped to the king at dine.

When he did look that lady upon,
He sighd and made a heavy moan.

He's taen three locks o her yallow hair,
An wi them strung his harp sae fair.
(Child 10B)

Scott, despite having followed Mrs Brown with relative faithfulness up to this point, replaces these stanzas with a more tawdry and sentimental group from another version, transitional in tone:

A famous harper passing by,
The sweet pale face he chanced to spy.

And when he looked that lady on,
He sighed and made a heavy moan.

He made a harp of her breast-bone,
Whose sounds would melt a heart of stone.

The strings he framed of her yellow hair,
Whose notes made sad the listening ear.²⁷

Stanzas are chosen to present a somewhat rosy view of medieval life, purged of anything prosaic or coarse. Heroic causes are assigned for all actions, for a heroine could not be asked:

"O is there water i your shee?
Or does the win blow i your glee?"
(Child 5A)

Instead a more picturesquely medieval question replaces the offending stanza:

"O is your saddle set awrye?
Or rides your steed for you owre high?"
28

Similarly, subjects which would not be spoken of in society are politely glossed over. The suggestion that the monstrous female encountered by the hero in "King Henry" is naked disappears. Anna Brown, in a version which already shows some expurgation, describes her thus:

Her head hat the reef-tree o the house,
Her middleye mot weel span;
He's thrown to her his gay mantle,
Says, "Lady, hap your lingcan."
(Child 32)

This becomes in Scott:

Her head touch'd the roof-tree of the house,
Her middle ye weel mot span:
Each frightened huntsman fled the ha',
And left the King alane.²⁹

The final command the kind must obey is not:

"Tak aff your claihs, now, King Henry,
An lye down by my side!"
(Child 32)

Instead, it is expurgated to:

"Now swear, now swear, ye King Henrie,
To tak me for your bride!"³⁰

On every count, the ballads are made to conform to early nineteenth-century standards.

If Hogg's attitude to traditional balladry was unsettled by the ballads contained in the Minstrelsy, he would find little to strengthen him in the imitations the collection contains. The final volume includes a number of so-called "Imitations of the Ancient Ballad", written by those who were most closely concerned in the project. As well as four imitations by Scott himself, there are ballads by John Leyden, Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, the Rev Dr Jamieson, who was later to edit a famous dictionary of Scots, and M G Lewis, author of the notorious novel The Monk. All of them, save perhaps the last named, were acknowledged experts on the ballad, while some of them, notably John Leyden, had first-hand experience of traditional society. But despite their knowledge of genuine balladry, when they came to write imitations, they relied entirely on the techniques of literature. Like Hogg, they protract their ballads with lengthy descriptions of scenery:

Sweet are the paths, O passing sweet!
By Eske's fair streams that run,
O'er airy steep, thro' copsewood deep,
Impervious to the sun.

There the rapt poet's step may rove,
And yield the muse the day;
There Beauty, led by timid Love,
May shun the tell-tale ray;

From that fair dome, where suit is paid,
By blast of bugle free,
To Auchendinny's hazel glade,
And haunted Woodhouselee.³¹

They show off their knowledge of medieval life by inserting

of their day forces them to ignore their experience of the true nature of the ballad and to substitute instead a more literary form.

However, though these authors are hampered by their literary pretensions from producing good imitations of the traditional ballad, they are better equipped than Hogg to produce acceptable literature in the ballad form. They were able to substitute for the traditional method of composing a ballad the standard literary devices for telling a story. Scott and his colleagues might not be able to organise their stanzas in complex spatial patterns but they were able to give their poems another kind of structure by variations of pace and perspective. The clarity of exposition we find in these imitations is evidence of their authors' ability to think logically and to point up the most important incidents in the narrative. Possessing the language of emotional description, the literary imitators can replace the dispassionate presentation of grief found in the traditional ballad with a powerful evocation of it which controls the reader's passions and responses. What the ballad would achieve by structure and denotative language, the Minstrelsy imitations achieve by employing a more connotative style. In other words, the literate imitators are not attempting to reproduce the traditional ballad, they are writing literary ballads, ballads for a literate culture. They hope, by the use of techniques familiar to their readers, to evoke the same feelings of empathy that a traditional singer does in his illiterate audience.

Unfortunately, it was precisely such techniques which were not yet natural to the inexperienced Hogg. Theoretically he was in an ideal position to write literary ballads, sharing as he did the

experience of traditional and literary balladry. However, in reality he possessed the virtues of neither and the faults of both. His footing in traditional literature was too weak for him to use it as a basis for composition. He came from an ossifying tradition which was rapidly losing the features which would have been beneficial to him. Moreover, he had been taught to set little value on such features by his mentors in the new world of literature in which he was moving. Yet he had as yet been able to learn from his new models no more than the superficial tricks of literature, the shortcuts to emotional evocation and grandiloquence. The subtlety of expression and perception which is the essence of literature he had not yet had time to experience for himself, with the result that his poems are hollow in the centre, for he is unable to fill them with his own thoughts. The Mountain Bard stands at a point of transition between the two worlds: Hogg lacked the knowledge to write a ballad imitation and the artifice to write a good literary ballad.

Yet without either of these qualities, knowledge or artifice, the literary ballad is nothing. The story and the skill with which it is told are the most important features of balladry, for these narrative poems are designed to excite the reader into empathy with an extreme situation. The quatrain does not allow expansiveness of imagery, for the four-line units are self-contained. For a similar reason depth of psychological insight is rarely found in such fragmented structures. It is a stanza form not suited to philosophical or moral argument: it is designed to be the vehicle of action and emotion by its power of concentration on individual pictures. Admittedly, the greatest imitations overcome these restrictions: all these features and more are to be found in

"The Rime of the Ancient Mariner", the greatest of all literary ballads. But "The Ancient Mariner" works because a master writer has evolved his own techniques of writing a ballad, whereby a composite picture is made up of layers of tiny images, each quatrain focussing on a perfectly realised facet of the whole. In literary ballads by less accomplished poets the spasmodic movement of the ballad must be counteracted by a steadily mounting emotional movement within the story which will catch and hold the reader's attention. But if the story is not well told, the reader has neither imagery nor argument in which to take pleasure.

Unfortunately, many of Hogg's ballads are not particularly well told. The action is not moulded so that it moves to a climax: Hogg is in most instances content to let the story tell itself, arranging the material in strictly chronological order with all the jumps in time and space that this approach entails. Too much time is spent on subsidiary material at the expense of the main plot. For example, in "The Fray of Elibank" the legend being told, that of the enforced marriage of Wat Scott to the "muckle-mouthed" daughter of Gideon Murray, is hustled into the end of the poem by a lengthy description of the battle at which young Wat was captured. "Mess John" divides the reader's attention between two separate characters, the persecutor, tormented by desire, and his victim, racked by supernatural tortures, but does not keep them both in view. Rather, one story replaces another, splitting, instead of augmenting, our sympathy. "The Pedlar" falls in two at its middle, for the denouement of the story follows many years after the incidents which started it. The stories Hogg has chosen, involving as they do such a range in time and space, were never meant to be versified:

they come from the prose legends of the Ettrick community and would be told in a form much looser than poetry demands. Later in his career Hogg was to give the more appropriate form of the short story to such legends, but when set out, without alteration, in verse form, they appear no more than a string of four-line stanzas extending monotonously for pages on end. The ballads flare into momentary interest at each crucial exchange and then lapse into a low-keyed linking narrative. With more skill in literature and less faithfulness to his stories Hogg could have cut and shaped them into exciting narrative verse, but as yet the task defeated him.

This is not to deny that some of the ballads are enjoyable to read and do indeed achieve a fair measure of success, though with each of them one is left with some reservations. "Sir David Graeme" enjoys the tightest structure and skilfully builds up suspense by narrating the facts of the story obliquely, allowing emotion to emerge from the action rather than from the description. Unfortunately the atmosphere tends to dissipate in the closing section, for the ballad ends, in its first version, with a grizzly description of the dead lover's body, which relies on morbid horror to create the desired effect of shock, not narrative skill. Even when Hogg revised this poem for a second edition in 1821 the end remained unsuccessful, for needless explanation destroys the half-tones of the hinted action of the earlier part. The fragmentary "Lord Derwent" preserves its obliqueness more consistently, stimulating the reader's imagination into activity by its very incompleteness. The volume contains, as well as tragedies such as these, some successful comic ballads. "The Fray of Elibank" is

Such were the lessons Hogg carried from The Mountain Bard to his next major collection.

CHAPTER II

The Queen's Wake

Six years elapsed between Hogg's first success with The Mountain Bard and the appearance of his next volume of poetry. The delay was to some extent forced on Hogg by circumstances, but, as we shall see, it was of considerable benefit to him as a writer. It was a period of great change for him, not least in the fact that it saw his departure from the Ettrick valley where he had lived hitherto for the very different surroundings of Edinburgh. The origins from which he was already drifting by the time he wrote The Mountain Bard were now cut off from him and he had to make his way as a member of literary society. The consequent problems were to be stimulating to his talent and would result in the best writing he had produced to date.

The Mountain Bard had seemed an auspicious start to the poet's career. It had made him known in literary circles, and had strengthened his links with the group of which Scott was the leader. It had, moreover, been very profitable for him. From the sale of that volume, together with that of another volume which he produced for Constable, The Shepherd's Guide, a treatise on the diseases of sheep and their remedies, Hogg realised nearly three hundred pounds. He had already taken on the tenancy of two farms in the expectation of profit from the two books, but he was soon to find that the supply of money was not sufficient to meet his new liabilities. He maintains in his Memoir that he was overcharged for the rent, but he also had difficulty getting the landlords of the farms to accept the security he was able to put up. His difficulties in obtaining the farms were as nothing compared to the problems he encountered once he entered on the tenancy.

He soon found that the farms were too large for his funds:

It would have required at least one thousand pounds for every one hundred pounds that I possessed, to have managed all I had taken in hand; so I got every day out of one strait and confusion into a worse. I blundered and struggled on for three years between these two places, giving up all thoughts of poetry or literature of any kind.¹

In fact, Hogg did not survive even the three years he says here. In May 1808 we find him writing to tell Scott that financial difficulties, exacerbated by the death of his stock, have forced him into insolvency.² He attempted to return to his old trade of shepherd but found masters unwilling to employ a failed farmer and notorious poet. When he did obtain work, it was so severe that it effectively kept from him writing. Writing to Scott from the farm of Locherben in July 1809 he confessed: "My occupation is so laborious here that I have no time at all to finish any large work; several smaller pieces I am frequently producing."³ The following winter he was unemployed. The pressures under which he was living must indeed have kept him from working, for the supply of pieces for the magazines dried up: only two short poems appeared in 1808, and nothing in 1809. Moreover, he had lost all his books when he became bankrupt. Without the literature which was his pleasure or the shepherding which was his livelihood, he had nothing left to tie him to Ettrick. Therefore, as he writes in the Memoir, "in February 1810, in utter desperation, I took my plaid about my shoulders, and marched away to Edinburgh, determined, since no better could be, to push my fortune as a literary man".⁴

Edinburgh did not exactly open its arms to welcome the new arrivals, and the next years were, as a result, a series of shifts to earn a living as a hack writer. But the capital offered countless opportunities

to make such a living: as a centre for literature for the whole of Britain, controlled from the shop of Archibald Constable by the powerful Edinburgh Review, it was a town of would-be poets and paragraph writers, and openings for earning money by the pen were many. Hogg resorted to three. He persuaded Constable to publish a hastily gathered volume, The Forest Minstrel, a collection of all the songs that Hogg had published in the magazines, together with such pieces as he had about him at the time, and some others given him by his friends. He next became Secretary to the Forum, a debating club for local tradespeople in which important questions were heatedly discussed, emulating in little the Speculative Society which had been a training-ground for the young Whig founders of the Edinburgh Review. And thirdly, in a town of periodicals, Hogg decided to edit his own weekly paper, The Spy: a Periodical Paper of Literary Amusement and Instruction. The first number appeared on 1 September 1810 and for the next fifty-one weeks it appeared every Saturday, containing fiction, verse, and moral discourse. It nearly faltered after only four weeks when a story by Hogg, somewhat more outspoken in sexual matters than convention allowed, caused widespread cancellation of subscriptions and, in the author's eyes worse still, brought the wrath of Scott down on the offender's head. In the course of that year Hogg published articles by many of Edinburgh's celebrities - the headmaster of the Royal High School, several distinguished ladies, even one from Scott himself. It won its editor many contacts who would later prove useful to him, but left him, at the end of its brief life, once more at a loose end.

It is therefore not surprising that we find Hogg in November 1811 asking help from Scott with a new collection of poems:

I am obliged to leave Edinburgh for some time on Monday next. If you could inform of a spare hour between this and that time I would wait upon you with some poetical tales which I trust will draw your consent to my publishing of them especially as I am likely to be completely unemployed during the winter months.⁵

Hogg devoted the next year to the preparation of the volume, so much so that once again we find no verse pieces from him in the magazines for an entire year. It was however a fruitful year of absence, for on 24 September Hogg was able to offer Constable first refusal of the completed volume, which had by now been given the title The Queen's Wake.⁶ Constable, taking him at his word, refused it, and the volume appeared instead under the imprint of a young and inexperienced publisher, George Goldie, early in the Spring of 1813. It had been six years since Hogg had last had any great impact on the literary world, years when the never-ending toil of farm work and the incessant demands of his periodical had left him little time for composition. But at the end of this silence Hogg produced a poem which made his name for the rest of the nineteenth century and which still enjoys respect even today.

The Queen's Wake was, as the events of Hogg's life would suggest, produced under conditions very different from its predecessor. Hogg was able to devote all his energy to its production and to give of his best as a result. He was living among literary men, from whom he could find the stimulus of criticism. He had now a far wider knowledge of literature and opportunities for increasing that knowledge steadily. The experience of The Spy, which had forced him to produce at high speed and under considerable pressure a lengthy article practically every week, had given him increased fluency as a writer. The Forum too had allowed him a platform on which he might air his views and clarify his thoughts, an experience for which he later expressed his gratitude:

Private societies signify nothing; but a discerning public is a severe test, especially in a multitude, where the smallest departure from good taste, or from the question, was sure to draw down disapproval, and where no good saying ever missed observation and applause. If this do not assist in improving the taste, I know not what will. Of this I am certain, that I was greatly the better for it, and I may safely say I never was in a school before. I might and would have written the "Queen's Wake" had the Forum never existed, but without the weekly lessons that I got there I could not have succeeded as I did.⁷

All these factors meant that in The Queen's Wake, unlike The Mountain Bard, he was no longer reliant solely on his own resources lightly varnished with the thinnest possible layer of literature. Now that he had a firmer grasp on literature he would be more capable of giving form to his ideas.

That he should do so was made the more essential by the changed literary world in which he was seeking an audience. The primary influence on The Mountain Bard was, as we have seen, Scott's Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border. Six years later that collection had long since fallen out of fashion, for its editor had gone on to produce other, more complex works against which any aspiring Scottish poet was bound to be judged. Hogg had received The Lay of the Last Minstrel just as he was putting the finishing touches to The Mountain Bard, but it arrived too late to have any influence on that volume.⁸ But Hogg now had to compete not only with the success of that first poem but with that of its successors: Marmion, which was published in 1808, The Lady of the Lake which followed two years later, and The Vision of Don Roderick, which appeared in 1811. Southey had also been publishing a series of long narratives, notably The Curse of Kehama, which was acclaimed on its appearance in 1810. Two years later saw the appearance of the first two Cantos of Byron's Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. There was a steady move from the short ballad imitations which lay at the

back of The Mountain Bard to much longer narrative forms, which called on the author to sustain one story over the length of an entire volume. Hogg had, as we have seen, previously had difficulty in adequately sustaining twenty pages: therefore, he had need of all his newly learnt craft to help him hold the reader's attention throughout a poem over three hundred pages long.

In fact, the structure that he chose side-steps the difficulty rather neatly, for it gives the illusion of being a long narrative while consisting in reality of a number of much shorter poems. The main body of the poem, told in tetrameter couplets, describes the first visit of Mary Queen of Scots to Edinburgh following her coronation. A chance hearing of a Scots lyric makes the young queen eager to hear more of the songs of her new kingdom and prompts her to summon the poets of the land, both Highland and Lowland, to sing ballads to her at her court on the three nights leading up to Christmas. Each night a winner will be chosen from the performers and at the end of the celebrations the overall victor will be named. In the course of the narrative we hear the ballads of twelve of the minstrels, who sing their stories in a wide variety of metres and styles. It is a useful form for Hogg, for it provides a coherent narrative structure throughout the book but one that enables him to vary the effect on the reader easily and naturally. In the course of the narrative, while he can also hint at Mary's future fate and at the intrigues of her court, he has opportunities for historical portraiture and antiquarian description. Above all, he can, by adopting this form, avoid the necessity of sustaining a complex plot throughout an extended narrative, for the book is made up not of one unit but of a number of layers which need not be resolved at the end. Hogg was justly proud of his idea. He thought that the

plan of the work "though it was contrived solely for the purpose of stringing my miscellaneous ballads into a regular poem, happened to have a good effect, from always keeping up a double interest, both in the incidents of each tale, and in the success of the singer in the contest for the prize harp".⁹

On the other hand the form does have disadvantages, which early reviewers were not slow to point out. The influential critic Francis Jeffrey, discussing the book in the Edinburgh Review a year after it had first appeared, while generally viewing it with a favourable eye, had reservations about the ultimate effect of its structure:

This, it is obvious, is a plan that admits, and even invites, to every possible degree of variety - at the same time that it has the disadvantage of excluding all sustained or continued interest - and of forcing the author, in a good degree, to mimic a diversity of styles, and, consequently, to forego that which is most natural and best adapted to his genius; and allowance for both these peculiarities must of course be made in judging of this performance, the character of which, however, it is not easy to mistake. Mr Hogg has, undoubtedly, many of the qualifications of the poet - great powers of versification - an unusual copiousness and facility in the use of poetical diction and imagery - a lively conception of natural beauty - with a quick and prolific fancy to body forth his conceptions. With all this, however, he is deficient in some more substantial requisites. There is a sensible want of incident, and character and pathos, about all his composition. He is excellently well appointed as to what may be entitled the materiel of poetry, but weak in its living agents. There is too much mere embellishment, and too little stuff or substance in his writings.¹⁰

It is certainly true that Hogg does not fully develop the situations that he describes, but is inclined to increase the number of incidents he discusses rather than amplify a few of the more important strands. It is also true that the book is inclined to move in fits and starts and that whole sections are to be ignored because Hogg has set off

on the wrong foot in writing one of the ballads. As we shall see, several of the pieces have only a minimal effect on us as fiction or as poetry. However, it may also be true that the consciousness of having given his book a structure, however tenuous, gave Hogg the confidence to compose two of his finest poems, "The Witch of Fife" and "Kilmeny".

In point of fact, Hogg is extremely diligent in giving a semblance of coherency to his poem through the structure of the linking narrative passages. The book is divided into three Nights, framed by an Introduction and a Conclusion. Each section, each "Night" in other words, begins with a description of Edinburgh and the surrounding countryside, and of the sports and celebrations of her citizens as they while away the time before the evening's contest. Each Night ends with the Queen dismissing her court as dawn approaches. Within each section we find similar techniques employed to give unity to the narrative. Each song is preceded by a detailed description of the bard who performs it, his appearance, his upbringing, his attitude to poetry. At the close of the song the reaction of the audience is described. By means of these descriptions Hogg builds up a tension of contrasts, so that each song is read in relation to one of the preceding. The bards tend therefore to be grouped in pairs. The effeminate Rizzio, who opens the contest with a florid ballad called "Malcolm of Lorn" is followed by the rugged warrior Gardyn, whose "Young Kennedy" is seen as a conscious challenge to his hated predecessor:

Next in the list was Gardyn's name:
 No sooner called, than forth he came.
 Stately he strode, nor bow made he,
 Nor even a look of courtesy.
 The simpering cringe, and fawning look,
 Of him who late the lists forsook,
 Roused his proud heart, and fired his eye,
 That glowed with native dignity.¹¹

The Leven Bard who sings the rollicking "Witch of Fife" at the close of the first Night is sharply contrasted with the lofty Farquhar whose would-be sublime "Glen Avin" opens the second. The sturdy Ettrick bard, a thinly disguised portrait of Hogg himself, is followed by the crippled and visionary Macfarlane. Throughout the contest a recurring rivalry between the Highland and the Lowland bards adds bite to their competition: when one of the regions scores a success the narrative regularly describes an attempt by the other to regain face. By these means Hogg persuades the reader to treat The Queen's Wake not merely as an anthology of songs but as a picture of a contest in the court of Mary Queen of Scots.

Hogg's verdict on the verse of the narrative portion of the poem is probably a just one: it is indeed, as he describes it in the Memoir, "middling good".¹² The four-stress couplet which he chose is, as Scott had shown already in his major narratives, so admirably suited to telling a story fluently and clearly. Most of Hogg's couplet writing in this poem is competent, grammatical, and tasteful. In other words, it achieves a steady average level which allows the reader to consume vast quantities of it without pausing to think and criticise. Rarely is one stopped by a powerful image, a striking description, or even a glaring mistake. The best passages are those where Hogg manages to break through the mould of the end-stopped couplet into which his verse is apt to fall by setting up a counter rhythm which syncopates the passage into units other than the line, as can be seen occurring half-way through the following quotation:

Her comely form and graceful mien,
 Bespoke the Lady and the Queen;
 The woes of one so fair and young,
 Moved every heart and every tongue.
 Driven from her home, a helpless child,
 To brave the winds and billows wild;
 An exile bred in realms afar,
 Amid commotions, broils, and war.
 In one short year her hopes all crossed, -
 A parent, husband, kingdom lost!
 And all ere eighteen years had shed
 Their honours o'er her royal head.
 For such a Queen, the Stuart's heir,
 A Queen so courteous, young and fair,
 Who would not every foe defy!
 Who would not stand! who would not die!
 (p.8)

In general however, the norm is a movement like that of the following description, from the opening of the third Night, in which line follows line in units of the same length, sitting down heavily on each rhymeword and pausing for breath at the end of each couplet:

The blooming maid ran to bedight,
 In spangled lace, and robe of white,
 That graceful emblem of her youth,
 Of guileless heart, and maiden truth.
 The matron decked her candid frame
 In moony broach, and silk of flame;
 And every Earl and Baron bold
 Sparkled in clasp and loop of gold.
 (p. 193)

This monotonous competence in the versification is not however so damaging to the reader's appreciation of The Queen's Wake as the tritely conventional language in which the vast bulk of the narrative links and, worse still, a large proportion of the poems are written. To preserve the steady flow of his narrative, Hogg, justifiably, avoids the too-arresting epithet which will draw attention away from the main point of the poem, which is the story being told. Unfortunately, in exchange for such epithets, he is likely to give the reader nothing but slack and tired language, which results in empty and unevocative

description. This is most obvious when Hogg comes to describe his heroine, for, since such descriptions are the staple fare of poetry, all the poet's freshness of imagination is required to bring her to life. All Hogg can offer as a description of Queen Mary is a collage of the standard motifs of love poetry:

Light on her airy steed she sprung,
 Around with golden tassels hung,
 No chieftain there rode half so free,
 Or half so light and gracefully.
 How sweet to see her ringlets pale
 Wide waving in the southland gale,
 Which through the broom-wood blossoms flew,
 To fan her cheeks of rosy hue!
 Where'er it heaved her bosom's screen,
 What beauties in her form were seen!
 And when her courser's mane it swung,
 A thousand silver bells were rung.
 A sight so fair, on Scottish plain,
 A Scot shall never see again!

(pp. 8-9)

The reader can certainly construct a picture of Mary from this description, but he will not do so from the words themselves. The emotion they contain is given at second-hand, drawing on the reader's experience of other poetry of this sort. Vague qualitative words such as "sweet" or imprecise colours such as "rosy" do not have any pictorial content in them, and any connotative meaning they once had has evaporated in their repeated handling by generations of poets: they stand as empty sacks into which the reader is expected to put emotion and meaning. The author has not played his part by making any effort to control the meaning which the reader will find. The essence of this passage is to be found in the exclamation "What beauties in her form were seen!" The reader is told that beauty was there, but if he wants to see it he must imagine it for himself. The

words used are no more than triggers to emotion, buttons which when pressed produce a conditioned response.

Nor is it merely words which are used as such triggers. Hogg is content to pick up from his predecessors tricks of imagery and symbol which can be used to build up a description without any effort on the author's part. When Mary is told of the power of Scottish song, its attraction is conveyed not by a direct call on the reader's imagination but by just such a string of conventions:

It nerves the arm of warrior wight
 To deeds of more than mortal might;
 'Twill make the maid, in all her charms,
 Fall weeping in her lover's arms.
 'Twill charm the mermaid from the deep;
 Make mountain oaks to bend and weep;
 Thrill every heart with horrors dire,
 And shape the breeze to forms of fire.
(p. 14)

The mythical and romantic trappings of the description do not start in pictorial form before the reader's eyes, but merely point him towards the sort of area in which his thoughts should be straying. Instead of precisely delineating the attraction by careful use of epithets, Hogg refers the reader to pictures to be found more fully drawn in the works of Scott or Lewis. The reader, if he then remembers how such authors described war, love, and the supernatural, has before him a description of the powerful attraction of song. However, if he is not prepared to make such an effort, as few modern readers will be, the passage stands void of meaning.

In such passages Hogg has advanced little from The Mountain Bard. His writing has gained consistency and fluency, there are fewer flaws in diction and much greater skill in organising material, but the

language is still not native to him. Since it is still a second language he has only the words and images which he has learnt from his teachers, the authors who have preceded him. Unfortunately, not only does he lack the vocabulary to express what he wants to say, the second-hand nature of the vocabulary he does have tempts him to take over wholesale the perceptions of other writers. When he breaks through his limitations, as he does in certain of the passages of natural description which come at the opening of each Night, he is revealed as an acute observer of his surroundings and the owner of a very precise imagination:

The storm had ceased to shroud the hill;
 The morning's breath was pure and chill;
 And when the sun rose from the main,
 No eye the glory could sustain.
 The icicles so dazzling bright;
 The spreading wold so smooth and white;
 The cloudless sky, the air so sheen,
 That roes on Pentland's top were seen;
 And Grampian mountains, frowning high,
 Seemed froze amid the northern sky.
 The frame was braced, the mind set free
 To feat, or brisk hilarity.

(pp. 189-190)

The details which are picked out for notice are new and startling, so that the scene is plainly built up not from Hogg's reading but from the knowledge of Edinburgh and its surroundings which he had gained over his three year residence. This clarity of description provokes a corresponding clarity of response from the reader: for a moment, the passage springs alive. But the leadenly contrived description of the morning sky which follows on its heels removes the reader once more to the world of books:

The sun, far on his southern throne,
 Glowed in stern majesty alone:
 'Twas like the loved, the toilsome day,

That dawns on mountains west away,
 When the furred Indian hunter hastes
 Far up his Appalachian wastes,
 To range the savage haunts, and dare
 In his dark home the sullen bear.

(p. 190)

The reader, who does no more than recognise the literary stereotypes which make up the description, is not persuaded by such writing that the author has any new perceptions of life to offer.

This proves disastrously weakening to the collection as a whole, for it is precisely new perceptions of conventional subject matter that emotive poetry such as this demands. Northrop Frye, discussing the literature of the latter half of the eighteenth century,¹³ has distinguished between two views of literature which he has christened "literature as product" and "literature as process". The first is defined as an attitude to literary creation in which the author, as in, say, Tom Jones, is writing with a definite sense of purpose and so throws the reader's attention towards a definite end when a resolution of plot and theme will point the moral of the work. An author holding the second view, which Frye sees as typical of the late eighteenth century, concentrates rather on producing an effect on the reader from moment to moment, as, say, Sterne does in his Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy or Mackenzie does in The Man of Feeling. One might speculate that the view of literature as process became more attractive to authors when the rules and standards of the first half of the century, the Tory order which Pope and his colleagues presented as an ideal to which an erring world should return, were proved increasingly inadequate by the ever-accelerating social change of the end of the century, so that authors lacked the confidence to impose a preconceived

form and message on their works. But it is certainly true that such literature calls on special skills in its authors. If the literature is to live from moment to moment, each line must create an effect on the reader, for without an emotional effect he is left with nothing at which he may clutch, no carefully wrought argument or moral theme. The work must pass uninterrupted from the imagination of the author to that of the reader, but this insists that the author's imagination is always working at full power.

The task is made more difficult by Hogg's time by the wide variety of criticisms his work might be expected to meet. The reactionary reader, following the views expounded by most of the literary critics of the day, held to standards of literary decorum and poetic diction, accepted beauty and morality as things that could be finitely described, and thought that all readers of taste would agree on what was good or bad. The more advanced reader would side with the writers we now call the Romantics, would question the hitherto accepted standards, see beauty in new objects, and redefine the nature of what was poetic. In such a situation it is essential that all writers should define their frame of reference and not rely on their audience's ready acceptance of the conventional view. But it is the nature of the more conventional writers that they should hold on to previous standards in a time of change and write as if no change has taken place. In consequence we find Hogg, Wilson, and many of their fellow minor poets writing by the same criteria as minor poetry had always followed, praising the same moral qualities and objects of beauty, but demanding the reader's identification with their point of view only by vociferous exclamation which pretends that such views invite no argument. Such an attitude to literature does not succeed in a period of transition. Hogg's empty pictures of beauty are all that is required.

if all men find the same things beautiful: they do not work for a more questioning age.

This leads Hogg into frequent bathos, for he fails to take account of changing standards. Bathos is theoretically impossible when standards are fixed, for a writer need only follow the standards which apply to lofty poetry for all men to call his verse lofty. However, if the audience does not automatically sympathise with his views, the author must be constantly on his guard to control the reader's response so that a statement which is meant to sound triumphant does not strike the reader as an anti-climax. Hogg, relying on literary stereotypes, is frequently careless in this respect. In the opening scene of The Queen's Wake, Hogg tells how Mary, on her entry into Edinburgh, is of a sudden struck pensive, and in a string of rhetorical questions followed by a climactic explanation attempts to describe why:

Though Mary's heart was light as air
 To find a home so wild and fair;
 To see a gathered nation by,
 And rays of joy from every eye;
 Though frequent shouts the welkin broke,
 Though courtiers bowed and ladies spoke,
 An absent look they oft could trace
 Deep settled on her comely face.
 Was it the thought, that all alone
 She must support a rocking throne?
 That Caledonia's rugged land
 Might scorn a Lady's weak command,
 And the Red Lion's haughty eye
 Scowl at a maiden's feet to lie?

No; 'twas the notes of Scottish song,
 Soft pealing from the countless throng.

(pp. 10-11)

A more sceptical reader who may not share Hogg's lofty view of the power and importance of Scottish song may feel that affairs of state

are of rather greater importance. Had Hogg prepared the reader more adequately to accept his attitude to song and to art, such a sudden plunge would not be felt, but the rhetorical questions tacitly assume that the reader will agree with the proposition that refutes them. Here as elsewhere Hogg has failed to work sufficiently hard to control the reader's sympathy with the author's point of view and has consequently failed to achieve the effect he intended.

The deficiencies that show in the weaker passages of the narrative are also evident in Hogg's handling of the embedded songs. Repeatedly he fails to make the most of the stories he has chosen to put into verse. Just as the words he uses are empty sacks, so too are the plots of these ballads. In the vast majority of instances, the songs performed by the bards are reshufflings of themes exhausted by earlier poets - avenging ghosts, prophetic visions, heroic tournaments. Such themes, when treated with care, can still raise excitement or supernatural horror even for readers who are familiar with earlier treatments. No single example of their use is necessarily definitive: any subject should reveal a multitude of new facets to an author who is prepared to examine it from a fresh perspective. But Hogg is not able, or willing, to render more than a vague outline of the implications of his story, and as a result its secondhand quality goes undisguised.

This can perhaps be seen most clearly in "Young Kennedy", the second song in the competition, and in "Earl Walter", which the eleventh bard sings the following evening. The versification in each poem is competent enough, and in each of them Hogg manages to sustain a consistently lofty poetical tone. The subjects of the two songs, the

former a supernatural one, the latter a heroic, are scarcely inferior to many previously handled by Scott and others; "Young Kennedy" is reminiscent of Scott's "The Eve of St. John", included in the final volume of the Minstrelsy. But both poems are, as they stand, failures, for in neither does Hogg do more than flatly retell a rather dull story. In "Earl Walter", one of the four ballad imitations included in The Queen's Wake, the nobleman of the title is prompted by his honour and by the taunts of his father to challenge in single combat the redoubtable Lord Darcie, inevitably winning renown and the love of the king's daughter in the process. The ballad opens strongly, giving in its first two verses some sense of the hero's doubts and fears at his dangerous undertaking:

"What makes Earl Walter pace the wood
 In the wan light of the moon?
 Why altered is Earl Walter's mood
 So strangely, and so soon?"

"Ah! he is fallen to fight a knight
 Whom man could never tame,
 Tomorrow, in his Sovereign's sight,
 Or bear perpetual shame."

(p. 146)

The following stanzas point up the conflict between father and son, the father's ideas of honour branding Walter's doubts as those of a coward. But for the bulk of the poem this potential source of interplay between father and son, and therefore of depth in the characterisation of the protagonists, is obscured completely by a detailed description of the combat between Walter and Darcie, a combat scarcely distinguishable from hundreds of others of which we have read. The reader, if he feels no concern for the characters, can find pleasure only in the vaguely medieval picture Hogg presents. The heroic action of the middle section is meant to arouse the reader's

delight in feats of knightly courage, but the bare factual narrative of the battle is no more than a trigger for such a reaction, of the sort to be found in Hogg's sentimental descriptions. The mere mention of two warriors fighting is judged sufficient to raise the reader's temperature.

The heroic trigger of "Earl Walter" is matched by its supernatural counterpart in "Young Kennedy". The eponymous villain of this poem was born of a dead mother in a frozen wilderness and was nourished by a harsh Nature, an upbringing which leaves him rough and pitiless, ruthlessly ambitious and delighting in the sorrow of others:

The nursling of misery, young Kennedy, learned
 His hunger, his thirst, and his passions to feed:
 With pity for others his heart never yearned, -
 Their pain was his pleasure, - their sorrow his meed.
 His eye was the eagle's, the twilight his hue;
 His stature like pine of the hill where he grew;
 His soul was the neal-fire, inhaled from his den,
 And never knew fear, save for ghost of the glen.
 (p. 48)

The opening description presents Kennedy as a small-scale heroic villain, an outcast such as the heroes of countless Gothic novels, who has magnificence in his defiance of morality. However, as the story of seduction and murder proceeds, this characterisation fades into the background, to be replaced in importance by skull and crossbones supernatural description. Kennedy is no longer marked out from other villains by the peculiar features of his birth but becomes merely one more murderer tormented by the avenging spirit of his victim. The return from the dead of his murdered father-in-law is meant to evoke a shudder but, as Kennedy's bride describes it, the ghostly visitation has horror only for those well read in Matthew Lewis:

"Bestower of being! in pity, O! hide
 That sight from the eye of my spirit for ever;
 That page from the volume of memory divide,
 Or memory and being eternally sever!
 My father approached; our bed-curtains he drew;
 Ah! well the gray locks and pale features I knew.
 I saw his fixt eye-balls indignantly glow;
 Yet still in that look there was pity and woe.
 (p. 57)

Nothing in the description betrays Hogg's intimate knowledge of folk belief which enables him on occasion to give convincing and unusual detail to his pictures of ghosts and spirits. Here, he is content to add one more ill-described ghost to the train which trooped after the German romantics. The effect is further weakened when later in the volume we find similar descriptions in "Glen-Avin", in "The Fate of Macgregor", and in "King Edward's Dream".

These shadowy descriptions are all Hogg now has to offer the reader, for he has almost entirely renounced his knowledge of the ballad and its methods. Four only of the poems in The Queen's Wake employ the ballad quatrain: "The Witch of Fife", "Glen-Avin", "Earl Walter", and "Mary Scott". Only two poems - "The Witch of Fife" and "Kilmeny" - are written in Scots. Folk narrative is used as a basis in only a handful of instances, half of the twelve ballads being either sentimental in tone or of a supernatural type which is connected only remotely with genuine folk belief. Some knowledge of the authentic ballad is evident, but it is heavily disguised. Hogg says in a note to "Mary Scott" that it is "founded on the old song of The Grey Goss Hawk. The catastrophe is the same, and happens at the same place, namely in St. Mary's church-yard" (p. 349). "The Gay Goshawk", as the ballad is more usually known, is one of the finest in tradition. It tells a story which is, in outline, very similar to that of Romeo and Juliet, save

that in this case it ends happily when the hero wakens the heroine from her drugged sleep and wins her father's consent to their marriage. There is a typically fine version taken down from the singing of Anna Brown (Child 96A), which vividly tells the story in twenty-eight well-structured stanzas. Scott, true to form, augmented this version when he came to prepare the Minstrelsy, adding another nine stanzas to his original. However, Hogg takes one hundred and eighty-three stanzas to tell the same story in "Mary Scott". The clear line of the original narrative is confused by escapes and disguises so that all suspense is lost. Although Hogg knew the original well, having sent a version of it to Scott, at this stage of his development he felt obliged to translate it into weak and conventional literary verse, rather than use it to form the poet's own style. Even more deeply hidden under its literary ornament is a reference to the ballad of "The Lass of Roch Royal" (Child 76) which we are told was sung by the sixth bard. The synopsis of this performance which Hogg gives in the narrative does little to persuade us that the version Hogg visualised being sung was meant to be a traditional one:

He sung Lochryan's hapless maid,
 In bloom of youth by love betrayed:
 Turned from her lover's bower at last,
 To brave the chilly midnight blast;
 And bitterer far, the pangs to prove,
 Of ruined fame, and slighted love;
 A tender babe, her arms within,
 Sobbing and "shivering at the chin."
 No lady's cheek in Court was dry,
 So softly poured the melody.

(pp. 64-65)

The traditional modes which gave a foundation, however shaky, to the imitations of The Mountain Bard are therefore only remotely present for the bulk of The Queen's Wake. Even when they are used they are so disguised in form as to be barely recognisable. Hogg, it seems, had

abandoned the assistance which could be found in oral culture and was now attempting to conquer the literary world with its own weapons. It is therefore not surprising that the primary influences at work in The Queen's Wake should be literary ones. Scott is ever present, especially in the linking passages which describe Mary's court. The metre used is the iambic tetrameter which is basic to Marmion and The Lady of the Lake. The idea of the bardic contest may well have been suggested by the similar gathering of minstrels which celebrates the marriage at the end of The Lay of the Last Minstrel. Other, more anonymous, poets lurk behind sentimental tales such as "Malcolm of Lorn", the tale of a Highlander who dies heart-broken when his lover must leave for a far country, and can also be seen influencing the descriptions of young love in poems like "Old David". The Mountain Bard still had its roots in Hogg's upbringing, no matter how distorted a picture it gave of traditional culture. But in The Queen's Wake Hogg, having set aside the strengths of that collection, seems to have replaced them only by a superficial acquaintance with literature. We must therefore conclude that, in the parts of The Queen's Wake we have considered so far, Hogg's progress between these two volumes of poetry was only slight.

However, two of the poems contained in The Queen's Wake - "The Witch of Fife" and "Kilmeny" - are more than ample evidence of the vast improvement in Hogg's verse since the days of the earlier collection. These two poems stand out from their surroundings, set apart not only in quality but in many other features which distinguish them from the rest of the volume. They are, perhaps significantly, the only poems of the book which are written in Scots. They both have behind

them a great weight of traditional knowledge. Yet they both have total control over the reader's response, which shows a careful calculation of the effect they will produce, comic in the first, serious and mystical in the second. Each shows in addition an awareness of other works of literature, literature of the very highest kind. Above all, in these two poems Hogg is for the first time secure enough in technique to offer the reader an experience which cannot be found better expressed in the works of other authors. In other words, "The Witch of Fife" and "Kilmeny" show Hogg for the first time speaking in his own voice.

"The Witch of Fife", as Hogg himself confesses in the notes, takes its story directly from folk tradition. Hogg retells in verse a legend which has been recorded in many parts of the British Isles, but which is most readily found in one of the head notes in the Minstrelsy:

A tradition existed, during the seventeenth century, concerning an ancestor of the noble family of Duffus, who, walking abroad in the fields, near to his own house, was suddenly carried away, and found the next day at Paris, in the French king's cellar, with a silver cup in his hand. Being brought into the king's presence, and questioned by him who he was, and how he came thither, he told his name, his country, and the place of his residence; and that, on such a day of the month, which proved to be the day immediately preceding, being in the fields, he heard a noise of a whirlwind, and of voices, crying "Horse and Hattock!" (this is the word which the Fairies are said to use when they remove from any place), whereupon he cried, "Horse and Hattock" also, and was immediately caught up, and transported through the air, by the Fairies, to that place, where, after he had drunk heartily, he fell asleep, and, before he woke, the rest of the company were gone, and had left him in the posture wherein he was found. It is said that the king gave him the cup, which was found in his hand, and dismissed him.¹⁴

As it stands in Scott's version, the story is a slight one, with little of either characterisation or description. Hogg, bringing to this unpromising material all his powers of imagination, refashions it into a fast-moving narrative which has been justly called "a superb piece of high comedy, one of the supreme masterpieces of Scottish poetry".¹⁵ Hogg gives the story shape, creates a memorable character out of the central figure, and siezes the opportunities to describe the hero's flight with dizzy vividness. Although he chooses as the stanza form for his tale the ballad quatrain which had proved so intransigent to literary use in his earlier attempts, he brings to the form a new command of literary techniques. "The Witch of Fife" is an imitation not merely of the ballad but also of distinguished literary models, for it echoes many other literary forms, most notably those earlier Scots poems which had celebrated food, drink, and dance in verse of grotesque speed and vigour ever since the days of the Makars.

What marks "The Witch of Fife" out from Hogg's earlier verse is above all else the tight check the poet keeps on the nuances of tone, allied to his concentration on the essential features of each description. Up to this poem, Hogg's prevailing sin had been to drag out his stories beyond their due length, distracting the reader from the main plot by too much circumstantial detail until the line of the story was lost. "The Witch of Fife" is notable for Hogg's fixed concentration on his two main characters, a drunken old man and his wife, the witch, whose tales of unlimited drink in the cellars of the Bishop of Carlisle tempt her husband to follow her coven on one of their nightly revels. This initial situation is conveyed neatly and clearly in one dialogue between husband and wife in which she recounts her adventures on the

three previous nights. This naration could easily become formless but is never allowed to do so. The magic journeys of the wife on three successive nights are each told separately, the adventures of each night being marked by a different mode of transport and destination, climaxing in the visit to the Bishop's palace under the power of the mighty word which will later allow the witch's husband to follow her example. The end of the narrative of each night's adventures is signalled by the old man's insistent carping:

"Quhat guid was that, ye ill womyn?
 Quhat guid was that to thee?
 Ye wald better haif bein in yer bed at hame,
 Wi yer deire littil bairnis and me."
 (p. 69)

This quasi-refrain is not simply a device of rhetorical structure but is used to create one of the best comic effects in the poem. The old man's disapproval at the adventures of the first two nights points up the more strongly his change of mind when, at the mere mention of the Bishop's wine, his expected complaint is replaced without further comment by an enthusiastic enquiry about these supernatural powers:

"But tell me the word, my gude auld wyfe,
 Come tell it me speedilye;
 For I lang to drink of the gude reid wyne,
 And to wyng the air with thee."
 (p. 78)

Hogg draws from this opening dialogue the maximum possible effect. At once, the descriptions convey information and atmosphere, build up characterisation, create suspense, and move to a comic climax which gives added impetus to the second section, the story of the old man's flight.

The control of structure shown in the poem is matched by a similar control of language, which is manipulated with equally cool

subtlety. Hogg not only writes the poem in effective Scots, more especially he is able to use the Scots constructively to achieve particular ends. We find that movements and actions are almost invariably described in Scots in this poem, and frequently in obscure Scots at that, in which Hogg draws on the considerable vocabulary of such words to be found in the dance poems. This allows Hogg a greater shade of meaning in his descriptions of movement, and adds all the connotations these words have acquired. Allied to a style in which verbs have unusual prominence, this creates an impression of speed and activity by the most simple means:

The auld gude-man he grew se crouse,
 He dancit on the mouldy ground,
 And he sang the bonniest sangis of Fife,
 And he tuzzlit the kerlyngs round.

And ay he percit the tither butt,
 And he suckit, and he suckit se lang,
 Quhill his een they closit, and his voice grew low,
 And his tongue wold hardly gang.

The kerlyngs drank of the bishopis wyne
 Quhill they scentit the mornyng wynde;
 Then clove again the yeilding ayr,
 And left the auld man behynde.

(p. 81)

In addition Hogg makes great play with alliteration for onomatopoeic effect - "sousit downright like the stern-shot light" or "fluffit i' the flotyng faem". The result is a poem which sounds speedy, noisy, and joyous.

Hogg's control over the diction of his poem enables him to present each situation in the language appropriate to it. The flight of the real witches is described in a language which makes it seem awe-inspiring and noble:

"Fleet is the roe on the grein Lommond,
 And swift is the couryng grew;
 The rein deir dun can eithly run,
 Quhan the houndis and the hornis pursue.

But nowther the roe, nor the rein-deir dun,
 The hinde nor the couryng grew,
 Culde fly owr muntaine, muir, and dale,
 As owr braw steedis they flew.

(p. 73)

The old man, on the other hand, is, by skilfully placed items of grotesque description, rendered ridiculous:

The auld gude-man cam fra his hole
 With feire and muckil dreide,
 But yet he culdna think to rue,
 For the wyne came in his head.

He set his foot in the black cruik-shell,
 With ane fixit and ane wawlyng ee;
 And he said the word that I darena say,
 And out at the lum flew he.

(p. 80)

So great is Hogg's control of the tone of his poem that he can create deliberate bathos by the contrast of the sublime of the witches with the ridiculous old man:

The witches skalit the moon-beam pale;
 Deep groanit the tremblyng wynde;
 But they never wist till our auld gude-man
 Was hoveryng them behynde.

(p. 80)

The subtle shadings Hogg achieves can be seen in the potentially cruel end of the poem as it stood in the first edition of The Queen's Wake. There, the old man is burnt at the stake as a witch after he is found by guards lying in a drunken stupor in the Bishop's palace. One would be tempted at first glance to agree with Scott who thought this ending too bloodthirsty and persuaded Hogg to alter it for the later editions so that the poem ends there in a more obviously celebratory manner as the old man is rescued by his wife and flies off shouting defiance at his tormentors. Alexander Scott feels that "The Witch of Fife" must be denied full greatness as a comic work because this sense of comic release

was achieved by means suggested by someone other than the poet.¹⁶ But two things must be taken into account. In the first place, most other versions of the story to be found in the folk culture do have the ending suggested by Scott, which may imply that Hogg required little prompting to make the alteration.¹⁷ But more importantly, Mr. Scott's criticism does not take proper notice of the humour with which Hogg softens the cruelty of the execution and so preserves the comic tone intact. The old man's sufferings under torture are distanced by absurd detail:

They nickit the auld man, and they prickit the auld man,
And they yerkit his limbis with twine,
Quhill the reid blude ran in his hose and shoon,
But some cryit it was wyne.

They lickit the auld man, and they prickit the auld man,
And they tyit him till ane stone;
And they set ane bele-fire him about,
And they burnit him skin and bone.
(p. 83)

The moral which originally closed the poem is likewise hardly tragic:

Now wae be to the puir auld man
That ever he saw the day!
And wae be to all the ill wemyng,
That lead puir men astray!

Let never ane auld man after this
To lawless greide incline;
Let never an auld man after this
Rin post to the diel for wyne.
(p. 83)

Hogg's control of effect meant that he could imply the comic climax which is stated more literally in the revised version.

That Hogg had learnt such subtlety of narration from a source other than a traditional one is suggested by several features of the poem. Firstly, the idiosyncratic spelling which is so obvious in the stanzas that have been quoted seems to be an attempt to imitate the spelling of Middle Scots, as found in such literary poems as "Christis Kirke on the

Green" or "Peblis to the Ploy". These poems are also brought to mind by Hogg's use of alliteration and mid-rhyme, features much more common in that type of poem than in the traditional ballad. Much of the grotesque description of "The Witch of Fife" seems to come from poems such as "Kind Kittock". The "wee, wee man" who plays for the witches on the first night might come straight out of that poem:

Than up there rase ane wee wee man,
 Franethe the moss-gray stane;
 His fece was wan like the collifloure,
 For he nouthir had blude nor bane.
(p. 70)

But Hogg has not copied these poems, he has used elements of them, just as he has used the metre of the ballad, to give form to his imagination. "The Witch of Fife" shows Hogg using such literary and traditional material to bring to life the old legend. But the finished poem which evolves from this combination is far greater than the sum of these individual elements, for by combining the simple traditional story with scraps of literature and balladry, Hogg has created a poem which in pace, in imagination, and in joyful comic exhilaration is indeed a minor masterpiece.

But the jewel of the collection is, as critics have agreed since its first publication, "Kilmeny". In background this poem is similar to "The Witch of Fife". Hogg allies it in the notes to ballads such as "Thomas Rhymer" and "Tam Lin" as well as to a number of local legends of men and women carried off by the Fairies. Yet he also allies it in its original version with the Makar tradition by adopting an archaic orthography similar to that of "The Witch of Fife". As we shall see later, other analogues draw the poem even further into the world of literature. Yet, as in "The Witch of Fife", Hogg succeeds in producing in "Kilmeny" a poem of great individuality. "Kilmeny" tells of a young girl who is taken from earth to the "lowermost vales of the storied heaven" where she

is shown visions of the Other World and of the future history of Scotland. At length she returns home to tell humanity of the wonders she has seen, but, finding the world unsatisfactory after the joys of Heaven, she returns there at the end of the poem. Hogg's achievement is to realise to the full the imaginative potential of this story and to visualise it in images of haunting power.

The considerable beauty of "Kilmeny" lies in the simple but clear diction in which these events are described. Scarcely a word is wasted, each adjective and verb giving a fresh detail of the scenes witnessed by Kilmeny. Hardly an epithet jars by introducing a note of glibness or slackness. Nothing disturbs the tranquil tone of the poem, a tone admirably suited to its visionary setting. But this tone is not the result of chance, for a close examination of the poem reveals how Hogg has worked to create it by careful attention to detail. From the opening description Hogg bends grammar and diction to freeze the action in a series of beautiful and undisturbed tableaux. There is very little action described in the poem. Instead, the grammar of the opening concentrates on what has not happened and diminishes the importance of what has:

Bonny Kilmeny gaed up the glen;
 But it wasna to meet Duneira's men,
 Nor the rosy monk of the isle to see,
 For Kilmeny was pure as pure could be.
 It was only to hear the Yorlin sing,
 And pu' the cress-flower round the spring;
 The scarlet hypp and the hindberrye,
 And the nut that hang frae the hazel tree;
 For Kilmeny was pure as pure could be.¹⁸

By describing the scene in this way, Hogg draws the reader's attention away from the movement involved in these actions. In the next paragraph, action and movement is delayed to a future time:

But lang may her minny look o'er the wa',
 And lang may she seek i' the green-wood shaw;

Lang the laird of Duneira blame,
 And lang, lang greet or Kilmeny come hame!
 (p. 176)

In the scene of Kilmeny's return our attention is concentrated on the perfected, completed, nature of all movement:

When many a day had come and fled,
 When grief grew calm, and hope was dead,
 When mess for Kilmeny's soul had been sung,
 When the bedes-man had prayed, and the dead-bell rung,
 Late, late in a gloamin when all was still,
 When the fringe was red on the westlin hill,
 The wood was sere, the moon i' the wane,
 The reek o' the cot hung over the plain,
 Like a little wee cloud in the world its lane;
 When the ingle lowed with an eiry leme,
 Late, late in the gloamin Kilmeny came hame!
 (p. 177)

In no instance up to this point has an action been described as happening in the present time of the narrative; all movement has stopped and the poem concentrates on the moment of time when Kilmeny returned. Even when that return is described Kilmeny plays no part in the action. She is questioned in direct speech but her reply is given in an oblique form of narrative which seems to give voice to her very thoughts:

Kilmeny looked up with a lovely grace,
 But nae smile was seen on Kilmeny's face;
 As still was her look, and as still was her ee,
 As the stillness that lay on the emerant lea,
 Or the mist that sleeps on a waveless sea.
 For Kilmeny had been she knew not where,
 And Kilmeny had seen what she could not declare;
 Kilmeny had been where the cock never crew,
 Where the rain never fell, and the wind never blew,
 But it seemed as the harp of the sky had rung,
 And the airs of heaven played round her tongue,
 When she spake of the lovely forms she had seen,
 And a land where sin had never been;
 A land of love, and a land of light,
 Withouten sun, or moon, or night:
 Where the river swa'd a living stream,
 And the light a pure celestial beam:
 The land of vision it would seem,
 A still, an everlasting dream.
 (p. 178)

Hogg has used a number of techniques to achieve the effect he wants but

he has taken care to blend them with perfect consistency. As a result, the poem, while varied in its details, seems to fit each detail into a wider pattern.

In the past, critics have felt that this unity of tone is disrupted by the scenes in which Kilmeny's experiences in the Other World are narrated. It is suggested that Hogg was not capable of adequately describing Heaven and that the clarity of the opening description is therefore lost in the poem's central section. Douglas Mack, putting forward this view, excuses Hogg by pointing out the difficulty of the task. "The human mind cannot conceive Heaven adequately," Mack writes, "and any attempt to describe it directly is bound to end in anticlimax. We can only perceive something of its nature indirectly, through echoes and reflections, as in the opening and closing scenes of the poem."¹⁹ A closer examination of Hogg's description of Heaven shows that even here he has greater control over the reader's powers of imagination than he has been given credit for. Hogg has in fact created a very evocative portrait of Heaven by using the only technique open to him: he has defined its nature by contrasting it with that of Earth. The passage I quoted at the end of the previous paragraph invites us to imagine a world without the miseries of our own, without even the physical features that we take for granted - day, night, wind, rain. The poem also seeks to evoke Heaven in terms similar to those used by Milton and Dante, describing it as a place of blinding light which comes however from no definite source but which pervades the whole area:

They lifted Kilmeny, they led her away,
 And she walked in the light of a sunless day:
 The sky was a dome of crystal bright,
 The fountain of vision, and fountain of light:
 The emerald fields were of dazzling glow,
 And the flowers of everlasting blow.

(p. 182)

Nor are the visions that are shown to Kilmeny as clumsily portrayed as has often been suggested. The nature of these visions is amply suggested by the first of them, in which Hogg presents for us no more than an abstract whirl of colour:

She looked, and she saw nor sun nor skies,
 But a crystal dome of a thousand dies.
 She looked, and she saw nae land aright,
 But an endless whirl of glory and light.
 And radiant beings went and came
 Far swifter than wind, or the linked flame.
 She hid her een frae the dazzling view;
 She looked again and the scene was new.
 (p. 185)

By co-ordinating two lexically dissimilar items - "glory" and "light - Hogg challenges us to synthesise abstract qualities with concrete colours and so to imagine a world where normal standards of perception do not apply. This synaesthetic experience is carried into the next vision where Kilmeny views a panorama of the Scottish countryside, in which the very land is alive with the movement of clouds and water, and brilliant with light and sparkling colour:

She saw a sun on a summer sky,
 And clouds of amber sailing bye;
 A lovely land beneath her lay,
 And that land had glens and mountains gray;
 And that land had vallies and hoary piles,
 And marled seas, and a thousand isles;
 Its fields were speckled, its forest green,
 And its lakes were all of the dazzling sheen,
 Like magic mirrors, where slumbering lay
 The sun and the sky and the cloudlet gray;
 Which heaved and trembled and gently swung,
 On every shore they seemed to be hung;
 For there they were seen on their downward plain
 A thousand times and a thousand again;
 In winding lake and placid firth,
 Little peaceful heavens in the blossom of earth.
 (pp. 185-186)

These two visions convey not only a clear picture of what Kilmeny saw but are also rich in implied descriptions of the nature of Heaven, of the greatly expanded perceptions of those who inhabit the Other World, and of the attraction and beauty of the poet's native land. As in the weaker

descriptions discussed earlier, Hogg is here constructing his picture out of a network of interconnecting hints, but the much greater weight of meaning hinted at ensures that the reader imagines only what the poet has previously imagined for himself. The reader's imagination is stimulated into activity but it is not allowed to run freely; the boundaries within which it is to act are clearly defined.

However, the visions that follow are of a different nature, for they convey in allegorical form firstly the struggles of Queen Mary's reign and later the disorder which was being experienced in Hogg's own day, during the fighting that succeeded the French Revolution. Louis Simpson, in his study of Hogg's work, expresses his dislike of these passages, finding the animal symbolism in which they are described reminiscent of "types of political cartooning".²⁰ Certainly, these passages do show a falling off from the achievement of the poem up to this point: the scenes from history which we are given do not have much imaginative appeal for the modern reader. This may be partly because we are no longer affected by the favour felt at the time of the Napoleonic War and therefore more likely to view the patriotic sentiments it provoked with a critical eye. A passage such as the following seems to the twentieth-century reader very simplistic:

She saw before her fair unfurled
 One half of all the glowing world,
 Where oceans rolled, and rivers ran,
 To bound the aims of sinful man.
 She saw a people, fierce and fell,
 Burst frae their bounds like fiends of hell;
 There lilies grew, and the eagle flew,
 And she herked on her ravening crew,
 Till the cities and towers were rapt in a blaze,
 And the thunder it roared o'er the lands and the seas.
 The widows they wailed, and the red blood ran,
 And she threatened an end to the race of man:
 She never lened, nor stood in awe,
 Till claught by the lion's deadly paw.
 Oh! then the eagle swinked for life,
 And brainzelled up a mortal strife;
 But flew she north, or flew she south,
 She met wi' the gowl of the lion's mouth.

(pp. 188-189)

However, it could be argued that the impetus of the passages leading up to this is sufficient to allow us to accept these less fully imagined visions. What cannot be denied is the notable lift in interest when we come to the last of Kilmeny's visions. Her final glimpse into the future takes her forward to the end of the world, presented to us in a sequence of fragmented images:

But she saw till the sorrows of man were bye,
 And all was love and harmony;
 Till the stars of heaven fell calmly away,
 Like the flakes of snaw on a winter day.
(pp. 189-190)

The simplicity of the last two lines nullifies whatever clumsiness there may be in the preceding section.

This vision of the ultimate happiness of mankind is central to the poem, for it is this happiness that Kilmeny has found. John R. Mair, in a discussion of "Kilmeny", has suggested that the key scene comes immediately after, when Kilmeny is shown at her return surrounded by the animals of the countryside rejoicing in companionship with her. Mair suggests that Kilmeny has, during her stay in Heaven, experienced the ultimate truths, and returns perfected, knowing the past and future of her country, to bring order to the land. Having, as Mair puts it, "been in constant communion with Nature, having become truth and infinity, having been shown to be Scottish, and finally being seen in Scotland instilling peace and harmony into the predatory world of wild creatures, Kilmeny becomes the poet's vision of the true spirit of Scotland. She herself becomes an allegorical symbol."²¹ But this is to misread the clear indications of why Kilmeny was removed from Earth. It was not to perfect her, but because she was already perfect. The "meek and reverend fere" who greets her on her arrival tells this quite specifically to the assembled hosts:

"Baith night and day I have watched the fair,
 Eident a thousand years and mair.
 Yes, I have watched o'er ilk degree,
 Wherever blooms femenitye;
 But sinless virgin, free of stain
 In mind and body, fand I mane.
 Never, since the banquet of time,
 Found I a virgin in her prime,
 Till late this bonny maiden I saw
 As spotless as the morning snaw:
 Full twenty years she has lived as free
 As the spirits that sojourn this countrie.
 I have brought her away frae the snares of men,
 That sin or death she never may ken."
 (p. 180)

The company hails her purity because by it "Women are freed of the littand scorn" (p. 180). She returns to Earth no different from when she left it, but by then the reader has learnt the truth that is symbolised by her union with Nature. The scene at her return, with the animals playing around her, has an obvious parallel in the picture of Paradise to be found in Book IV of Milton's Paradise Lost. Hogg presents the scene in purely Scottish terms:

The wild beasts of the forest came,
 Broke from their bughts and faulds the tame,
 And goved around, charmed and amazed;
 Even the dull cattle crooned and gazed,
 And murmured and looked with anxious pain
 For something the mystery to explain.
 The buzzard came with the throstle-cock;
 The corby left her houf in the rock;
 The blackbird alang wi' the eagle flew;
 The hind came tripping o'er the dew;
 The wolf and the kid their raike began,
 And the tod, and the lamb, and the leveret ran;
 The hawk and the hern attour them hung,
 And the merl and the mavis forhooyed their young;
 And all in a peaceful ring were hurled:
 It was like an eve in a sinless world!
 (p. 192)

Milton, in the wider perspective of Paradise, introduces a much greater range of animals:

About them frisking played
 All beasts of the earth, since wild, and of all chase
 In wood or wilderness, forest or den;

Sporting the lion ramped, and in his paw
 Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,
 Gambolled before them, the unwieldy elephant
 To make them mirth used all his might, and wreathed
 His lithe proboscis; close the serpent sly
 Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine
 His braided train, and of his fatal guile
 Gave proof unheeded; others on the grass
 Couched, and now filled with pasture gazing sat,
 Or bedward ruminating.

(Paradise Lost, IV, 340-352)

Despite the obvious differences, the picture of the animals playing contentedly, their natural animosities forgotten, is practically identical in outline. The implication is clear: Kilmeny, as the first sinless woman, can repair the evil done by the first sinful woman, Eve, and restore Paradise to Earth. As Hogg writes at the end of his description, with a possible pun, "It was like an eve in a sinless world". On Kilmeny's return it is as if the world were indeed sinless, as if the Fall had never been. Of course, Kilmeny's purity cannot provide a complete restoration of Paradise: the visions that she has been shown in Heaven make no secret of the turmoil that Scotland and the rest of the world will endure in the days that follow. The world as it exists is far from perfect and cannot hope to contain a Kilmeny:

It wasna her hame, and she couldna remain;
 She left this world of sorrow and pain,
 And returned to the land of thought again.
 (p. 193)

But the last of the visions she saw offered proof that one day the world would follow her example and would be ready to contain a sinless woman. The picture of the time when "the stars of heaven fall calmly away" offers a resolution for the confusions of the world.

"Kilmeny" stands out like a beacon from the work Hogg had produced up to The Queen's Wake. For the first time in his career, Hogg had produced a poem in which a single line of thought runs clearly from

beginning to end. For the first time Hogg had used his skill as a writer to express in verse a story which had implications wider than the effect on the lives of a particular set of characters; for the first time the reader is able to find in a piece of his verse pleasure of a kind higher than the simple delight in hearing a story. "Kilmeny" is, in other words, the first of Hogg's poems in which there is an argument, in which the reader is made to think about what Hogg is saying as much as about the form in which he is saying it. It is scarcely surprising that Hogg, once he had found something he wanted to express, should then have found the appropriate form in which to say it, for the desire to convey the vision he had imagined would override the self-consciousness with which he usually handled formal matters. The consistent line of argument brought with it a consistent vision of the events by which that argument was to be conveyed, and as a result, language, imagery, and structure were all found to be flexible in the effort to give form to the poet's message. Earlier clumsinesses in versification were plainly as much the result of self-conscious concentration on technical matters as of Hogg's personal deficiencies, for when he turns his attention from technique to content, he finds no difficulty in casting his poem in a fluent structure.

What is, however, interesting is the method by which Hogg creates the form by which his vision will be expressed. It is notable that Hogg, having imagined the scene of Kilmeny's return to Earth, chooses to describe it not in terms drawn from his experience of country life but rather by direct reference to the work of a literary predecessor, Milton. But it is also notable that Hogg does not merely lift Milton's description out of its context and insert it into "Kilmeny": in other words, he does not plagiarise Milton. The scene from Paradise Lost is used in an oblique way that expects the reader to recognise the borrowing and to add to the

direct effect of Hogg's own imagination an appreciation of the resonances of the borrowed description. Milton's description of Adam and Eve and the implications of that description have been made a part of Hogg's poem in which they will work to achieve an end very different from their original context. In "Kilmeny" Hogg has arrived at a position of strength in literature where he is able to take over another poet's imaginings and use them in his own writing, without finding his own perceptions being distorted by the ideas of his predecessor.

It is perhaps this more than anything that marks Hogg's advance in "Kilmeny". In earlier poems, Hogg, as we have seen, was repeatedly finding his attitude to the actions and emotions of his characters being distorted by the language in which he expressed them, a language which he had taken over from poetic predecessors. He had not felt confident enough to use that language as his own, without necessarily taking over the attitudes of those who had used it before him. Now, with "Kilmeny", Hogg proved that he could write verse in which he expressed a coherent and relatively original argument by synthesising the metre of Scott, the imagery of ballad and folktale, and the language of a wide variety of sources, folk and literary. Moreover, whereas before when Hogg imitated another source he did so largely in an attempt to form an acceptable verse style, in "Kilmeny", Hogg was not attempting to write like Milton, he was using Milton incidentally in a poem of a very different style. Having found a style in which to write this poem, he neither needed the help of another author in its evolution, nor was he to be distracted from it by contact with that of authors he had read.

Unfortunately, Hogg was not yet capable of writing like this consistently: for the bulk of the volume he was, as so often, merely copying other writers, not using them creatively. Only in "The Witch of

Fife", where he makes use of balladry and earlier Scots poetry, and in "Kilmeny", where he synthesises folk and art literature, does he achieve the desired stability. What is more, he is not even consistently successful in these poems. The weakest section in "Kilmeny", the political visions, may derive its weaknesses from just such a failure to take over a predecessor's vision and use it constructively. Behind the scene where Kilmeny, seated on high, looks down on visions of the future history of her country there seem to lie parallel passages in Milton's Paradise Lost and Spenser's The Faerie Queene. It will be remembered that in the closing books of Milton's epic, the archangel Michael seats Adam on a mountain top and shows him the future history of Israel. In this scene Milton is himself imitating two scenes in The Faerie Queene. Towards the end of Book I of that poem the Redcrosse Knight is taken to the top of the House of Holiness where he is shown the joys of Heaven and an allegorised picture of London. Later, in the second book, Sir Guyon and Prince Arthur are both shown the future history of Britain in the strange library, symbolic of the mind, which is situated at the top of the House of Alma. In all three instances we have the motif of the vision of the future granted the hero on some high place. In addition, in both of the examples from Spenser we have the fact that the history in the vision is presented in symbolic terms rather than by direct description. For example, in the House of Alma sequence, British history is told in terms of the history of Faeryland, with pretty much the same token characterisation that is to be found in "Kilmeny".²² Hogg knew the works of Milton sufficiently well to imitate his style in The Pilgrims of the Sun, published two years after The Queen's Wake, and he was certainly familiar at this time with the Spenserian stanza, for he used it in his next poem, Mador of the Moor. Moreover, it seems not improbable that Scott, whose early admiration for Spenser is acknowledged in the fragment of autobiography included by

Lockhart in his Life of Sir Walter Scott, should have introduced his protege to the words of a writer he would have thought congenial to a visionary poet. However, if Hogg is imitating Milton and Spenser in this passage from The Queen's Wake, it is plain that he has been much less successful in freeing his imagination from the power of the originals and giving the scenes he has borrowed imaginative life in the context of his own work. Perhaps this is because, wishing in this sequence from "Kilmeny" to convey the abstract notion of the continuing conflict in the world even after Kilmeny's triumph, his imagination is much less powerfully stimulated by this rather intellectual idea, with the result that the scene he produces, while fitting into the intellectual argument of the poem, fails to play its part in its emotional movement. Without the impelling vision which is at the back of the rest of the poem, Hogg becomes self-conscious once more and is swamped by the poems from which he is trying to borrow.

His hold on literature is, in other words, still not totally secure, and he must still grapple with the demands of literary creation. This shows in his tendency to be influenced by other authors but it also shows in a continuing failure to meet the demands of a literate audience. In almost all of the volume apart from "The Witch of Fife" and "Kilmeny" he still seems ignorant that poetry consists of more than the surface meaning of words and is still deaf to the resonances which carry implications other than the literal sense. He is still reluctant to go below the surface tricks of style to express the deeper awareness of life which is essential to the production of a poem which expresses a unique viewpoint. Moreover, he has still to write a long poem in which the structure is maintained throughout the length of a volume. Even in the subterfuge he adopts in The Queen's Wake he fails to write satisfactorily for more than a few pages at a time: we are left praising a few poems, not the entire

volume. Hogg's friend John Wilson sensed this when he wrote after the poet's death:

"The Queen's Wake" is a garland of fair forest flowers, bound with a band of rushes from the moor. It is not a poem - not it - nor was it intended to be so; you might as well call a bright bouquet of flowers a flower, which, by the by, we do in Scotland. Some of the ballads are very beautiful; one or two even splendid; most of them spirited; and the worst far better than the best that ever was written by any bard in danger of being a blockhead.²³

Therefore, though "Kilmeny" was the highest point that Hogg had reached in his career, The Queen's Wake as a whole did not afford a basis for future development. Moreover, it probably achieved all that Hogg could expect in his imitation of folk forms: all other attempts to use balladry would now be in danger of merely repeating the style of "Kilmeny". In The Queen's Wake Hogg had come to the end of his poetic apprenticeship but he still had much to learn before he could produce a masterpiece. The volumes of the next few years were all attempts to learn more of his craft.

CHAPTER III

From Mador of the Moor to The Poetic Mirror

As a professional writer, whose only source of income was what accrued from the profits of his books, Hogg could not for long keep from following up the success of The Queen's Wake. By the autumn of 1813, barely six months after the appearance of the volume that had made his name, he had embarked on a new project, with the encouragement of his circle of literary advisers. The publisher of The Queen's Wake, George Goldie, writing in October of that year to another of Hogg's literary acquaintances, Bernard Barton, described the progress of this poem:

At present he is engaged in a descriptive poem in the Spenserian stanza, which I think superior to anything he has ever attempted - his excellent friend Mr. Grieve is also of the opinion that it has discovered more genius than any of his former pieces. He began this poem among the different scenes which it professes to describe and is now extended to above fifty stanzas - Mr. Grieve and I read it along with him a few nights ago, and we intend to do the same tonight with what he has written since, from which I anticipate another treat of no ordinary relish.¹

As we learn from Hogg's Memoir, this descriptive poem was to provide the basis of a new attempt by the poet to write a successful narrative poem, later to be published under the title of Mador of the Moor. By the first day of February the following year the poem was virtually completed, and Hogg, despite the rebuff he had met when preparing his previous volume, again gave Archibald Constable the first offer of publishing it. However, although on this occasion Constable agreed to bring out the new poem, Hogg changed his mind and, in the following July, offered in its place another, slightly shorter poem which he had just written, The Pilgrims of the Sun. Constable was less pleased with this volume with the result that Hogg found himself holding two completed poems without a publisher

for either.

However, by this time Hogg had become associated with a publisher who was to do much more for him than constable ever had. The bankruptcy of George Goldie not long after the appearance of The Queen's Wake had led to Hogg becoming known to the new rising sun of Edinburgh publishing, William Blackwood, who was one of the failed publisher's trustees. Negotiations over Hogg's rights to the unsold copies of his poem, which occupied the closing months of 1814, meant that the two men saw much of each other; at the end of the transaction the poet emerged an accepted member of the growing band of writers published by Blackwood. When, therefore, The Pilgrims of the Sun came out in 1815, followed within twelve months by Mador of the Moor, it came as no surprise to the public that the publisher's name on the title page should have been that of William Blackwood, linked with that of his London colleague, the highly influential John Murray. In the years that followed, Blackwood was to have a powerful influence on the development of Hogg's career; the stormy relationship between author and publisher was to form a background to the creation of all Hogg's subsequent works.

The two poems were greeted by Hogg's contemporaries with no small enthusiasm, The Pilgrims of the Sun meeting with especially high praise. A writer in the New Annual Register thought that there were "but few of the poetical attempts of the year that are more richly imbued with all the genuine qualities of poetry than this work. It is full of imagination, tender, sentimental, animated, and daringly wild and romantic."² The Eclectic Review, which was not noted for the leniency of its reviewing, declared: "We have received so much gratification from the volume before us, that were we to express our opinion of its merits, under the warm impulse of the feelings it awakened, we fear that our praise would be thought partial or inordinate."³ Typical of the reviews of Mador is

one to be found in the British Critic, which continued the series of favourable reviews with which it had greeted Hogg's two previous volumes with an equally approving one of the new poem:

There is a charm in native simplicity which no labour nor affectation can reach. When a coxcomb, either in manners or in poetry, attempts to become, what he terms natural, he may take for granted that he will be vapid, childish, and silly. Art is never less successful than when it attempts to invade the province of nature. We have seen various failures in this branch of poetry among the living authors of the day, we know of but one instance of success, and that is in the poet now before us. There is a native sweetness, a dignified simplicity in all the writings of Hogg, which Burns himself scarce attained. The images of Burns were more tender and affecting, but Burns could not tell a story as Hogg has done. Though but a "shepherd's boy," his language is chaste, clear, and strong. He sometimes rises even unto the sublime, but it is by an even and a gentle motion; and his flight is well sustained and seldom drops into harshness or obscurity.⁴

Admittedly the Monthly Review, which had savagely attacked The Queen's Wake, when faced with Mador produced a withering review:

We know not of one vulgarity or want of convention, or rudeness of versification, or any demerit whatever, in the "Queen's Wake", which does not prominently and transcendently appear in the pages of "Mador of the Moor". We have marked the book through, with indices to various examples of all these vices; and our only difficulty is to do justice to the severity of our censure by exactly appropriate quotations of contemptible passages.⁵

However, despite that dissenting voice, Hogg's contemporaries seem to have thought these two poems worthy successors to The Queen's Wake. Unfortunately, critics writing closer to our own time have been less kindly disposed. Edith Batho, whose biography of Hogg appeared in 1927, expresses her dissatisfaction with Mador:

The descriptive passages are the best, but the story is very poor. Hogg had the ambition, for which it would be unfair to condemn him, of rivalling Scott and Byron, especially Scott, whom he followed in his long poems and stories - though he asserted loudly that he was no imitator - and never, except in one or two ballads, with any good result. There is a hint of Scott in the story of Mador, which is a distorted Lady of the Lake, and of Byron in the verse, the Spenserian stanza, which Hogg learnt from him.⁶

Louis Simpson, in the most recent extended discussion of Hogg's work, finds both volumes guilty of similar faults:

The most apparent fault is the lack of vital form and language.....In Mador of the Moor the Spenserian stanzas move awkwardly, seeming, at best, an imitation. In The Pilgrims of the Sun the poet attempts to vary his technique. The first part is in ballad quatrains; the second, in unrhymed pentameters; the third, in heroic couplets - and so on. Lacking any confidence in his subject, he casts about for mechanical aids.

The two poems, Batho and Simpson would seem to be saying, are not only bad in themselves, they are also derivative. Far from showing the freshness praised by the reviewers, Mador of the Moor and The Pilgrims of the Sun are merely repetitions of the work of Scott and Byron. Hogg's attempts to imitate greater writers have, in the eyes of the modern critics, necessarily made him produce inferior work.

Yet it is perhaps paradoxical that, having condemned Hogg for lack of originality in these two poems, both Batho and Simpson should be united in their praise of the other volume Hogg produced in this period, The Poetic Mirror, which consists of a number of deliberate imitations and parodies of some of Hogg's more illustrious contemporaries. In that collection, which appeared in 1816, Hogg not only imitated the styles of, among others, Scott, Byron, and Wordsworth, but, what is more, made no secret of the fact that these authors were the objects of imitation. Batho and Simpson seem therefore to have rather rigorous views about the freedom an author can allow himself in the repetition of the styles of other poets: on the one hand, unacknowledged imitation is forbidden, on the other self-confessed parody is praised. But it could well be argued that the two opposite sides of the same coin, the condemned technique doing no more than an extension of that which is praised. There seems therefore to be **need for examining** what Hogg thought he was doing before such rigorous standards may be applied since so much seems to hinge

on the author's attitude to the objects of imitation it is only fair to Hogg that we consider what that attitude was, and to what extent his contemporaries, as opposed to the modern reader, would have thought it justifiable. Of course, such an explanation would in no way alleviate the charge that the first two poems are unsuccessful in themselves but it would mean that Hogg was at least not being condemned for a literary crime which was far from his intention. In the process, the modern reader may find that he has to reconsider his ideas of what constitutes originality in a writer's work.

When Hogg first mooted the question of The Poetic Mirror, he did not mean to write a volume of parodies: in fact, his intention was that he should have to write not one word of the collection. Hogg's initial idea had been to publish an anthology of poems by the most notable writers in the country, who, he hoped, would freely supply him with material without expectation of financial return, since it was designed to be solely for his benefit. To establish this "Repository", intended originally to become an annual publication, Hogg made use of the many contacts he had made in his time in Edinburgh; throughout 1814 and 1815 letters were despatched to sound out writers for contributions. In June of 1814 Hogg took the opportunity of beginning a correspondence with Robert Southey that was to continue sporadically throughout his life:

Before I make any request I must explain the meaning of it and I am sorry that it is purely selfish but now that the rage for politics is somewhat subsided and as people who have been used to read must still read something I propose in conjunction with some literary friends to establish a poetical repository in Edinburgh to be continued half-yearly price 5/- [.] One part of it is to consist of original poetry and the remainder to be filled up with short reviews or characters of every poetical work published in the interim. It was not suggested by me but by some other

benevolent gentlemen for my behoof and in order to give it currency at first and if possible render it of some emolument it is earnestly desired to have something either less or more from every great poet in Britain. Scott, Byron, and Wilson have already assented and the latter who is a principal supporter and one of the editors thinks that he will procure Wordsworth and my request to you my dear bard is that you will send us one or two little things for our first number at least if you have anything by you, and if you have not an hour any afternoon will do the business and when an hour of your time once in a half year can be of such sterling value to a poor son of song I expect that you will not refuse it[.]⁸

Byron too was pestered with requests both for contributions and for the use of his influence with John Murray to persuade him to publish the collection, to which, at least at first, he seemed favourable:

I will mention your wishes on the score of collection and publication to Murray - but I have not much weight with him; what I have I will use. As far as my approval of your intention may please you, you have it, and I should think Mr. Scott's liking to your plan very ominous of its success.⁹

However, the scheme, which must have looked so promising in theory, did not survive the realities of the literary world. In the event it was Byron's indolence that prevented the "Repository" appearing in the form Hogg intended. Despite repeated applications from Hogg and Murray, the noble author, who was just about to pass through the emotional crisis which exiled him, never found time to supply the desired poem. The project had already been weakened by Scott's refusal to co-operate until a second volume appeared, and now, the two leading names in contemporary poetry being absent, the volume no longer seemed worth publishing. So Hogg, more than ever in need of the fortune that the volume was intended to make now that he had once more become the tenant of a farm, had to look round for ways to turn this setback to his advantage:

I began, with a heavy heart, to look over the pieces I had received, and lost all hope of the success of my project. They were, indeed, all very well; but I did

not see that they possessed such merit as could give celebrity to any work; and after considering them well, I fancied that I could write a better poem than any that had been sent or would be sent to me, and this so completely in the style of each poet, that it would not be known but for his own production. It was this conceit that suggested to me the idea of "The Poetic Mirror, or Living Bards of Britain." I set to work with great glee, as the fancy had struck me, and in a few days I finished my imitations of Wordsworth and Lord Byron.¹⁰

The resulting volume, in its revised form, appeared in October 1816, its publication shared between the firms of Longman and John Ballantyne.

Hogg may have been prompted to produce such a volume of parodies as The Poetic Mirror by the phenomenal success of a similar collection called Rejected Addresses or the New Theatrum Poetarum, which the brothers Horace and James Smith had published anonymously four years previously. That volume, which contained imitations of the leading poets, among them Wordsworth, Scott, Moore, and Crabbe, purported to reprint the unsuccessful entries for a genuine verse competition which had been held in 1812 to choose a suitable poetic address to celebrate the reopening of the Drury Lane Theatre, the previous building having been destroyed by fire in 1809. The competition had however been cancelled by the committee when no entries of appropriate quality seemed to be forthcoming, and the opening was commemorated in a piece commissioned directly from Lord Byron. The Smiths, imagining the sort of poetry some of the leading literary figures might have submitted, published these supposed rejected entries to coincide with the first night of the new theatre. The volume they produced caused a sensation, running through eighteen editions over the next twenty years and enjoying continued popularity throughout the rest of the century. The volume was in no way a hoax, despite the straight-faced introduction in which the "Editors" pretended that they had managed to lay hands on the actual manuscripts of the poems, and vouched elaborately for their authenticity:

It is not necessary for the Editor to mention the manner in which he became possessed of this "fair sample of the present state of poetry Great Britain." It was his intention to publish the whole; but a little reflection convinced him that, by so doing, he might depress the good, without elevating the bad. He has therefore culled what had the appearance of flowers, from what possessed the reality of weeds, and is extremely sorry that, in so doing, he has diminished his collection to twenty-one.¹¹

However, there could be no doubt in even the most dull reader's mind of the true nature of the poems contained in the volume, for they present such a distorted picture of the styles of the various authors that no one would for a moment fall into the trap of assuming they were genuine. The parodies printed in Rejected Addresses mercilessly expose to mockery the tricks of style, the absurdities of philosophy, and, less fairly, the physical and mental peculiarities of the authors who are imitated. For example, in the inevitable parody of Byron, the two brothers turn to ridicule the extreme pessimism, the world-weariness, and the misanthropy which society had read into the first two cantos of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. "Cui Bono?", as the Smiths call their parody, opens with Byron, who had for the general public become inextricably linked with his persona, posing as an outcast from society, railing against the audience for wasting their time in the theatre:

Sated with home, of wife, of children tired,
 The restless soul is driven abroad to roam;
 Sated abroad, all seen, yet nought admired,
 The restless soul is driven to ramble home;
 Sated with both, beneath new Drury's dome
 The fiend Ennui awhile consents to pine,
 There growls, and curses, like a deadly Gnome,
 Scorning to view fantastic Columbine,
 Viewing with scorn and hate the nonsense of the Nine.¹²

The notorious pessimist holds out little hope for the safety of the audience, reminding them of the far from encouraging fact that the new theatre might burn down just as easily as the old:

This goodly pile, upheaved by Wyatt's toil,
 Perchance than Holland's edifice more fleet,
 Again red Lemnos' artisan may spoil;
 The fire-alarm and midnight drum may beat,
 And all be strewed ysmoking at your feet!
 Start ye? perchance Death's angel may be sent,
 Ere from the flaming temple ye retreat;
 And ye who met, on revel idlesse bent,
 May find, in pleasure's fane, your grave and monument.¹³

This incongruous juxtaposition of the poet's misanthropic gloominess and the joyfulness of the occasion is obviously comic in intention, designed to make Byron and his verse mildly ridiculous in the eyes of the reader by showing how absurd such writing is when applied to a situation closer to the reader's experience than the exotic settings usually adopted by the author. The parody of Byron which the Smiths wrote implies, as do all those contained in Rejected Addresses, a criticism of its pretended author.

Hogg had, of course, also to include in his volume a supposed poem by so popular an author, but his attitude to the works of Byron is very different from that of the Smiths. When Hogg came to write "The Guerilla", the poem with which he opened his collection, his intention was not to point out the absurdities of Byron's style, nor to turn Childe Harold to ridicule. Certainly he adopts certain features of the poet's style in that poem: "The Guerilla" is written in the Spenserian stanza which had become associated with Byron, while its Spanish setting reminds the reader that Spain was the first country visited by Harold on his wanderings. But Hogg's conscious debt to Byron's epic ends there, for the poem he produced is of a very different cast. Instead of the meditations on life of a saturnine philosophical hero, Hogg's imitation tells a melodramatic story of passion and vengeance, touched by moments of pathos. Byron had of course written many such tales by the time Hogg came to imitate him in 1815.

having scored notable successes with such poems as The Giaour (1813), The Corsair (1814), and Lara (1814), which Hogg claimed had been specifically intended for the original Repository. But had Hogg been parodying these he would be unlikely to have written the poem he did, for a would-be imitator of Byron's poetic tales would have chosen a Greek or Turkish setting, and would have written his poem in the octosyllabic couplet Byron invariably uses in such cases. By uniting the form of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage with the subject matter of the tales Hogg shows that he intended something other than nudging the reader into noticing absurdities of style. "The Guerilla" is intended to be a Byronic poem which Byron had not yet got round to writing: it completes Byron's canon by adopting his style to tell a new story in a new setting. The parodist would stand outside Byron's work, eyeing it for flaws and absurdities, but this is not Hogg's intention. He has attempted to steep himself so far in Byron's style that the poem he writes will be indistinguishable from the genuine work of Byron. Rather than employing the jarring incongruities and inconsistencies of parody, Hogg has composed a poem which is, in intention at least, a coherent whole. Certainly, Hogg, like the Smiths, refers to the most obvious and notorious features of the poet's world-view. For example, the outlook of the poem is sceptical about the nobility of life and the good intentions of mankind:

Millions have bled that sycophants may rule,
 Have fallen to dust and left no trace behind;
 And yet we say that Heaven is merciful,
 And loves and cares for all the human kind;
 And we will spread our hands and mouthe the wind
 With fulsome thanks for all its tenderness.
 Ah me! that man, preposterously blind,
 Should feel, hear, see, reflect, yet not the less,¹⁴
 Hope in his hopeless state of abject nothingness!

"The Guerilla" also betrays that yearning for the unattainable that characterises Harold on his pilgrimage:

The common woes that human kind belay,
 May by the pen or language be defined;
 The sigh may tell of them, the tear betray,
 Like these, away they pass upon the wind:
 But that insatiate yearning of the mind
 Still preying, hungering, craving still to prey,
 Doom'd never bourn or resting-place to find;
 O that must torture, undivulged for aye!
 Save in the soul's still voice, the eye's perturbed ray.
 (p. 19)

But such views are not meant to be contradicted by the poem, even though they are far from being the views that Hogg himself expresses throughout the rest of his writings. The poem is not critical of Byron, nor is it attempting to be humorous at his expense, despite Louis Simpson's jibe that "to think the tale serious, one would have to lack a sense of humour". In "The Guerilla" Hogg sought to write a poem in which, for the time being, his views were identical to Byron's, and the final effect is designed to be similar to a poem by that author. The reader is meant to find the death of its heroine a sentimentally affecting climax to a tragedy:

With gloomy mien and unrelenting heart,
 O'er her he hung and watch'd her life's decay;
 He mark'd the pulse's last convulsive start,
 And the sweet breath in fetches waste away.
 Just ere the last these words she did assay:
 "Now all is past - unblameable I die."
 Then her pale lips did close no more for aye,
 A dim blue haze set slowly o'er her eye,
 And low on purpled couch that mountain flower did lie.
 (p. 12)

This is not to say that "The Guerilla" succeeds completely in its aims. The lofty style necessary for such narratives easily turns bombastic in Hogg's hands, and he finds it difficult to sustain the required pessimistic tone, with the result that the deaths degenerate into picturesque sentimentality. The poem seems voyeuristic in its attitude to suffering,

betraying Hogg's lack of belief in the subject he has chosen. But, such judgements set aside, it is plain that Hogg is here attempting not a parody of Byron's style, such as is found in Rejected Addresses, where Byron's poems are distorted for humorous effect, but an imitation of it, where an effect similar to that of the original is intended.

"The Guerilla" is not the only poem in Hogg's collection which attempts to imitate rather than parody the author to whom it is assigned in the Contents. The first of the two poems supposedly written by Scott which are contained in The Poetic Mirror, "Epistle to R. S****", is a perfectly serious imitation of the style in which are composed the introductions to each canto of Marmion, written, in point of fact, not by Hogg but by his friend Thomas Pringle, who, together with James Cleghorn, was to be the editor of the forerunner of Blackwood's Magazine. The style of this poetic epistle is not particularly characteristic but, it could well be argued, neither is Scott's style in Marmion. Both Pringle and Scott write a perfectly correct form of verse, in a diction which carries over many of the features of Augustan poetry, while describing scenery and manners more appropriate to Scottish rural life. Pringle, no matter how easy he found the task, has produced a poem which makes its slight impact not by reference to previously written work but by its own success in a style adopted from that work. No more a parody of Scott is the other poem that bears his name. While "Wat o' the Cleuch", written by Hogg, is certainly comic, it does not obtain its humour by belittling Scott's heroic world or by mocking its conventions: the comedy arises from the activities of an uncourtly hero within the chivalric world, a warrior of immense strength and limited intelligence whose feats amuse us not because they deflate heroic writing but from their own inherent absurdity. In a similar way, Hogg's

self-parody, "The Gude Greye Katt", is not meant to produce a laugh at the poet's expense but is an attempt to repeat the success of "The Witch of Fife" by telling, in a similar archaic diction, a similar story of wild supernatural flight and rumbustious action. If the poem fails to achieve the neatness of construction of its predecessor, and seems unnecessarily protracted in consequence, the adventures of the supernatural cat have both pace and imagination enough to arouse in the reader some part of the same pleasure. Further examples of this type of imitation can be found in two of the three versions of the style of Hogg's associate John Wilson, the minor poet who was to rise to great influence as the "Christopher North" of Blackwood's and, in another sphere, as Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Edinburgh. Their success in repeating that writer's style is hardly surprising if, as was asserted in Hogg's lifetime, they were actually written by Wilson himself. "Hymn to the Moon" and "The Stranded Ship" do manage to suggest Wilson's style by a similar use of the weakly emotive epithets and sentimental description which are its most prominent features, but it is a manner that came only too readily to both Wilson and Hogg. However, in none of these instances are Hogg and his associates giving a distorted picture of the authors involved, while equally in none of them are specific passages from an author's work behind the imitations. In each, the writer has attempted to take over the appropriate style and treat subjects to which its owner has not yet turned.

The volume does certainly contain parodies of the more usual kind, intentionally humorous poems which amuse the reader by making an author's style appear ridiculous, usually by applying it, as the Smith brothers did that of Byron, to a context for which it is ludicrously unfitted. In such instances Hogg follows the custom of parodists throughout the

ages by taking his author's actual words and, by reapplying them to a different subject, creating a result the opposite of the author's intention. The other imitation of Wilson, "The Morning Star", applies the description of the rapturous lovers sailing in the Indian Ocean which opens Wilson's Isle of Palms, with all its resounding rhetoric, to a picture of a collier and his woman aboard the Alloa coal steamer. Similarly, a supposed poem by Southey, "The Curse of the Laureate: Carmen Judiciale", which echoes the titles of two of Southey's successes, The Curse of Kehama (1810) and Carmen Nuptiale (1816), makes ridiculous use of a passage from the first of these in its central section. Admittedly, as indeed in the Wilson parody, Hogg is not really attacking the poet's style but merely teasing a man for whom, as we have seen earlier, he had a great respect and affection. In fact, the object of ridicule in "The Curse of the Laureate" is not so much Southey himself but his principal critic, Francis Jeffrey of the Edinburgh Review. Jeffrey is described as a fiend who attacks the Laureate's numerous offspring, in other words the works which poured from his over-fertile pen, as each appears, until Southey is prompted by a divine spirit to impose on the offender a fearful curse, in which are echoed the metre and often the very words of the curse, famous in Hogg's day, that the villainous Kehama puts on Ladurlad, the hero of Southey's poem. The joke is therefore not on Southey but on Jeffrey, who, to the young Tories who clustered round Blackwood, was the symbol of all the evils of Whiggery. Southey, who had long since abandoned his former radical sympathies, had once written to Hogg expressing all his dislike of his critic:

When I take him in hand it shall be to dissect him
 alive, & make a preparation of him to be exhibited
in terrorem, an example to all future pretenders to critic-
 ism. He has a forehead of native brass, - & I will write
 upon it with aqua-fortis. I will serve him up to the
 public like a Turkey's gizzard, sliced, scored, pepperd,
 salted, kiaun'd, grilled and bedevilled. I will bring him

to justice: he shall be executed in prose, & gibbeted in verse, & the Lord have mercy on his soul!¹⁵

Hogg was merely going a little way in assisting Southey in his projected revenge. More cruel than these two genial parodies is "Isabelle" in which the more idiosyncratic mannerisms of Coleridge's "Christabel" are made to appear absurd nonsense by shrewd distortion:

Why does the Lady Isabelle
 Sit in the damp and dewy dell
 Counting the racks of drizzly rain,
 And how often the Rail cries over again?
 For she's harping, harping in the brake,
 Craik, craik - Craik, craik.
 Ten times nine, and thrice eleven;-
 That last call was an hundred and seven.
 Craik, craik - the hour is near -
 Let it come, I have no fear!
 Yet it is a dreadful work, I wis,
 Such doings in a night like this!

(p. 216)

The most famous, as well as the most personal, of the parodies in The Poetic Mirror are the three in which Hogg, with malicious accuracy, assists Wordsworth by contributing three more passages for the projected Recluse. "Isabelle" makes only Coleridge's poetry seem ridiculous; the Wordsworth parodies have as their target not only Wordsworth the poet but also Wordsworth the man. In part, this merely follows the fashion which had made Wordsworth the acknowledged butt of all literary satirists. But Hogg's satire was given an added edge by a supposed insult he had received from the Lake Poet, whom he had first met in 1814 and had later visited in his native district. As Hogg tells the story in his Memoir, Wordsworth had one evening led a party consisting of his sister Dorothy, Wilson, Charles Lloyd, De Quincey, and Hogg to see the aurora borealis:

Miss Wordsworth's arm was in mine, and she was expressing some fears that the splendid stranger might prove ominous, when I, by ill luck, blundered out the

following remark, thinking that I was saying a good thing: - "Hout, me'm! it is neither mair nor less than joost a treeumphal airch, raised in honour of the meeting of the poets."

"That's not amiss. - Eh? Eh? - that's very good," said the Professor, laughing. But Wordsworth, who had De Quincey's arm, gave a grunt, and turned on his heel, and leading the little opium-chewer aside, he addressed him in these disdainful and venomous words: - "Poets? Poets? - What does the fellow mean? - Where are they?"

Who could forgive this? For my part, I never can, and never will! I admire Wordsworth; as who does not, whatever they pretend? but for that short sentence I have a lingering ill-will at him which I cannot get rid of. It is surely presumption in any man to circumscribe all human excellence within the narrow sphere of his own capacity. The "Where are they?" was too bad! I have always some hopes that De Quincey was leeing, for I did not myself hear Wordsworth utter the words.¹⁶

Hogg, who was touchy about his literary achievements, would not readily forget such a rebuff, and it is hardly surprising that he should have found difficulty in imitating Wordsworth's style without turning it to ridicule. The supposed Wordsworth poems, unlike the rest of the collection, where the effect intended is either perfectly serious or at worst genially humorous, are designed to humiliate the author being imitated. The obvious vehicle for a satire of Wordsworth was The Excursion, for, ever since its appearance in 1814, that poem had been generally agreed to be the most ridiculous of all the poet's works, the product of all his egotism and lack of taste. Hogg says of his first meeting with Wordsworth that he was "overjoyed, for I admired many of his pieces exceedingly, though I had not then seen his ponderous 'Excursion'".¹⁷ It is this quality of ponderousness, applied to subjects which Hogg and his friends considered unpoetic, that is satirised in the three parodies - "The Stranger", "The Flying Tailor", and "James Rigg".

Yet even here Hogg constructs his humorous picture of Wordsworth's style not by copying a piece of his verse but by writing new verse of

his own. The three Wordsworth poems at no point imitate particular phrases from The Excursion; in fact, they do not even introduce the principal characters of that poem. Instead of writing a parody of that kind, Hogg creates what is virtually a series of dramatic monologues for a Wordsworth figure, which draw their resemblance to Wordsworth's poetry from similarities of style and diction, as well as from a repetition of the poetic failings for which Wordsworth was usually condemned. What makes Hogg's parodies of Wordsworth so effective is that he has not relied on merely introducing inconsistencies into a piece of genuine Wordsworth but has created three poems in which the very inconsistencies are consistent, in which the mistakes and banalities are introduced in such a way that the three poems read together form a portrait of a character who is not Wordsworth but is a fully imagined distortion of him. One could say that instead of writing a parody of Wordsworth's verse, Hogg has formed in his mind the idea of a parody Wordsworth, and written verse characteristic of him. By so doing, Hogg can include in his parodies both good and bad writing, and can, without mocking the subjects of which he treats, mock the author. "The Flying Tailor", for example, opens with perfect solemnity, describing the churchyard in which the tailor lies buried with no trace of a smile, and expecting no humorous response from the reader, although perhaps Hogg is suggesting what were seen as absurdities in Wordsworth's style in the prosaic details of measurement and precise location:

If ever chance or choice they footsteps lead
 Into that green and flowery burial-ground
 That compasseth with green and mournful smiles
 The church of Grassmere, - by the eastern gate
 Enter - and underneath a stunted yew,
 Some three yards distant from the gravel-walk,
 On the left-hand side, thou wilt espy a grave,
 With unelaborate head-stone beautified,
 Conspicuous 'mid the other stoneless heaps
 'Neath which the children of the valley lie.
 There pause - and with no common feelings read
 This short inscription - "Here lies buried
 The Flying Tailor, aged twenty-nine!"

(p. 155-156)

However, the bluntness of the epitaph at the end of this breaks the mood of seriousness, a lapse into bathos that many of Hogg's contemporaries thought typical of Wordsworth. This sudden use of bathos, a method basic to Hogg's parodies of Wordsworth, suggests that he thought Wordsworth, rather than being an intrinsically ridiculous poet, was instead a good poet flawed by failings of taste. Hogg can therefore at one and the same time arouse awe from serious description and laughter from the descent into absurdity:

More had I said, resuming the discourse
 Of subterraneous magazines of bones,
 The faint reflections of infinitude,
 The moon and the unvoyagable sky,
 And all the high observances of things,
 But that, chancing again to turn my eyes
 Toward the bosom of that peaceful mere,
 I saw a form so ominous approach
 My heart was chill'd with horror - through the wave
 Slowly it came - by heaven I saw it move
 Toward the grizzly skeleton! - Its shape
 Was like a coffin, and its colour such,
 Black as the death-pall or the cloud of night!
 At sight of such a hideous messenger,
 Thus journeying through the bowels of the deep,
 O'er sluggish leaf and unelaborate stone,
 All Nature stood in mute astonishment,
 As if her pulse lay still - onward it came,
 And hovering o'er the bones, it linger'd there
 In a most holy and impressive guise.
 I saw it shake its hideous form, and move
 Towards my feet - the elements were hush'd,
 The birds forsook their singing, for the sight
 Was fraught with wonder and astonishment.
 It was a tadpole - somewhere by itself
 The creature had been left, and there had come
 Most timeously, by Providence sent forth,
 To close this solemn and momentous tale.

(pp. 152-153)

The Wordsworth whom Hogg has imagined has other faults besides his tendency to bathos. He is, for example, inclined to employ the most grandiose diction to describe the most mundane things:

The steed was all impatience - high his head,
 And higher still his ears were rear'd aloft;
 For his full eye (nigh blinded by a shade
 Of stubborn leather - a half round it was,
 In shape like to the holy moon, when she
 Glides o'er the midnight heaven on silent foot,
 When half her course and some few stages more
 Already has been run) that eye was fix'd
 On a huge stone, that on the mountain lay
 Like dome of eastern temple, or the mosque
 Where pagans worship.

(pp. 138-139)

He is ever ready to philosophise in vague terms on any subject which floats into his mind:

The horse went round
 Most unrespective, and, not satisfied
 with whisking his dark tail in furious guise
 He broke on all propriety, with snort
 Like blustering cannon, or the noise that bursts
 From heaven in thunder through the summer rain.
 The boy was stunn'd - for on similitude,
 In dissimilitude man's sole delight,
 And all the sexual intercourse of things
 Do most supremely hang.

(p. 142)

He also discovers philosophical implications in objects which seem to ordinary men matter of fact:

A pair
 Of breeches to his philosophic eye
 Were not what unto other folks they seem,
 Mere simple breeches, but in them he saw
 The symbol of the soul - mysterious, high
 Hieroglyphics! such as Egypt's Priest
 Adored upon the holy Pyramid,
 Vainly imagined tomb of monarchs old,
 But raised by wise philosophy, that sought
 By darkness to illumine, and to spread
 Knowledge by dim concealment - process high
 Of man's imaginative, deathless soul.

(pp. 168-169)

When not dwelling on the heights of verbiage and philosophy, Hogg's Wordsworth is obsessed with trivia which, contrary to standard poetical practice, he then describes in everyday language:

On Tuesday morn, at half-past six o'clock,
 I rose and dress'd myself, and having shut
 The door o' the bed-room still and leisurely,
 I walk'd down stairs.

(p. 171)

He is moreover a man of many personal failings. He is envious; in "The Stranger" he is shown making snide comments about the poets who are with him in a way that betrays Hogg's sensitivity to the supposed insult:

It boots not here to tell all that was said.
 The Laureate, sighing, utter'd some few words
 Of most sublime and solemm tendency.
 The Shepherd spoke most incoherent stuff
 About the bones of sheep, that on the hills
 Perish unseen, holding their stations so.
 And he, the tented Angler of the lakes,
Alias the Man of Palms, said nothing meet.
 He was o'ercome with feeling, - it is known
 To many, and not quite to me unknown,
 That the youth's heart is better than his head.

(pp. 148-149)

He is also proud and egotistical, as must have seemed in those days any poet who intended to devote an entire epic poem to a description of his own intellectual development:

But sure his bounds across the village green
 Seem'd to my soul - (my soul for ever bright
 With purest beams of sacred poesy)
 Like bounds of red-deer on the Highland hill.

(p. 158)

For mark my words, - eternally my name
 Shall last on earth, conspicuous like a star
 'Mid that bright galaxy of favour'd spirits,
 Who, laugh'd at constantlywhene'er they publish'd,
 Survived the impotent scorn of base Reviews,
 Monthly, or Quarterly, or that accursed
 Journal, the Edinburgh Review, that lives
 On tears, and sighs, and groans, and brains, and blood.

(p. 170)

To compound these deficiencies, he is mentally obtuse, prepared to ignore the obvious for the recondite, and to treat with awe the philosophical

implications of the words of a poor man, while paying no attention to the man's obvious sufferings. The hero of "James Rigg" is a peasant who has been blinded in an accident. "Wordsworth", in a parody of the sort of cross-examinations we find in "We are Seven" and "Resolution and Independence", learns Rigg's genuinely tragic story but, instead of assisting the man, treats him to a long philosophical monologue which is inevitably met with blank incomprehension. Edith Batho finds the poem distasteful, thinking Hogg's jesting at the infirmities of a blind man shows a coarseness of sympathy. At no point, however, is Rigg a subject of mockery: the poem's true target is the disproportionate interpretation Wordsworth puts on the man's experiences and the poet's Quixotic failure to realise them for what they really are. Rigg himself is a rather dignified figure; when, later, Hogg must deal with Rigg's pathetic reaction to his loss of sight, he does not try to provoke laughter, but writes with tragic simplicity, in a style which shows how greatly he was aware of some of the true quality of Wordsworth's verse:

There, hapless man,
 He moved his lips, as if he inly pray'd,
 And clasp'd his hands and raised his sightless face
 Unto the smiling sun, who walk'd through heaven,
 Regardless of that fatal accident,
 By which a man was suddenly reduced
 From an unusual clear long-sightedness
 To utter blindness - blindness without hope,
 So wholly were the visual nerves destroyed.
 "I wish I were at home!" he slowly said,
 "For though I ne'er must see that home again,
 "I yet may hear it, and a thousand sounds
 "Are there to gladden a poor blind man's heart."
 (pp. 182-183)

Even when, as in these parodies of Wordsworth, Hogg is doing his utmost to ridicule the author, he is, in The Poetic Mirror, not content merely to copy or repeat but must create something new. Whether he is writing a new poem in the style of an existing author, or, in the

Wordsworth imitations, inventing what is virtually the work of a new author, Hogg takes over the style he has found and uses it as if it were his own. The style he has found elsewhere is used to create genuine, first-hand emotion in the reader. Our age, for whom the poet's ability to create a new plot, style, and language in each of his works is one of the primary criteria of judgement, will be inclined to set a low value on what Hogg has done in this volume, and to prize it at best as a literary sport, a momentary detour in the clear line of the poet's development. But this is not necessarily how it would have been viewed by Hogg's contemporaries, whose ideas of what constituted originality were very different from those of the present day. George Watson has well described the attitude of one poet who was active at the time Hogg was writing, Samuel Taylor Coleridge:

Like most European poets before him, Coleridge took it for granted that art imitates art as well as the world around itself, and that what it tells us about may be, as much as anything, the nature of itself. I do not deny that this is a view of poetry which, however traditional, demands more patience than every modern reader is able to bring. It certainly offers no ready certainties, least of all about the question "how to live". It is a view only a professional can plausibly offer, and one that only those interested in the craftsmanship of poetry can readily accept. And, when it speaks of literary "imitation", it risks confusion with the Aristotelian doctrine of mimesis, with which it has nothing whatever to do.¹⁸

Coleridge, in other words, allowed the description "original" to be granted to a poem even if the terms in which it spoke were taken from another writer. By this, he did not imply a mere copy, but reserved the highest praise for an imitation in which similarities were combined with points at which poem and imitation contrasted, so that a new compound was formed:

In this view the business of the poet is not to copy but, at the highest, to contrast, to set off a poetic manner by using a model for a purpose which is not traditional

but in which the traditional purpose yet remains apparent - as the "Ancient Mariner", for example, continues to fulfil some of the functions of a medieval ballad and yet seems all the more modern for that reason.¹⁹

Such poems are not parodies for they do not distort, they are literary imitations, written in conscious awareness of the literary tradition. As Watson shows, Coleridge was in no way unique for his time. Most poets, at least at the start of their careers, wrote imitations of earlier authors, usually selecting for the purpose the classics of Greece and Rome; the imitation of classical satire, attempting to find contemporary equivalents for the original targets, had become an established literary kind during the eighteenth century, and had provided a starting point for many of the Romantics. Most of the poets went on from this to evolve a style personal to themselves but several, Keats and Byron especially, to the very end of their lives made considerable use of earlier authors. Keats never ceased to imitate Spenser, while Byron drew extensively on Pulci and other Italian satirists in the writing of Don Juan, his principal contribution to literature in the last years of his career.

The distinction between parody and imitation was clearly understood by the critics who reviewed The Poetic Mirror, though they found it difficult to agree under which category the volume should be classed. The anonymous reviewer in the Critical Review divided the volume into imitations, among which he included those of Scott and Hogg, and parodies, such as those of Wordsworth and Coleridge.²⁰ John Wilson Croker, who reviewed the book for the Quarterly, thought that the author had intended to produce parodies but had instead produced imitations:

What Mathews is to Mr Kemble, the Rejected Addresses were to Southey and Scott, very like and very laughable; but the author now before us is the grave and not at all laughable imitator. This we say rather in reference to the

effect which he produces, than that which he is desirous of producing; for it is evident that he intends to be merry, and will be disappointed at being told that he is like without being ludicrous.²¹

But he was prepared to admit that "Wat o' the Cleuch" seemed to be of a different type, so much so that he suspected Scott himself of having written it:

This poem never could have been intended for a pleasantry on Mr Scott's style - it is an imitation in good earnest; and though it wants ease, and is written apparently in great haste, and though the author makes too frequent forays into Mr Scott's borders, the resemblance is lively, and the poem has that degree of merit that a very careless sketch of Mr Scott's might have had.....

We really cannot help suspecting that, though some of the subsequent articles are evidently factitious, Wat o' the Cleuch may be the real offspring of the prolific, though imperfect, and sometimes hasty pen of Mr Scott himself; how it has got into the hands of the publisher we cannot divine, and we speak with unfeigned sincerity when we say we have no other ground for our suspicion than the internal evidence.²²

The reviewer in the Eclectic classed the book as the work of a "serious parodist".²³ In other words, the bulk of the reviews saw clearly that what they were reading was quite different from Rejected Addresses, and possessed a critical vocabulary with which to discuss the difference. Moreover, when they criticise The Poetic Mirror adversely, it is not because it contains serious imitations, but purely because they feel that the examples of the form which the author has produced are unsatisfactory. The critics fully accepted that an author could write a poem in the style of a contemporary and produce an original work of literature; the question was solely how well he had performed the task.

Such a judgement could not be more alien to the reader of the present day. The poetic tradition that has arisen in the years following the great Romantic writers - Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats - has allotted the highest status to the poem which comes directly from the experience

of its creator. The true poetic subject in the eyes of both poets and their readers has become the mind of the poet himself, and for the presentation of his theme the poet is expected to evolve his own forms of expression. As a result of this attitude to poetry, the poet has come to consider borrowing from another writer, or conscious imitation, as necessarily resulting in the falsification of an insight which is possessed by himself alone. The American critic, Harold Bloom, in his recent book The Anxiety of Influence, has expressed the post-Romantic poet's struggle against literary influence in terms of an Oedipal conflict between predecessor and successor, or "ephebe" as he terms the later poet. Bloom describes the aim of the poets of our time as a desire for "personal, and self-achieved, immortality".²⁴ Such a desire is thwarted if the poet feels that all his creative power comes from a predecessor. The poet's career is therefore a continuing struggle to deny the patently obvious fact that he is, in his writing, influenced by what he has read; the resulting anxieties can have a crucial effect on the development of the poet's style, as he attempts to avoid the charge of imitation, and, in all but the most "strong" poets (the description Bloom applies to those poets who can use the predecessor's influence without finding themselves merely copying him), the struggle may result in the destruction of poetic individuality. The values that this induces in the poet are necessarily transferred to the reader; inevitably they form part of the attitude of every reader of our time, either consciously or unconsciously, so that it is impossible not to judge literature according to them. But there was, as Bloom acknowledges, a time when poetic imitation was a legitimate activity, when a poet could, without any anxiety, accept his debt to a predecessor without feeling his originality threatened.²⁵ Hogg could not in any sense be descri-

bed as one of the great strong poets; it would be clearly absurd to class him with major writers such as Yeats, Browning, or Pound. It is plain from the spontaneity with which he writes his imitations that he was free from the latterday feelings of guilt, in other words, that he was part of the more innocent age of poetry. If we are to do justice to his imitations we must read them with a similar innocence.

The dangers that lie open for the critic who fails to do so are nowhere more obvious than in the treatment meted out by Edith Batho and Louis Simpson to a collection of songs which Hogg prepared for publication in 1822. For these songs, he had taken as his model some of those contained in Thomas Moore's famous collection of Irish Melodies, instalments of which appeared at intervals throughout the years between 1807 and 1835. However, Hogg had rewritten these songs so that their effect was completely different, with the result that Moore's publishers, Longman and Company, became jealous for their property and brought pressure to bear on the Scots poet to cancel them. Hogg, who was the more vulnerable to the influence of Longman and his partners because they had shown themselves prepared to publish his work, submitted to their request, but, when the fuss had abated, published his versions in his collected Songs of 1831, adding appropriately bitter comments on what he saw as his ill-usage. It seems to have been a quarrel entirely between Hogg and the publishers: Moore never offered a poet's verdict on the affair. Miss Batho takes Longman's side and portrays Hogg's conduct in a rather bad light; the only explanation for his actions she can offer is that the whole business was "an unsuccessful joke".²⁶ Louis Simpson is less severe on the poet, and cautions the modern reader "that literary practices were a great deal looser in Hogg's day than they are now".²⁷ Simpson is correct in

suggesting that Hogg should be judged by standards other than those of the present day, but to call such standards "looser" is to associate a moral rectitude with the present attitude to imitation which scarcely does justice to the earlier time. Hogg was not merely a plagiarist writing in an age when plagiary was standard practice, he was, as his later comments on these songs acknowledge, attempting to create something new out of Moore's originals. Hogg describes his version of Moore's most famous song, "The Minstrel Boy", as a "per contra" to the original: we can see what he meant by that phrase if we set the two versions of the poem together. Moore's version, as everyone must know from their schooldays, goes as follows:

The Minstrel Boy to the war is gone,
 In the ranks of death you'll find him;
 His father's sword he has girded on,
 And his wild harp slung behind him. -
 "Land of song!" said the warrior bard,
 "Though all the world betrays thee,
 "One sword, at least, thy rights shall guard,
 "One faithful harp shall praise thee!"

The Minstrel fell! - but the foeman's chain
 Could not bring his proud soul under;
 The harp he lov'd ne'er spoke again,
 For he tore its chords asunder;
 And said, "No chains shall sully thee,
 "Thou soul of love and bravery!
 "Thy songs were made for the pure and free,
 "They shall never sound in slavery."²⁸

Even by the end of the first line, Hogg's poem is directed in quite the opposite direction:

The Minstrel Boy to the glen is gone,
 In its deepest dells you'll find him,
 Where echoes sing to his music's tone,
 And fairies listen behind him.
 He sings of nature all in her prime,
 Of sweets that around him hover,
 Of mountain heath and moorland thyme,
 And trifles that tell the lover.

How wildly sweet is the minstrel's lay,
 Through cliffs and wild woods ringing,

For, ah! there is love to beacon his way,
 And hope in the song he's singing!
 The bard may indite, and the minstrel sing,
 And maidens may chorus it rarely;
 But unless there be love in the heart within,
 The ditty will charm but sparely.²⁹

Hogg's song, it will be seen, leaves Moore's at an early stage and follows a consistent path of its own. A reader who was familiar with Moore's original, and it would have been difficult at the time Hogg was writing to find one who did not know the Irish Melodies, would have had no doubt that Hogg's pacific minstrel was meant as a conscious criticism of the call to martial glory in the other version. Of course, that is not to say that Moore's "Minstrel Boy" was rendered laughable by Hogg's counter-argument; the end result is perfectly serious and allows validity to both points of view. The two poems are intended to be read as opposite sides of a debate.

This aim, the criticism of Moore's songs by inverting them, is for the most part followed consistently throughout the group of songs, though the results are variable. Hogg describes "The Maid of the Sea" as "one of the many songs which Moore caused me to cancel, for nothing that I know of, but because they ran counter to his. It is quite natural and reasonable that an author should claim a copyright of a sentiment; but it never struck me that it could be so exclusively his, as that another had not a right to contradict it."³⁰ Unfortunately, the resulting song is perhaps the least successful in the group, for it is merely a contradiction of what Moore had written, saying "Come from the sea" where Moore's version has "Come o'er the sea" and leading Hogg into the nonsense of being in love with a mermaid. However, "Go home to your rest", in which a girl refuses the invitation to an evening walk offered by the young man in Moore's song, is a successful light and cynical love song, which takes its place in a tradition dating back to Raleigh's mocking reply to Marlowe's "Passionate Shepherd to his Love". The other songs Hogg composed are

equally successful in their debate with Moore. These songs may not be particularly important and do not offer any startling insights, but they are often amusing and neatly expressed; at no time do they show any constraint on their author's imagination coming from the activity of imitation. Certainly the reaction of Moore's publishers to them bears out Watson's point that the idea of conscious literary imitation even as early as the 1820s was no longer as acceptable as it once had been. But it seems that for Hogg at any rate the earlier attitude persisted.

It is, I would suggest, by standards appropriate to that attitude rather than by modern opinions of originality that The Poetic Mirror should be considered. The poems it contains are unashamedly intended to be included among Hogg's works and judged as a fresh contribution to literature while making use of pre-existing material. The readers are expected to recognise the book as a product of one mind and to praise or blame the success its author has had in echoing styles. Although published anonymously, The Poetic Mirror makes little attempt to disguise the nature of its authorship. The author's identity was anyhow an open secret; on the first publication of the volume, John Ballantyne wrote to its author:

Your volume is out, and the truth denied stoutly
by James and I, when questioned regarding the author...

Too many people (deny how we will) guess truly:
the success of this work will bring Murray & Blackwood
to your feet, and your terms will then be acceded to,
as prescribed by your own judgement, without being
qualified by their opinion, or views of individual
profit.³¹

Admittedly, critics more remote from the Edinburgh literary scene were led into error: Croker, in the Quarterly, who had heard of the original scheme for the Repository, thought that the poems were the result of a joke played on an unsuspecting Hogg. But the Scots Magazine was able to hint broadly at its knowledge of the authorship of the work:

The author, whoever he be, appears to us to have studied and admired very particularly the poetry of Mr Hogg; for whomsoever he attempts and professes to imitate, he slides always naturally into the style of the bard of Ettrick. In many cases, however, it is the best style of that meritorious bard; so that if the author of this volume cannot be much extolled in the humbled character of an imitator, his merit, in the higher capacity of an original poet, is frequently of no ordinary cast.³²

Even those who were not in the secret could not fail to realise from the title page that the poems were spurious. Hogg uses as epigraph to the book a quotation from The Winter's Tale:

Is it true think you?

Very true, and but a month old.

But the apparent innocence of that epigraph is undercut for most readers by a recollection of its context in the play, which would hardly give one confidence in the authenticity of the poems:

Clown What hast here? Ballads?

Mopsa Pray now, buy some. I love a ballad in print a-life, for then we are sure they are true.

Autolycus Here's one to a very doleful tune, how a usurer's wife was brought to bed of twenty money-bags at a burden, and how she longed to eat adder's heads and toads carbonadoed.

Mopsa Is it true, think you?

Autolycus Very true, and but a month old.³³

A contemporary of Hogg's, realising that this was a volume of imitations, and probably being fully aware of its author's identity, would not have expected the author to have created his own style and material but would be looking for as accurate as possible a continuation of the works being imitated:

That contemporary reader would, in addition, not have required the imitations to be amusing. The bulk of the imitations in The Poetic Mirror

are, as we have seen, perfectly serious. In fact, it could be said that the book, where it is most acceptable to modern audiences, has most failed to carry out its intentions. The modern reader is quite prepared to praise a parody, acknowledging it as a legitimate form of light verse, and is consequently ready to give due credit to the success of the three imitations of Wordsworth the volume contains. But it must be remembered that these imitations are the least typical in the collection. It may well be that Hogg's original conception was to write as serious an imitation of Wordsworth as he had done of the other poets in The Poetic Mirror, but his personal prejudice, allied to the prevailing literary climate, perverted that intention so that the resulting imitation is distorted into comedy. That may seem to our day a more genuinely creative achievement than the close imitation of another writer, but this should not blind us to the fact that Hogg's intention is perhaps to be found more fully realised in poems like "Wat o' the Cleuch" and the imitations of Wilson where the reader may well be left in doubt as to whether the poem is not, indeed, genuine.

However, once Hogg's intention in The Poetic Mirror is allowed to be justifiable, it becomes necessary to reconsider one's attitude to the two poems written immediately prior to it, Mador of the Moor and The Pilgrims of the Sun. In the light of what has been shown concerning The Poetic Mirror, it must be decided whether these two poems, which, as was said earlier, have been accused of following too closely on the example of earlier writers, are indeed guilty of that literary crime or whether they do not rather have behind them an intention similar to that of The Poetic Mirror. It would be pointless to deny their indebtedness to the works of other writers, but it is necessary to stress that Hogg makes little secret of this. The Pilgrims of the Sun acknowledges its sources quite explicitly, while Mador of the Moor chooses a model of which no

reader would have been ignorant. In other words, Hogg was either attempting, in an extremely naive manner, to impose on his readership, or else, surely a more likely hypothesis, he was expecting his poems to be read in a way that would take account of similarities. Once that has been accepted it may be possible to judge these poems on their own terms, without being misled by suspicions of Hogg's literary dishonesty.

Mador of the Moor, the Advertisement to the volume claims, "is partly founded on an incident recorded in the Scottish annals of the 14th Century".³⁴ While that statement is the literal truth, it might be thought that Hogg is, for all that, being less than candid. Certainly the story of the Stuart king who moves among his subjects disguised as a beggar has been a favourite tradition among the Scottish people, a tradition which can moreover be matched by similar tales told of their kings by the folk of many other nations. But for most literate people the plot of Mador of the Moor would call to mind not a folk legend but a highly polished literary performance, for by the time Hogg came to write his poem, the story of the disguised king had become inalienably linked with Scott's The Lady of the Lake. Hogg takes few pains to disguise the connection between Scott's poem and his, for he follows the line of Scott's narrative remarkably closely. In Hogg's version, the heroine, Ila Moore, is wooed by the mysterious harper, Mador, whom she secretly marries but who leaves her suddenly when she becomes pregnant. Scott's heroine, Ellen, is less rash, and rejects the proffered love of her disguised wooer, but there are many similarities between the visit of Fitz-James to her bower on Loch Katrine and Mador's stay in the castle of Kincairney on the River Tay. Both heroines feel their love threatened by the prior claims of their father's landlord: in Scott the grim Roderick Dhu is an ever-present force, while the more shadowy Albert of the Glen in Mador, though less

vividly evoked, still has power enough to disrupt the heroine's life when he turns the pregnant girl off his land. Finally, both heroines, in an attempt to cure their miseries, must travel to the royal court at Stirling to seek an audience with the king, and in both instances it comes as no surprise to the reader when the lover both girls seek is revealed to have all along been king of Scotland. However, Hogg also brings to Mador of the Moor elements from other sources. Instead of Scott's characteristic tetrameter couplet we find Hogg using a Spenserian stanza which may be intended to remind the reader of Byron but is also reminiscent of the use of the stanza by Spenser himself, a resemblance heightened by Hogg's incidental use of little verse tags to summarise the action of each canto rather as Spenser does in The Faerie Queene. On the other hand, there are also elements drawn from the ballad tradition when Ila, fleeing in search of her missing husband, falls in with a palmer who is tortured by guilt for his past life of sin. Such a character is a stereotype of the literary ballads which were written in the late eighteenth century, but the story he tells, though clothed in literary garb, is a paraphrase of the traditional ballad called "The Cruel Mother" (Child 20). There can be no intention to deceive the reader into thinking all this material was original to Hogg; such references would have been part of the common stock of the first readers of Mador. That they were not acknowledged by the author suggests only that he assumed they would be recognised.

The literary allusions in The Pilgrims of the Sun are at once more complicated and more explicit than those in Mador of the Moor. They are complicated by their range and by the extent to which they permeate the poem, but in The Pilgrims of the Sun Hogg acknowledges his debts quite openly at every stage so that the reader need not make even the limited effort of recogni-

tion required in Mador of the Moor. The plot of The Pilgrims of the Sun is substantially similar to that of the earlier "Kilmeny". Mary Lee is, like Tam Lin in the ballad (Child 39), spirited away from the farm of Carterhaugh in the Ettrick Valley and led by a helpful spirit called Cela through the glories of Heaven. Having travelled through the many regions of the Other World, she returns to Earth transfigured in beauty and tells of the wonders she has seen. When eventually she meets again with Cela, who has been journeying the earth disguised as a minstrel, the couple are married. Hogg divides his poem into four parts which, contrary to usual literary practice, are each narrated in a different metrical form and in a different style of language. This may be partly to show the author's poetic versatility, but it is also an attempt to find the metre most appropriate to the content of each part, for Hogg is always careful to signal the reasons for the change in style.

The first part, which describes the heroine's peaceful early life and her later flight to Heaven, is written in ballad quatrains. This metre is useful for sketching in details quickly but is also, as Hogg had already found in "The Witch of Fife", suited by its disjunctive nature to the description of rapid motion. However, the sharply focussed and jerky ballad style, while well able to suggest the speedy movement from one picture to the next, is less well-suited to sustained description such as will be required when Mary arrives at her destination. In addition, since Hogg wishes to give a more grandiose description of Heaven than he had done in "Kilmeny", he must adopt a verse form which can comfortably contain a more lofty diction. Therefore, at the end of the first part he takes leave of the ballad quatrain which he has used up to that point:

Here I must leave the beauteous twain,
 Casting their raptured eyes abroad,
 Around the vallies of the sun,
 And all the universe of God.

And I will bear my hill-harp hence,
 And hang it on its ancient tree;
 For its wild warblings ill become
 The scènes that ope'd to Mary Lee.

Thou holy harp of Judah's land,
 That hung the willow boughs upon,
 O leave the bowers on Jordan's strand,
 And cedar groves of Lebanon:

That I may sound thy sacred string,
 Those chords of mystery sublime,
 That chimed the songs of Israel's King,
 Songs that shall triumph over time.

Pour forth the trancing notes again,
 That wont of yore the soul to thrill,
 In tabernacles of the plain,
 Or heights of Zion's holy hill.

O come, etherial timbrel meet,
 In Shepherd's hand thou dost delight;
 On Kedar hills thy strain was sweet,
 And sweet on Bethle'm's plain by night.

And when thy tones the land shall hear,
 And every heart conjoins with thee,
 The mountain lyre that lingers near
 Will lend a wandering melody.³⁵

But the style adopted is not in fact that of the Psalmist; instead the next part opens in the metre and diction which had become associated with sublime description throughout the preceding century:

Harp of Jerusalem! how shall my hand
 Awake thy Halelujahs! - How begin
 The song that tells of light ineffable,
 And of the dwellers there! The fountain pure,
 And source of all - Where bright Archangels dwell,
 And where, in unapproached pavilion, framed
 Of twelve deep veils, and every veil composed
 Of thousand thousand lustres, sits enthroned
 The God of Nature! - O thou harp of Salem,
 Where shall my strain begin!

(pp. 27-28)

The debt to Milton is so obvious that it does not need to be proved, and, while no other passage has quite such a heavy clustering of

latinisms and apostrophe, the similarity to the descriptions in Paradise Lost persists throughout this part, even down to the geography of the heavenly regions which Hogg visualises. At the end of the second part, Hogg must again seek another style, for the Miltonic manner becomes inappropriate when, having told of the glory of God, the poem goes on to describe the paradise of lovers and the various hells to which politicians, lawyers, and critics are consigned. A lighter touch is needed, and so, taking his cue from similar descriptions in "The Rape of the Lock", Hogg employs the heroic couplet. He does not fail to acknowledge this:

Imperial England, of the ocean born,
 Who from the isles beyond the dawn of morn,
 To where waste oceans wash Peruvia's shore,
 Hast from all nations drawn thy boasted lore.
 Helm of the world, whom seas and isles obey,
 Tho' high thy honours, and though far thy sway,
 Thy harp I crave, unfearful of thy frown;
 Well may'st thou lend what erst was not thine own.

Come thou old bass - I loved thy lordly swell,
 With Dryden's twang, and Pope's malicious knell;
 But now, so sore thy brazen chords are worn,
 By peer, by pastor, and by bard forlorn;
 By every grub that harps for venal ore,
 And crabbe that grovels on the sandy shore:
 I wot not if thy maker's aim has been
 A harp, a fiddle, or a tambourine.

(pp. 61-62)

He sees himself writing in the tradition of Pope and Dryden, disdaining Crabbe's later, more prosaic use of the metre. For the final part, which largely consists of narrative, Hogg returns to the four-stress line which had been proved by Scott to be the most successful narrative metre. Yet again we find the change noted when Hogg writes at the end of the third section:

Here I must seize my ancient harp again,
 And chaunt a simple tale, a most uncourtly strain.

(p. 92)

At no point has Hogg made any pretence that he is not imitating quite consciously the styles of poetic predecessors: he does not conceal the fact that in his search for appropriate forms he has received guidance from the works he has been reading.

However, though it must be granted that Hogg intended to do more in these two poems than simply copy his originals, it must also be admitted that he proves himself unequal to the challenge imitation involves. A writer who imitates the style of a great contemporary, or an even greater predecessor, must be ready to offer the reader an experience which he could not find better expressed in the original. The greater the work imitated the more difficult it is for the imitator to achieve this. Coleridge, as George Watson notes, was reluctant to imitate his contemporaries and his immediate predecessors for other than comic purposes, for, in such cases, he felt himself lacking in the detachment necessary for creative imitation.³⁶ This danger is one that Hogg fails to overcome in Mador of the Moor and The Pilgrims of the Sun. Although in intention he wishes to follow in this pattern of creative imitation, he fails in the satisfactory performance of his task. Mador of the Moor, for instance, is unsatisfactory as narrative verse not merely because Hogg is content to take over the characters he found in Scott but more especially because he does so without making any effort to bring them back to life, so that the central figures are for the most part ciphers. The occasional moments when the characterisation rises above this all occur in intentionally comic passages, where Hogg views his characters with a less heroic and sympathetic eye than Scott possessed and so produces something fresh. This can be seen in the reaction of Ila's mother to her supposedly illegitimate grandson; the new grandmother, aware that the circumstances of the child's birth render it

vulnerable to supernatural influence, waits in terror for the fairies to come and spirit it off:

Still wax'd her dread, for ah! too well she knew
 Her floor, o'ernight, had frames unearthly borne!
 Around her cot the giggling fairies flew,
 And all arrangement alter'd ere the morn!
 At eve, the candle of its beams was shorn,
 While a blue halo round the flame would play;
 And she could hear the fairies' fitful horn
 Ring in her ears an eldrich roundelay,
 When every eye was shut, and her's all wakeful lay.

And many a private mark the infant bore,
 Survey'd each morn with dread which none can tell,
 Lest the real child was borne to downward shore,
 And in his stead, and form, by fairy spell,
 Some froward elfin child, deform'd and fell!
 O how her troubled breast with horror shook,
 Lest thing from confines of the lower hell
 Might sit upon her knee and on her look!
 'Twas more than her weak mind and fading form could brook.
 (pp. 89-90)

Such a comin description, no matter how grotesque, is greatly to be preferred to the stiffly sentimental descriptions of Ila herself. However, Mador of the Moor is most consistently successful not in the narrative passages, where the influence of Scott is most readily felt, but instead in the vivid natural descriptions to be found in the first canto. The Spenserian stanza, with its longer measure, allows Hogg more detail than his more usual metres, and he takes the opportunity to produce stanzas as fine as the following description of the aftermath of a stag hunt:

Another day came on, another still,
 And eye the clouds their drizzly treasures shed;
 The pitchy mist hung moveless on the hill,
 And hooded every pine-tree's reverend head:
 The heavens seem'd sleeping on their mountain bed
 The stragling roes mistimed their noontide den,
 And stray'd the forest, belling for the dead,
 Startled at every rustle - paused, and then
 Sniff'd whistling in the wind, and bounded to the glen.
 (p.15)

In addition, despite Miss Batho's complaint that Hogg uses the stanza form inefficiently, so that the final alexandrine is generally redundant,

in such descriptions we find Hogg achieving effects in his chosen form which would be impossible in other metres. Notice for example the onomatopoeic effect produced by the longer last line in the following stanza:

As if by lost pre-eminence abased,
 Hill behind hill erected locks of gray,
 And every misty morion was upraised,
 To speak their farewell to the God of Day:
 When tempests rave along their polar way,
 Not closer rear the billows of the deep,
 Shining with silver foam, and maned with spray,
 As up the mid-way heaven they war and sweep,
 Then, foiled and chafed to rage, roll down the
 broken steep.

(p. 20)

Such moments remind one that Hogg had originally intended this poem to be a description of the Tayside landscape,³⁷ and lead one to regret that he felt obliged to add a story to the initial description. It is significant that the most original stanzas are to be found in the initial inspiration and that it is as a later spur to composition that Hogg must go to Scott for his material.

The verse-writing in The Pilgrims of the Sun is not perhaps as inferior to its great models as one would initially expect. Surprisingly the most effective descriptions are to be found when Hogg is influenced by the greatest poet of all those he imitated, Milton. The passage I quoted from the opening of the second part may suggest that all Hogg had achieved was to swell out the vagueness of his imaginings with a stiff imitation of some of Milton's more obvious mannerisms. But in the course of his imitation of Milton he can rise to a point where the Miltonic style becomes so natural to him that he can use it to evoke in a terrifying description the plight of a world cast off by the Almighty once its purpose has been fulfilled:

Just in the middle of its swift career,
 Th' Almighty snapt the golden cord in twain
 That hung it to the heaven - Creation sobbed!

And a spontaneous shriek rang on the hills
 Of these celestial regions. Down amain
 Into the void the outcast world descended,
 Wheeling and thundering on! Its troubled seas
 Were churned into a spray, and, whizzing, flurred
 Around it like a dew. - The mountain tops,
 And ponderous rocks, were off impetuous flung,
 And clattered down the steeps of night for ever.

(pp. 54-55)

The blank verse is skilfully modulated in tone and rhythm, and the picture is built out of a series of sharply convincing details. Out of the picture Hogg found in Milton of the Earth suspended from Heaven by a single golden chain, he has produced new poetry with the aid of his own imagination.³⁸ In such cases the association with Milton has been fruitful. The manner of Pope is perhaps less natural to Hogg, for it requires a control over language which comes only with practice, as well as a slightly dispassionate classical attitude to detail and form which was possibly not to be found in Hogg's less precise emotions. Fortunately, he rarely attempts the rhetorical balance of Pope at his finest but is content to produce a less heady type of heroic couplet, which provides a vehicle for the poet's descriptions without involving him in additional complications of formal balance. However, The Pilgrims of the Sun, like Mador, must finally be judged successful only in parts, since the rest of the poem wants detail in its descriptions and freshness in its language.

Despite the limited success achieved by Hogg in his imitations, it must nevertheless be realised how essential the experience had been for him. In the three works which followed The Queen's Wake he had tried his hand at forms suited to a content requiring more rigorous thought than the simple narrative verse he had produced to that point; his outlook on literature was no longer confined by the strengths and weaknesses of the ballad. To that extent Hogg's inclination towards imitation may have resulted from a desire to learn new poetic techniques, and to put into practice the lessons he had taken from other writers. Imitation

might also have had the attraction of casting his poetic productions in a form which would be acceptable to readers and publishers, so that he could be assured of seeing his poems appear in print, a fact of some importance when his earnings from literature were his only source of income. Hogg was very conscious of being an outsider in literary society and was sensitive to the criticism his work received. His Memoir contains bitter protests at the number of publishers who rejected his works and a sense of very personal outrage at their treatment of him. It must have been very tempting to hide his developing talent behind the styles, and even the names, of other, more universally approved writers, until he felt himself capable of making an assault on literary fame on the strength of his own abilities. The work Hogg produced in this manner was necessarily not characteristic of him, nor, for the most part, does it provide a satisfying experience for the reader, but the experience of imitation gave him a satisfying launching for the rest of his poetic career. Certainly, the third of the volumes, The Poetic Mirror, shows the most obvious assurance in the employment of the techniques of literature, as well as the most consistently vigorous imagination.

Unfortunately, Hogg was not to be allowed to find an outlet for his new proficiency in verse until the very end of his life. He produced only one more full-length narrative poem, the colossal epic Queen Hynde, which more than any of the poems considered so far attempts to emulate the manner of Scott. While it did not appear until 1825, Queen Hynde belongs more naturally to the period discussed in this chapter, for Hogg actually began the poem in 1817, but laid it aside until, when pressed for money in 1824, he worked it up into a publishable form. It cannot really be said to mark a step forward in Hogg's development, for it is

no more successful than previous attempts in presenting more than the externals of its story, a tale of battles against Norse invaders in the early days of the kingdom of Scotland. In fact, it is rendered less successful than these by the very fact of being over twice their length. Despite Hogg's great enthusiasm for it, at least on paper, and despite extensive "puffing" in Blackwood's, it sold badly and did little to encourage the poet to another attempt.³⁹ However, the true fruit of Hogg's education through imitation is to be looked for not in that last attempt at the epic form but in some of the personal poems which he wrote in the last five years of his life, where, concentrating for the first time on his own emotions, he writes in a style which is unique to himself but which reminds us of the best of the verse of his contemporaries.⁴⁰ Without the opportunity of matching himself against the greatest names in literature ten years and more earlier, Hogg could not have evolved that style, for he would have been confined within the ballad form. However, for the present, the lessons he had learnt had to be set aside, for his career was now to enter on a new phase.

CHAPTER IV

The Brownie of Bodsbeck

Apart from the delayed publication of Queen Hynde, which prolonged his career as a writer of long poems into the 1820s, it can fairly be said that the publication of Mador of the Moor in 1816 marked the end of Hogg's attempts at fame in that form of literature. Of course, he did not leave poetry entirely behind him: in the twenty years that followed he produced a remarkable quantity of songs and ballads, while scarcely an issue of the newly founded Blackwood's Magazine appeared which did not contain at least one short poem from the popular "Ettrick Shepherd". But Hogg was never again to write a poem on such a large scale as The Queen's Wake and its two successors, nor to spend an extended period of time on the preparation of a volume of verse. The three works that principally occupied his energies in the years up to 1824 were all written in prose, not verse. It was from his abilities as a prose-writer that he now thought his reputation would be made. The writing of prose was not of course an entirely new departure for him: as early as 1802 he had contributed to the Scots Magazine a series of articles which described a tour he had made of the Highlands, and later tours provided material for similar articles in 1805 and 1808. The publication of The Brownie of Bodsbeck was not even his debut as a writer of prose fiction - that can be found in a number of short stories scattered throughout The Spy, and, after the demise of that periodical, in the pages of the Scots Magazine and Blackwood's.¹ Had events fallen out as Hogg planned, a collection of these short stories would have followed hard on the heels of The Queen's Wake, for Scott was informed by his protege of just such an intention in the spring of 1813:

I would fain publish 2 vols 8vo. close print of Scottish Rural tales anonymous in prose[.] I have one will make about 200 pages alone[.] Some of the others you have seen in the Spy &c. Some people say they are original and interesting.²

But The Brownie of Bodsbeck, when it appeared in the first half of 1818, was clearly a more finished piece of fiction than any Hogg had published hitherto. For the first time, Hogg had brought out a piece of prose that was meant to be judged on the same footing as his verse: he was, 'the volume seemed to proclaim, now to be thought of as much as a writer of novels as of poems. His earlier fiction had been only a few pages long, and had consisted of little more than a few anecdotes strung together to tell the life of one individual living in the same surroundings and period as the author. The Brownie of Bodsbeck, adopting a much wider perspective, attempts, in nearly five hundred duodecimo pages, to present a detailed picture of the sufferings of the people of Scotland in the crucial years of the religious struggle that split Scotland in the seventeenth century. Therefore, with this first novel, Hogg's career strikes out on a new path, for which he must learn new techniques of expression. In other words, Hogg, after many years of learning the poetic craft, must once again return to his apprenticeship.

Of course, by 1818 Hogg was far from being the newly literate sheep farmer whose early attempts at literature can be seen in The Mountain Bard. By hard study he had gained no small degree of skill in the writing of narrative verse, and now had a much greater appreciation of the expectations of the reading public. Obviously he would be able to avoid many of the pitfalls that beset him in his early poetry. But the production of a novel demanded additional skills in which Hogg had so far shown himself deficient, for example the ability to invent psychologically complete characters and to create and describe a logically motivated

plot. Therefore it is not surprising that Hogg should have looked on The Brownie of Bodsbeck as containing a new set of problems to be overcome and should have treated the writing of this book as if it had been his earliest venture in literature. By the time Hogg came to write Mador of the Moor and The Pilgrims of the Sun, he had felt sufficiently confident of his literary ability to take on the poets whom his contemporaries considered the giants of English literature - Milton and Spenser, Pope and Scott. Where earlier he had based his imitations on his knowledge of folk literature, in these two poems it was his knowledge of art literature that stimulated him into creativity. Such confidence would have been rash in writing The Brownie of Bodsbeck, so that the sources he employs there are of a less exalted kind. As always, Hogg is quite open about them. In an introduction which appeared with the revised edition of the novel prepared for the posthumous collected Tales and Sketches, he gave due acknowledgement:

The general part is taken from Wodrow, and the local part from the relation of my own father, who had the best possible traditionary account of the incidents.³

The new beginning of Hogg's career was marked by a return to his origins: in the writing of The Brownie, Hogg would draw on sources similar to those that had produced his earliest verse. The reader was expected to match The Brownie of Bodsbeck not against the classics of high art fiction but against the legends of the Ettrick Valley and the popular, near-legendary history of the covenanting times written by Robert Wodrow. From the imitation of Pope and Milton Hogg had reverted to the equivalent of the ballads and chapbooks which had produced The Mountain Bard. By no means did this involve him in a lowering of standards, for it took him back to familiar ground, away from the dangers of writing beyond his means which had faced him in his recent verse. Moreover, he was now better able to realise the literary possibilities of his folk material,

for he would find that prose was a more suitable vehicle than the ballad verse in which he had earlier sought to convey it. Hogg, who had by now shown himself more able to mould the material he borrowed, might now prove successful in the aim that had so far eluded him, that of giving literary form to the vivid productions of the folk imagination.

In outline, the plot of The Brownie of Bodsbeck does not especially smack of folk literature. The story opens in 1685, when a chance meeting involves Walter Laidlaw, the tenant of the sheep farm of Chapelhope at the head of St. Mary's Loch, with a group of covenanters who have hidden from persecution on his land. His natural charity prompts him, despite the possible consequences, to assist them with food and shelter. Unfortunately, suspicion of their presence brings to Walter's farm the brutal government troops commanded by Graham of Claverhouse, and Walter, enraged by Claverhouse's cruelty and by his licentious treatment of Walter's beautiful daughter Katherine, is arrested and taken to Edinburgh after striking one of the officers. Unknown to Walter, however, Katherine is aware of the presence of another group of covenanters on the farm and, by taking advantage of the legend that it is haunted by a Brownie, she is able to explain away the evidence of the fugitives and to continue to protect them. The covenanters repay this by the seemingly miraculous tasks they perform on the farm, which the local people ascribe to the brownie. Eventually, Walter, acting on the advice of a friendly Highland trooper, avoids the charge which seemed likely to cost him his life by calling on the influence of his landlord and by roundly cursing the court with most unsaintlike profanity. Able as a result to return to his farm, where he learns of Katherine's activities, he gives the covenanters the welcome news that the government, having come to realise the ineffectiveness of

of their persecution of dissenters, have adopted a more tolerant policy. The comic reactions of Walter's neighbours to the feats of the supposed brownie provide relief from the harshness and brutality of the farmer's experiences.

But if the main plot of the story does not seem particularly folklike, it is merely evidence of how well Hogg has been able to incorporate his sources, for repeatedly Hogg draws on them to provide incidents and details in the course of the narrative. The very title of the book, The Brownie of Bodsbeck, refers to a well-known legend of the Ettrick area, for the farm of Bodesbeck, some six miles outside Moffat, was notorious for the activities of its brownie, the unpredictable but generally helpful sprite that attaches itself to a Scottish household. Hogg referred to the legend in one of his earliest articles for the Scots Magazine:

The last brownie that left the south of Scotland, haunted Badsbeck in our vicinity; the tenor of whose lamentations for the extirpation of his tribe, on the night of his departure, is yet well-known hereabouts.⁴

A more detailed account of the story is to be found in the words of a young contemporary of Hogg's, Robert Chambers, who includes the tale in his Popular Rhymes of Scotland:

The brownie of the farmhouse of Bodsbeck, in Moffatdale, left his employment upwards of a century ago, on a similar account. He had exerted himself so much in the farm-labour both in and out of doors, that Bodsbeck became the most prosperous farm in the district. He always took his meat as it pleased himself, usually in very moderate quantities, and of the most humble description. During a time of very hard labour, perhaps harvest, when a little better fare than ordinary might have been judged acceptable, the goodman took the liberty of leaving out a mess of bread and milk, thinking it but fair that at a time when some improvement both in quantity and quality, was made upon the fare of the human servants, the useful brownie should obtain a share in the blessing. He, however, found his error, for the result was that the brownie left the house for ever, exclaiming:

"Ca, brownie, ca'
A' the luck o' Bodsbeck away to Leithenha'."

The luck of Bodsbeck accordingly departed with its brownie, and settled in the neighbouring farmhouse, called Leithenhall, whither the brownie transferred his friendship and services.⁵

Hogg uses the resonances that had become attached to the name over the centuries but, in point of fact, sets his story not at Bodsbeck, but moves its location to the farm of Chapelhope, some nine miles to the north-east of the original locale. This shift in setting is explained by Hogg in one of the speeches of the supposed brownie himself,

John Brown:

"We first came to Bodsbeck, where we got shelter for a few weeks. It was there that I was first supposed by the menials, who chanced to see me, to be a Brownie, and that superstitious idea the tenant thought meet to improve for our safety; but on the approach of Lag's people he dismissed us. We then fled to Leithenhall, from whence in a few days we were again compelled to fly; and at last came to this wild, the only place in the south that soldiers had never searched, nor could search with any degree of success.⁶

While a reader knowledgable in legend would realise that Brown's account matches the legendary brownie's journey, it must not be denied that it is only after several readings that one becomes sure of precisely why the book has the title it does. One of the key incidents in the story results therefore directly from tradition, and, indeed, there is still a local legend that the haunting of Bodesbeck can be accounted for by precisely the reason that Hogg gives.⁷

We find a similar use of tradition at the very outset of the story. The fugitive covenanters have been forced into hiding out of fear of reprisals for the murder by another band of the local curate, who was hated as a government informer. Hogg describes the means the Whigs took to remove this impediment to their safety:

They way-laid, and seized upon one of the priest's emissaries by night, a young female, who was running on a message to Grierson of Lag. Overcome with fear at being in custody of such frightful-looking fellows, with their sallow cheeks and long beards, she confessed the whole, and gave up her dispatches. They were of the most aggravated nature. Forthwith two or three of the most hardy of the whigs, without the concurrence or knowledge of their brethren, posted straight to the Virgin's chapel that very night, shot the chaplain, and buried him at a small distance from his own little solitary mansion; at the same time giving out to the country, that he was a sorcerer, an adulterer, and a character every way evil. His name has accordingly been handed down to posterity as a most horrid necromancer.

(pp. 12-13)

In fact, Hogg had already made use of the legends that surrounded this clergyman, for they formed the subject of one of the poems in The Mountain Bard. In "Mess John", the curate of St Mary's Chapel, consumed by lust for a local beauty, accomplishes her seduction with supernatural assistance. When, however, a group of covenanters hear of his evil practices, they ambush him in his church and shoot him. Such a supernatural story would sit uneasily in a realistic historical novel such as The Brownie of Bodsbeck and so Hogg finds a non-supernatural natural motive for the curate's murder. But in fact he had already hinted at just such an explanation in the introduction to "Mess John":

If I may then venture a conjecture at the whole of this story, it is no wise improbable that the lass of Craigyburn was some enthusiast in religious matters, or perhaps a lunatic; and that, being troubled with a sense of guilt, and a squeamish conscience, she had, on that account, made several visits to Saint Mary's Chapel to obtain absolution: and it is well known that many of the Mountain-men wanted only a hair to make a tether of. Might they not then frame this whole story about the sorcery, on purpose to justify their violent procedure in the eyes of their countrymen, as no bait was more likely to be swallowed at that time?⁸

It seems therefore that in the passage quoted from The Brownie Hogg is expanding on hints from local traditions.

That Hogg should have shifted the story wholesale from Bodesbeck to Chapelhope is evidence of the close relationship he saw between his novel and the scenes among which he himself was living at the time. By setting the story in Chapelhope, Hogg had in fact brought it nine miles nearer to his own farm, for Eltrieve is separated from Chapelhope only by the length of St. Mary's Loch, a mere six miles or so. The scenes referred to in the novel are all contained within a very small space of countryside, all within easy walking distance of Eltrieve. Douglas Mack, in his edition of the book, has shown how accurate Hogg's geographical details are, and has given ample evidence of the imaginative use Hogg has made of the physical features of the landscape. It is perhaps important that, when the novel was revised for a second edition, one of the features most studiously revised was that the place-names should be correctly spelt, a matter in which the printer of the first edition, working without Hogg's supervision, had frequently been careless. It is plain that Hogg saw this novel as very much the story of his ancestors and those of his neighbours: that he should himself have been related to the Laidlaw family on his mother's side is surely far from irrelevant.

The familiarity of setting in The Brownie of Bodsbeck enabled Hogg to give to his book a considerable air of circumstantial veracity. In the hundred and thirty years that separated him from the events he was describing the shepherd's life had not changed much - it was no softer nor had farming methods greatly altered. Even the religious fanaticism had scarcely lessened over the years; when Hogg was collecting ballads from Scott, he found great difficulty in extracting verses from an uncle of his who had renounced his reputation as a singer as unfitting a Christian.⁹ Hogg therefore found little difficulty in including his own experience in The Brownie of Bodsbeck. The achievement of the

brownie which is greeted with the most enthusiasm by Walter's shepherds is his rapid smearing of the whole of the Chapelhope flock:

All shepherds are accused of indolence, and not perhaps, without some reason. Though John dreaded as death all connection with Brownie, yet he rejoiced at the progress they were likely to make in the smearing, for it is a dirty and laborious business, and he was glad by any means to get a share of it off his hands, especially as the season was so far advanced.

(p. 137)

That Hogg should welcome such a feat is hardly surprising when one compares what he himself wrote to Scott a few years earlier:

I am now engaged in the ardent and naseous business of smearing which continues every lawfull night until a late hour and in a very few days always makes my hand that I can in nowise handle a pen consequently you will not hear from me again in a sudden.¹⁰

Hogg was even able to transfer back without anachronism the characters and the sentiments of the independent but uneducated tenant farmers he himself knew so well. When Walter's shepherd John Hoy is cross-examined about his master's ability in taking family prayers, the shepherd gives an amusing account of a not very religious man's difficulties in that customary exercise:

"Can you repeat any part, or any particular passage of his usual prayer?"

"I'm sure I might, for he gangs often aneuch owr some o' them. Let me see - there's the still waters, and the green pastures, and the blood of bulls and of goats; and then there's the gos-hawk, and the slogy riddle, and the tyrant an' his lang neb; I hae the maist o't i' my head, but then I canna mouband it."

"What does he mean by the tyrant and his long neb?"

"Aha! But that's mair nor ever I could find out yet. We whiles think he means the Kelpy - him that raises the storms an' the floods on us, ye ken, and gars the waters an' the burns come roarin down wi' bracks o' ice an' snaw, an' tak away our sheep. But whether it's Kelpy, or Clavers, or the Deil, we can never be sure, for we think it applies gay an' weel to them a'."

"Repeat the passage as well as you can."

"Bring down the tyrran an' his lang neb, for he has done muckle ill this year, an' gie him a cup o' thy wrath; an' gin he winna tak that, gie him kelty."
(pp. 64-65)

This may seem slightly improbable, and threatens to caricature Walter's religious feelings, but in fact Hogg is transferring word for word some of the prayers which he elsewhere gives as typical of those uttered by a famous local character, Adam Scott of Upper Dalgleish:

"We're a' like hawks, we're a' like snails, we're a' like slogie riddles; - like hawks to do evil, like snails to do good, and like slogie riddles, that let through a' the good, and keep the bad."

"Bring down the tyrant and his lang neb, for he has done muckle ill the year, and gie him a cup o' thy wrath, and gin he winna tak that, gie him kelty." (Kelty signifies double, or two cups. This was an occasional petition for one season only, and my uncle never could comprehend what it meant.)¹¹

Such passages, coming from a traditional way of life which was yet to be disrupted by social change, breathe warmth into the book, for they tell of things its author knew and loved.

If the emotion of The Brownie of Bodsbeck comes from the Ettrick countryside, its history comes, as Hogg confesses in the Introduction to the book, from the writings of Wodrow. The Rev. Robert Wodrow had published his History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland in 1721, within living memory of the events it describes. Written with a glaring bias in favour of the covenanters, Wodrow's History had become the standard martyrology of the Presbyterian Church, and had coloured the picture of the struggle for generations of Scots country-folk.¹² It is anecdotal in character, recounting year by year the most famous trials, murders, and injustices which occurred in the period 1660

to 1688. It was for a long time considered the literal truth, with the result that the statistics of atrocities contained within have on many occasions been used to belabour the government forces. Modern historians have, however, come to view it with mistrust. Rosalind Mitchison, for example, sees it as typical of a sort of biased writing which has for centuries confused the study of Scottish history:

Scottish historiography of this era and later cannot be properly understood without the realization that a vast amount of nonsense has been talked about this short and disturbed period. After the establishment of Presbyterianism, various members of the Kirk, while repudiating the Covenanters' concept of church government, accepted the leaders of the sect into the martyrology. Robert Wodrow, who was a small child at the time of the struggle, spent a large part of his adult life in collecting written and oral material on it which was published in 1721 as The History of the Sufferings of the Church, a semi-official account. As he included in it large sections of the papers of the Privy Council, historians have found it a useful work, without always noticing that much of the rest of his material is hearsay which does not even bear the name of the teller.....Though there have been protests at times, a great deal of garbage has been inserted into the received edition of Scottish history.¹³

However, despite these historiographical objections, it is sufficient to assert that for Hogg at least all Wodrow's stories were literally true and that he felt that an appeal to Wodrow was the ultimate vindication of the events of his story. The novel Hogg produced as a result may give a distorted picture of covenanting times but it was a picture that Hogg, along with much of the rest of the Scottish people, believed fervently was the absolute truth.

However, Hogg's respect for Wodrow's history did not mislead him into slavish copying of every detail contained in that rather dry work. Certainly we find in Wodrow's pages the names of those historical personages who appear as characters in The Brownie of Bodsbeck: George Lockhart the advocate, Thomas Livingstone the cruel officer, and the

drunken trooper Peter Ingles are all mentioned in that history. Hogg's decision to set his story in 1685 may very well have been prompted by the description that Wodrow gives of the crucial nature of that year:

This year affords abundance of matter. I have left to this chapter the narrative of the severe persecutions, everywhere almost upon the society's declaration. and the refusal of the abjuration oath. New murders in the open fields turn so frequent, that I shall scarce be able to give account of them all. Multitudes were cut off every month, without the tedious formality of a process, besides a good number of public executions at Edinburgh and other places, and the barbarous drowning of poor innocent women within the sea mark. In February the death of king Charles falls in, a popish prince mounts the throne, to the terror of all good protestants, and the joy of all papists; and after he had given some smooth words to lull all asleep, he quickly cast off the mask, and some branches of the persecution of presbyterians run very high. A new session of parliament meets in April under this popish sovereign, and since little was left undone by the former sessions, that could be done against presbyterians, the iniquitous procedure and acts of the council are all ratified, and some new advances made. In the following month, the attempt of the noble earl of Argyle falls in, which was soon quite broken, and issued in his death, and that of some excellent persons with him, and we need not doubt was carefully improven by our managers, for a new and general harassing of the country. The summer affords us some more murders in the open fields, and upon scaffolds, and the inhumane treatment of some hundreds of prisoners at Dunotter in harvest, and toward the end of it; we have, besides some more public executions, the transportation of a great many to America, with Pitlochy, beside some other incidental things. These will afford matter for a good many sections.¹⁴

However, details such as these apart, when Hogg takes a story out of Wodrow, he almost invariably reworks it so that it fits without any incongruity into the texture of his novel. The closest Hogg comes to merely repeating Wodrow comes in the story of the murder of Andrew Hyslop at the command of Sir James Johnston of Wester-Raw (Brownie, pp. 82-85). In detail the story Hogg gives is the same as Wodrow - a fugitive covenanter shelters in the house of a poor widow, whose son is then captured

and executed at the command of the cowardly Johnston, who has become noted for zeal on behalf of the government in order to conceal his earlier enthusiasm for the Whig cause (Wodrow, IV, 249-250). But even here Hogg expands on Wodrow's bald account. The plight of the covenanter who is forced into hiding is described more affectingly, while Johnston, instead of being the evil-minded turncoat of Wodrow's version, is presented as a weak-willed scapegoat employed by Hogg's villain, Claverhouse, to draw away from the general the unpopularity resulting from cruel punishments. But above all Hogg expands on a hint found in Wodrow's account to amplify the description of one of his more important subsidiary characters. Wodrow says in passing that one of the officers refused to carry out the unjust execution:

Claverhouse ordered a highland gentleman, captain of a company who were traversing the country with him, to shoot him, with some of his men. The gentleman peremptorily refused, and drawing off his men at some distance, swore he would fight Claverhouse and his dragoons before he did it. Whereon he ordered three of his own men to do it.¹⁵

The humane action of this anonymous officer is transferred by Hogg to the credit of Sergeant Macpherson, the absurdly proud but noble-minded Highlander who decides to help Walter:

Johnston swore he would be shot. Clavers hesitated, and made some objections; but the other persisting, as Clavers knew he would, the latter consented, as formerly, saying, "Well, well, since you will have it so, let it be done - his blood be on your head, I am free of it. - Daniel Roy Macpherson, draw up your file, and put the sentence in execution."

Hyslop kneeled down. They bade him put on his bonnet, and draw it over his eyes; but this he calmly refused, saying, "He had done nothing of which he was ashamed, and could look on his murderers and to Heaven without dismay."

When Macpherson heard this, and looked at him as he kneeled on the ground with his hands pinioned, his beautiful young face turned toward the sky, and his long fair ringlets hanging waving backward, his heart melted within him, and

the great tears had for some time been hopping down his cheeks. When Clavers gave the word of command to shoot the youth, Macpherson drew up his men in a moment - wheeled them off at the side - presented arms - and then answered the order of his general as follows, in a voice that was quite choaked one while, and came forth in great volleys at another - "Now, Cot t-n - - sh- sh- she'll rather pe fighting Clavers and all her dragoons, pe- pe- pefore she'll pe killing tat dear good lhad."

Captain Bruce burst out into a horse-laugh, leaping and clapping his hands on hearing such a singular reply; even Clavers had much ado to suppress a smile, which, however he effected by uttering a horrible curse.

(pp. 84-85)

From being merely an incidental anecdote, the story becomes one of the most crucial instances of the spontaneous humanity with which Macpherson is identified.

Hogg has, in the above example, borrowed a more extended passage from his historical source than is his usual practice. More often, his method is to give flesh to a generalised description from Wodrow by transferring it to a particular group of characters. For instance, Wodrow describes Claverhouse's methods for forcing an entire village to take the abjuration oath in the most abstract terms:

In every division the whole inhabitants, men and women, young and old, without distinction, were all driven into one convenient place. When thus got together, he called out as many of them as he saw proper, at once, till he got through them, and interrogate them severally, if they owned the duke of York, as he was formerly called, to be king. When they had done so, he took an oath of all the men that should stand by him, and still own him as king, and never do any thing against him. Not satisfied with this, he interrogates them next, if they had taken the abjuration; and some whom he suspected, he posed upon their oath, whether they had ever repented their taking the oath now imposed. If they answered, they did not, then he made them promise, upon their renouncing their part in heaven, they should never rue their so doing; and when they had complied with all his impositions, he would let them go, saying, "Argyle shall have a perjured dog of you"....

All the children in the division were gathered together by themselves, under ten years, and above six years of age, and a party of soldiers were drawn out before them. Then they were bid pray, for they were going to be shot. Some of them would answer, Sir, we cannot pray. Then they were ordered to tell when they saw men and guns in their house, and if any men with guns and swords got any meat in their house, or who took it to the door to them, and such other questions, and they should not be shot. Several children of seven or eight years of age, were carried about with the soldiers, who sometimes would offer them all fair things, if they would tell of their parents, and what people used to come to them late at night, and go away early in the morning, or if they knew where their fathers were, and who in the house carried any thing to them. At other times they treated them most inhumanely, threatening them with death, and at some little distance would fire pistols without ball in their face. Some of the poor children were frightened almost out of their wits, and others of them stood all out with a courage perfectly above their age.¹⁶

While such a description is well suited to a history which wishes to preserve the semblance of truth, a novel requires a more dramatic mode of presentation. At the end of Claverhouse's cross-examination of John Hoy, the "facts" presented in the first part of the quotation are brought to life firstly by being presented in dialogue and secondly as happening to a character with whom the reader has come to feel sympathy:

"Take the old ignorant animal away - Burn him on the cheek, cut off his ears, and do not part with him till he pay you down a fine of two hundred merks, or value to that amount. And, do you hear, make him take all the oaths twice; and a third oath, that he is never to repent of these. By G-, if either Monmouth or Argyle get him, they shall have a perjured dog of him."
(p. 66)

The second half of the quotation, the description of the torture of the children by mock execution, which is in the original a not particularly affecting atrocity story, is transfigured into a lavish piece of heart-tugging sentiment by replacing the anonymous children with Walter's two sons, and the resulting rather sickly scene makes full use of the inherent pathos of the incident.¹⁷

Perhaps the most striking example of the distance Hogg can move from his source is to be found in his description of the cruelties suffered by the fanatical Nanny Elshinder, a half-crazed old woman whom Walter has taken on as a servant at Chapelhope. This character is built up out of hints taken from proclamations Wodrow quotes during his account of 1685:

July 14th, the magistrates of Glasgow present a petition to the council, showing, "that their tolbooth is pestered with many silly old women, who are a great charge to the town. The council order them to be whipped and burnt on the cheek severely, who are guilty of reset and converse, and such as are guilty of ill principles, that they be whipped and all dismissed."¹⁸

Later he tells how a resolute group of Edinburgh Whigs were sentenced "to have the following stigma and mark, that they may be known as banished persons if they shall return to this kingdom, viz. that the men have one of their ears cut off by the hand of the hangman, and that the women be burnt by the same hand on the cheek, with a burned-ironmarked with the letters [C. R.] and that before they be put aboard in order to their transportation, and appoint a surgeon to be present, and to see their cure".¹⁹ Nanny, who at first seems merely a crazy old woman becomes a striking example of the resilience of the covenanters when she is revealed as having suffered precisely these penalties. But Hogg does not merely recount the cruelties. In a crucial scene, he whips up excitement in the steadily-mounting pace of the dialogue so that the final details of the brutal punishments Nanny has suffered provide a powerful climax to the whole exchange:

"An' can the presence o' ane o' them do this?" said Nanny, starting up and speaking in a loud eldrich voice. "Then Heaven and hell acknowledges it, an' the earth maun soon do the same! I knew it! - I knew it! - I knew it! - ha, ha, ha, I knew it! - Ah! John, thou art safe! - Ay! an' mae than thee; an' there will be mae yet! It is but a day! an' dark an' dismal though it be, the change will be the sweeter!"

Blessed, blessed be the day! None can say of thee 'died Abner as a fool died? his hands were not bound nor his feet put into fetters.'" Then turning close round to Katherine, with an expression of countenance quite indescribable, she added in a quick maddened manner, - "Eh? Thou seekest a test of me, dost thou? Can blood do it? - Can martyrdom do it? - Can bonds, wounds, tortures, and mockery do it? - Can death itself do it? All these have I suffered for that cause in this same body; mark that; for there is but one half of my bone and my flesh here. But words are nothing to the misbelieving - mere air mouthed into a sound. Look at this for a test of my sincerity and truth." So saying, she gave her hand a wild brandish in the air, darted it at her throat, and snapping the tie of her mutch that she had always worn over her face, she snatched it off, and turning her cheek round to her young mistress, added, "Look there for your test, and if that is not enough, I will give you more!"

Katherine was struck dumb with astonishment and horror. She saw that her ears were cut close to the skull, and a G. indented on her cheek with a hot iron, as deep as the jaw-bone. She burst out a-crying - clasped the old enthusiast in her arms - kissed the wound and steeped it with her tears, and without one further remark, led her away to the Old Room, that they might converse without interruption.

(pp. 98-99)

It is obvious how closely Hogg has followed Wodrow in details but it is also clear how much more strongly the implied cruelty of the punishment is conveyed by Hogg's fictional account than by the more factual style of Wodrow. In such a case it is senseless to talk of Hogg "copying" Wodrow: here, as in many other of his works, Hogg has, by sheer force of imagination, recreated the experience that lay behind the passage he borrowed.

Direct borrowing from Wodrow is however to be found in a mere handful of instances throughout Hogg's novel. Far more important than similarities of detail between the two books is their similarity of attitude towards the events they describe, and, to some extent, of sympathy for the heroes of their histories. The countless stories of torture and injustice which are to be found on every page of Wodrow formed the background to Hogg's mental picture of the period of his

story, and coloured his conception of it so that The Brownie of Bodsbeck imaginatively recreates the view of history which Wodrow wished to present. Moreover, since Wodrow's version of the covenanting struggles was so very similar to that believed in by the people of Hogg's district, and reflected in their legends and anecdotes of that time, it is not surprising that it should be the version of history that Hogg should have adopted. Admittedly, this means that The Brownie of Bodsbeck tells only part of the story and gives a very biased picture of its period; had Hogg been a historian he might perhaps have adopted a more critical attitude to the "facts" found in Wodrow. But since the legendary description of the period was for him the truth, it is sufficient that he should have been able to construct a consistent fiction on that basis; the events narrated in The Brownie of Bodsbeck may not be true, but they are nevertheless consistent with themselves.

Much ink and paper has, since the novel's very first appearance, been expended in the discussion of another possible source for The Brownie of Bodsbeck. Since Scott's Old Mortality had, from the time it appeared in 1816, been accepted as the definitive fictional treatment of the covenanting period, it was inevitable that Hogg's book should be compared with it. The anonymous writer who reviewed The Brownie for the British Critic, while praising many parts of Hogg's novel, thought it fatally weakened by its plagiarism of Scott:

However admirable the composition of a picture may be, yet it is the original only upon which the connoisseur sets any considerable price. Let a copy be ever so exact, yet the very name alone is sufficient to destroy its value....

We have been induced to make these observations, because "the Brownie of Bodsbeck" is so manifest an imitation, that, without some explanation, the author might perhaps incur the danger of being denied a fair audience from the public.²⁰

The imputed charge that Hogg was a mere copyist who had been prompted to write a novel on the covenanters by a desire to follow Scott's popular success was strenuously denied by the accused author. As Hogg described matters, The Brownie, far from being a mere following of Old Mortality, had been written several years before Scott's novel appeared and only seemed to copy it because of a delay in publication:

That same year I published "The Brownie of Bodsbeck," and other Tales, in two volumes. I suffered unjustly in the eyes of the world with regard to that tale, which was looked on as an imitation of the tale of "old Mortality," and a counterpart to that; whereas it was written long ere the tale of "Old Mortality" was heard of, and I well remember my chagrin on finding the ground, which I thought clear, pre-occupied before I could appear publicly on it, and that by such a redoubted champion. It was wholly owing to Mr. Blackwood that this tale was not published a year sooner, which would effectually have freed me from the stigma of being an imitator, and brought in the author of the "Tales of My Landlord" as an imitator of me. That was the only ill turn that ever Mr. Blackwood did me; and it ought to be a warning to authors never to intrust booksellers with their manuscripts.²¹

Critics, as Alan Lang Strout has shown in his biography of Hogg, have been only too ready to doubt his claim to priority, seeing it either as yet one more example of his famed literary dishonesty or else as an attempt to cover up the criticism of Scott that the novel seems to imply. Strout himself leaves his discussion of the affair open-ended but, in as much as he commits himself at all, seems to suggest that Hogg was at very least mistaken in his facts.²² However, as Douglas Mack has shown in his introduction to the novel, Hogg has perhaps been unjustly charged in this instance.²³ There is, Mr Mack points out, a strong possibility that The Brownie of Bodsbeck dates back to the very early collection of tales which Hogg offered to Constable in 1813: that collection, which was called variously The Rural and Traditionary Tales of Scotland and Cottage Winter Nights, is mentioned in a number of Hogg's letters to Constable and Blackwood between 1813 and 1818 and obviously

existed in a fairly finished form from an early date. Significantly, the first mention to be found of The Brownie of Bodsbeck comes in a letter to Blackwood, written at the beginning of 1818, which seems to ally the novel with that earlier collection of stories:

Push Mr. Scott about the advertisement calling in the names of subscribers for the Wake, and as soon as you think meet announce the tales some way as follows but take your own way.

In the press and speedily will be published Vols 1 and 2 of Mr Hogg's Cottage Tales containing The Brownie of Bodsbeck and The Wool-gatherer. These tales have been selected by him among the Shepherds and peasantry of Scotland and are arranged so as to delineate the manners and superstitions of that class in ancient and modern times &c &c.²⁴

Part of the earlier collection clearly forms a basis for the collection called Winter Evening Tales which appeared in 1820. This contains several pieces from The Spy which, it will be recalled, Hogg included in the proposed contents of the volume mooted to Scott, as well as "The Bridal of Polmood" which is mentioned as part of the collection in a letter to Blackwood at the beginning of 1817. One of the tales which Hogg published along with The Brownie, "The Wool-Gatherer", is also taken from The Spy, and so may have been part of the original collection. The weight of circumstantial evidence implies, though it obviously cannot prove, that The Brownie also dates, at least in part, from the earlier half of the decade. In other words, Old Mortality could not have influenced Hogg's novel for the simple reason that it did not appear until The Brownie of Bodsbeck had already been written in a fairly advanced form. Hogg seems to have revised his tale extensively for its eventual publication: Blackwood was informed at the beginning of 1818 that "another M.S. copy as long as this will be to transcribe but I will have it ready in a week or two".²⁵ But influences that came in from Scott's writing at that stage could affect Hogg only

in the details of his story; the main body of the work - the plot, the characters, and the themes - must have existed before.

Critics have been drawn to the theory that The Brownie of Bodsbeck was written after Old Mortality because Hogg's novel seems, at least superficially, to counter and criticise the other work. But such an antithesis does not inevitably mean that Hogg wrote his novel in constant reference to Scott's, for the religious and social views of the two men had been opposed long before either came to write their novels. Since Hogg, as was suggested above, saw the struggle from the standpoint of popular history, he sided with the suffering people rather than the government. At least part of Scott's sympathies on the other hand went to the government's desire to preserve order in the country. Hogg came out of a community where religion was still a consuming passion; Scott for his part adopted a more rationalistic stance and in consequence seems, in a number of passages in Old Mortality, to find it difficult to understand the basis of the covenanters' quarrel with existing church government. Finally, whereas Hogg was a confirmed and practising presbyterian, though perhaps of a moderate persuasion, Scott had moved away from that religion and was, from an early stage of his life, a member of the Scottish Episcopal Church, in other words, of the church which traced its descent from the government side in the seventeenth century struggles. The sharp division in attitude between the two men came to the surface in a quarrel that occurred, according to Hogg's Familiar Anecdotes of Sir Walter Scott, on the day after The Brownie of Bodsbeck appeared:

There was once more and only once that I found Sir Walter in the same querulous humour with me. It was the day after the publication of my Brownie of Bodsbeck. I called on him after his return from the parliament House on pretence of asking his advice about some very important advice [sic] but in fact to hear his sentiments of my new

work. His shaggy eyebrows were hanging very sore down, a bad prelude, which I knew too well.

"I have read through your new work Mr Hogg" said he and must tell you downright and plainly as I always do that I like it very ill - very ill indeed."

"What for Mr Scott?"

"Because it is a false and unfair picture of the times and the existing characters altogether. An exaggerated and unfair picture!"

"I dinna ken Mr Scott. It is the picture I hae been bred up in the belief o' sin' ever I was born and I had it frae them whom I was most bound to honour and believe. Ah' mair nor that there is not one single incident in the tale - not one - which I cannot prove from history to be literally and positively true. I was obliged sometimes to make one part coalesce with another, but in no one instance have I related a story of a cruelty or a murder which is not literally true. An' that's a great deal mair than you can say for your tale o' Auld Mortality."

You are overshooting the mark now Mr Hogg. I wish it were my tale. But it is not with regard to that, I find fault with your tale at all but merely because it is an unfair and partial picture of the age in which it is laid.²⁶

Perhaps the heat of the quarrel had driven the two men to express their positions more strongly than they perhaps actually believed - perhaps, even, Hogg has, in writing his account, heightened the quarrel for a more dramatic effect - but it is true that at base their positions were as different as the passage suggests. Scott takes his stand on the truth of history as found in documents, Hogg on the history that is handed down in the folk. Since the two views of history are frequently irreconcilable the novels which come from them would be bound to seem opposed even if each were written in ignorance of the other.

The Brownie is then a counterpart to Old Mortality only to the extent that it is a book on the same subject written by an author who held sharply differing views. It need not have been written as a conscious refutation. In fact, if Hogg were intending to provide a corrective to

what he considered errors in Old Mortality, he chose a remarkably oblique method of reply. While both books do in general describe the events of the Wars of the Covenant, The Brownie of Bodsbeck is set some twenty years after Old Mortality and so deals with a much later stage in the struggle: Scott chooses the dramatic campaign that culminated in the Whig defeat at Bothwell Bridge while Hogg concentrates on the grim guerilla war which eventually forced the government into compromise. The only character common to the two books is the commander Claverhouse but while Scott and Hogg offer contrasting portraits of this warrior the difference is more than accounted for by the inherent opposition of attitude in the two authors. Scott's Claverhouse is cultivated, polished, and eloquent in defence of his actions; Old Mortality closes with a sympathetic presentation of his rash but heroic campaign in defence of the rights of James II. Hogg, who had learnt about Claverhouse from tradition, where the opposing general had become a near-supernatural representative of the devil, portrays his "Clavers" as a licentious thug. The Introduction to the second edition is quite unrepentant about this picture of the villain of the novel:

On the publication of the first edition, I was grievously blamed, by a certain party, for having drawn an unfair character of Clavers. I can only say that it is the character I had heard drawn of him all my life, and the character of him which was impressed upon my mind since my earliest remembrance, which all his eulogists can never erase. Moreover, I have not contrived one incident in order to make his character blacker than it was; I may have taken a few of the worst, and condensed them, and that is all, and perfectly fair. If through all the histories of that suffering period, I had discovered one redeeming quality about Clavers, I would have brought it forward, but I found none. He had the nature of a wolf and the bravery of a bull-dog.²⁷

The two books do not even have similar settings: Old Mortality is set in the West of Scotland, which had always been considered the centre of

covenanting activity, while Hogg, ignoring this obvious location, places his novel in his own region of Ettrick Forest. Such differences of period, characterisation, and setting make it difficult to accept that the two books are intended to be read as two sides of a debate.

It is moreover only a very simplistic reading of either book that would see them as polar opposites. Scott has been justly praised for the extent to which he feels sympathy with at least some of the covenanting party, a sympathy which, if it perhaps does not quite balance the scornful caricaturing of Kettledrummle and Mucklewraith, greatly enriches Old Mortality and prevents it from descending into polemic. While The Brownie of Bodsbeck is undeniably a lesser achievement, Hogg is equally careful not to allow all the virtue to only one side. Indeed, it is questionable whether he is in full agreement with either of the contrasting parties. Those who would see the book as a conscious attempt to correct the unfavourable portraits given in Old Mortality would do well to consider which characters really win the author's approval. The book does not show only two attitudes to religion, the High Church and the Covenanting, the Tory and the Whig, but in addition portrays many of the shades which exist between these two extremes, including several characters of whom it could be said they have no religion at all. Certainly, it is the High Church supporters that are most consistently shown to be evil, and to act in a manner contrary to the dictates of Scripture, but several on that side show towards Walter an active charity which can only stem from true religious beliefs. The Whigs, on the other hand, though popularly known as the "saints", are frequently shown to be beset with doubts as to the benevolence of Providence and can be guilty of cruel and self-seeking actions which are in no way consistent with their declared principles. Only one character in the book, Walter Laidlaw's daughter

Katherine, attains the highest standard of religious belief and is never seen to act in a sinful and discreditable manner. She alone never doubts the essential goodness of God or is impatient at the sufferings and injustices the virtuous endure. But Hogg does not pretend that such perfection is easily attained in this world or that only those who have reached that level are truly religious. Many other characters, flawed and doubting though they may be, are capable of a practical form of Christianity which is more suited to the world in which they live and which is, in the event, more attractive than the austerity of perfection. Such characters are, as will be seen, not criticised for their failure to achieve perfection but are praised for their very positive strengths.

Most prominent among such characters is the book's hero, Walter Laidlaw. It is stressed repeatedly that Walter is no model in the strict observance of religious form. John Hoy's description of his master's confusions in the conduct of family worship has already been quoted, while the answers of Walter's son William under cross-examination presents a similar picture, which one would imagine describes the practice of many of Hogg's contemporaries:

"It canna be lees that the man wants, for that maks him nae the wiser; an' for you to say that my father rises to pray i' the night-time, beats a', when ye ken my mither has baith to fleitch an' fight or she can get him eggit on till't i' the Sabbath e'enings. He's o'er glad to get it foughten decently by, to rise an' fa' till't again."

(p. 72)

Given Walter's laxity of form, it is perfectly understandable that he should be committed to no one side in the conflict which is going on round him, but is aware of the failings of both sides:

Walter despised Clerk and his tenets both most heartily; he saw that he was a shallow, hypocritical, and selfish being, and that he knew nothing of the principles in which he pretended to instruct them; therefore he regretted sore the influence that he had gained over his family. Neither did he approve of the rigid and rebellious principles which he believed the Covenanters possessed. When he met with any man, or community of men, who believed firmly in any thing and held it sacred, Walter revered that, and held it sacred likewise; but it was rather from a deference to the belief and feelings of his fellow creatures than his own conviction. In short, Walter was an honest, conscientious, good, old-fashioned man, but he made no great fuss about religion, and many supposed that he did not care a pin who was right or who was wrong.

(p. 14)

Indifferent as to religious form, he is however possessed of natural feelings of Christianity which express themselves in a desire to give practical assistance to those who stand in need of it. The attempts of the covenanters to convince him of the justice of their cause by rational argument are doomed to failure, since of far greater importance to Walter is the obvious deprivation of the necessities of life from which the fugitives are suffering:

"There is still a handfu' remaining in Israel that have not bowed the knee to Baal, nor yet kissed him - that remnant has fled here to escape the cruelty of man; but a worse fate threatens us now - we are all of us perishing with famine - For these three days we have tasted nothing but the green moss, save a few wretched trouts, eels, and adders." "Ethers, man!" quo' I, - "For the love o' God take care how ye eat the ethers - ye may as weel cut your throats at aince as eat them. Na, na, lad, that's meat that will never do." I said nae mair, but gae just a wave to my dog. "Reaver," quo' I, "yon's away." - In three minutes he had ten score o' ewes and wedders at my hand. I grippit twa o' the best I could wale, and cut aff their heads wi' my ain knife. "Now, doctor," quo' I, "take these and roast them, and part them amang ye the best way ye can - ye'll find them better than the ethers - Lord, man, it will never do to eat ethers."

(p. 24)

In consequence he is prepared to risk the loss of his property and even of his life rather than allow those who have asked his assistance to want it:

"Na, na, lads, let them come - let them come their ways! Gin they should take a' the ewes and kye on the Chapelhope, I can stock it o'er again. I dinna gie a bawbee about your leagues, and covenants, and associations, for I think aye there's a good deal o' faction and dourness in them; but or I'll desert a fellow-creature that's oppressed, if he's an honest man, and lippens to me, od, I'll gie up the last button on my breast."

(p. 23)

when, at the end of the book, his daughter's part in the succour of the covenanters is revealed, Walter's praise is reserved not for her religious convictions, evident though these are, but for the charity which, following his example, she has shown:

"O my dear father," said she, "you know not what I have suffered for fear of having offended you; for I could not forget that their principles, both civil and religious, were the opposite of yours - that they were on the adverse side to you and my mother, as well as the government of the country."

"Deil care what side they war on, Kate!" cried Walter, in the same vehement voice; "ye hae taen the side o' human nature; the suffering and the humble side, an' the side o' feeling, my woman, that bodes best in a young inexperienced thing to tak. It is better than to do like yon bits o' gillflirts about Edinburgh; poor shilly-shally milk-an'-water things! Gin ye but saw how they cock up their noses at a whig, an' thraw their bits o' gabs; an' downa bide to look at aught, or hear tell o' aught, that isna i' the top fashion. Ye hae done very right, my good lassie - od, I wadna gie ye for the hale o' them, an' they war a' hung in a strap like ingans."

(p. 163)

Hogg never denies that Walter is far from an ideal in his attitude towards religion; it was not even necessary to point out how far he falls short in following the duties laid down by Scripture. However, his actions more than make up for his failings. In fact, his commonsense attitude is seen to a certain extent as a correction of some of the more extravagant beliefs of the covenanters. His ability to come to the root of the problem is frequently contrasted with the theologians' more abstract conclusions:

Then he began a lang serious harangue about the riches o' free grace, and about the wickedness o' our nature; and said, that we could do naething of ourselves but sin. I said it was a hard construction, but I couldna argy the point ava wi' him - I never was a dab at these lang-winded stories. Then they came on about prelacy and hearsays, and something they ca'd the act of abjuration. I couldna follow them out at no rate; but I says, "I pit nae doubt, callants, but ye're right, for ye hae proven to a' the world that ye think sae; and when a man feels conscious that he's right, I never believe he can be far wrang in sic matters. But that's no the point in question; let us consider what can be done for ye e'en now - Poor souls! God kens, my heart's sair for ye; but this land's mine, an' a' the sheep around ye, and ye're welcome to half-a-dozen o' the best o' them in sic a case."

(p. 22)

At such points, Hogg seems to have arrived at the position where the practical but worldly-minded man seems closer to true Christianity than the most sternly orthodox theologian.

Hogg's attitude towards the covenanters is, in fact, very ambivalent. He shows sympathy with them in their struggles and underlines their heroism in their battles with the troops. He never shows them guilty of the mindless brutality shown by the government army; their two most savage acts, the murder of the curate at the beginning of the book and the massacre of a party of soldiers who descend on the area subsequent to that, are both in response to the most strong provocation. Yet Hogg does not go out of his way to deny that they were at times violent beyond requirements, nor does he deny that these two murders were unheroic and messy pieces of work:

When Copland arrived at the place of rendezvous, five out of his ten associates were no where to be seen, nor did they make their appearance, although he tarried there till two in the afternoon. The guide then conducted them by the path on which those missing should have come, and on arriving at a narrow pass in Chapelhope, they found the bodies of **the** four soldiers and their guide mangled and defaced in no ordinary way; and judging from this that they were long enough in that neighbourhood, they hasted back to Traquair with the news of their loss.

(pp. 16-17)

The conflict in Hogg's mind between basic sympathy for the sufferings of the covenanters and realisation of their acts of violence is never resolved, at least in The Brownie of Bodsbeck. The group whom Katherine helps and to whom Walter brings the news of the relaxation of the government attitude are specifically the most violent of the sect:

"You see here before you, sir," said the little hunch-backed figure, "a wretched remnant of that long persecuted, and now nearly annihilated sect, the covenanted reformers of the west of Scotland. We were expelled from our homes; and at last hunted from our native mountains like wolves, for none of our friends durst shelter any of us on their grounds, on pain of death. Even the rest of the persecuted disowned us, and became our adversaries, because our tenets were more stern and severe than theirs, for we acted on the principle of retaliation as far as it lay in our power, holding that to be in consistency with the laws of God and man; therefore were we expelled from their society, which indeed we disdained."

(p. 161)

By placing this at the end of his novel, Hogg ignores the implications of what the fanatical Brown is saying and relies on the reader's accumulated sympathy persuading him of its justification. While the book encourages the reader to sympathise with the covenanters and to admit the justice of their grievances, it refuses to commit itself on the ethics of the violent means taken to further their cause. The full discussion of that question had to await the more subtle treatment of the covenanting frame of mind which Hogg evolved in the later Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner.

Hogg's ambivalence, if it leads him to less than full agreement with the covenanting party, equally keeps him from utterly damning the Tories. His willingness to be fair to them, and to admit that only a few of them were complete monsters, extends as far as to soften the Borderer's traditional hatred of the Highland troops under Claverhouse's command. "The Highland Host" had passed into legend as the epitome of

all that was savage in the actions of a repressive government, all of the Lowlander's inherited loathing, fear, and mistrust of the Highlander having been concentrated on that invading army. Yet, even though this must have been the attitude in which he was brought up, Hogg is able to ignore all that tradition must have told him and present as one of the most sympathetic and humane characters in his book a member of the Highland army. The actions of Sergeant Roy Macpherson are constantly used to alleviate the charges made against the Royal army, for though, in all but one crucial incident, he obeys orders implicitly, and is consequently guilty of many brutal crimes, this does not prevent him from showing pity for those he is called on to punish. Ignorant and cantankerous, blown up with ridiculous pride in his own genealogy and the sense of his own importance, he is still a noble savage of a kind, whose natural impulses are towards good. His impulsive pity is in many ways a reproach on the savagery of his superiors, for if a man so close to primitive nature can feel pity, what more should a civilised and cultivated scholar such as Claverhouse do? Hogg is fairminded enough to admit that not all the leaders of the Tory side were as unprincipled as Claverhouse. Walter's advocate, Sir George Lockhart, is ready to help the oppressed, while his landlord, Drumelzier, leavens his zeal for his party with mercy and understanding. He was, we are told,

a bold and determined royalist - was, indeed, in high trust with the Privy-council, and had it in his power to have harassed the country as much, and more, than the greater part of those who did so; but, fortunately for that south-east division of Scotland, he was a gentleman of high honour, benevolence, and suavity of manners, and detested any act of injustice or oppression.

(pp. 101-102)

Such exceptions to Hogg's condemnation of the High Church party ensure that the book does not seem unduly glib and clearcut.

But Hogg also has sufficient awareness of the nature of a struggle of this type to realise that the bulk of the population will remain unaligned. The endless arguing over points of conscience may be necessary for some, but the majority of people, especially in a farming community, realise that life and work must be carried on. John Hoy, Walter's shepherd, is prepared to suffer the loss of his ears rather than abandon the farm at a time when there is work to be done, while Walter's neighbours seem far more frightened of the Brownie than they ever are of Claverhouse. Even the outwardly religious are not really affected by the conflict. Walter's wife Maron appears to be a fervent episcopalian who has implicit faith in the holiness of the local curate, Clerk, but, as Walter realises, her zeal arises more from a desire for importance than out of any sense of conviction. As we are told, Maron is "just such a character as would have been a whig had she ever had an opportunity of hearing them or conversing with them" (p. 14). On the other hand, the loquacious Davie Tait, the herd of nearby Whithope, while making great display of his talents as a preacher and imitating the style of the leading Whig orators, is moved to do so not by his views on the relationship between Church and State, but by his pride in his abilities and by his gratification at the deference paid to them by his circle of acquaintance. However, if these neutral characters are presented as motivated to some extent by self-interest, they are also shown as being in general much less ready to do harm than good. While less active in their charity than Walter and his daughter, they are, in their own small way, good people who will assist in necessity. Hogg would seem to be suggesting that humanity, while capable

of great cruelty in times of disorder, is in general peaceable and amiable; once the evil caused by strife is removed, life will return to a naturally pleasant course.

Therefore, while Hogg is without doubt more inclined to favour the Whigs than Scott, he does not do so blindly or in a partisan spirit. Instead he stresses the essential goodness of mankind which, while it may be perverted by fanatical zeal towards a particular cause, will still show through no matter what may be one's beliefs. This conviction in the virtue of moderation inevitably brings The Brownie of Bodsbeck, in the final analysis, to a position not too far removed from that of Old Mortality. Of course, Scott and Hogg have a bias towards opposing sides for which neither man would have been able to give a wholly rational explanation; it was a bias which resulted from generations of prejudice as well as from the widely differing social backgrounds of the two men. But in the rational portion of their minds they were prepared to admit that neither side was composed of perfect saints or unredeemed villains. That they could be so dispassionate perhaps suggests that neither had a real grasp of the nature of the struggle. The suggestion that religious form is unimportant would hardly have been found acceptable by the participants and perhaps comes more easily to those whose principle interests lie outside religion in the world of art. But from a critical point of view, the desire to see the two books as opposites has probably led many to overemphasise Hogg's enthusiasm for the whigs as much as contemporary Whig prejudice branded Old Mortality as unredeemed Tory diatribe.

This tendency to overemphasise the importance of Hogg's presentation of the Whigs has also blinded critics to an important strand of the book. Old Mortality is, by all definitions, a historical novel: it

attempts to convey imaginatively the social pressures and the personal conflicts that were expressed in the conflict between Whig and Tory. This shows in Scott's greater historical accuracy and in his more critical attitude to the written source material on which he drew. It shows too in Scott's interest in the outward trappings of life - in eating habits and social forms - which stress the differences between the seventeenth century and his own. Scott's sense of the continuum of history, its progression into and out of periods of conflict, makes him emphasise above all the particular nature of that period in Scottish history, so that Old Mortality takes its place in that cycle of novels which show the motivation for the confrontations between Whig and Tory from the early seventeenth century right up to Scott's own day. The type of historical fiction that this intention produces is a very important one, particularly vital when one is living, as Scott was, at a time of accelerated social change where the roots of one's culture are in danger of being lost, but Scott's outstanding achievement in this manner of writing should not lead us into the error of thinking it the only possible way of using history for fictional purposes. It certainly will not give an adequate account of Hogg's The Brownie of Bodsbeck. Hogg is not greatly interested in establishing the historical reality of his story. Differences in costume and manners are not greatly insisted on; as has been said earlier, Hogg is, on the contrary, at pains to suggest how similar country life of that period was to that he had himself experienced. Nor does the language, at least of the lower class characters, attempt to impart a historical flavour to the book; that infallible litmus test of fake historicism, the kind of oaths the characters use, shows how contemporary The Brownie must have seemed, for its profanity was thought lively

enough to require censorship in the later edition. Dates and documents are not emphasised: the authorities appealed to are Wodrow and the evidence of the Ettrick countryside, hardly irrefutable evidence, and, certainly in the case of the traditional evidence, frequently open to the objection that Hogg has made it up. His laxity in historical detail shows how little interested Hogg was in the idea of the historical novel as an imaginative social history; his interest plainly lay elsewhere.

Hogg's intention in setting his novel in the last quarter of the seventeenth century was not to present in detail the historical reality of that period but to use the opportunities it allowed for exposing his characters to a far greater degree of upheaval and suffering than would have been possible in a more contemporary setting. He may have been drawn to that time by traditional enthusiasm for the period and by a desire to do justice to the persecuted party, but its principal attraction lay in the sharp ideological divisions which existed then, which meant that a man's life was at the whim of the beliefs of his persecutor. The use of this historical setting allows Hogg to describe in The Brownie of Bodsbeck a nightmare world where truth and honesty are no defence against brutality and where normal standards of conduct will not protect the victim from injustice. John Hoy, sentenced to torture for telling nothing but the truth, laments: "'Ah, lak-a-day! I fear things are muckle waur wi' us than I had ony notion o'! I trowed aye that even down truth an' honesty bure some respect till now - I fear our country's a' wrang thegither.'" (p.66). Walter Laidlaw is left baffled by his acquittal on a criminal charge for his innocence has played no part in saving him; he has been cleared solely because he abused the court:

I thankit his lordship; but thinks I to mysel ye're a wheen queer chaps! Ye shoot fock for praying an' reading the Bible, an' whan ane curses an' damns ye, ye ca' him a true honest man! I wish ye be na the deil's bairns, the halewort o' ye!

(p. 142)

Walter's belief in the ultimate vindication of truth has earlier been unsettled by his conversations with the worldly-wise Sergeant Macpherson:

Walter said, he trusted still to the proofs of his own loyalty, and the want of evidence to the contrary.

"Pooh! Pooh! Cot tamm!" said Macpherson; "I tell you the evidence that you want is this, if any great man say you ought to live, you will live; if not, you will die."

(p. 106)

In the world in which Walter is living normal ethical standards seem to be no shield to an honest man. But where then is he to seek consolation from the cruelty of the oppressor? Where may order and pattern be found in a world of disorder? For life to seem worth suffering for, Walter must find some positive force which will counteract the irrational time in which he lives.

The only source of order in the chaos lived through by the characters of The Brownie of Bodsbeck lies in a belief in the Christian God, and a submission to His will. Such a conclusion may seem platitudinous and weakly pietistic, resolving the conflict in the book by an appeal to religious authority and not by the development of the characters. But that would be the case only if Hogg showed such consolation to be easily won. All internal conflict would be a sham if Hogg always had to hand the comfortable resolution of a devotional tag; nothing is left for the author to do if all problems can be solved by escaping to a loftier plane whenever they arise. But by portraying the

agonies and doubts of even the most confirmed of believing Christians, Hogg shows the true nature of such a mind when confronted by the horrors of sin and confusion; the religious consolation eventually found does not seem glib when one sees the torments which must be passed through before it is reached. This shows most clearly in the doubts which Nanny, the old covenanting serving-woman, must suffer before she attains full confidence in the ultimate goodness of God. One would not expect from the opening descriptions of her that it was a struggle which she would have to undergo. She seems rock-steady in her faith, confident that, despite the sufferings of her covenanting husband and son, they will have received their reward in Heaven:

"I'll look round to my right hand and ane will say, 'Mother! my dear mother, are you here with us?' I'll turn to my left hand, another will say, 'Nanny! my dear and faithful wife, are you too here with us?' - I'll say, 'Ay, John, I'm here; I was yours in life; I have been yours in death; an' I'll be yours in life again.'" (p. 93)

When Nanny is later asked by Katherine to tend the Whigs while she goes to her father's assistance, the old nurse rejoices in the news that she will be saved from the attentions of the Brownie by the presence of the covenanters, seeing this as a vindication of their holiness. Such faith is however too easily won and must undergo a more severe trial before Nanny fully understands her religious duties. During Katherine's absence, Nanny disobeys her instructions not to look at the Whigs, and sees the figure of her supposedly dead husband, deformed by injury, whom she imagines to have been punished for his sins by being turned into the Brownie. Faced with what she thinks a perversion of all her ideals, she is left, like Walter, questioning what rewards may be given the honest and the just if they suffer both in this world and the next:

"Say nae sae, dear bairn; my sight hasna deceived me, yet I have been deceived. The world has deceived me - hell has deceived me - and heaven has winked at the deed. Alak, an' wae's me, that it should hae been predestined afore the world began! The day was, an' no sae lang sin' syne, when I could hae prayed wi' confidence, an' sung wi' joy; but now my mind is overturned, and I hae nouter stay on earth, nor hope in heaven! The veil of the Temple may be rent below, and the ark of the testimony thrown open above, but their forms will not be seen within the one, nor their names found written in the other! We have been counted as sheep for the slaughter; we have been killed all the day long; yet hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious? and is his mercy clean gone for ever?"

(p. 118)

It is only Katherine, the one perfect character in the book, whose belief is sufficiently secure to counter these doubts. Possessed of such purity of belief, she can reassure the broken-hearted old woman and restore her faith:

"I tell you, woman, that whatever you may fancy you have seen or heard in the darkness of night, when imagination forms fantasies of its own; of all those who have stood up for our civil and religious liberties; who for the sake of a good conscience have yielded up all, and sealed their testimony with their blood - not one hair of their heads shall fall to the ground! for their names are written in the book of life, and they shall shine as stars in the kingdom of their Father. You have yourself suffered much, and have rejoiced in your sufferings - So far you did well - Do not then mar so fair an eternal harvest - so blest a prospect of a happy and everlasting community, by the sin of despair, that can never be forgiven. Can you, for a moment, while in possession of your right senses, doubt of the tender mercies of your Maker and Preserver? Can you for a moment believe that he has hid his face from the tears and the blood that have been shed for his cause in Scotland? As well may you doubt that the earth bears or the sun warms you, or that he never made a revelation of his will to man."

(p. 119)

While Nanny experiences such doubts in their most extreme form, many other characters are brought to a similar position. Walter's foolish wife Maron appears in her most sympathetic light when, thinking that her two sons have been executed by Claverhouse, she exclaims, "'He hasna forgotten to be gracious, nor is his mercy clean gone'" (p.72) Even the stern whigs who seek shelter on Chapelhope **doubt** God's

mercy, for Walter must assure one who hopes that the Lord will forgive him the theft of a sheep "'If he dinna...he's no what I think him'" (p. 22).

Katherine's assurances of God's eventual reward are reflected in the shape of the book, for the seemingly never-ending persecutions and injustices which are detailed in the beginning have been brought to a close by the last chapter. The Whigs Walter shelters doubt whether peace will ever be restored:

"Dost thou talk of our rulers relaxing?" said he.
 "Blind and mistaken man! thou dost not know them. No; they will never relax till their blood shall be mixed with their sacrifices.....York hath said in full assembly, 'that neither the realm nor the mother-church can ever be safe, until the south of Scotland is again made a hunting forest;' and his commissioner hath sworn by the living God, 'that never a whig shall again have time or warning to prepare for Heaven, for that hell is far too good for them.' Can we hope for these men relaxing?"

(p. 33)

Such a view is inevitable to those who are buffeted by the movement of history for they have knowledge only of the past and present. It is left to the novelist, blessed with the knowledge of their future, to show the wider pattern and point to a time when injustice will cease. That this happens with miraculous, and unprepared, suddenness is Hogg's way of suggesting the concern of Providence for the sufferers: he does not even hint at the true reason for James II's conversion to tolerance, his desire for less persecution throughout the religious spectrum, even as far as Roman Catholicism. Hogg means the reader to be left with the feeling that good will ultimately prevail no matter how grim the situation. The controlling power which orders events will ensure that the good man, believer or non-believer, will not suffer, but will emerge into prosperity renewed by the trials he has undergone.

In The Brownie of Bodsbeck, therefore, Hogg is using the form of the historical novel to put forward a consistent picture of the world and to express his attitudes on a number of subjects - religion, charity, the nature of the relationship between God and Man. The presentation of what Hogg sees as the true picture of the covenanters is subsidiary in importance to these themes. Since The Brownie of Bodsbeck asks very different questions from Old Mortality, it is inevitable that the novel Hogg produced, no matter what the answer may be to the question of priority, was of a very different sort. However, though such a unity of argument must be granted Hogg's novel, it must also be admitted that the ultimate impression the book leaves upon the reader is far from unified, and that in consequence it is only by making large allowances that Hogg's wider scheme can be perceived. The book contains striking scenes and memorable characters, but the onward movement which should carry the reader along simultaneously with the pressure of the argument is lacking. Hogg is discussing important matters and has identified them with some degree of clarity, but he has failed to present them in the most appropriate form. He may have, as this chapter has tried to show, possessed insight enough into the expectations of the reading public to meet the demand for a consistent handling of theme and plot but he has yet to match this with a consistent narrative texture for its presentation.

Hogg adopts a number of modes of narrative in The Brownie of Bodsbeck. Many passages are given in direct speech, narrated by the very characters to whom the events described are supposed to have happened. These sections are written in colloquial Scots, and are, as Hogg tells us, meant to reflect the manner of telling adopted by a country story-teller. For instance, towards the beginning of the

book, Hogg introduces Walter's account of his first meeting with the Whigs with the hope that "as Walter was wont to relate the story himself, when any stranger came there on a winter evening, as long as he lived, it may haply be acceptable to the curious, and the lovers of rustic simplicity, to read it in his own words, although he drew it out to an inordinate length, and perhaps kept his own personal feelings and prowess too much in view for the fastidious or critical reader to approve" (p. 18). Other passages, also written in Scots, describe events by the use of dialogue, in which Walter or his neighbours discuss their opinions about what is happening, while some scenes, such as that which describes the revelation of Nanny's torture, use dialogue in a way closely approaching that of the drama. However, for much of the book, Hogg, instead of adopting these vivid forms of narrative, prefers to employ a more conventional third-person narrative form, in which an omniscient narrator stands outside the action of the book and comments on events, reporting dialogue in indirect speech. These methods of narration are of course basic to all writers of fiction and have been used with equal success by many a great novelist. However, since Hogg does not follow any one of them consistently through his book, but prefers to alternate them so that some passages are told in one form, others in another, the jolts when he changes from one to another are felt the more strongly by the reader. There is no one standpoint from which the reader can view the story: he is meant to empathise with Walter in his narratives, to participate in the opinions of other characters in the dialogues, and to stand back with the editor in the reported passages. The constant shifts in perspective which result from this varying narrative mode counteract the unity which results from Hogg's tightness of theme and characterisation.

It is not an oversimplification to say that the best sections of The Brownie of Bodsbeck are those which are closest to the spoken word. The book achieves its most vivid life in Walter's account of his adventures, as, for example, in the long description he gives of the chance meeting which starts him on his path of suffering and imprisonment:

I was just standin looking about me amang the lang hags that lead out frae the head o' the North Grain, and considering what could be wort of a' the sheep, when I noticed my dog, Reaver, gaun couring away forrit as he had been setting a fox. What's this, thinks I - On he gangs very angry like, cocking his tail, and setting up his birses, till he wan to the very brink of a deep hag; but when he gat there, my certy, he wasna lang in turning! Back he comes, by me, an' away as the deil had been chasing him; as terrified a beast I saw never - Od, sir, I fand the very hairs o' my head begin to creep, and a prinkling through a' my veins and skin like needles an' preens. - "God guide us!" thinks I, "what can this be?" The day was derk, derk; for I was in the very stamoch o' the cludd, as it were; still it was the day time, an' the e'e o' Heaven was open. I was as near turned an' run after my tike as ever I'll miss, but I just fand a stound o' manheid gang through my heart, an' forrit I sets wi' a' the vents o' my head open. "If it's flesh an' blood," thinks I, "or it get the owrance o' auld Wat Laidlaw, od it sal get strength o' arm for aince." It was a deep hag, as deep as the wa's o' this house, and a strip o' green sward along the bottom o't; and when I came to the brow, what does I see but twa lang liesh chaps lying sleeping at ither's sides, baith happit wi' the same maud. "Hallo!" cries I, wi' a sture voice, "wha hae we here?" If ye had but seen how they lookit when they stertit up; od, ye wad hae thought they were twa scoundrels wakened frae the dead! I never saw twa mair hemp-looking dogs in my life.
(p. 19)

One's initial response is to praise the accuracy with which Hogg has evoked the sound of spoken Scots. This has been done partly by the use of dialect words, partly by the adoption of exclamations and forms of direct personal address which are employed in the spoken language, but also by the creation of longer and less tightly structured sentences than is characteristic of written prose. But Hogg's skill in the imitation of direct speech should not be allowed to conceal his

equally considerable ability in describing the action through Walter's eyes. In the passage just quoted, Hogg, by concentrating on the physical sensations which fear brings out in Walter, goes a great way towards persuading the reader to identify his own responses with those of the sheep-farmer. The description of the day is rendered the more impressive because of the effect it has on the central character; it would not possess nearly such power over the imagination if there were no figure in whose emotions the reader could share. The brief struggle which breaks out between Walter and the supposed intruder testifies in a similar fashion to the advantages of seeing violent action through the protagonist's own eyes:

I wheeled just round in a moment, sir, and drew a desperate straik at the foremost, an' sae little kend the haniel about fencing, that instead o' sweeing aff my downcome wi' his sword, he held up his sword-arm to save his head - I gart his arm just snap like a pipe-stopple, and down fell his bit whittle to the ground, and he on aboon it. The tither, wi' his sma' spear, durstna come on, but ran for it; I followed, and was mettler o' foot than he, but I durstna grip him, for fear he had run his bit spit through my sma-fairns i' the struggle, for it was as sharp as a lance, but I keepit a little back till I gat the end o' my stick just i' the howe o' his neck, and then I gae him a push that soon gart him plew the flow wi' his nose. On aboon him I gets, and the first thing I did was to fling away his bit sweeg of a sword - I gart it shine through the air like a fiery dragon - then I took him by the cuff o' the neck, and lugged him back to his neighbour, wha was lying graning in the hag.

(pp. 20-21)

The vivid similes, as well as the startling aural simile which brings the sound of a breaking arm to gruesome life, give immediacy to the description while the movement of the sentences, longish but made up of short phrases and clauses, provides an apt illustration of Walter's stage by stage progress to mastery of the situation. Again the narrative achieves its effect by having a centre for the reader's consciousness in Walter himself, so that the emotional response to the action is conveyed as strongly as the action itself.

Such advantages result naturally from the first-person form, but the nature of the action, in which Walter is separated from the main centre of events after he has been taken prisoner, makes it impossible for him to be narrator to the whole book. However, by using a sort of dramatic dialogue, in which events are described only through the remarks of the characters, without the author's intervention, much of the vividness of first-person narrative is achieved without the author having to put the story into the mouth of any one person. For example, a nervous dialogue which follows the supposed visitation of the Brownie on Davie Tait and his friends tells far more of the ridiculous superstitions of the country people, and the irreverent attitude of Davie, than any description could have done:

"Lord sauf us!" cried Davie, from below, "we hae forespoke the Brownie - tak that elbow out o' my guts a wee bit. They say, if ye speak o' the deil, he'll appear. 'Tis an unsonsy and dangerous thing to - Wha's aught that knee? slack it a little. God guide us, sirs, there's the weight of a millstane on aboon the links o' my neck. If the Lord hae forsaken us, an' winna heed our prayers, we may gie up a' for tint thegither! - Nanny, hae ye boltit the door?"

(p. 124)

Again, the reader is prompted to identify with the plight of Tait and his companions by the need to imagine the situation as they saw it; that ridiculous pile of frightened rustics is rendered much easier to visualise from the stray arms and legs which interrupt Davie's flow of speech. At other times, the descriptions of a neutral author figure are given vividness and focus by the liberal use of dialogue which concentrates the reader on the viewpoint of each speaker in turn.

Unfortunately, for much of the book, the reader has no character with whom to identify, for in a great many of the third person narratives Hogg adopts the dispassionate tone of the historian. This is especially the case in the central section of the book in which Hogg

describes the atrocities witnessed by Walter on his journey to Edinburgh. Hogg employs the manner, as well as the matter, of Wodrow and tells of the most hideous cruelty without persuading the reader to feel it or to sympathise with the sufferers. In such passages, Hogg adopts a stilted English style, pruned of the evocative similes and the varied vocabulary of the "spoken" descriptions. The story of the young shepherd who is tried and executed as a covenanter merely because he is found visiting his sweetheart late at night could be affecting, or could at least provide some tear-jerking sentiment, but not in the way Hogg chooses to describe it:

About the break of day, they went and surrounded a shepherd's cottage belonging to the farm of Corehead, having been led thither by the curate, where they found the shepherd an old man, his daughter, and one Edward M'Cane, son to a merchant in Lanarkshire, who was courting this shepherdess, a beautiful young maiden. The curate having got intelligence that a stranger was at that house, immediately suspected him to be one of the wanderers, and on this surmise the information was given. The curate acknowledged the shepherd and his daughter as parishioners, but of M'Cane, he said, he knew nothing, and had no doubt that he was one of the rebellious whigs. They fell to examine the youth, but they were all affected with the liquor they had drunk over night, and made a mere farce of it, paying no regard to his answers, or, if they did, it was merely to misconstrue or mock them.

(pp. 110-111)

This reads like a legal report, where fact is of greater importance than emotion, and, indeed, the style it imitates, that of Wodrow, has just such an end in view. Had Hogg been writing a history of the rebellion, such a narrative style could have had considerable cumulative effect as fact piled on fact without the author forcing conclusions and emotions on the reader. But as incidental narratives in the course of a novel where for much of the time emotional identification is the author's principal intention these reported stories cannot help but seem dry and cold. The author, it seems, has made no attempt to transform them

from fact into fiction by applying his imagination to the bare narrative bones: amid so much that is imaginative they inevitably seem dull.

The disparity between the vivid descriptions based on speech and the dry scholarly tone of the embedded historical narratives arises from the incompatible nature of the two sources out of which he was writing. From folk tradition Hogg took the style of the oral narrator, telling his story in Scots, with great detail drawn from personal experience. Such a narrator seeks to arouse in his audience the same emotions that he felt himself and employs his virtuosity in the description of his surroundings and in mimicry of others to create an imaginative picture of his experiences. From Wodrow on the other hand Hogg took a respect for fact, a desire to present what he believed to be a truthful picture of history without distorting it by emotional appeals. Of course, there is no reason why Hogg should not have been able to unite the two halves into one vision but that would have required far greater effort of imagination than he applied to the passages which echo Wodrow. Hogg had shown in his poetry what success he could achieve in taking over the matter of another man's writing into his own imaginings, but in much of The Brownie of Bodsbeck such success eluded him. In consequence, the novel he produced moves fitfully and in an episodic fashion.

This may be a residue of the original plan of writing a collection of tales based on popular traditions, the form in which, it will be remembered, Hogg first offered a book of prose to Archibald Constable. The remarkable tenacity with which the title Cottage Winter Nights, or something similar, clings to this collection and finally attaches itself to the volumes containing The Brownie suggests that, in the author's mind at least, there was some degree of identity between the two projects.

It may well be, therefore, that a number of shorter tales have been fused together to form The Brownie of Bodsbeck. This would account for the episodic nature of the work, in which a number of sub-plots coincide with Walter's central experiences: it might, for example, account for the small part that Walter plays in the actual adventure of the Brownie, and for the presence of vignettes such as Davie Tait's prayer. It might also explain the unassimilated nature of the Wodrow-like passages, which frequently seem to be irrelevant to the main action. At best, they provide examples of the injustice which the characters must counter by the strength of their belief, but such a concept has not been given imaginative reality. If they were indeed late additions to a much shorter tale, it is easy to understand how the resulting effect was so inconsistent. Certainly, whatever the reason, Hogg has failed to incorporate them into the imaginative unity of his novel.

The British Critic, in its review of The Brownie of Bodsbeck, concluded that the principal fault of the book was that Hogg was frequently writing of things of which he had no first-hand experience:

We think the above specimen of our author's talents for humour and lively description will be sufficient to shew that Mr Hogg has only to remember the precept of Horace,

"Sumite materiam vestris, qui scribitis, aequam
Viribus,"

and he will become a very popular novelist. If he will only favour the public with a series of tales, illustrating the manners and scenery of his country, as they exist at present, and have come under his own observation, we cannot entertain a doubt of his success.²⁸

Given the comparative failure of the historical passages as opposed to those which come from Hogg's traditional background, one might be tempted to agree with the anonymous reviewer. But it must not be forgotten that Hogg had earlier shown convincing evidence of his ability

to be as successful in his treatment of things he found in books as of things he found in the more familiar surroundings of country life.

The Brownie of Bodsbeck is hampered therefore not by Hogg's basic intention of writing a novel with a historical setting but by his temporary failure to meet the expectations raised by such an undertaking. He had shown that he had something to say but, unlike "Kilmeny", The Brownie of Bodsbeck does not show the perfect form emerging automatically to express the author's ideas. Hogg required more experience before he was fully able to tell a consistent story from a consistent point of view: his education as a prose writer was still far from complete.

The Brownie of Bodsbeck is certainly not an unreadable failure - it has too much vitality and imagination to be that - but Hogg needed to make other attempts at the form before he achieved complete success.

CHAPTER V

The Three Perils of Man

Of Hogg's three full-length novels, The Three Perils of Man¹ has been the least kindly treated by posterity. The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner has slowly gained in reputation until it has reached the position of esteem it enjoys in the twentieth century. The Brownie of Bodsbeck was included in Hogg's Tales and Sketches and was reprinted, both as part of that collection and on its own, throughout last century. But The Three Perils of Man, after its initial appearance in 1822, virtually disappeared without trace for one hundred and fifty years. Since it sold poorly on first publication, it was reprinted only in the severely cut edition, renamed "The Siege of Roxburgh", which was prepared for Tales and Sketches; as a result it has been known to but few readers and has received little critical attention. Faced with the difficulty of finding an early copy and daunted once they had by the sheer bulk of the complete text, critics were happy to take on trust the dismissive judgement which its author passed on The Three Perils of Man ten years after he had published it:

In 1822, perceiving that I was likely to run short of money, I began and finished in the course of a few months, "The Three Perils of Man, viz. War, Women, and Witchcraft!" Lord preserve us! What a medley I made of it! for I never in my life rewrote a page of prose; and being impatient to get hold of some of Messrs. Longman and Co.'s money or their bills, which were the same, I dashed on, and mixed up with what might have been made one of the best historical tales our country ever produced, such a mass of diablerie as retarded the main story, and rendered the whole perfectly ludicrous.²

However, the recent reappearance of the work after so long an absence from literary history, newly edited in an absolutely complete text,³

demands that a fresh look be taken at it: one must consider how far Hogg's verdict on the book was influenced by its initial failure. Coming as it does two years before The Confessions of a Justified Sinner, it stands at a crucial point in the author's development. As much his longest work to date, The Three Perils marks the degree of maturity reached by Hogg in the middle years of his career. In this chapter, therefore, I shall discuss whether The Three Perils of Man is indeed the hastily-written pot-boiler which Hogg himself termed it or whether, possessing a greater integrity than he credited it with, it shows a positive development in his ability as a writer of prose fiction.

One thing about Hogg's account of the book is certainly false: far from being the product of a few months intensive effort, The Three Perils of Man occupied its author for nearly three years. Mention of a new work of fiction was first made to Blackwood as early as November 1819:

I am going to publish a romance in two volumes this spring coming, anonymously. And if you did not really consider it as an object to you I would rather have it in some respectable company's hands in London. I not only think that you make your general publishing a very subordinate consideration but I do not like to have all my ventures however small in one hand.⁴

That the book he described was indeed The Three Perils is indicated by the letter written a fortnight later in which he gave the publisher further information about the new book:

I really would like better that my book were published in London because my bookseller and stile are so well known that I may as well put my name to it as publish it with you. I do not know about the transaction[,] I myself will never try to do it and I take it very kind in you

offering your experienced hand though it is only of a piece with all your dealings formerly. It is however somewhat ticklish. Should I trust it solely to Mr Scott it would be conducted through the medium of Ballantyne and would likely fall into hands I should not like, most probably Hurst and Robinson. I might as well give up all previous connections and publish it at home. With Murray or Cadell and Davies I would be in the same scrape as with yourself. I really think then that you should try your hand with Longman & Co. and if you cannot arrange matters we shall try what can be done some other way [.] Be sure keep them in the dark[.] I would not even tell them the name but merely that it is a Romance or Tale of Chivalry in two volumes descriptive of the characters of the Scots and English Borderers in former times.⁵

Hogg must have made considerable headway in the writing of the book, for in January of the following year he was able to confirm that the new romance would be ready in the spring.⁶ Unfortunately, this forecast proved to be unduly optimistic. Throughout 1820 The Three Perils of Man seems to have lain untouched. Blackwood did his best to hustle the writer on, showing friendly concern for the book even though he no longer had any share in the publication.

"What are you doing with your Romance?" Hogg was asked in August of that year. "I am weary to hear about it and to see some part of it."⁷ The request was repeated a few days later: "You don't say a word about your Romance. Have you given it up."⁸ Hogg finally broke silence about his book in a letter dated the twentieth of that month:

I have been so much engaged in other matters that I have made no progress in my border Romance for about 3 months. For my own part I think it exceedingly happy but I have only about one vol written [.] I could not venture it to press before the spring.⁹

But despite his renewed mention of it, Hogg still could not make time to complete his romance: on 7 October he wrote regretfully that it was still "stationary".¹⁰ Some time between then and the following June he was at last able to finish it, only to be met with

the humiliation of seeing it refused by the proposed publishers, Longman and Company. Blackwood was asked to use his influence with the firm, while Scott's aid was sought in revising the book into a more publishable form:

There is another way in which you could render me independant in my farm at once merely by promising to Constable, Murray, Longman or any you please to go over my new work either in proof or MS - I felt long ago when I took you up as my pattern and master in literature that without you I could not do. I feel it now once more as strongly as ever. For these five years bygone I thought myself quite independant and calculated on continuing so. If it had not been such a large concern coming on me at once so I would but I trust to be soon more independant than ever.¹¹

It is not clear which name proved the most influential, but the next year the long gestation was over and The Three Perils of Man appeared under Longman's imprint, but without the anonymity which its author had requested. The Three Perils, as can be seen from these letters, was not the product of one short burst of writing at a particularly needy time but had slowly developed in the course of two winters with ample time between for consideration.

There were, it must be admitted, many reasons beside the aesthetic why The Three Perils of Man should have taken so long to write. The years from 1820 to 1822 were fraught with difficulties for the fifty year old farmer and the time available for literary creation must have been severely curtailed. 1820 saw not only Hogg's marriage to Margaret Phillips after a lengthy courtship, but also his entry into the tenancy of Mount Benger, an extensive sheep farm which, for the next ten years, added to his existing liabilities at Eltrieve Lake. On top of that, Robert Hogg, the writer's father, died that autumn after a long illness. The

following year confronted the new tenant with a series of disasters: his father-in-law, Peter Phillips, who had undertaken to stand as surety for Hogg's tenancy, went bankrupt and left his son-in-law solely responsible for stocking the farm, while in the autumn of that year Hogg was confined to bed for a number of weeks, seriously ill with the measles. Already under stress on these counts, Hogg's always uneasy temper was liable to let fly at any presumed slight. It was perhaps inevitable that 1821 should have seen the first of Hogg's quarrels with William Blackwood, provoked by the mockery which "Maga" had heaped on Hogg and by a disagreement about the supposed profits accruing from The Brownie of Bodsbeck. Small wonder, therefore, that Hogg, under stress on all sides, should have felt little like writing. But this should not lead us to ignore the effect the delay must have had on The Three Perils of Man: the faults it might be expected to show would not be the result of overhaste and lack of thought, but rather would, if anything, be the products of overingenuity in its author's attempts to continue a stuck work. The romance may be expected to show inconsistencies of plotting but the long germination period should have given Hogg a deeper insight into the theme and subject of the book and so have enabled him to unify it by the consistency of his thought. It will certainly be necessary to think of the book as a carefully meditated whole produced over an extended period of time.

The setting for The Three Perils of Man takes the reader further back in history even than The Brownie of Bodsbeck, for the action takes place in the days of King Robert II of Scotland, who reigned, according to the history books if not to Hogg, from 1371 to 1390. Sir Philip Musgrave, an English nobleman, to prove his worthiness

of the hand of the beautiful Lady Jane Howard, has captured the castle of Roxburgh and vowed to hold it against the Scots until Christmas has passed. Envious of this mark of favour offered to the princess of a rival country, the Scottish princess, Margaret, pledges her hand to any Scottish knight who will pay her the compliment of retaking the castle in her name before the period has elapsed, but laying the severe condition that failure will involve the challenger in the forfeit of his lands. The only knight who is sufficiently brave to risk the penalty, the fiery Lord Douglas, summons his vassals and lays siege to the town. However, one of the Border lairds summoned, the wily Warden of the middle marches, Sir Ringan Redhough, resents being treated as a subordinate, and, fearing the augmentation of Douglas' power, stands off to await developments. The two rival ladies, disguising themselves as men, both travel in search of their respective lovers, but Margaret, meeting her rival on the road, discovers the lady's identity and presents Lady Jane to Douglas as a captive, while, having adopted a new disguise, she acts as page to her lover.

Meanwhile, Sir Ringan, having realised that the siege is now in a position of stalemate, decides that the time has come to enter the contest. Before doing so, he sends an embassy to his kinsman, the noted wizard Sir Michael Scott, in order to learn the probable outcome of that action. The grotesque party, headed by the brave Borderer Charlie Scott and the mysterious Gospel Friar, whom the reader comes to recognise as the legendary Roger Bacon, arrive at Scott's castle of Aikwood after a perilous journey through enemy territory. They confront the wizard and, in a duel of magic between Scott and the Friar, blow Scott's evil steward Gourlay from the top of the castle with gunpowder, leaving themselves trapped there behind

locked doors. The party, fearing starvation, hold a story-telling competition to determine who will be eaten should necessity demand it. A troop of soldiers sent by Sir Ringan to their rescue is chased off by devils, but, in due course, the prisoners are released and, after experiencing the full extent of Scott's magic power, are dispatched from Aikwood in the form of cattle. Sir Ringan, taking this as a sign, is able to capture Roxburgh by the trick of concealing his troops in cow hides and so persuading the famished garrison to take them through their gates. The English soldiers, disheartened by the earlier suicide of Sir Philip, who was driven to despair by the sight of his mistress on the scaffold awaiting execution, surrender the castle after a long and bloody battle. Ringan is rewarded with seven baronetcies, Douglas receives the hand of Margaret, while Charlie Scott, after a great deal of court intrigue, is married off to Lady Jane. Michael Scott, we learn at the end, is the one loser, for the expiry of his contract with the devil results in his being torn to pieces by demons. The book closes with a description of his burial in Melrose Abbey.

Even from this outline of The Three Perils of Man, the reader will see how far it is removed from the attempt at historical reality in The Brownie of Bodsbeck. The earlier novel, though hardly painstaking in its desire for historical accuracy, at least had a source in a work of popular history to which the author could refer. The history of Hogg's second novel, on the other hand, is almost entirely the product of his imagination. Douglas Gifford has shown in his annotations to The Three Perils of Man how chance are the resemblances between the romance and the facts of history. Characteristics of many Stuart kings find themselves amalgamated in the description of Robert, battles are transferred from one

century to another, anachronisms are rife. The characters named in The Three Perils of Man either never existed, or, if they did, played a very different role in history. Where The Brownie is marked by a scrupulous concern for the realities of geography and of history, at least as contained in Wodrow, a concern which is stressed by the careful revision such details underwent for the second edition, Hogg's lack of interest in such matters when writing The Three Perils is shown by the equanimity with which he approached the task of renaming one of his central characters a matter of months before the book appeared. It will be remembered that, in the summer of 1821, Hogg had asked Scott to look over his rejected romance and advise on any changes that would make it more acceptable. Scott remained silent on the quality of the book but expressed his horror at the unflattering portrait given of the Warden, which he found the more objectionable because Sir Ringan was the ancestor of the present Duke of Buccleuch, the head of the house of Scott. Hogg was easily swayed by such objections, however absurd they may seem to us today, and set to work to remove from the Warden's character those features in which he was less than ideal:

I have drawn Sir Walter as I suppose he existed. As a warrior and a chief I am sure of the justice done him and he still rises in estimation till the end. But then I have made him somewhat blunt and uncourtly uttering at times strong expressions of broad Scots and besides he is not a little superstitious. The character is a noble character and in any hands but those of one situated as I am would have done well and you may be sure I meant it well. Still I do not know[.] The slightest blot thrown upon the first of a long line of noble ancestors would be a kittle cast and that line terminating in my own master and benefactor. Not terminating. God forbid that it ever should terminate but existing and flourishing in him.¹²

The most satisfactory solution he found was to retain the characterisation but rename the character; in place of Sir Ringan's family name

of Scott, he and all his followers are identified in the book by their place of residence or by nicknames. Faced with a similar difficulty in The Brownie of Bodsbeck, where the principal Whig character had to be renamed to avoid comparison with Old Mortality, Hogg smarted under a sense of grievance which lasted until he came to write his Memoir three years later; the alteration in The Three Perils of Man provoked not a word of complaint and in less than a month the changes were completed.¹³ It is plain that Hogg at no point regarded The Three Perils of Man as an attempt to write truthful history.

In place of history, Hogg placed even more reliance on folk literature as a basis for composition than he had done before. Of course, his earlier verse had drawn on ballads and legends as subject matter while more recently many incidents in The Brownie of Bodsbeck came from tradition, either directly from Hogg's family and neighbours or else through the medium of Wodrow. But important though the folk influence had been in these writings, in The Three Perils of Man it is all-pervasive and, more than anything, determines the character of the book. In much of the plot, the setting, and the imagery, which come directly from the legends of areas close to where Hogg was living, and in the dialogue, which makes notable use of proverbs and the many other features of popular speech which the folklorist would class under the term "folksay", Hogg's great indebtedness to folk material in The Three Perils of Man stands beyond question. When the details of Hogg's tale, the "motifs", are compared with those contained in the standard motif-index for folk literature,¹⁴ it becomes plain how much he has taken from traditional sources in the plotting of his book. Admittedly, one is surprised to find on occasion that a motif in The Three Perils

which has all the appearance of tradition fails to appear in Stith Thompson's index. However, it must be remembered that the index is necessarily incomplete, for the task of collecting and collating material from the world's cultures is a huge one and the rigorous study of folklore a recent development. Secondly, the very difficulty of separating Hogg's personal imaginings from the genuine products of folk culture shows to how great an extent he has, in this romance, steeped himself in traditional sources; often it is impossible to tell when he is creating, when reporting. If, necessarily, only a few of the more obvious examples are given in this chapter, it is evidence partly of that difficulty but also of the sheer magnitude of references contained in The Three Perils of Man. What follows is merely a sample of the traditional analogues which can be found at all levels from the most basic features of the plot to the most fleeting incidental reference.

Just how pervasive was the influence of tradition can be seen when one considers how much would be missing from the book had Hogg not been exposed to folk literature. From tradition he took the two main elements of his plot - the challenge to regain Roxburgh Castle and the stratagem whereby Sir Ringan achieves that objective. The challenge and reward that Margaret offers would be classed in the Stith Thompson index under:

H331.2.1. Suitor contest: success in battle

while the taking of the castle while disguised as animals is an extension of:

K754. Capture by hiding in artificial animal.

In fact, this latter incident has a more precise analogue in the Border tradition that a later Lord Douglas won back Roxburgh Castle during another siege by putting black cloaks over his men so that

the English mistook them for cattle. The use Hogg makes of this legend, which Scott was to retell when he came to publish his Tales of a Grandfather in 1828, says much for his disregard of historical fact in his book; he feels no anachronism in transferring back in time this incident from a later siege. The two traditional stories - the hero who must conquer to gain his lady's hand, and the shrewd trick which deceives an enemy by putting on animal disguise - are taken complete into The Three Perils of Man. It can be said that in his romance Hogg has taken a story from tradition and retold it.

In a similar way we find equally complete tales embedded in the narrative. These are self-contained incidents which may not affect the main course of the action but which enrich it considered. For example, when the rescue party, led by the redoubtable Dan Cunningham, are hastened by disguised demons to the rescue of the trapped embassy at Aikwood, Hogg takes the opportunity to particularise their journey by introducing two short aetiological legends. These two legends are, in true folk style, related to specific features of the local countryside. An appeal for their truth can be made firstly to existing names and secondly to geographical features:

They were nigh to the heights when these words passed, and the four black horsemen perceiving them to take it leisurely, they paused and wheeled about, and the majestic primate taking off his cornuted chaperon, waved it aloft, and called aloud, "For shame, sluggish hinds! Why won't you speed, before the hour of prevention is lost? For Aikwood, ho, I say!" As he said these words, his black courser plunged and reared at a fearful rate; and, as our troopers thought, at one bolt sprung six or seven yards from the ground. The marks of that black horse's hoofs remain impressed in the sward to this day, and the

spot is still called The Abbot's lee. At least it had been so called when Isaac the curate wrote this history.

(p.329)

Later, when Dan has been tempted to ride over thin ice and has inevitably fallen into the lake which he tries to cross, Hogg ingeniously ties the incident to the supposed etymology of a local place name:

As he rode, the morning being frosty, he chanced to utter these words: "Heigh-ho, but I be a cauld cheil!" Which words, says Isaac, gave the name to that lake, and the hill about it to all future ages; and from those perilous days of witchcraft and divination, and the shocking incidents that befel to men, adds he, have a great many of the names of places all over our country had their origin.

(pp.329-330)

Such legends are part of the culture of all regions, and, as here, are adapted to the particular name which they try to explain. But one can also find a more general form of the first legend in the index under:

A972.4. Imprint of horse in rocks.

The most famous aetiological legend used in the book, the splitting of the Eildon Hill by Michael Scott, may have no particular analogue in the Index, but it is a legend which must be known to every Scottish school child; again this is introduced complete into the course of the romance. The tale-telling competition in Aikwood gives Hogg the opportunity of putting into the Poet's mouth another legend which, as well as being a variant of his favourite "Kilmeny" plot, is also a variant of

D1960.1. Seven sleepers. (Rip Van Winkle).

While the adaptation of complete folk tales is fairly common in The Three Perils of Man, Hogg's usual practice is to take from

tradition a series of motifs which do not in themselves make up a story and to weave them into the course of his plot. The countless transformations which the characters are forced by Michael Scott's power to undergo - to mules, to chickens, to dogs, calves, and hares, the rats who become soldiers, and the banquet which dwindles to nothing - can all be found in tradition and all have motif numbers assigned to them. The black dog who eavesdrops on the plans of the rescue party is a traditional disguise for the Devil (G303.3.3.1.1) as Hogg himself had found when friends of his were accused of raising Satan in that shape.¹⁵ The impressive incident where part of the embassy find themselves being pursued by a dead man locked on horseback may not have been noted by Thompson, but there is a surprisingly close parallel in the English legend of a nobleman who tricks a friar into taking from him the blame for the murder of one of his fellows by persuading him that the murder was his responsibility and then by terrifying him into confession through causing him to be pursued by the body on horseback:

He looked back and was terrified to see a mailed warrior in hot pursuit. Finally he was overtaken, and the two horses collided. The dead body fell to the ground, the helmet rolled off, and the face of Brother John appeared. Brother Richard was so terrified by this supernatural pursuit that he confessed the crime he thought he had committed, and it is said that he would have paid the penalty for it, but Sir Thomas Erpingham came forward and revealed the truth. All this is supposed to have happened near Norwich.¹⁶

Hogg has taken the most striking features of a similar story which must have existed in the Ettrick Valley and employed it in working out his narrative.

The folk influence does not however stop with these fairly

substantial examples, where, for at least a certain stretch of the narrative, Hogg follows the course of a popular legend. Often the material borrowed will be only a small detail employed with several others to create a composite picture drawing on a wide number of legendary sources. The superb description of the devil seen by Dan Cunningham and his friends is the compound of a number of different traditional motifs:

It appeared about double the human size, both in might and proportion, its whole body being of the colour of bronze, as well as the crown upon its head. The skin appeared shrivelled, as if seared with fire, but over that there was a polish that glittered and shone. Its eyes had no pupil nor circle of white; they appeared like burning lamps deep in their sockets; and when it gazed, they rolled round with a circular motion. There was a hairy mantle hung down and covered its feet that they could not be seen; but Dan saw its right hand, as it pointed to them to retire, every finger of which terminated in a long crooked talon that seemed of the colour of molten gold. It once opened its mouth, not as if to speak but to breathe, and as it stooped forward at the time, both of them saw it within. It had neither teeth, tongue, nor throat, its whole inside being hollow, and of the colour of burning glass.

(p.288)

Among the motifs used by Hogg in the creation of this description are:

- G303.3.0.1. Devil in hideous form
- G303.4.1.2.2. Devil with glowing eyes
- G303.4.4.1. Devil has five claws.

In addition Hogg seems to echo a belief similar to

- G303.4.8.2. Devil holds molten coin in mouth.

The confidence with which Hogg writes such a description results from his awareness of the large body of lore he had behind him: such a description feels authentic, and therefore effective, precisely because its author is writing from personal knowledge of tradition. Often Hogg merely hints at a legend without bothering

to explain his reference to a reader who is not well versed in tradition. When Sir Ringan tells the mysterious prophet who comes to advise him of the importance of keeping Douglas' favour "'But you are not to turn my auld wife into a hare, Master, an' hunt her up an' down the hills wi' my ain grews'" (p.8) Hogg is referring to a famous legend, also included in the notes to The Mountain Bard, of a witch who was made to suffer that punishment at the hands of Michael Scott. A later passage brings together fragmentary details of a large number of beliefs:

The land was the abode of the genii of the woods, the rocks, and the rivers; and of this the inhabitants were well aware, and kept within locked doors, whose lintels were made of the mountain ash, and nightly sprinkled with holy water. Cradle and bed were also fenced with cross, book, and bead; for the inmates knew that in no other way could they be safe, or rest in peace. They knew that their green and solitary glens were the nightly haunts of the fairies, and that they held their sports and amorous revels in the retiring dells by the light of the moon. The mermaid sung her sweet and alluring strains by the shores of the mountain lake, and the kelpie sat moping and dripping by his frightsome pool, or the boiling caldron at the foot of the cataract. The fleeting wraiths hovered round the dwellings of those who were soon to die, and the stalking ghost perambulated the walks of him that was lately living, or took up his nightly stand over the bones of the unhouseholded or murdered dead. In such a country, and among such sojourners, who durst walk by night?

(p.325)

To take only a few of the motifs contained in the above passage, Hogg refers here to:

- G303.16.14.3. Devil over-powered or chased with a stick of rowan-tree
- G303.16.14.4. The devil is exorcised with bell, book, and candle
- E723.2. Seeing one's wraith a sign that person is to die shortly
- E272. Road-ghosts.

Since Hogg does not pause over any one of the large number of legends

which lie behind such passages, the reader is made aware of the huge mass of tradition which provides the ethos in which the action is set.

So great is Hogg's knowledge of tradition that often one is unaware which episodes are traditional and which the product of his imagination. All the examples discussed so far can be proved to have analogues in tradition either by the evidence of the Motif-Index or by comparison with material recorded from traditional sources. But many incidents contained in the book, while they seem to be of a legendary type, do not seem to have a provable traditional source. While they may be unrecorded examples, it seems more probable, considering the attention Hogg lavishes on them, and the imagination with which each detail is worked out, that they are his own original contributions to the traditional style. For example, the story of Sandy Yellowlees, the old fisherman who discovers the supply lines of the English garrison, has no specifically traditional details - no noted motifs, no published analogues - but is allied with tradition by the style in which it is narrated. Hogg, adopting the manner of a folk narrator, stresses the reality of the story by his concern with details of locality and time, and by the association of the tale with existing features:

As there can be no doubt of the authenticity of this part of the Curate's tale, these secret passages must have been carried under ground all the way from the castle to the junction of the two rivers; and it is said that a tradition still exists on the spot, that these vaulted paths have often been discovered by former inhabitants.

(p. 57)

On the other hand the story is marked out as original since it is longer than most of his folk examples and has more fully developed characterisation and description. One may have similar doubts about the stories told by Gibby Jordan, the Laird of Peatstacknowe.

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He is included in the embassy as "a true natural and moral philosopher", whose passion is the telling of stories which seem appropriate to the predicaments in which the group find themselves. In consequence, Hogg can put in his mouth a considerable number of comic tales which run through the whole range of kinds of folk narrative. Very few of these stories can be identified specifically in tradition, but if they are not traditional, Hogg has captured the style with great accuracy.

There are beast tales:

"Gentlemen," said Gibby Jordan, "you mind me of a story that I have heard about a paddock that was lying on the plowed land, an' by comes the harrows, an' they gangs out ower the tap o' the poor paddock, an' every tooth gae her a tite an' a turn ower. 'What's the matter wi' you the day, Mrs Paddock?' says the goodman: 'Naething ava, but rather ower mony masters this morning,' quo' the paddock; 'I wish I were safe i' my hole again, an' let them ring on.' Sae masters, I'll tak the paddock's hint, an' wish ye a' good morning."

(p.98)

There are numskull stories:

"'It is a hard matter,' says Jock to himself, 'that a' the lave o' Commonsides men can swatter and swim in the loch like sae mony drakes but me. I am fain either to poutter about the side, or down I gang. I can neither sink nor swim; for when I try to get to the bottom to creep, there I stick like a woundit paddock, wagging my arms and my legs, and can neither get to the top nor the bottom. Just half way, there stick I. But I's be even hands wi' them an' mair, an' then I'll laugh at the leishest o' them; for I'll stand, and wade, and gang ower the waves afore them a', aye, and that wi' my head boonmost.' Jock, after this grand contrivance, coudna rest, but off he sets to Hawick, and gets four big blawn bladders; and the next day, when a' the lave went to bathe, Jock he went to bathe amang the rest; and he gangs slyly into a bush by himsel', and ties twa o' the bladders to every foot. 'Now,' thinks Jock, 'I'll let them see a trick.' Sae he slips into the loch, and wades into the deep, but the bladders they aye gart him hobble and bob up and down, till, faith, he loses the balance, and ower he coups. Nane o' them kend o' Jock's great

plan, and they were a' like to burst their sides wi' laughing when they saw Jock diving. But when they saw he wasna like to come up again, they swattered away to the place, and there was Jock swimming wi' his head straight to the bottom, and his feet and the four bladders walking a minuay aboon."

(p.133)

There are anecdotes of local characters:

"Gude troth, Yardbird, an the task light on either of us, it may weel bring me in mind o' the laird o' Glencarthon, when he stack i' the midden at Saint Johnston, an' tint himsel i' the dark entry. The laird, you see, he comes to the door of a sow-house, an' calls out, 'Good people within there, can you tell me the way to the Queen's hostelry?' 'Oogh?' cried the auld sow. The laird repeated his question quite distinctly, which disturbing some o' the pigs, they came to the back o' the door an' fell a murmuring an' squeaking. 'What do you say?' said the laird in his turn: 'I'll thank you if you will not speak so vehemently.' The pigs went on. 'Oh, I hear you speak Erse in this house,' said the laird; 'but no matter: thank you for your information, I will try to work my way.'"

(p.101)

Each is perfectly realised and contains recognisable features of the folk style of spoken narration, but there is an added vividness, together with an appositeness in the context of the book, which suggests that they have been written by Hogg for the occasion.

Not is it only folk tales which are taken from tradition by Hogg in the creation of The Three Perils of Man. Speech is characterised not only by the precise imitation of spoken Scots but also by the inclusion of the proverbs and tricks of speech which are typical of verbal culture. Hogg notes, for example, the Border use of the "by-name" popularly applied to the people of a particular family, a sort of Homeric adjective which describes their supposed physical and mental peculiarities:

First of all rode Sir Ringan Redhough,
supported by all the gentlemen of the middle

and west marches - the Scotts, the Elliots, the Armstrongs, and the Olivers, were the most powerful of these: And next in order came the Laidlaws, the Brydens, the Glendenyngs, and the Potts. After them rode the copper-nosed Kerrs, the towsy Turnbells, and the redwudd Ridderfords; for in those days every sept had some additional appellative or by-name. These were also mixed with a number of smaller septs, such as the Robsons, the Dicksons, the hurkle-backed Hendersons, and the rough-riding Riddels; and they were all headed by the doughty Sir Andrew Ker of Aultonburn.

(p.410)

But Hogg is here only making obvious at a late stage in the book a feature that has been prominent throughout it, for the characters, especially Charlie Scott, have constantly applied such epithets in their speech. Again, Hogg makes extensive use of traditional modes of speech, which spring to the characters' lips in all situations. For example, it is natural for Charlie to express himself in utterances such as "'But be he devil, be he dicken, I shall gie him ae squeeze.'" (p.155) just as it is natural for his troops to refer to proverbial lore in the expression of their fears at his advancement in royal favour:

"'Sudden rise, sudden fa'; that was a saying o' my grandfather's, and he was very seldom in the wrong. I wadna wonder a bit to see our new knight get his head choppit off; for I think, if he haud on as he is like to do, he'll soon be ower grit wi' the Queen. Fo'k should bow to the bush they get biel frae, but take care o' lying ower near the laiggens o't. That was a saying o' my grandfather's aince when they wantit him to visit at the castle of Mountcomyn."

(p.439)

At every turn Hogg stresses how much the action of The Three Perils of Man takes place in a community which can draw on centuries of tradition.

However, though the folk material employed by Hogg in writing

The Three Perils provides a kernel round which the plot can be constructed and also greatly enriches the fabric of the narrative, it is of no assistance to him in the most crucial task that faced him, that of giving his tale a structure which would hold together all the many incidents into one whole. The individual motifs taken from tradition have too localised an effect to act as unifying factors, while even the full-length tales embedded in the narrative, clearly marked off at beginning and end, can give cohesion only for that portion of the book which they themselves constitute. More especially, the form of folk narrative which Hogg makes use of in The Three Perils of Man, and whose techniques and effects he shows most signs of imitating, is one not likely to provide a tight structure in itself. Linda Degh, in an important article on folk narrative,¹⁷ has sub-divided the form into two broad categories - tale genres and legend genres. The former, which includes Maerchen (tales of the kind familiar from the collection of the Brothers Grimm), Novellas, and jests, as she says, function within the folk culture primarily as entertainment and as art. Although such tales may well contain survivals of earlier religious practices, or may echo feelings of class resentment, or simply provide guidelines for conduct, the storyteller intends above all to delight his hearers. This he does partly by the inherent nature of the action, which moves in a fantastic world where marvels are commonplace, but also by the virtuosity with which he gives to the tale a formalised and largely conventional structure. Rather like the singer of a traditional ballad, the storyteller patterns his narrative by repetitions and parallelisms, so that the fantastic incidents of his tale are given a satisfying shape. The intention of the narrator of a legend in a folk community is very different and the

story which results is of a significantly different type. The legend, as Professor Degh says, is designed "basically not to entertain but to educate people, to inform them about an important fact, to arm them against danger within their own cultural environment".¹⁸ Legends supply an oral culture with its history, by retelling the deeds of famous men, its geography, by describing the origin of prominent features of the landscape, and its morality, by explaining the dreadful consequences of transgressing the ethical prohibitions of the culture. The events narrated in legends show the dangers of running counter to folk beliefs and also the way best suited to propitiate the potentially hostile powers that surround one. Above all, the content of the legends is treated as being the truth, not marvellous fantasy as in the Maerchen. This is not necessarily to say that every member of the culture believes implicitly in each detail of a legend, but rather that the events of the legend are treated as being verifiable fact. In Professor Degh's words:

People's attitudes may vary in this respect, even in backward communities. The acceptance of the validity of the legend is expressed by its convincing style. Claim for belief lies in the style of the legend, in the way it is structured, in its painstaking precision to present witnesses and evidence. If there is artistry in the way a legend is told, it is in the skilful formulation of convincing statements.¹⁹

This is reflected in the constant reference to the existing physical features of the world as evidence of the result of the actions described in the legend and in the effort taken to establish, by genealogy and by the chronology of epoch-making incidents in the culture, the identity of those involved and the precise time the incident took place. However this emphasis on its factual nature brings with it the corollary that the content

of the legend assumes far greater importance than the form in which it is told. The aesthetic pleasures of the Maerchen are not needed, for the audience is seeking something other than entertainment from the legend. It is enough that the teller of a legend gives all the facts of his story clearly and in good order; the belief of his audience will ensure that, no matter how bald the telling, the story will have the desired effect. Whereas the formalised shape of the Maerchen coheres through many tellings as it is handed down in tradition, it is the facts, not the form, of the legend which are passed on. The legend is shaped not by traditional patterns but by the necessity of convincing one's hearers of the truth of the story.

The Three Perils of Man shows affinity not with the formalised Maerchen but with the comparatively formless legend. Hogg adopts many of the techniques of the legend in relating his fictitious history: the reference to physical features as evidence has already been mentioned, while the careful identification of the characters by residence and family relationship shows a concern with provable detail similar to the folk narrator's. The Three Perils of Man, even though its principal motifs of challenge and search are ones basic to the Maerchen, has none of the formal pattern that the traditional storyteller would give it, for Hogg does not depart from the linear construction which is typical of literary narrative. However, this means that while Hogg has found fascinating and evocative material, he is still left with the problem of evolving a suitable structure and style by which it can be expressed. Hogg is therefore faced with a far greater challenge than he had been in The Brownie of Bodsbeck. The legends have no particular style

upon which he can model his book, not even the dry reporting style which he had taken over from Wodrow. The legends are merely the raw material which awaits his shaping power; if he wishes to create a full-length literary narrative out of them he must himself supply both style and form. The Three Perils of Man challenged him to show that he could produce a novel in which the traditional stories, while offering the reader individual pleasure, would, by cohering into a larger shape, give him the double satisfaction of appreciating the scope of the whole book.

In one important respect The Three Perils of Man does show a remarkable unity: the action which is presented and the values by which it is judged cohere into a consistent picture of the world from which one can determine the author's attitude to the characters he has created. Douglas Gifford, the Introduction to whose edition of The Three Perils of Man contains the only extended discussion the novel has received, has suggested that Hogg's primary purpose in writing it was to counter the romantic view of chivalry that Scott had glorified in his novels. Instead of accepting the virtues of the chivalric code, and making it the basis of the actions of his heroes, Hogg has written a novel, Mr Gifford would suggest, that consistently portrays the code as full of absurdity and liable to lead men to ignore the reality of life. There can, certainly, be little doubt that the book is much less sympathetic to the customs of the Middle Ages than any of Scott's, and that the author does not always share with his characters their whole-hearted acceptance of chivalric glory as the chief end of life. Stress is laid on the misery of warfare and the cruelty which it brings out in those involved. The sordidness of death is emphasised more than the glory that can be won in battle. The heroic code,

and the romantic attitude to love, are both shown to be a kind of madness, whose followers find themselves involved in situations where they appear ridiculous. From the very opening of the book, the obsessive nature of the pursuit of military glory is made plain when the chivalric ritual of a courtly tournament is parodied by the attempts of the common people to imitate their social superiors:

No gentleman of noble blood would pay his addresses to his mistress, until he had broken a spear with the knights of the rival nation, surprised a strong-hold, or driven a prey from the kinsmen of the Piercies, the Musgraves, or the Howards. As in all other things that run to a fashionable extremity, the fair sex took the lead in encouraging these deeds of chivalry, till it came to have the appearance of a national mania. There were tournaments at the castle of every feudal baron and knight. The ploughmen and drivers were often discovered, on returning from the fields, hotly engaged in a tilting bout with their goads and plough-staves; and even the little boys and maidens on the village green, each well mounted on a crooked stick, were daily engaged in the combat, and riding rank and file against each other, breaking their tiny weapons in the furious onset, while the mimic fire flashed from their eyes.

(pp.1-2)

Courtly love causes other absurdities in its devotees. The noble Douglas may be a brave warrior but in love he is shown to be a weak and posturing fool:

Douglas kissed the locket, and put it in his bosom, and then uttered abundance of the extravagant bombast peculiar to that age. He called her his guardian angel, his altar of incense, and the saint of his devotion, the buckler of his arm, the sword in his hand, and the jewel of his heart.

(p.70)

Moreover, as Hogg makes plain, the chivalric ideal is a standard unattainable in the world of power politics and intrigue in which the action is set. None of the more obviously heroic characters - Douglas, Margaret, Lady Jane - are seen to act consistently from

the highest motives. The moving spring behind the Scottish court is avarice and the struggle for power; it is no insignificant change in the traditional stories that the penalty for failure in the suitor contest is not, as is usual in such narratives, loss of life, but rather loss of property and status. Even Sir Ringan is moved to help Douglas dispossess out of a desire for glory than out of a desire for more land, though he at least has the redeeming feature of not pretending otherwise. On the embassy's journey to Aikwood they are met with treachery and falsehood at every turn; the very members of the party are gluttonous, cowardly, or bombastic. The only characters who are moved solely by virtue are the rough and naive soldiers of Sir Ringan, and even then their principal virtue is little more than an unthinking devotion to his cause. Not even the two heroines, beautiful though they may be, are possessed of all the qualities one expects of the heroine of a romantic novel. Scott had of course created a number of heroines who showed more spirit and wit than the conventional heroine: Flora McIvor, Diana Vernon, and Minna Troil are all subject to moods which must have seemed unfeminine to early readers. But more even than these lively dark-haired heroines, Princess Margaret is wilful and uncontrollable, constantly worrying over preserving her position of superiority and jealous of the competition she senses in Lady Jane; at the end of the novel, even after her marriage to the hero of the book, she is piqued by the cachet Lady Jane has received from having her lover die for her. Even Lady Jane, though of a more placid temperament, is not as pure and chaste minded as conventional morality might demand, for she finds the prospect of eternal devotion to the dead Musgrave's memory a distinctly irksome one:

The lady Jane only sighed at this address, and looked down, thinking, without doubt, of the long and dismal widowhood which it would behoove her to keep for the dismal end of her betrothed knight, and then a virgin widowhood too, which was the worst of all.

(p.431)

Undoubtedly the main tendency of the book is, as Gifford suggests, antiheroic and seems to be in opposition to at very least the spirit in which Scott was writing.

But the antithesis between The Three Perils of Man and the Waverley Novels is sharper than Gifford has described it for other evidence in the text of Hogg's novel shows that Hogg was fully aware of the extent to which his book ran counter to Scott's works. In the first place, it is hardly coincidental that Hogg should have begun The Three Perils of Man in 1819, a year which saw the publication of the most chivalric of all Scott's novels, Ivanhoe, though in fact it was not till after Hogg started The Three Perils that a copy of the book came into his hands.²⁰ The entire novel could not be further removed in spirit from the noble and heroic attitudes of which Scott's hero is a representative. Even more important, however, is the implied criticism of Scott's practise contained in the central "Witchcraft" section of The Three Perils of Man. Hogg revels in the freedom the supernatural passages allow him and makes no attempt to offer a rational explanation for the activities of his demons and witches. It is enough for him that superstition should have been rife in the age in which the book is set; he enters into the beliefs of the time with wholehearted gusto and views the supernatural through folk eyes. Of course, the literal-minded have the assurance that Hogg is merely following the account of the imaginary contemporary chronicler, Isaac the

Curate, but for more imaginative readers the book offers an escape into a world in which the supernatural dominates. Hogg shows no guilt at providing such fare in the third decade of the nineteenth century, seeming certain that readers, no matter what their personal beliefs may be, will accept the imaginative openings afforded them. In his early novels Scott had also confessed to the appeal of the supernatural and, despite the rational explanations which are included for the benefit of the more sceptical reader, exercises his fantasy unashamedly. Nowhere is this more evident than in The Monastery, the little-regarded novel which he published in March 1820. But at its first appearance it was considered an inferior example of the author's style, not least among the causes for complaint being the extent to which he had recourse to supernatural agency, for among the characters of The Monastery is a ghostly White Lady who guards the fortunes of the house of Avenel, warning its members of danger and helping them in difficulty. No rational explanation is given of her actions but their effect is evident in the natural world in which the characters move. So great was the outcry from the public, which felt itself above such things, that when Scott published a sequel to the book, The Abbot, in September that year, the White Lady was, apart from the briefest of references, expunged from the action. The later novel is kept resolutely on the plane of reality the public seemed to demand, and all its agents are human. Scott, having written his recantation in an Introductory Epistle to his book, never again made any major use of the supernatural in his writings, reserving it in future for set pieces like "Wandering Willie's Tale" or for short entertainments such as the stories he wrote for The Keepsake. This sudden change of attitude came at a crucial point in the development of The Three

Perils of Man, and is reflected in the direction the story takes. It will be remembered that while Hogg began his story in the year before the publication of The Monastery, he set it to one side for a long period and did not take it up again until some time towards the end of 1820, in other words, after Scott had turned from the supernatural in The Abbot. It will also be remembered that, according to Hogg, he broke off with "only about one vol written". While there is no reason to suppose that this was where the first volume of the printed text ends, with the arrival of the embassy at the gates of Aikwood Castle, it would, from the proportions of the completed novel, certainly have been at some place between the dispatch of the embassy and that point. Therefore, there is a clear indication that, until The Abbot came out, Hogg had written only the section which deals predominantly with mundane affairs, and that, having stuck there for several months, he went on after its appearance to produce the remaining two thirds in which he has most to say of the supernatural. It might therefore be justifiable to suggest that Hogg, in writing a book in which the supernatural plays such a substantial part, is making an implied criticism of Scott's recent volte face, of the sort which some years later he wrote in the opening paragraph of his short story "The Mysterious Bride":

A great number of people now-a-days are beginning broadly to insinuate that there are no such things as ghosts, or spiritual beings visible to mortal sight. Even Sir Walter Scott is turned renegade, and, with his stories made up of half-and-half, like Nathaniel Gow's toddy, is trying to throw cold water on the most certain, though most impalpable, phenomena of human nature. The bodies are daft. Heaven mend their wits!²¹

That the opposition of the two novels is not mere chronological coincidence, becomes plain when one considers the tale told

by Charlie Scott during the contest at Aikwood. The rough warrior offers as his part in the competition a description of the first raiding party in which he participated, during which he assisted in burning down an English castle, but was also principally responsible for rescuing a baby boy from the blaze, in which, unfortunately, its mother had been killed. The child, who it later transpires grew up into the poet who is listening to Charlie's tale, is taken under the protection of the uncouth Will Laidlaw,, who is soundly mocked by his companions for his tender-heartedness. There is, in The Monastery, a parallel passage which is far too exact to be merely coincidental. The hero of that book, Halbert Glendinning, while on a Border raid, coming across a murdered woman and her infant son, rescues the baby, and is then ridiculed by his fellow-soldiers.²² The baby is later revealed to be heir of Avenel, just as the poet is found to be heir of Ravensworth. The similarities extend further, for Hogg's two philanthropists, Charlie and Will, later find themselves visited by the ghost of the infant's mother, who seeks to protect her son in a manner very similar to that of the White Lady of Avenel; the ghostly mother is in fact specifically referred to on a number of occasions as "the white lady". Hogg obviously had Scott's novel and its sequel in his mind when writing The Three Perils of Man and may be deliberately reminding his readers of its existence.

In one further instance Hogg can be seen expanding on the work of Scott in The Three Perils of Man, the result once again being a criticism of his friend's writings. At the end of Hogg's romance, Michael Scott, destroyed in his battle with the Devil, is ceremoniously buried in Melrose Abbey:

They went, and found him lying as stated,
only that his eyes were shut, some of his
attendant elves having closed them over night.

His book was in his bosom, and his rod in his hand, from either of which no force of man could sever them, although when they lifted the body and these together, there was no difference in weight from the body of another man. The King then caused these dangerous relics to be deposited along with the body in an iron chest, which they buried in a vaulted aisle of the abbey of Melrose; and the castle of Aikwood has never more been inhabited by mortal man.

(pp.463-464)

Hogg's description of the manner in which the wizard is laid out echoes quite consciously that given in The Lay of the Last Minstrel, when his tomb is reopened:

Before their eyes the Wizard lay,
 As if he had not been dead a day.
 His hoary beard in silver roll'd,
 He seem'd some seventy winters old;
 A palmer's amice wrapp'd him round,
 With a wrought Spanish baldrick bound,
 Like a pilgrim from beyond the sea:
 His left hand held his Book of Might;
 A silver cross was in his right;
 The lamp was placed beside his knee:
 High and majestic was his look,
 At which the fellest fiends had shook,
 And all unruffled was his face:
 They trusted his soul had gotten grace.²³

Such a repetition might seem to be merely a compliment to the success of Scott's early poem if one did not know from one of Hogg's letters what his opinion of this scene was. In 1806, not long after Hogg first began his correspondence with Scott, he wrote his mentor an extremely laudatory letter concerning The Lay of the Last Minstrel, which had appeared the previous year. Hogg had, however, some small criticisms of which the most severe was that he had "not yet discovered what the terrible parade of fetching Michael Scott's black book from the tomb proved or what was done with it of consequence before returned and fear it will be construed as resorted to for sake of furnishing the sublime and awefull description".²⁴ Scott paid no attention to Hogg's criticism at that time so, in writing The Three Perils, Hogg seems to have taken the opportunity of correcting this

fault in emphasis, which is a genuine failing in Scott's poem, by giving a more weighty background to the scene.

Both implicitly and explicitly, The Three Perils of Man seeks to correct what Hogg saw as failings in Scott's novels. Hogg offers the reader an alternative view of the chivalric code, one which takes account of human weaknesses, while also making a higher claim for the powers of the imagination than Scott had done in his most recent writings. The book is given unity by the consistency of the author's attitude to his characters and their actions, an attitude which, while not condemning them utterly, never loses consciousness of the absurdities and even the inhumanities into which a false sense of honour leads them. But though this makes The Three Perils of Man a very tightly organised book thematically, each incident adding more to the reader's awareness of the author's antiheroic stance, it is not sufficient in itself to hold together the variegated folk material out of which Hogg has constructed his tale. While each takes its place in the author's world picture, the legends and motifs require a greater degree of shaping to make the book move consistently in one direction. Individual stories may be sharply realised in folk terms, and may play their part in Hogg's argument, but the reader's attention needs clearer guidelines to prevent it being lost in a book as long as The Three Perils of Man. It is not enough to say, as Douglas Gifford has done, that the unity of The Three Perils "lies not in aspects of plot structure, or carefully planned revelation of character through action, but in something looser, larger, and much more uncommon in the nineteenth century" (p.xix). While one will agree with Gifford that what makes Hogg's tale readable is "its sheer extravagance and fantastic gusto and the obvious enjoyment

of the author in allowing his imagination free rein" (p.xix), one must not blind oneself to the fact that The Three Perils of Man frequently runs the danger of shapelessness as the author loses sight of his narrative in the pursuit of attractive legends which have no relevance to the main characters. Though Gifford offers a timely warning that Hogg's originality may well render normal criteria inappropriate, the book's failure to impose a wider structure on the elements of the narrative considerably weakens its impact. There are faults in the book which no amount of special pleading will explain away, and which ultimately prevent it from making its full effect.

Most obvious among these faults is Hogg's manifest failure to give a satisfactory proportion to his book. Having brought the siege into a state of deadlock, Hogg opens his tenth chapter with the words: "We must now leave the two commanders in plights more dismal than ever commanders were before, and return to our warden, the bold baron of Mountcomyn, whose feats form a more pleasant and diverting subject" (p.94). What follows, far from being a brief digression from the main course of action, is a complete change of plot and setting, for the action does not return to Roxburgh until sixteen chapters have passed, a little more than half of this long book. The characters who have been introduced in the first chapters play no part in this section of the book and are indeed mentioned only in passing. Admittedly Hogg does try to relate the two parts of his action. For example, he explains that a great storm raised during the contest of magicians at Aikwood is the same as one which has earlier played a part in the struggles at Roxburgh:

Needless it is to describe the night farther. It was that on which the great battle was fought in the camp of Douglas, and formerly mentioned in this momentous history. -It is therefore apparent that Isaac the curate is now drawing near to the same period of time when he broke off at a tangent and left the camp, and that every thing will, of course, go on to the catastrophe without further interruption.

(p.192)

Once the long central section is over and the scene returns to the siege, Hogg is careful to explain that Sir Ringan's success

was wholly owing to the wierd read by the great enchanter Master Michael Scott. So that though the reader must have felt (as the editor did in a very peculiar manner,) that Isaac kept his guests too long in that horrible place the castle of Aikwood, it will now appear that not one iota of that long interlude of his could have been omitted; for till the wierd was read, and the transformation consummated, the embassy could not depart, - and unless these had been effected, the castle could not have been taken.

(p.396)

The confused incidents at Michael Scott's castle are given unity by a recurrent simile in which Hogg compares his task as a writer of fiction to that of a waggoner transporting freight:

These casual separations of dramatis personae are exceedingly unfortunate for the story-teller who aims at conciseness and brevity; because it is impracticable to bring them all on at the same time. A story is like a waggoner and his horses travelling out the king's highway, his machine loaden with various bales of rich merchandise. He goes smoothly and regularly on, till he comes to the bottom of a steep ascent, where he is obliged to leave a great proportion of his loading, and first carry one part of it to the top of the hill, then another, and then another, which retards his grievously on his way. So it is with the writer of a true history such as this; and the separation of parties is as a hill on his onward path.

(p.159)

The poor waggoner must again return from the top of the hill, and bring up the most

important and weighty part of his cargo; no less a load than muckle Charlie Scott, laird of Yarbire, and the far famed warlock and necromancer, Master Michael Scott.

(pp.162-163)

It is therefore natural that the transition between Aikwood and Roxburgh should be marked by a similar intervention by the author:

We have now performed the waggoner's difficult and tedious task with great patience, and scarcely less discretion, having brought all the various groups of our dramatis personae, up to the same period of time. It now behoves us (that is, Isaac the curate and me,) to return again to the leading event, namely, the siege of Roxburgh.

(p.352)

However, it must not be thought that the passages just quoted are only a few samples of the connections Hogg makes between the two halves of The Three Perils, for in reality they constitute the only links that hold the book together, so that the incidents at Aikwood and those at Roxburgh stand largely unrelated. Therefore, for over half the book, the story of the siege of Roxburgh stands aside to make way for the embassy's farcical adventures at the hands of demons and the tedium of the tale-telling competition which is relevant to the book only in so far as it displays the characteristics of each teller. Moreover, even when Hogg does describe the action at Roxburgh he expands many incidents far beyond their due relevance to the plot: the story of Sandy Yellowlees the fisherman, or of the supposed skin dealers and the cattle thieves may be enjoyable but their importance to the plot is not equal to the space allotted to them. It might be said that Hogg's eagerness to expound these sub-plots fully is greatly to be preferred to his usual failing of writing hasty and unparticularised narratives, in which

little of the action is brought to life. One must not deny that the sheer fecundity of Hogg's imagination gives the book great richness. But the result is not the "looser, larger" work that Gifford describes, but a frequently incoherent book, which the reader, faced with yet another digression, feels could be extended to eternity.

Other faults, less crippling to the book as a whole, nevertheless prevent individual scenes from making their full impact. Hogg's characterisation of Sir Philip Musgrave, the commander of the beleaguered garrison, is both original and daringly anti-heroic. More than any other character, Musgrave shows the potential for destructiveness that is latent in the chivalric code. The flower of knighthood at the start of the siege, when his courageous defiance is the envy of the whole Scottish court, he slowly crumbles under the mounting pressure as first his brother and then his beloved are taken prisoner, until finally, his reason nearly lost, he seeks relief by throwing himself from the battlements of Roxburgh Castle. In conception, this characterisation shows considerable insight into the pressures on the fighting man and seems to foreshadow the presentation of war which has become general in the present century, but it is, unfortunately, a conception which Hogg lacks the technical ability fully to carry out. While able to imagine the mind of such a man, the only means Hogg has available to express it is the conventional rant with which madness was portrayed on the contemporary stage. The start of Musgrave's decline is marked by the agony of conscience he must suffer when he confronts his captured brother in Douglas' tent. This potentially moving scene is in execution merely embarrassing, for the psychological insight is converted by the extravagant diction Hogg employs

into a melodramatic stereotype:

"There is my hand! Here is my sword!
But the vital motion, or the light of reason,
who shall ensure to me till these things are
fulfilled? Nay, who shall ensure them to this
wasted frame for one moment? I am not the man
I have been, brother: But here I will swear
to you, by all the host of heaven, to revenge
your death, or die in the fulfilment of my vow.
Yes, fully will I revenge it! I will waste!
waste! waste! and the fire that is begun within
shall be quenched, and no tongue shall utter it!
Ha! Ha, Ha! shall it not be so, brother?"

(p.62)

Musgrave's suicide is saved from the artificiality of his stage rhetoric only by Hogg's vivid and clear-eyed description of the circumstances of his death:

"Then my resolution is fixed!" cried
Musgrave: "Though all England should deprecate
the deed, and though I know my brethren in arms
disapprove of it, I must and will redeem the
lives of these two. Yes, I will save them, and
that without abating one iota from the honour of
the house of Musgrave. Not make one effort,
Lady Jane? Not one sacrifice to save your
honour and life? Effort, indeed, I will make
none. But, without an effort, I will make a
sacrifice of as high estimation for you as
ever knight offered up for the lady of his love.
Perhaps it may not be in my power to save you;
but in the sight of these rival armies, - in
yours my only brother and betrothed bride, -
and in the sight of heaven, - I offer the last
ransom that can be offered by man." As he said
these words, he flung himself headlong from the
battlement of the western tower, struck on the
mural parapet around the lower platform, then
on the rampart, from which he flew with a rolling
bound, and flashed with prodigious force into the
ample moat. There, by the weight of his armour,
he sunk forthwith to rise no more. The troops
of the rival nations stodd aghast, with uplifted
hands, gazing on the scene; but no more was to
be seen of the gallant Musgrave! A gurgling boil
of bloody water arose above him as he sank to the
bottom, - and that was the last movement caused
in this world by one whose life had been spent
in deeds of high chivalry and restless commotion.

(p.355)

Admittedly, a better, simpler style is found to express Musgrave's reaction to the presumed execution of his brother, with the result

that the scene is both moving and direct:

"Oh! my brother! my brother! - So you would not warn me, you dog? - Nor you? - Nor you? - No, you are all combined against me. That was a sight to gratify you, was it not? My curse on you, and all that have combined against the life of that matchless youth!"

(p.86)

However, the general voice of heroic passion in The Three Perils of Man, for both Musgrave and Douglas, is a form of stage rant in which Hogg can only imitate the style of, say, the closing scenes of Richard III or of Home's Douglas.

The hollowness of this rhetoric is but a symptom of the general level of characterisation which is at best thin and at worst inconsistent. This is perhaps a less serious flaw in the presentation of the comic characters: the embassy, for instance, is little more than a collection of humours, a bundle of psychological **tics** which responds automatically to a given stimulus. Such characterisation may become tiresome over a period but it suffices for a group of grotesques in whom Douglas Gifford sees the descendants of the tradition of the medieval morality. However, the conventionality with which the leaders of the two armies are characterised is a greater weakness in the novel, for, since one has little sympathy with such stereotyped figures, Hogg's presentation of the sufferings brought on by war is considerably less subtle than it might otherwise have been. In a book where romantic stereotypes are so often mocked by being inverted, a character who has no greater depth than the conventions of romance is left with no substance at all and certainly will not arouse pity in the reader. But at least Musgrave and Douglas, though dully portrayed, are not inconsistent in their actions. The two characters who play the most important roles in

the other half of the book, the Gospel Friar and Charlie Scott, are deprived of their full stature by their sudden change from comic to heroic figures. The Gospel Friar is shown at one moment as the typical cowardly, lustful, and bombastic cleric of the medieval fabliaux, speaking an absurdly inappropriate Biblical diction borrowed from the "Chaldee Manuscript" parody with which Hogg had scandalised Edinburgh: at other times the Friar must represent the voice of goodness and religious faith in order to provide a strong opposition to Michael Scott. Charlie is initially presented as a good-natured but not particularly intelligent muscle-man, but this characterisation becomes increasingly uneasy as Hogg gives him a bigger part to play in the story. When, in the general marriage with which the book ends, he is the only possible partner for Lady Jane, he must be completely remodelled. Despite Hogg's hasty explanation of Charlie's new-found grace, and regardless of the more polished style of speech by which the Borderer is elevated to the heroic class, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Hogg has been forced by exigencies of plot to make him play a part for which he was never intended. The transition between Charlie's two roles is far from convincing:

But, among all these Border chiefs, there was none whose appearance attracted so much admiration as that of Sir Charles Scott of Raeburn and Yarbire..... Both himself and his horse Corbie were literally covered with burnished gold; while the playful restiveness of the one, and the manly and almost colossal figure of the other, rendered the appearance of our warrior a sight truly worthy of admiration. The activity and elasticity of all his motions, combined with his invincible muscular strength, and urbanity of countenance and manners, rendered Charlie at all times an interesting object; but till once he appeared in his plumes and light

armour studded with gold, no one could have believed that he was so comely and graceful a personage. At the same time the very consciousness of his appearance, and the rank that he was obliged to support, raised his personal carriage and address many degrees, as by a charm; so that wherever the Warden and his train presented themselves, strangers always appeared disposed to move their bonnets to Sir Charles, whom they took for a king, or an earl at the very least.

(p.409)

In other words, Hogg has difficulty in imagining a character in such detail that necessities of plotting will not distort it from its basic shape.

On the other hand, The Three Perils of Man does possess many considerable strengths. Hogg visualises the action with a clarity rarely to be found in the bulk of his work, and conspicuously absent from The Brownie of Bodsbeck. The battles, chases, and ambushes which play such an important part in the plot are set in a precise geography, over which the characters move consistently and naturally; for instance, the exits from rooms are obviously thought out in advance, so that no one escapes through a door which has not previously been mentioned. Physical settings are described with great power, as for example in the striking description of Aikwood Castle, removed into another world by the total absence of life and movement which surrounds it with vacancy:

As they drew near to the huge dark-looking pile, silence prevailed among them more and more. All was so still that even that beautiful valley seemed a waste. There was no hind whistling at the plough; no cattle nor sheep grazing on the holms of Aikwood; no bustle of servants, kinsmen, or their grooms, as at the castles of other knights. It seemed as if the breath of the enchanter, or his eye, had been infectious, and had withered all within its influence, whether of vegetable, animal, or human life. The castle itself scarcely seemed to be the

abode of man; the massy gates were all locked;
 no porter was in attendance; and there was only one
 small piping smoke issuing from one of the turrets.

(p.141)

The precision of imagination is matched by a precision of narrative voice which, in the best parts of the book, enables Hogg to switch without jarring from irony to true feeling, from comedy to tragedy. Such a subtle transition, essential in a book which intends to criticise a character's words without denying the importance of the emotions which produced them, can be found in the scene where the embassy, on their journey to Aikwood, are chased by soldiers of an opposing faction. In a piece of low comedy, the Friar's mule grapples with the mount of one of the pursuers and engages it in absurd battle. One would expect the eventual death of the pursuing trooper to be a ridiculous one, but Hogg, concentrating on its details without comment, conveys the horror of the man as he plunges to his death. The comedy is not denied by the tragic outcome, the fight is still shabby and unheroic, but the subtle change in tone ensures that death is never allowed to become the subject of jesting. Whatever chivalry may say about the glory of warfare, Hogg makes it quite plain that death is always cruel:

The English moss-trooper had raised his arm to strike, but seeing his horse shoved and rearing in that perilous place, he siezed the rein with his sword hand. The mule finding the substance to which he leaned give way, pressed to it the harder. It was all one to him whether it had been a tree, a horse, or a rock; he shouldered against it with his side foremost so strenuously, that in spite of all the trooper could do, the fore feet of his horse on rearing, alighted within the verge of the precipice. The noble animal made a spring from his hinder legs, in order to leap by the obstreperous mongrel; but the latter still coming the closer, instead of springing by he leaped into the open void, aiming at the branches of an oak that grew in a horizontal direction from the cliff. It was an old and stubborn tree, the child of a thousand years; and when the horse and his rider fell upon its hoary branches, it yielded far to the weight. But its roots being entwined in

the rifted rock as far as the stomach of the mountain, it sprung upward again with a prodigious force to regain its primitive position, and tossed the intruding weight afar into the unfathomed deep. Horse and rider went down in a rolling motion, till they lessened to the eye, and fell on the rocks and water below with such a shock, that the clash sounded among the echoes of the linn like the first burst of the artillery of heaven, or the roar of an earthquake from the depths of the earth.

(pp.119-120)

Hogg paces individual scenes to achieve the maximum effect, heightening and releasing tension so that the reader is totally involved. In the long scene in the twenty third chapter where the party draw lots to determine who will be eaten, suspense arises naturally from the succession of blank papers, for obviously a marked slip must eventually be drawn. However, the tension is heightened by the sudden release given when Jordan, drawing the marked slip, breaks the steady rhythm which has built up during the lottery, by responding violently. This sudden burst of action, while providing a climax to the steadily mounting tension, also launches the action on a new phase with fresh impetus.²⁵ Hogg keeps his authorial voice in the background so that the scene takes on a dramatic life and makes the reader respond to the variations of pace as if he were seeing it played in a theatre.

However, while The Three Perils of Man can rise on occasion to descriptions which show great skill on the author's part, it is uneven and fails to sustain this level for the entire book. When the reader closes it, he does not feel satisfied that he has finished a work of art whose end is a necessary consequence of its beginning. He has been moved on occasion, at other times he has laughed, he may well have found much of the demonology awe-inspiring

but he has never felt that all these emotions have been contained within the one structure. The book shows unbounded imagination and great breadth of knowledge but has never had imposed on it the shape which will make it cohere. This is to a great extent a consequence of the sources on which Hogg was drawing. Ideal as a basis for short stories, the short folk narratives Hogg was using are too self-contained to take their place in the onward momentum of a novel. Only a more experienced writer could have welded them into a full-length work. Hogg had no source on which he could base a wider structure for his novel: the Waverley Novels, which could have helped him, offered him only a theme. In his next book, The Confessions of a Justified Sinner, Hogg, more aware of the novelists' art, and with a literary example behind his plotting, was able, without halting the action, to employ a great deal of folk detail. But at present, though he had conceived an important theme for The Three Perils of Man, and had clothed it in the liveliest products of his imagination, he was unable to make each incident interact with the next so that all would contribute to the whole.

The Three Perils of Man is not a development from The Brownie of Bodsbeck. The strengths of the two books are quite different, as, equally, are their faults. The Brownie has the virtue of conciseness and clarity, concentrating on a limited cast of characters, though placing them against a wider background; on the other hand, the desire for concentration in the narrative curbs Hogg's imagination and causes much of the book to be dry and cursory. The Three Perils of Man displays imagination in abundance, each incident being copiously decorated with the fantastic outpourings of the author's brain, but it wants control and is consequently

loosely-structured and diffuse. Therefore the two books are complementary and might almost be said to show the two halves of the author's character: The Brownie of Bodsbeck, with its attempted neatness of structure and its respect for fact, seems to come from the literary Hogg, who seeks to be accepted by society on the same terms as other writers, while The Three Perils is the work of Hogg the representative of the folk, using popular traditions to stimulate his imagination and writing as his inspiration, rather than literary convention, dictates. Now, having produced these two parallel works, drawing on both halves of his mind, his task was to write a work of fiction in which both halves would be yoked together, where copiousness of imagination was contained within literary control. Both novels show him to possess views which he sought to present in fictional form, but in each he had failed adequately to convey them. However, it was necessary that he should be partially successful in these novels, for their limitations could point the way to a literary work in which Hogg's aims would be in harmony.

CHAPTER VI

The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner

Up to 1824 Hogg's literary career seems no more than a series of false starts. None of his works had been totally successful, nor had he evolved a consistent style. Each of the books that have been discussed so far presented Hogg with different problems and each, as has been shown, had different reasons for its success or failure. The poems and tales produced in the process are all to some extent interesting in themselves, but had Hogg written nothing beyond them he would not have merited attention as more than a footnote in the history of popular taste. Despite his clear intention of educating himself by imitating the great classics of literature and by stimulating his imagination through his contact with folk literature, he had yet to write more than a series of trial runs for an eventual masterpiece. This finally came with the writing of The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner, a book in which all elements cohere into a unified whole which is evidently the work of a unique writer. In this chapter I intend to show what caused Hogg to be so successful in this book, and how its success is a necessary consequence of the development that has been traced in earlier chapters. The Confessions of a Justified Sinner is, as I shall prove, the supreme example of Hogg's attempts to discover a satisfactory literary style by the imitation of his predecessors, the direct result of his ability to take what he wants from his sources without disrupting the coherency of his argument. Yet I shall also show that the impetus which eventually enabled him to avoid the difficulties which had faced him throughout his career was the urge to express in a suitable form views which he considered

to be of vital importance. The nature of these views, and the form in which he chose to convey them, enabled him to arrive at the goal he had sought from the beginning of his career, that of complete mastery of literary form.

No twentieth-century critic would deny that The Confessions of a Justified Sinner merits the attention of readers. Each year sees yet another attempt to discuss the questions raised by this tale: in countless articles the critics wrangle over the book's relation to literary history, to theology, or to the study of the darker areas of the human mind. Unique among Hogg's writings it has been in print throughout this century, while in recent years it has been paid the signal honour of existing in two editions simultaneously. All who write on it acknowledge its high merits. J H Millar, in a discussion of Hogg written at the beginning of the century, is forced grudgingly to concede that it is the "one piece of prose fiction from Hogg's pen that is really of any account"¹ while an anonymous writer reviewing the most recent edition for the Times Literary Supplement introduces it as required reading:

It is generally accounted a masterpiece by those who have read it and may be strongly recommended to those who have not. As a document in the history of Scottish culture, a tale of the supernatural which haunts the reader all the more for being so firmly grounded among recognizable places and people, and a psychological terror story of how an unbalanced character destroys itself from within, it reveals the highest qualities of imagination.²

Perhaps most laudatory of all is the enthusiastic introduction written by André Gide for an edition that appeared in 1947, in which the French novelist eagerly invites readers to share in the discovery of a book which he hails as an extraordinary achievement:

I made inquiries of all the English and Americans I came across in Algiers - some of them remarkably cultivated. But not one of them knew the book. On my return to France I renewed my inquiries - with the same result. How explain that a work so singular and so enlightening, so especially fitted to arouse passionate interest both in those who are attracted by religious and moral questions, and, for quite other reasons, in psychologists and artists, and above all in surrealists who are so particularly drawn by the demoniac in every shape - how explain that such a work should have failed to become famous?³

But mingled with the praise of The Confessions one frequently finds a note of astonishment that Hogg should have been able to produce a book as fine as this, which possesses, we are told, qualities which had hitherto had little place in his work, and which rarely showed themselves subsequently: the conciseness of structure, the assured consistency of the style, and the intense psychological insight displayed in the characterisation are all, the critics would say, a new development in his career. Kurt Wittig, for example, despite his admiration for the book, admits that none of Hogg's other writings "helps to prepare our minds for this astonishing study of religious fanaticism - or for the direct and economical simplicity of the language in which Scots folk speech is often combined with Hebrew rhetoric".⁴ The critics do not deny that The Confessions shows greatness but seem convinced that it was a matter of chance that Hogg should have found himself able to write it.

This astonishment at what is seen as the unprecedented quality of The Confessions is not simply a product of the present century's general ignorance of the rest of Hogg's output. The critics of a hundred years ago, when Hogg's verse at least was still widely read, were even more ready to express their sense of the difference between

this profoundly imaginative work of fiction and the majority of the rest of Hogg's prose. So far, indeed, did they see The Confessions stand out from the rest of Hogg's work that many writers questioned whether Hogg could in fact have written it. Perhaps the most notable figure to express his doubts of Hogg's unaided authorship and the one who put forward the most cogent arguments was George Saintsbury, later a distinguished Professor of Rhetoric at the University of Edinburgh. In a short survey of Hogg's career, he agrees that The Confessions is a masterpiece but confesses that he has grave doubts as to the authorship:

At the same time I am absolutely unable to believe that it is Hogg's unadulterated and unassisted work. It is not one of those cases where a man once tries a particular style, and then from accident, disgust, or what not, relinquishes it. Hogg was always trying the supernatural, and he failed in it, except in this instance, as often as he tried it. Why should he on this particular occasion have been saved from himself? and who saved him? - for that great part of the book is his there can be no doubt.⁵

Saintsbury, who goes on to suggest that J G Lockhart must certainly have had a hand in the book, was not alone in his doubts: the eminent reviewer Andrew Lang shared his opinion, while even into the present century the American critic T Earle Welby, editing the book in 1924, could write:

That Hogg owed something of such success to Lockhart can hardly be disputed; yet it is well to remember that his, anyone's, capital difficulty in work of this sort would be to find the method, and, that found, only consistency in using it would be necessary for such a genius as Hogg's to achieve what he did in this wonderful book.⁶

It is not a view that any modern critic would be prepared to defend. Hogg's family were prompt to offer documentary proof of Hogg's authorship, while it has been shown definitively by Louis Simpson

how many of the book's preoccupations are shared by Hogg's other prose writings.⁷ However, the critic who, while agreeing that the book must be Hogg's, persists in treating it as a fortunate deviation from the general direction of the author's career, is merely echoing in a more oblique form the previous century's belittlement of Hogg's abilities. I hope to show in this chapter that critical surprise at the assurance of The Confessions is based on a false idea of Hogg's development.

One fact did lend itself to support the views of those who would have denied Hogg's authorship: for this, the greatest of his works, there exists an unusually small amount of autobiographical evidence on how the book came to be written. This was siezed on as proof that Hogg had no pride in a book which was not the product of his brain alone and therefore did not feel tempted to write about it. Though this interpretation now seems unduly suspicious of Hogg's motives, it is indeed true that Hogg, who was rarely reluctant to write in defence of any of his works which seemed to receive less than their due attention, makes only the briefest of references to The Confessions in his Memoir:

The next year, 1824, I published "The Confessions of a Sinner;" but it being a story replete with horror, after I had written it I durst not venture to put my name to it: so it was published anonymously, and of course did not sell very well - so at least I believe, for I do not remember ever receiving any thing for it, and I am sure if there had been a reversion I should have had a moiety. However, I never asked any thing; so on that point there was no misunderstanding. Perhaps I may bring the parties to account for it still, which they will like very ill.⁸

When one considers the lengths to which he will go to praise even a poem so palpably inferior as Queen Hynde, this seems a surprisingly

lukewarm account of the book. What is more, no mention at all is made of it in Memorials of James Hogg, the semi-official biography written, apparently in most cases from first-hand evidence, by the poet's daughter, Mrs Garden. Even Hogg's letters, which so often offer glimpses into the author's mind while composing his works, are of little help; there is only the most passing mention of the work when, writing to Blackwood, Hogg asks that care should be taken not to destroy the anonymity under which he wishes to publish The Confessions.⁹ While it is to be hoped that more letters concerning the genesis of The Confessions will come to hand in due course, from, for example, the archives of the book's publishers, Longmans, which are still in the process of being conserved and catalogued at the University of Reading, it must be admitted that Hogg was notably silent about this book until after it was published when, inevitably, he badgered Blackwood about the possibilities of a profit from the volume. Whatever may be the reason for Hogg's silence on this score, and I hope to offer one in the course of this chapter, it does mean that it is impossible to reconstruct the circumstances in which the book was written. All that can be known for certain is that the book existed in a fairly complete form in August 1823, when a letter which plays an important part in the closing pages of the tale was published in Blackwood's,¹⁰ and that in 1824 the book went to press and was published by Longman and Company. It was not successful initially - Longmans informed their client through William Blackwood that the expected profit was only about £2.¹¹ It did not enjoy even a critical success for, as far as John Carey, the book's most recent editor, could discover, only one contemporary review, and that an adverse one, appeared. Deprived of further evidence of how The Confessions came to be written and what estimate its author

placed on the book, the critic is left with only the text itself on which to found his theories.

The most obviously original feature of The Confessions is its multiple narrative structure, which allows the author to tell his story as seen from the differing perspectives of a number of people. The first third of the book is taken up with the "Editor's Narrative", which supposedly tells the history of the family of the Colwans of Dalcastle as it appears in documents and in tradition. The elderly Laird of Dalcastle takes to wife an extreme presbyterian, but finding it impossible to agree with a person whose views are so opposed to his, agrees to separate. However, two sons are born to Mrs Colwan in successive years, though there is more than grounds for suspicion that the father of the second son is in reality the estranged wife's minister, the fanatical Wringhim. Colwan disowns his younger son and the two boys are brought up separately, the elder, George, following the worldly views of his father, while the younger, Robert, who adopts the surname Wringhim, adheres to the extreme Calvinist doctrine of his mother in which those who are ordained to receive divine grace, "the justified", are thought incapable of losing salvation no matter what crimes they may commit. When the two brothers meet in Edinburgh as members of opposing religious factions, Robert provokes his brother to attack him and causes him to be temporarily imprisoned. A later series of provocations culminates in George's murder, apparently at the hands of his close friend, Thomas Drummond. Grief-stricken by the death of his favourite, the old Laird dies, and the estate passes to Robert. However, the late laird's house-keeper and presumed mistress, Mrs Logan, suspects Robert of respon-

sibility for the murder and, finding a prostitute who can swear that Drummond had no part in it, she goes to confront the new Laird, who is identified as having been present when his brother was murdered. But before Robert can be brought to justice, he disappears. The Editor finds nothing in tradition which can explain the part Robert played in his brother's death and how Drummond came to be accused.

However, the next section offers some explanation of what happened. It purports to contain the memoirs of Robert Wringhim Colwan and presents the facts as they appeared to him. Shortly after Rev Wringhim tells the boy that he has been received among the justified, Robert meets with a mysterious stranger, calling himself Gil-Martin, who has the power of assuming the appearance of any person he chooses. Impressed by Gil-Martin's promises of advancement, Robert assumes him to be the disguised Czar Peter of Russia, and completely fails to notice the similarities of his new friend with Satan himself. Gil-Martin prompts him to embark on a career of the murder of the supposed enemies of Christianity, assuring him that, as one of the justified, he will do no harm to his soul. Having destroyed a saintly local minister, Robert is persuaded to attempt the life of his brother. George's eventual murder, we are told, was performed by the disguised Gil-Martin and Robert acting together. However, Robert has for some time been aware that he has lost control of his actions and that a figure in his shape has been seen in places where he knows he has not been and performing deeds for which he knows he is not responsible. When he comes to the lairdship of Dalcastle, he is forced to flee from accusations of crimes of which he has no knowledge and, assisted by

Gil-Martin, he escapes in a changed shape. Henceforth he must live as a fugitive, tormented by his friend, who has now assumed the shape of his dead brother, and terrified by the sound of demons bargaining for his soul. Eventually Gil-Martin persuades the despairing sinner to hang himself, promising him that his justified nature will save him from the consequences even of that. The book closes with the Editor's account of how he came to discover the book in the pockets of a miraculously preserved corpse buried on a hill-top in the Ettrick Forest. The Editor attempts to explain the sinner's narrative as the work of a madman, or as a religious parable, but ends in a confession of bafflement at what the truth might be.

As this brief synopsis shows, there are many features of The Confessions of a Justified Sinner which a reader brought up on the central tradition of the novel would find difficult to accept. The form of the novel which developed during the nineteenth century and by whose standards, despite the experiments of the present century, most readers still judge narrative fiction, emphasised above all that fiction should represent the world as it was experienced by most readers. The action of a novel was expected to meet a number of requirements. It was to be set on a plane of reality similar to that of the reader, with characters of an identifiably human form, and settings which were, or seemed to be, recognisable as part of some pre-existing society. The characters would have names such as are common in the society being portrayed and would speak in a diction of a more or less colloquial register. Above all, they would have a substantial measure of control over their destiny, without the possibility of divine intervention to avert the logical consequences of their actions. When a novelist violates this last

convention, as, arguably, Charlotte Bronte does in some of the elaborate coincidences of Jane Eyre, or Dickens does in manipulating Oliver Twist's destiny so that he will discover his parentage, it is seen as matter for heated critical debate, and, for many critics, seriously hampers these novels from obtaining their full measure of praise. Even in our century, where a significant change of belief has prompted novelists to portray their characters as the sport of chance or irrational destiny, extensive use of coincidence is seen as a deviation from the norm and worthy of remark. The accepted theorists on the development of the English novel - Leavis, Percy Lubbock, Ian Watt - whatever other differences they may have in method, are all united in their acceptance by such criteria as the basis of the novel, and, by extension, of all "significant" forms of prose fiction. A work that does not correspond to these standards of judgement is cast out into the lesser realms of ghost story, science fiction, fantasy, or some other form of entertainment.

Therefore, The Confessions of a Justified Sinner seems, at least superficially, to be in violation of the normal practice of novelists. Admittedly it meets most of the expectations of the realistic tradition: it is set in a recognisable Scotland at a given period of history, while names and dialogues abide by the tenets of what Ian Watt has called "formal realism".¹² But a large part of the book appears to breach the most important of these rules. One of the major characters has the power of changing his shape, while another has a supernatural double and receives warnings from angelic figures and divine visions. When faced with danger, Robert can call on preternatural assistance to rescue him; when the time comes for him to meet his punishment, it is at the persuasion of a

supernatural agent. Critics, faced with the dilemma of either accepting a work which seems so little in accord with the standard theories of form or rejecting as minor entertainment a book which has held a particular fascination for them, have been led to consider whether the action of The Confessions is indeed so much on a supernatural plane or whether, having found a more rational explanation for it, they can then include it in the tradition of the novel.

To the twentieth century reader, Robert's experiences seem remarkably similar to those undergone by sufferers of the mental condition commonly, if inaccurately, called schizophrenia. The sensation that the mind is split in two halves, the inability to account for certain actions, and the sense of one's identity being taken over by another are all symptomatic of that form of mental illness. It has therefore become a standard justification of the realism of Hogg's story to see the second part as an account of Robert's subjective delusions while suffering from insanity. This attitude is implicit in André Gide's Introduction to the edition which has done most to spread the book's reputation in the present day:

The personification of the Demon in Hogg's book is among the most ingenious ever invented, for the power that sets him in action is always of a psychological nature; in other words - always admissible, even by unbelievers. It is the exteriorized development of our own desires, of our pride, of our most secret thoughts. It consists throughout in the indulgence we accord to our own selves. Hence the profound teaching of this strange book, the fantastic part of which (except in the last pages) is always psychologically explicable, without having recourse to the supernatural, as is the case too in Henry James's admirable Turn of the Screw.¹³

More recently, in an article which appeared in 1973, Barbara Bloedé

has allied the book firmly with other nineteenth century fictions in which the figure of the Double is purely hallucinatory. She goes on to present a psychoanalysis of Hogg which purports to account for the attraction of such a theme for him.¹⁴ But even before the twentieth century arrived with its insights into the human mind, critics were eager to suggest that Robert's account was the product of mental delusion. The criticism of the book published in the Westminster Review for October 1824, quoted by John Carey in his edition, while recognising that not all the facts are covered by the explanation, still, in the facetious manner which is typical of the review, suggests that the hero is most probably insane:

In the supposed auto-biography of a victim of superstition, to preserve that unity which is essential to the production of a pleasurable impression on the reader, one of two obvious courses must be consistently adhered to. The phantoms of that superstition must either have a real, external being; or they must exist solely in the diseased imagination of the supposed writer. We can readily become, for the time, either believers or philosophers, to relish a good story; but the author must make his election, and adhere to it. The "Justified Sinner" will not allow us to jog on comfortably with him in either character. He is mad enough, for all the arch-fiend's pranks to have been played in his own brain merely: so mad, that we are oft-times convinced they could have no other theatre; and yet, just as we are settling down into this conviction, the most preposterous of his tricks are seriously sworn to by some half-dozen witnesses in their sober senses, on the authority of their own eyes and ears. This inconsistency is as great an annoyance as if the audience were compelled to change their dresses three or four times during a performance, instead of the actors.¹⁵

George Saintsbury's résumé of the plot, with equally typical self-confidence, does not bother to allow for any other interpretation:

The story of the pretended Gil Martin, preposterous as it is, is told by the unlucky maniac exactly in the manner in which a man deluded, but with occasional suspicions of his delusion, would tell it. The gradual change from intended and successful rascality

and crime into the incurring or the supposed incurring of the most hideous guilt without any actual consciousness of guilty action may seem an almost hopeless thing to treat probably. Yet it is so treated here. And the final gathering and blackening of the clouds of despair (though here again there is a very slight touch of Hogg's undue prolongation of things) exhibits literary power of the ghastly kind infinitely different from and far above the usual raw-head-and-bloody bones story of the supernatural.¹⁶

When the action of the book is treated in this manner, the book returns to the central line of the novel; The Confessions, instead of being a story of the supernatural, is seen as the tale of a lunatic told through his own distorted perspective, an early and remarkably striking use of the limited narrator who has played so important a part in the later tradition of the form. Any evidence which seems inconsistent with this interpretation is disposed of by invoking the corruptions that enter tradition over the centuries. After all, the Editor says quite explicitly that his account is based on traditional sources:

It appears from tradition, as well as some parish registers still extant, that the lands of Dalcastle (or Dalchastel, as it is often spelled) were possessed by a family of the name of Colwan, about one hundred and fifty years ago, and for at least a century previous to that period. That family was supposed to have been a branch of the ancient family of Colquhoun, and it is certain that from it spring the Cowans that spread towards the Border. I find, that in the year 1687, George Colwan succeeded his uncle of the same name, in the lands of Dalchastel and Balgreennan; and this being all I can gather of the family from history, to tradition I must appeal for the remainder of the motley adventures of that house. But of the matter furnished by the latter of these powerful monitors, I have no reason to complain: It has been handed down to the world in unlimited abundance; and I am certain, that in recording the hideous events which follow, I am only relating to the greater part of the inhabitants of at least four counties of Scotland, matters of which they were before perfectly well informed.¹⁷

Therefore, when in the first part there is evidence of others having seen Gil-Martin and of Robert being credited with impossible powers,

it might be seen as betraying the distortions by which hysteria or exaggeration can make a rational story supernatural.

However, although this interpretation removes difficulties concerning the form of The Confessions, it is not supported by the text of the novel itself. The explanation of popular suspicions of Gil-Martin is very neat but it is not one that would occur to any reader while The Confessions of a Justified Sinner was in his hands. Such explanations are acceptable only if irrefutable evidence for them has been placed by the author in his book and if he so controls the reader's response that they seem the most probable solution when the narrative ends. Conversely, if the author presents strong evidence for the existence of the supernatural and manipulates the reader so that he agrees with that evidence, it is irrelevant to suggest other possible explanations; if we suspect that Gil-Martin really exists, it is because the author intends us to do so and we should not look around for other ingenious explanations. Therefore when, in the first part of the book, the reader is made aware of the existence of a mysterious character long before there has been any suggestion that Robert is not totally sane, considerable evidence to the contrary will be required to persuade him that such a character does not in fact exist. Moreover since the earliest appearances of this character associate him with the Devil, the seeds of the future development of the tale are already planted in the reader's mind before there is any suggestion that the book will be other than realistic.

The first intimation Hogg gives that a further character has yet to be introduced to the reader comes nearly half way through

the Editor's narrative. Already, probability has been unsettled by the mysterious persecution of George by a seemingly ubiquitous Robert; now, without any explanation, Robert has sprung on his brother and tried to fling him over the cliff face of Salisbury Crag in the King's Park in Edinburgh. George, having repulsed the attack, attempts to find out the reason for it:

"So then, you indeed knew that I was here?"

"I was told so by a friend, but I did not believe him; a-a-at least I did not know it was true till I saw you."

"Tell me this one thing, then, Robert, and all shall be forgotten and forgiven, - Who was that friend?"

"You do not know him."

"How then does he know me?"

"I cannot tell."

"Was he here present with you today?"

"Yes; he was not far distant. He came to this hill with me."

"Where then is he now?"

"I cannot tell."

"Then, wretch, confess that the devil was that friend who told you I was here, and who came here with you? None else could possibly know of my being here."

"Ah! how little you know of him! Would you argue that there is neither man nor spirit endowed with so much foresight as to deduce natural conclusions from previous actions and incidents but the devil? Alas, brother! But why should I wonder at such abandoned notions and principles? It was fore-ordained that you should cherish them, and that they should be the ruin of your soul and body, before the world was framed. Be assured of this, however, that I had no aim in seeking you but your good!"

(p.44)

There is no suggestion that Robert is crazed, since all the reader now learns is that he has a friend with extraordinary powers who has as yet not appeared in the action. There is certainly no reason yet to doubt Robert's word. However, this prepares the reader for the story told by Bell Calvert, the prostitute who witnessed George's death. She stresses, in her account of the murder, that she saw two men, Robert and another, approaching the scene of the crime at the

very time Thomas Drummond was leaving it:

Now, note me well: I saw him going eastward in his tartans and bonnet, and the gilded hilt of his claymore glittering in the moon; and, at the very same time, I saw two men, the one in black, and the other likewise in tartans, coming toward the steps from the opposite bank, by the foot of the loch; and I saw Drummond and they eying each other as they passed. I kept view of him till he vanished towards Leith Wynd, and by that time the two strangers had come close up under our window. This is what I wish you to pay particular attention to.

(p.73)

This point cannot be ignored, for Hogg makes Bell Calvert underline it by the circumstantial detail of her description and by her insistence on its importance. Knowing that Robert has already confessed to having an accomplice, the reader will inevitably suspect that this second person is the unidentified friend. What is more this friend is once again endowed in the reader's mind with powers more than natural when Ridsley, Bell's companion, expresses his conviction of the identity of this man's appearance with that of Drummond. The last glimpse of Gil-Martin in the first part of the story and the first mention of his name comes when Mrs Logan and Bell see him walking with Robert after he has taken on the appearance of the murdered George. Again the point of his physical similarity is made at some length, and with great earnestness on the part of the two women. Furthermore, it is allied yet once more with a supernatural agency, not only by implication, when Bell Calvert compares Robert to a fiend, but also overtly:

"If there is an earthly crime," said Mrs Calvert, "for the due punishment of which the Almighty may be supposed to subvert the order of nature, it is fratricide."

(p.90)

Therefore, at the end of the first part, the reader already has some considerable knowledge of this character who is called Gil-Martin,

but has no reason whatsoever to doubt that he is any less substantial than the other characters of the book.

When the reader enters the second part he has much less concrete evidence to go on, for it is indeed possible that all the evidence is distorted by Robert's crazy brain. But even here there are facts which refuse to square with that interpretation and cannot readily be explained away. In the first place, the remarkable correlation between the unexplained details of the first part and the answers to be found in Robert's narrative cannot help but make us accept his statements as the truth. Secondly, the incidents which planted suspicions of Gil-Martin's existence in the first part are all echoed and expanded in Robert's account. Finally, there persists a strain of evidence in which it is difficult to question Gil-Martin's existence because he is so readily accepted by characters other than the supposedly deluded Robert. When Robert meets the saintly Rev Blanchard, the old minister is aware of a third party in the conversation:

When my companion the prince was gone, Mr Blanchard asked me anent him, and I told him that he was a stranger in the city, but a very uncommon and great personage. Mr Blanchard's answer to me was as follows: "I never saw any body I disliked so much in my life, Mr Robert; and if it be true that he is a stranger here, which I doubt, believe me he is come for no good."

(p.131)

Earlier, immediately after the first meeting of Robert and his companion, Hogg introduces the detail that others have seen the pair together: "Having been so frequently seen in his company, several people happened to mention the circumstance to my mother and reverend father; but at the same time had all described him differently." (p.128) Certainly, in the section of the book where Robert Colwan appears most to be suffering from a split

personality, when, lying in a sick-bed in Edinburgh, he feels himself possessed of two bodies, Gil-Martin appears only to him, but, in case we should jump to the conclusion that he is a mere figment, the companion is once again visible to all after Robert has become Laird of Dalcastle. When Lawyer Linkum astounds the new Laird with a forged charter supposedly prepared at his orders, the lawyer recognises Gil-Martin as an old acquaintance:

"I'm at a little loss for your name, sir,
(addressing my friend,) - seen you very often
though - exceedingly often - quite well acquainted
with you....Is it not the young laird who was
murdered whom you resemble so much?"
(p.178)

Robert's valet, Scrape, also has seen Gil-Martin and tells his master of the local rumour that his friend is indeed the Devil. A new kind of reality is given the tempter's figure when Robert is told that Gil-Martin has accompanied Wringhim Senior to Glasgow; Gil-Martin takes on a very independent identity when one realises that he can accompany other people beside his principal victim. At a very late stage in the book, growing suspicions are confirmed when Linton, assistant to the printer with whom Robert finds temporary work, tells Robert that the Devil has called for him at the printing house:

"Oo, gud bless you sir! saw him myself, gave
him a nod, and good-day. Rather a gentlemanly
personage - Green Circassian hunting coat and
turban - Like a foreigner - Has the power of
vanishing in one moment though - Rather a suspi-
cious circumstance that. Otherwise, his
appearance not much against him."
(p.223)

John Carey has remarked on the characteristically grim sense of humour with which Hogg has endowed Gil-Martin. This usually takes the form of a theologically ambiguous statement to which Robert can give a reassuring interpretation but which strikes the

reader as having uncomfortable implications which the sinner has utterly failed to grasp. For example, when Gil-Martin first broaches the question of the murder of Robert's father and brother, he tells the future parricide encouragingly: "It is decreed in the councils above, that they must both fall by your hand" (p.145). Although Robert draws from this the consolation that Heaven has expressed approval for his crime, the words bear another interpretation. In a predestined world it must literally be true that Heaven has preordained George's death; however, that need not imply that the murder has Heaven's approval. Again, the sudden death of Robert's father, which forestalls his son's intended violence upon him, is greeted by the tempter with an equivocation which Robert thinks strengthens his hopes of salvation but in which a less egocentric observer would have smelt brimstone:

Heaven spared me the deed, taking, in that instance, the vengeance in its own hand; for before my arm could effect the sanguine but meritorious act, the old man followed his son to the grave. My illustrious and zealous friend seemed to regret this somewhat; but he comforted himself with the reflection, that still I had the merit of it, having not only consented to it, but in fact effected it, for by doing the one action I had brought about both.

(p.173)

Again, at several points in the conversations of the two men Gil-Martin drops substantial hints of his identity, though arousing no suspicion in the mind of his dupe. Requests from Robert as to his patron's parentage provoke the lofty response: "I have no parents save one, whom I do not acknowledge" (p.129). Later in the book, when Robert confronts his mentor with his growing realisation that there are two opposing consciousnesses behind his actions, Gil-Martin seeks to divert this awkward conversation by

talking about himself:

"The spirit that now directs my energies is not that with which I was endowed at my creation. It is changed within me, and so is my whole nature. My former days were those of grandeur and felicity. But, would you believe it? I was not then a Christian. Now I am. I have been converted to its truths by passing through the fire, and since my final conversion, my misery has been extreme.

(p.192)

The Father of Lies is equivocating once more - before his expulsion from Heaven, Satan possessed a very different form nor could he be a Christian at a time when there was as yet no need of a Christian redemption. But assuredly, when Christ has redeemed man, the Devil's sufferings in the fires of Hell afford him ample proof of the truth of Christ's message, a conclusion in which Hogg anticipates the views of the devil-figure in James Bridie's Mr Bolfry. Robert also speaks of a look of exultation which habitually crosses Gil-Martin's face when he has persuaded the sinner to the execution of some evil act:

"Fain would I see the weapon of the Lord of Hosts, begin the work of vengeance that awaits it to do!"

I could not help thinking, that I perceived a little derision of countenance on his face as he said this, nevertheless I sunk dumb before such a man, and aroused myself to the task, seeing he would not have it deferred.

(p.137)

"I disclaim and deride every selfish motive thereto relating," said I, "farther than as it enables me to do good."

"Ay, but that is a great and heavenly consideration, that longing for ability to do good," said he; - and as he said so, I could not help remarking a certain derisive exultation of expression which I could not comprehend; and indeed I have noted this very often in my illustrious friend, and sometimes mentioned it civilly to him, but he has never failed to disclaim it.

(p.160)

Yet despite these hints of the true nature of his companion, Robert never once taxes him with suspicions of his identity and accepts

without question his offers of advancement until the very end of the book; even then the decline of Robert's ambition results more because, no positive good having resulted from his actions, he feels unworthy of the high rank he has been offered than because he fears such advancement will be harmful to him. Therefore, if the theory that Gil-Martin is no more than a figment of Robert's imagination is to hold, one must assume that his insane mind has performed a complicated act of mental gymnastics: having embodied his repressed desires in a figure who evidently has many characteristics of the Devil, he has then contrived to ignore the implications of the words that his own imagination has conceived. Even granting that such complexity is possible in the mind, one cannot from the evidence of the text accept it as an explanation of Robert's state without treating Robert as having a separate existence outside the words Hogg has written. Moreover, one must in the process deny the highly individual impression that Gil-Martin makes on the reader, who cannot but feel that the tempter has a personality far beyond what would be expected of an alter ego.

Even were Gil-Martin's presence to be explained away, there are other supernatural, or possibly supernatural, incidents in the course of the narrative which do equal violence to the tenets of realism. A rational explanation referring to the recorded phenomenon of the Brocken Spectre has frequently been given for the scene where George, standing on top of Salisbury Crags, sees before him a vision of his brother's figure, monstrously enlarged. Certainly, Hogg himself offered such an explanation for a similar phenomenon in a later article entitled "Nature's magic lantern".¹⁸ However, even though the Brocken Spectre may be an observable feature of the natural world, the context in which it is placed in The Confessions of a Justified

Sinner transforms it into something strange and otherworldly. From being a natural phenomenon, the vision becomes in Hogg's hands evidence for the everpresent power which will shield the virtuous from harm, and which will counter the baneful effects of Gil-Martin's machinations. David Eggenschwilder has described the fearsome vision seen by George as a punishment for his intolerance for his brother¹⁹ but it can be proved from the text that far from punishing George the vision is the one thing that saves him from death at that time. The Editor's narrative has already told us that George, revelling in the freedom of a morning walk, has climbed Salisbury Crag and been entranced by the beauty of the morning light playing on the mists below, which produces a ghostly rainbow. His pleasure is disrupted by the appearance of his brother's form and he turns and runs from the cliff edge where he was standing, only to stumble over Robert who is creeping up behind him. The reason for the two manifestations becomes plain when one turns to Robert's version of the incident. Gil-Martin, having told the sinner where to find his brother (itself a telling piece of evidence for the independent agency of Gil-Martin) goes on to say: "'I will go, meanwhile, and amuse his sight by some exhibition in the contrary direction, and he shall neither know nor perceive who has done him this kind office'" (p.159). The "exhibition" he provides must either be the halo or the spectre. However, we learn later that only the halo can have been the Devil's work:

I soon came upon my brother, sitting on the dizzy pinnacle, with his eyes fixed stedfastly in the direction opposite to me.... I arose on my right knee and left foot, and had just begun to advance the latter forward: the next step my great purpose had been accomplished, and the culprit had suffered the punishment due to his crimes. But what moved him I knew not: in

the critical moment he sprung to his feet, and dashing himself furiously against me, he overthrew me, at the imminent peril of my life.

(p.161,162)

Startled by the monstrous vision, George has broken away from the distraction Gil-Martin has created and so ceased to be the easy victim for Robert that was intended. However explicable the vision may be in natural terms, it has here worked so opportunely for good that it takes on a supernatural implication. In a similar fashion, the "sweet voice" heard warning Robert before the murder of Rev. Blanchard, the vision of weapons he sees in the sky, and the lady in white he meets on Salisbury Crags might all be called figments of his imagination, but, since they perform the function of expressing divine disapproval for Robert's actions, they are signs of a controlling power which is indeed supernatural, for it is not normally experienced in natural life.

However, the evidence most often seen as confirming the subjective nature of Robert's narrative is to be found in the sections where he totally loses control of his actions and feels his personality to be split. Critics have been quick to apply to these the modern label of schizophrenia, but this is not a term which Hogg would have recognised nor, in all likelihood, a condition which he would have been capable of identifying from other forms of insanity. A more contemporary explanation which associates Robert's condition with supernatural possession can be offered if one compares The Confessions with other stories by Hogg in which a state similar to Robert's is unequivocally the work of sorcery. In the two short stories "The Laird of Cassway" and "Mary Burnet" a supernatural power is shown to be capable of removing the spirit out of a human body and transporting it for huge distances; the victim is left bodily in bed, but the spirit

also has a body and is capable of perceptions. The Laird of Cassway is transported as a "wraith" of this type by a witchwife who wants to prevent his two sons from quarrelling:

"Johnston, there never was a mortal man suffered what I have suffered since midnight. I believe I have had dealings with hell; for I have been disembodied, and embodied again, and the intensity of my tortures has been unparalleled."²⁰

Mary Burnet is brought from her bed to her waiting lover after "he wished that some witch or fairy would influence his Mary to come to him in spite of her maidenly scruples. This wish was thrice repeated with all the energy of disappointed love."²¹ Mary tells him:

"You are a bad man, John Allanson, and I entreat you to go out of my sight. The sufferings that I have undergone this night, have been beyond the power of flesh and blood to endure; and by some cursed agency of yours have these sufferings been brought about. I therefore pray you, in His name, whose law you have transgressed, to depart out of my sight."²²

The confusion of mind experienced by the victim, and the feeling that someone else has taken control of one's actions are similar to Robert Colwan's sense of two personalities occupying his body, even when confined to bed by illness, and to the suffering he experiences. A later delusive dream follows his inheritance of Dalcastle but when he wakes he can dimly remember the mother of a girl whom he is accused of seducing. The similarities to "Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde" have often been noted but it is not necessarily one half of Robert's mind taking over. An element of doubt is introduced by Robert's insistence that he was confined to bed all the time he was seen pursuing George, while the later episode is succeeded by a scene where Gil-Martin, whom some would see as Robert's Hyde, is fully visible standing beside Robert. Later still, following another mysterious trance, it is Gil-Martin who brings Robert the news of

the discovery of his murdered mother's body. The constant reminders of the separate identities of Robert and Gil-Martin after each of these passages suggests that Hogg intends them to be read as evidence that Robert's mind has been taken over by an outside power and not that one half of his mind has eclipsed the other.²³

Had Hogg intended the reader to see a rational explanation behind the action of The Confessions, one would expect that any confusion would be resolved in the closing pages, so that the final impression of the book reinforced the interpretation with which the author hoped the reader would be left. In reality, the closing pages present a very different interpretation of events: the evidence contained in the final section, in which the Editor returns to comment on the action, may at various times undercut the truth of Robert's narrative but an attentive reading will show that the ultimate response that is evoked is one of sympathy for Robert and belief in the facts of his narrative. At the end of his account, Robert prepares for death and, in a growing atmosphere of demonology which stretches the reader's credulity to the utmost, cries hysterically:

But, ah! who is yon that I see approaching furiously - his stern face blackened with horrid despair! My hour is at hand. - Almighty God, what is this that I am about to do! The hour of repentance is past, and now my fate is inevitable. - Amen, for ever! I will now seal up my little book, and conceal it; and cursed be he who trieth to alter or amend!

(p.240)

The next voice heard is, in extreme contrast, that of the calm, antiquarian Editor, the man of reason, who is merely recounting old traditions. He poses the questions which every critic who has considered The Confessions since his day has asked himself:

What can this work be? Sure, you will say, it must be an allegory; or (as the writer calls it) a

religious PARABLE, showing the dreadful danger of self-righteousness? I cannot tell. Attend to the sequel: which is a thing so extraordinary, so unprecedented, and so far out of the common course of human events, that if there were not hundreds of living witnesses to attest the truth of it, I would not bid any rational being believe it.

(p.240)

In passing from Robert's terror to the rationality of the Editor, the reader feels that he has returned to the real world, an emotion heightened immediately afterwards when the Editor reprints a letter which Hogg himself had contributed to Blackwood's the previous year. Returning from the historical time of Robert's narrative to what is without doubt the immediate present, one is brought up with a jolt and is prepared to treat this letter as giving the ultimate truth of the story. The semblance of reality is the more enhanced by the flat antiquarian style in which the letter is written. The inclusion of the letter has of course an extra dimension of irony for the reader of the present age, who knows that the book, originally published anonymously, is in fact Hogg's. However, many of the original readers must have had a similar advantage, for the authorship had been hinted at in Blackwood's, and all subsequent editions had the author's name on the title page. The tone of the narrative returns to that of the documentary passages of the first section. But the story Hogg tells is every bit as strange as Robert's narrative and there are unsettling reminders of the other world in which Robert moved. For example, the suicide of whom the letter talks was employed at the farm of Eltrieve, a name which, Hogg tells us, was originally spelt Ault-Righ; we immediately recall that as the name of the farm on which Robert was working at the end of his life. The letter takes pains to establish the date of the burial:

"A nephew of that Mr Anderson's who was with the hapless youth that day he died, says, that, as far as he can gather from the relations of friends that he remembers, and of that same uncle in particular, it is one hundred and five years next month, (that is September, 1823), since that event happened; and I think it likely that this gentleman's information is correct. But sundry other people, much older than he, whom I have consulted, pretend that it is six or seven years more. They say they have heard that Mr James Anderson was then a boy ten years of age; that he lived to an old age, upwards of fourscore, and it is two and forty years since he died. Which-ever way it may be, it was about that period some way, of that there is no doubt."

(p.243)

This involved explanation is justified when one recalls that the last entry in Robert's journal is dated 18 September 1712. In other words, even here there is a bridge between the fantastic events of the second narrative and "the real world" in which the reader himself lives.

Of course, the rational-minded Editor throws doubt on Hogg's story of the discovery of the suicide's perfectly preserved body and, when Hogg himself enters the narrative as a barely coherent rustic, the reader is inclined to share these doubts. The Editor's subsequent investigations seem likely to dismiss the supernatural completely:

We went into a shepherd's cot to get a drink of milk, when I read to our guide Mr Hogg's description, asking him if he thought it correct? He said there was hardly a bit o't correct...

(pp.247-248)

However, what William Beattie, who has agreed to guide the Editor to the grave, quarrels with in Hogg's narrative is not the existence of the phenomenon but the location Hogg has given:

He said there was hardly a bit o't correct, for the grave was not on the hill of Cowan's-Croft, nor yet on the point where three laird's lands met, but on the top of a hill called the Faw-Law, where

there was no land that was not the Duke of Buccleuch's within a quarter of a mile. He added that it was a wonder how the poet could be mistaken there, who once herded the very ground where the grave is, and saw both hills from his own window.

(p.248)

One's growing scepticism is immediately squashed, for the reality of the grave and its strange contents has never been questioned; Hogg's letter, and, by implication, the sinner's confessions, seem undeniably true. Moreover, the dispassionate tone in which the Editor describes the reopening of the grave, at which he himself is present, and the weight of circumstantial detail - an exact inventory of the grave's contents, a description of the clothes worn by the body, even an analysis of the type of soil in which it was lying - prepares the reader to accept what would otherwise be a totally incredible occurrence. The effect is similar to those passages in Gulliver's Travels where the persuasive detail of the hero's narrative almost leads one to believe events of the most absurd nature. Similarly, for the time being, one accepts without question that a body can survive for over a century without decaying. Moreover, Laidlaw's comment over the body ties in with much that has already been said elsewhere in the book concerning the controlling hand of Providence:

"Grave, man!" exclaimed L--w, who speaks excellent strong broad Scots: "My truly, but ye grave weel! I wad esteem the contents of that spleuchan as the most precious treasure. I'll tell you what it is, sir: I hae often wondered how it was that this man's corpse has been miraculously preserved frae decay, a hunder times langer than ony other body's, or than even a tanner's. But now I could wager a guinea, it has been for the preservation o' that little book. And Lord kens what may be in't! It will maybe reveal some mystery that mankind disna ken naething about yet."

(pp.252-253)

One of the recurring themes of The Confessions of a Justified Sinner, the immanent divine presence, is brought to mind once again, this

time in a "real" context.

It is in such a frame of mind - a belief in the marvellous preservation of the body of Robert Colwan, and a powerful sense of the supernatural force which has preserved it from decay - that the reader comes to the Editor's conclusions:

Were the relation at all consistent with reason, it corresponds so minutely with traditionary facts, that it could scarcely have missed to have been received as authentic; but in this day, and with the present generation, it will not go down, that a man should be daily tempted by the devil, in the semblance of a fellow-creature; and at length lured to self-destruction, in the hopes that this same fiend and tormentor was to suffer and fall along with him. It was a bold theme for an allegory, and would have suited that age well had it been taken up by one fully qualified for the task, which this writer was not. In short, we must either conceive him not only the greatest fool, but the greatest wretch, on whom was ever stamped the form of humanity; or, that he was a religious maniac, who wrote and wrote about a deluded creature, till he arrived at that height of madness, that he believed himself the very object whom he had been all along describing. And in order to escape from an ideal tormentor, committed that act for which, according to the tenets he embraced, there was no remission, and which consigned his memory and his name to everlasting detestation.

(pp.254-255)

Standing as this does at the end of the book, it has the full weight of all that has been said before bearing down on it. With great effort the author has established a set of characters and placed them in a complicated structure, yet the Editor seems to dismiss the whole story as flawed and barely worth the telling. The patronising tone he adopts towards Robert's sufferings seems unduly glib to the reader who has followed Robert through the terrors of his flight and come to sympathise with him in the wretchedness of his miserable end. At the end of one of the best of Hogg's short stories, "The Brownie of the Black Haggs", the strange story of an

evil woman punished by a possibly supernatural assailant and of her unnatural attachment to him despite his cruelty, Hogg, or perhaps an editorial persona, seems as dismissive of his tale as is the last paragraph of The Confessions:

This story was told to me by an old man named Adam Halliday, whose great-grandfather, Thomas Halliday, was one of those that found the body and buried it. It is many years since I heard it; but, however ridiculous it may appear, I remember it made a dreadful impression on my young mind. I never heard any story like it, save one of an old fox-hound that pursued a fox through the Grampians for a fortnight, and when at last discovered by the Duke of Athole's people, neither of them could run, but the hound was still continuing to walk after the fox, and when the latter lay down, the other lay down beside him, and looked at him steadily all the while, though unable to do him the least harm. The passion of inveterate malice seems to have influenced these two exactly alike. But, upon the whole, I scarcely believe the tale can be true.²⁴

In "The Brownie of the Black Haggs", Hogg brings us to understand the woman's dependence on her tormentor and the evil consequences of her weak husband's tolerance of her actions; it is impossible for us to accept that dismissive last sentence, for it would invalidate the effect of the whole story. Hogg has under-cut that concluding paragraph by all that has preceded it with the result that the reader's belief in the story is all the stronger. The same effect is achieved in The Confessions. The bland assumption of the Editor that "in this day, and with the present generation, it will not go down, that a man should be daily tempted by the devil, in the semblance of a fellow-creature" is too pat, ignores too much that the reader has experienced in the book; the mask of cultivation fails to conceal the Editor's terror as he hustles unexplained matters out of sight. The superiority of the man of "the present generation" may be intended utterly to refute the Devil's existence, but all the evidence that

has been presented renders his tone of voice so repellent to the reader that the Editor's remarks lead him, more than anything else, to believe in Robert's story.

However, acceptance of the existence of supernatural characters and events in The Confessions of a Justified Sinner inevitably sets the book outside the bounds of the novel as usually defined. The world portrayed in Hogg's story is, by normal standards, a distortion of that in which we live; the experiences undergone by the characters are not ones in which we expect to share. Rather than condemn the novel as irrelevant to most readers and brand it with the lesser label of "entertainment" it is necessary to consider whether the formal criteria of the novel are appropriate to The Confessions. Not all critics appear to find them so. Several, accepting that the supernatural element cannot easily be explained away, have followed a lead offered by Robert Colwan himself, when he tells the printer for whom he works for a short time that his journal, which he wants published, is "a religious parable such as the Pilgrim's Progress" (p.221). Certainly, if The Confessions is an allegory, formal difficulties disappear; allegory is an accepted literary mode in which the most fantastic incidents can be employed because the reader understands that the action has a symbolic function. There is, for example, felt to be no incongruity in the flights of fancy contained in Gulliver's Travels, or, to take a more recent example, in David Lindsay's A Voyage to Arcturus, for it is clear that the reader is intended to look beyond the fantastic details to the eternal truths they embody. Critics have therefore sought to discover the truths which Robert Colwan, Gil-Martin, and the other characters represent. David Craig, for instance, finds Robert and Gil-Martin symbolic of religious truths:

This mirror-likeness or identity between devilish tempter and justified sinner no doubt symbolises the way in which, under pressure of Calvinist obsessions, the conscience may split itself off from the whole man and, dominating as a separate faculty, wind the zealot down into depths of moral confusion - arguing with himself only to square real doubts, perversely inciting himself to things his feelings recoil from, that he can approve only in his abstract intellect.²⁵

David Eggenchwilder, on the other hand, in the most thorough allegorical treatment Hogg's book has received, shows how the split in Robert's personality is echoed in the division between spirituality and carnality throughout the action of both parts of the story. The struggle in the ascetic sinner's mind, the death of his worldly-minded brother, and George's subsequent resurrection in the form of Gil-Martin are seen as representing the impossibility of suppressing one half of man's dual nature and the dangers that result if one attempts to. However, discussion of The Confessions of a Justified Sinner in such terms is based on a less than satisfactory definition of the term "allegory". Louis Simpson, in applying this label to the book, defines it as "a form of art which expresses ideas as physical realities"²⁶ and goes on to compare the action of Hogg's tale with The Faerie Queen and The Pilgrim's Progress. Such a definition of allegory is indeed borne out by the work of Spenser or Bunyan and offers insight into their manner of writing, but it leads to confusion when it is applied to The Confessions. In Spenser's epic all physical realities have an idea behind them, all actions possess a meaning above the literal. In The Confessions, however, no matter how ingenious the critic may be in his search, there are many details which possess only a literal force and which refuse to cohere into an allegorical scheme. Complications are introduced into the plot for their own sake and details of characterisation and gesture are included merely as idiosyncracies: Hogg finds a pleasure in the details of narration

which goes beyond any allegorical purpose that may lie behind them. It is more than significant that Craig and Eggenschwilder, after offering an allegorical explanation of the action, both find themselves, like unskilful watchmakers, with bits left over which refuse to go into place, and complain in consequence of faulty craftsmanship on the part of Hogg. Eggenschwilder finds that he must ignore the last section of the book:

Following these murders the confessions turn into the story of Robert's flight from the law and from his demonic companion, whom he had come to dread. Some commentators have found this section relating Robert's persecutions and suicide to be the weakest part of the confessions, since it moves away from psychological complexities and into some conventional demonology. In this final section of the confessions Hogg has done what he did in the last section of the editor's narrative; he has followed up the climax with some interesting, straight-forward story-telling that carries the plot to its conclusion without extending the main preoccupations of what preceded. As Mrs Logan's detective work added little to the allegorical conflicts of Scotland or the Colwan family, so Robert's increasing suffering and despair do not develop his symbolic and psychological nature; they mainly finish him off in an appropriately fantastic and dreadful manner.²⁷

Craig, having decided that The Confessions is an allegory, is forced to the conclusion that it is not a very good one:

But Hogg's symbolism too much externalises temptation into the Devil-figure. The tussle of wills and feelings and the specific grounds for scruple are not present as evoked states of mind, they are no more than points in a general scheme.... As written, however, this aspect of the novel is blurred by being cast in a 'mysterious' style in the line of the Gothic novel and, later, Poe...Too much of the crucial action comes down to plain crimes set side by side with flat generalisations against bigotry, where what is wanted is some inward presentment of how feelings, will, and ideas strive confusedly inside the zealot.²⁸

Hogg's story, it would seem, contains much that would take it away from the personifications of allegory into other forms - thriller, ghost story, even detective story. Either Hogg entangled himself

inextricably in the confusion of modes he employed or else allegory too is an unsatisfactory label for the work he produced.

However, there is a third possibility which avoids distorting the book, the inevitable consequence if one would present it as a novel, or finding it confused, which is the result of reading it allegorically. The problem of describing the form of the works of an author who apparently violates formal realism has also been faced by critics writing on the fiction of Robert Louis Stevenson. Like Hogg, Stevenson has been criticised for mingling, in stories such as Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, the supernatural with the everyday, while the elaborate and violent action of many of his tales has led to their being considered appropriate only to a juvenile audience, who can be allowed to escape from the constraining realism which is essential for mature readers. However, in an attempt to rehabilitate Stevenson's reputation, certain critics have questioned whether there is not a standpoint from which Stevenson's fiction can be seen in a more flattering light. Leslie Fiedler in his essay "R L S Revisited"²⁹ and Edwin M Eigner in his book Robert Louis Stevenson and Romantic Tradition have both suggested that the standards of the realistic novel are inappropriate to Stevenson's work: rather, they say, should his fiction be seen as part of the tradition of the "serious romance". In the opening chapter of his book, Eigner differentiates between these two forms, novel and serious romance:

The writer of the romance, at least apparently, is more intellectual than the novelist; and rather than striving to go deep by staying on the flesh, he tries to capture an internal vision, never expressed on the surface of the real world or, indeed, in the conscious portion of the writer's mind...Always the writer of the romance begins with his conception. Those writers we have so far been looking at started oftentimes with a thesis, but

more usually the romancer begins with a vision or an overpowering truth which he feels incapable of holding back... By way of contrast, the realist, if he begins his work with any preconception stronger than a general attitude towards experience, will probably distort the phenomenal world he is trying to portray. He finds the kernel of truth within his real or imagined experiences, while the writer of romance fabricates experience to illustrate a truth which in his vision or his theory he has already apprehended.³⁰

In other words, while the novelist discovers the meaning of the experiences he describes by presenting a realistic picture of them, the romancer uses his fiction to express a philosophical, ethical, or political truth which he has previously formulated. He can, without falsifying his message, use all levels of reality and probability to convey it. He may employ material of all kinds - ghosts, battles, magic potions - to express himself, but he can only be accused of distorting reality if he allows his argument to be distorted by the events of his fiction. The serious romance is very different from allegory for the characters are not symbols for more than their own personality, nor is an elaborate exegesis of their every gesture expected. The details of the plot of a serious romance are independent of the message; that is conveyed not by the fantastic adventures in which the characters participate but in the reactions of the characters to these adventures and the emotions that are aroused by them. Besides the realisation of the argument he wishes to present, however, the romancer also frequently has a vision which forms the nucleus of the action by which he hopes to portray it. This vision, as one sees repeatedly in any romancer's account of the genesis of his fiction, comes to the writer out of his sub-conscious in the form of a dream or a waking reverie, in which the normal controls of reality are loosened. For example, Stevenson has left an account of the prolonged day dream in which he

evolved the plot of The Master of Ballantrae, moving outwards from one crucial scene until the entire fabric of his plot was before him:

I saw that Marryat, not less than Homer, Milton, and Virgil, profited by the choice of a familiar and legendary subject; so that he prepared his readers on the very title-page; and this set me cudgelling my brains, if by any chance I could hit upon some similar belief to be the centre-piece of my own meditated fiction. In the course of this vain search there cropped up in my memory a singular case of a buried and resuscitated fakir, which I had been often told by an uncle of mine, then lately dead, Inspector-General John Balfour.

On such a fine frosty night, with no wind and the thermometer below zero, the brain works with much vivacity; and the next moment I had seen the circumstance transplanted from India and the tropics to the Adirondack wilderness and the stringent cold of the Canadian border. Here then, almost before I had begun my story, I had two countries, two of the ends of the earth involved: and thus though the notion of the resuscitated man failed entirely on the score of general acceptance, or even (as I have since found) acceptability, it fitted at once with my design of a tale of many lands; and this decided me to consider further of its possibilities. The man who should thus be buried was the first question: a good man, whose return to life would be hailed by the reader and the other characters with gladness? This trenched upon the Christian picture, and was dismissed. If the idea, then, was to be of any use at all to me, I had to create a kind of evil genius to his friends and family, take him through many disappearances, and make this final restoration from the pit of death, in the icy American wilderness, the last and the grimmest of the series. I need not tell my brothers of the craft that I was now in the most interesting moment of an author's life; the hours that followed that night upon the balcony, and the following nights and days, whether walking abroad or lying awake in my bed, were hours of unadulterated joy.³¹

Onto this visionary plot Stevenson then grafted that message of the dual nature of man's mind, uniting good and evil, which is central to so much of his fiction, using the wide-ranging action he had conceived as a vehicle for the truth which obsessed him. The resulting work of art is therefore the joint product of Stevenson's

imagination and his reason.

In thus allying imaginative fiction with philosophical truth Stevenson is echoing the method of the most important of the writers who, not long before Hogg came to write The Confessions of a Justified Sinner, had provided the culmination of the tradition of the Gothic novel, and with whose romances Hogg may well have expected his work to be classed. The early writers in the tradition, for example Horace Walpole, with whose The Castle of Otranto it may be said to start in 1764, produce their fiction entirely from their imagination, and excite the reader with the terrors which come from the world of nightmare. Certainly, they, like Stevenson, have their initial vision - Walpole, for example, wrote to a friend of the dream which provided the starting-point for his best-seller:

Shall I even confess to you what was the origin of this romance? I waked one morning in the beginning of last June from a dream, of which all I could recover was, that I had thought myself in an ancient castle (a very natural dream for a head filled like mine with Gothic story) and that on the uppermost bannister of a great staircase I saw a gigantic hand in armour. In the evening I sat down and began to write, without knowing in the least what I intended to say or relate. The work grew on my hands, and I grew fond of it - add that I was very glad to think of anything rather than politics - In short I was so engrossed with my tale, which I completed in less than two months, that one evening I wrote from the time I had drunk my tea, about six o'clock, till half an hour after one in the morning, when my hand and fingers were so weary, that I could not hold the pen to finish the sentence, but left Matilda and Isabella talking, in the middle of a paragraph.³²

But the fiction that results has no larger purpose than exciting the imagination and providing an escape from rationalism, for the reason is not used to shape the products of the imagination. However, later writers, with a more serious sense of literary purpose than the dilettante Walpole possessed, siezed on the potential of imaginative

fiction and created literature with a higher function. They saw that while imaginative riot was sufficient for entertainment literature, the attraction of fantasy could also, if applied to a serious message, produce a more worthwhile kind of art. An early example of this development can be found in Ann Radcliffe's The Mysteries of Udolpho (1794) in which, while for much of the time Mrs Radcliffe relies on the excitement of suspense, she also has serious things to say concerning the emotional development of her heroine and the dangers of excessive sensibility. However, more elaborate use of the Gothic form can be found in the writers who, in the ideological ferment which surrounded the French Revolution, sought to convey in fictional form a political message to their readers.³³ The first to introduce philosophical rigour to imaginative fiction was William Godwin, whose Caleb Williams, which appeared in the same year as Ann Radcliffe's very different romance, is an attempt to use the form of the adventure story to popularise the truths contained in his Enquiry concerning Political Justice, which had been published the previous year. It is to the method of this work, and to that of the famous novel which Godwin's daughter Mary Shelley produced in Frankenstein in 1818, that we should compare The Confessions of a Justified Sinner.

Both Godwin and his daughter found the germ of their stories in a vision of some kind. Godwin, for example, in planning his book, started with a clear conception of its closing section, which consists of an extended chase of the hero Caleb by his former employer Falkland:

I formed a conception of a book of fictitious adventure, that should in some way be distinguished by a very powerful interest. Pursuing this idea, I invented first the third volume of my tale, then the second, and last of all the first. I bent myself to

the conception of a series of adventures of flight and pursuit; the fugitive in perpetual apprehension of being overwhelmed with the worst calamities, and the pursuer, by his ingenuity and resources, keeping his victim in a state of the most fearful alarm. This was the project of my third volume.³⁴

The earlier section, which contains the philosophical ideas that the author intends to impart, was then created backwards from this initial piece of imagination. Frankenstein, like The Castle of Otranto, was the product of a dream, brought on by a conversation between Byron and Shelley concerning experiments to create artificial life:

Night waned upon this talk, and even the witching hour had gone by, before we retired to rest. When I placed my head on the pillow, I did not sleep, nor could I be said to think. My imagination, unbidden, possessed and guided me, gifting the successive images that arose in my mind with a vividness far beyond the usual bounds of reverie. I saw - with shut eyes, but acute mental vision, - I saw the pale student of unhallowed arts kneeling beside the thing he had put together. I saw the hideous phantasm of a man stretched out, and then, on the working of some powerful engine, show signs of life, and stir with an uneasy, half vital motion. Frightful must it be; for supremely frightful would be the effect of any human endeavour to mock the stupendous mechanism of the Creator of the world. His success would terrify the artist; he would rush away from his odious handywork, horror-stricken. He would hope that, left to itself, the slight spark of life which he had communicated would fade; that this thing, which had received such imperfect animation, would subside into dead matter; and he might sleep in the belief that the silence of the grave would quench for ever the transient existence of the hideous corpse which he had looked upon as the cradle of life. He sleeps; but he is awakened; he opens his eyes; behold the horrid thing stands at his bedside, opening his curtains, and looking on him with yellow, watery, but speculative eyes.³⁵

However, instead of following Walpole by piling ever more imaginative fantasy on to this initial impulse, Mary Shelley goes on to discuss the implications of that awful awakening she imagined and, from the starting-point of Frankenstein's experiments and the innocent being he created, proceeds to consider Frankenstein's responsibility to his

creation, his destructive curiosity, and, following the argument of her father's earlier novel, the social pressures which turn his creature from a being with a potential either for good or evil into a murderous monster. By clothing their philosophising in fictional garb Godwin and his daughter could hope to reach a far wider audience than if they had written without that sweetener. But, like Stevenson, they convey their philosophy not by allegory but by serious romance: the action is a vehicle for a truth rather than a symbol of it. To the expression of that truth they bring fantasy, adventure, and science fiction, knowing that the reality of their message will make the resulting story acceptable.

I would suggest therefore that it is by the standards of the serious romance rather than by those of the novel or the allegory that The Confessions of a Justified Sinner should be judged. Instead of concerning himself with the reality or otherwise of the events portrayed in the book, the critic should attempt to discover for what purpose Hogg concocted such a fantastic tale, and what message he hoped to convey by it. Certainly, if there were no message and no motive beyond exciting the reader, it would be fair to class The Confessions as entertainment, but if, as I hope to show, Hogg has a definite purpose in the writing of his book, it must, like other serious romances, be judged on a different level of truth. That The Confessions was a product of Hogg's imagination is plain on every page, for every detail of supernatural description is rich in resonances which reach to the reader's subconscious. That may indeed account for the sparseness of comment on the book by the author, and for the enigmatic statement in the Memoir that it was "a story replete with horror": perhaps in the process of writing Hogg had gone deeper into

his personal fears and nightmares than he cared to recall. Perhaps, as John Carey and Barbara Bloedé have suggested, in the writing of it he made use of the psychological conflicts which had been set up in his mind from his relations with his father and from the split personality which had resulted from the creation of a persona for him in the "Noctes Ambrosianae". Perhaps even, sure of his theme and his story, he had found himself writing automatically, as Godwin had when he came to write Caleb Williams:

I then sat down to write my story from the beginning. I wrote for the most part but a short portion in a single day. I wrote only when the afflatus was upon me. I held it for a maxim, that any portion that was written when I was not fully in the vein, told for considerably worse than nothing....

It must be admitted however, that, during the whole period, bating a few intervals, my mind was in a high state of excitement. I said to myself a thousand times, "I will write a tale, that shall constitute an epoch in the mind of the reader, that no one, after he has read it, shall ever be exactly the same man that he was before." - I put these things down just as they happened, and with the most entire frankness. I know that it will sound like the most pitiable degree of self-conceit. But such perhaps ought to be the state of mind of an author, when he does his best. At any rate, I have said nothing of my vain-glorious impulse for nearly forty years.³⁶

However, The Confessions deserves serious consideration only if the products of imagination - fears, nightmares, psychological conflicts - have passed through the filter of reason and been given the form of art. Therefore, it is to a consideration of the meaning of The Confessions of a Justified Sinner that this study must now turn.

Almost as much debate has raged over the meaning of Hogg's romance as over the kind of work in which he expressed it. Many critics, notably those who would present it as a psychological novel, see Hogg's intention as the presentation of the mind of the protagonist. Robert Kiely, on the other hand, thinks the point of the book lies in

its disruption of the audience's assumptions of reality and feels that the author wished to persuade his readers to expand their imaginations beyond normal constraints. For Kiely, the most interesting feature of the book is that "Hogg has acted on the fixed and reassuring conventions of the Gothic novel as Robert has acted upon the rules of tennis".³⁷ Others emphasise the book's presentation of religion: for Douglas Mack, The Confessions is undoubtedly a religious satire,³⁸ while Ian Campbell, with a slight change of emphasis, sees it as "a satire of human weakness, and the imperfections of a human intellect, especially one labouring under the sin of pride, when seeking to interpret scripture and doctrine".³⁹ Of course, any reading of the book is bound to combine elements of all these points of view; in a book as concentrated as The Confessions of a Justified Sinner there will be matter for thought at every turn. However, if, as I have suggested, Hogg has been drawn to write the book by the desire to convey one overwhelming message, it is likely that one particular theme or group of themes will stand out from the rest and will permeate the work from beginning to end. Therefore, one has to decide whether The Confessions is primarily a romance which, in a setting of religious disorder, seeks to expound truths about the existence of good and evil, whether it attempts to show the levels of reality which exist outside our perceptions, or whether, by means of a tale of the supernatural, Hogg is putting forward particular views on theology and ethics. The first two explanations seem most attractive to those critics who would fit the book into the form of the novel or the allegory, largely because Robert's mental condition and the supernatural figures bulk so large in discussions of those kinds. Robert's antinomian theology sinks into the background, merely a novelist's device to trigger off the madness from which he suffers, while the

theological arguments of Blanchard on the one side and Gil-Martin on the other are no more than a token sketch of the ethos which the protagonist inhabits. However, for several reasons, any attempt to discuss Hogg's story from either of these standpoints will present only a limited picture of it. The first interpretation rests of course on the mistaken assumption that Robert is insane and so becomes immediately untenable if the validity of the evidence I have presented is accepted. But even though the second interpretation acknowledges the presence of the supernatural in The Confessions, it renders the book extremely repetitive, no more than a series of shocks to the reader's assumptions, in which diminishing returns will set in long before the end of the story. Moreover, neither interpretation takes account of how greatly preoccupied is the narrative with religious matters, and in what detail a number of different theological points of view are put forward. But, above all, in each of these interpretations the book loses momentum before it is half finished, for once madness has firmly taken hold of the sinner, or once he has, by murdering his mother, fallen as deeply into crime as he can, there can be no further development in his character, so that his experiences while escaping punishment serve only to protract the book by postponing his inevitable death. The characterisation, which is not of any great importance when the book is treated in this fashion, becomes completely static and the book lacks a final solution. But if one accepts Hogg's right to use elements of fantasy in the presentation of his ideas, one finds one's eye less drawn to the supernatural figures and therefore can better appreciate the proportion of the book which is concerned with religion. The supernatural aspect loses its unique importance, with the result that one can more clearly examine the structure of the religious argument.

Hogg has taken it upon him to discuss through the unusual life of Robert Wringhim Colwan, the most essential question of Christian ethics - by what means is a man to be saved: by faith in God or by living a life which follows Christ's teachings in morality? Robert Colwan is exposed to many attitudes on this question in his short life, from his parents, from preachers, from Gil-Martin, and from those he meets by chance. It is his ultimate choice on which attitude he will follow which determines whether or not he has found grace, whether his life has been futile or worthwhile. Hogg sets his story in an age when there was the most extreme possible division on this question. In The Confessions he returns to the final stages of the conflict he described in The Brownie of Bodsbeck. The grim fighting between Tory and Whig, between presbyterian and episcopalian church government, has ceased and the Church of Scotland has reunited so as to comprehend most of the factions, leaving out only those who preferred to abide by episcopalianism and some of the more extreme presbyterians who could not bring themselves to acknowledge even the limited degree of Erastianism shown in the Kirk. However, once the debate on church government, though far from extinct, had subsided to some extent, fresh grounds of difference arose in the broad-based Church of Scotland, one of the chief of which was the question which divides the characters in Hogg's romance. A bitter quarrel arose between those who maintained that only those whom God's grace had elected would be saved, and that no amount of good works could save one who had not received grace, and another faction who considered that mercy would be extended to any man who earnestly sought to follow Christ's moral teachings.

Deliberately, Hogg takes as his principal characters representatives of an extreme form of each of these views, embodying the conflict in the opposition of the Wringhims and the Colwans. The Wringhims,

carrying the doctrine of predestination, that is of salvation by grace rather than works, to extremes, have fallen into the heresy of antinomianism, in which the elect are not only saved without reference to their active charity but cannot be damned no matter what sins they may commit. Admittedly, orthodox theology would maintain that one of the justified, possessed of grace, could not help but act for the most part in a moral fashion, for so grace would inspire him. But the Wringhims, under their assurance of salvation, have unleashed all their basest passions. They are racked by petty jealousies, which they avenge by spite and malicious interference; they are swollen with the sense of their own importance, which leads them to despise all who disagree with them; above all, they are totally selfish, so that they are prepared to go to untold lengths to further their ends. This means that they are incapable of forming a satisfactory relationship with another human being, and are, as a result, cold, solitary, and unloving: the liason between Rev Wringhim and Mrs Colwan takes no account of the personality of the other partner, but is the product of lust raised by opposition in debate. Robert, the product of this household, has, by the end of the book, run through all seven deadly sins and broken all ten of the commandments while following his ambition through lies and deceit. The Wringhims may constantly have the words of Scripture in their mouths but they are patently rotten and largely antipathetic to the reader.

The Colwans could hardly present a greater contrast to the Wringhims. Though active in religious strife, they are not notable for their religious professions. The old Laird is drawn into religious controversy from the hatred he feels for his wife (p.19), while George is so lax in religious form that he goes to church primarily to look at girls (pp.36-37). George is a blasphemer, a drunkard, and a

habitué of brothels, and, if Bell Calvert's testimony is accepted, in this he follows his father's custom (p.60). Mrs Logan appears callous when she refuses to pity Bell Calvert until she realises that the prostitute can help her solve the murder, and is, by all accounts, an adulteress. And yet, with all their sordid failings and sins, the Colwans present a sympathetic appearance to the reader and have more of the essence of Christ's teachings in their behaviour than the outwardly more religious Wringhims. Far more than those of the other party they are eager to do good and to avoid doing positive harm. George is guilty of unchastity and drunkenness but he is ready to ignore his brother's insults and be reconciled with him. His father, the Laird, may laugh at the idea of praying with his wife, but he is prepared, until her behaviour persuades him otherwise, to love her. They are capable of warm friendship, of great loyalty, and of the appreciation of beauty and pleasure. Their hope of salvation barely rests on belief in God at all, far more in their favour is their active charity to their neighbour and their want of really major sins against the person of another.

Between these extremes we find characters who express a variety of other viewpoints, mostly tending to agree with the Colwans, though less guilty of sin than these worldly figures. Wringhim's servant John Barnet, for example, though nominally a member of the same sect, is not deluded about the holiness of his master, and, more importantly, is equally clear-sighted about his own failings:

"Here stands the poor sinner, John Barnet, your beadle an' servant-man, wha wadna change chances wi' you in the neist world, nor consciences in this, for ten times a' that you possess, - your justification by faith an' awthegither."

(p.105)

He mixes with his predestinarian beliefs a strong leaven of charity:

for example, even when Robert's machinations result in his dismissal, he will still go to help his persecutor in difficulties (pp.111-113). Robert's man-servant, Samuel Scrape, is, we are told, a Cameronian, but he advises his master and gives him help despite his suspicions of Robert's guilt. On the other hand, Rev Blanchard, the first victim of Robert's campaign to purge the Church of enemies of the true faith, is presented quite explicitly as a Moderate preacher, who emphasises morality above all else. After Gil-Martin has first suggested murder to Robert, the sinner attends a sermon given by his intended victim:

I went and heard him preach for two days, and in fact I held his tenets scarcely short of blasphemy; they were such as I had never heard before, and his congregation, which was numerous, were turning up their ears and drinking in his doctrines with the utmost delight; for O, they suited their carnal natures and self-sufficiency to a hair! He was actually holding it forth, as a fact, that "it was every man's own blame if he was not saved!" What horrible misconstruction! And then he was alleging and trying to prove from nature and reason, that no man ever was guilty of a sinful action, who might not have declined it had he so chosen!

(p.135)

However, Blanchard allies these views to a profound belief in God, which shows in the tranquil forgiveness with which he dies:

The wounded man raised himself from the bank to a sitting posture, and I beheld his eyes swimming; he, however, appeared sensible, for we heard him saying in a low and rattling voice, "Alas, alas! whom have I offended, that they should have been driven to an act like this! Come forth and shew yourselves, that I may either forgive you before I die, or curse you in the name of the Lord." He then fell a-groping with both hands on the ground, as if feeling for something he had lost, manifestly in the agonies of death; and, with a solemn and interrupted prayer for forgiveness, he breathed his last.

(pp.140-141)

Such characters show a higher standard of behaviour and belief than the flawed Colwans, but their attitude to life is one of which the Colwans would have approved and provides the standard by which they should be judged.

However, if Hogg had done no more to present his theme than embody the opposing sides of the argument in a group of characters and allow each to speak his piece in turn, he might have produced a satisfactory moral tract but he would have failed to create a work of imaginative fiction. The Confessions of a Justified Sinner is raised to the level of art by the fact that the opposing points of view are not merely stated but are shown to act in the personality of the principal character, Robert Colwan. The conflict between the religion of faith and the religion of morality is shown through his every action; his personality develops according to the views he hears and his attempts to put them into action. All his sufferings result from his failure to realise the theological error under which he is lying, while his partial regeneration results from his attempts to follow the other way of life. He is faced with a number of choices: that he consistently fails to choose aright is shown to be the consequence of the faults of his personality, and, ultimately, of the philosophy by which he lives. Moreover, Hogg strengthens the reader's awareness of Robert's development by controlling the reader's sympathetic responses to him, so that Robert's tentative progress towards a more satisfactory form of Christianity is matched by a growing sympathy for him and forgiveness for his failings.

It is hard to feel sympathy with any aspect of the character of the young Robert Colwan. Egocentric, self-seeking, and ruthless, he is completely isolated from his fellow-men. Assured of his salvation by his presumed father, he feels little guilt for the many petty crimes he commits daily. He will lie and cheat to attain pre-eminence at school but lacks the courage to face the consequences of his actions. He is incapable of love, despising his mother and feeling only awe for

his father. He is insensitive to the attempts of others to make contact with him: he responds ungratefully to John Barnet's assistance in keeping him from a beating, and resists all the open-hearted overtures at reconciliation made to him by his brother George. A youth so incapable of human feelings and so hardened against guilt is an easy target for Gil-Martin's temptations, so that it is but a short step from Robert's total lack of awareness of the feelings and personalities of his fellow creatures to his actual physical violence against them. However, one consequence of his fall from uncharitability to active sin is a growing consciousness of his need for companionship and of the inadequacy of his austere faith as a consolation for misery and conscience. The trance into which Robert falls on becoming Laird of Dalcastle, from which he awakens to the torments of split personality and the constant memorial of his crime in Gil-Martin's shape, also reduces him to a state where he becomes aware of his isolation. In the relationship between Robert and his servant Samuel Scrape we see his first tentative attempts to share affection with his neighbour: for the first time he jokes without malice and converses naturally on his emotions without concealing his vulnerability. Scrape's loyalty and advice is accepted gratefully, without the pride which has answered all earlier attempts to help Robert. As a result, Robert for the first time questions seriously the beliefs on which his life is based, for although he had argued with Gil-Martin earlier, it had been as much a trial of intellectual strength as an expression of serious doubt, and had easily been overborne. Now, however, Scrape's tale of the temptation of the people of Auchtermuchty arouses genuine scruples in Robert's mind:

"'Now, this is a true story, my man" quo the auld wife; "an' whenever you are doubtfu' of a man, take auld Robin Ruthven's plan, an' look for the cloven foot, for it's a thing that winna

weel hide; an' it appears whiles where ane wadna think o't. It will keek out frae aneath the parson's gown, the lawyer's wig, and the Cameronian's blue bonnet; but still there is a gouden rule whereby to detect it, an' that never, never fails.'"....

The truth is, that the clown's absurd story, with the still more ridiculous application, made me sick at heart a second time. It was not because I thought my illustrious friend was the devil, or that I took a fool's idle tale as a counterbalance to divine revelation, that had assured me of my justification in the sight of God before the existence of time. But, in short, it gave me a view of my own state, at which I shuddered, as indeed I now always did, when the image of my devoted friend and ruler presented itself to my mind. I often communed with my heart on this, and wondered how a connection, that had the well-being of mankind solely in view, could be productive of fruits so bitter. I then went to try my works by the Saviour's golden rule, as my servant had put it into my head to do: and, behold, not one of them would stand the test. I had shed blood on a ground on which I could not admit that any man had a right to shed mine; and I began to doubt the motives of my adviser once more, not that they were intentionally bad, but that his was some great mind led astray by enthusiasm, or some overpowering passion.

(pp.203-204)

The uncouth old tale makes him conscious of the importance of Christ's ethical teaching, echoing as it does two sentences from the Sermon on the Mount.⁴⁰ The wretched wanderings of the last days of Robert's life strengthen his realisation that there is need to abide by more than the letter of Christian teaching to be happy. In the misery of poverty and homelessness he becomes grateful for even the most rudimentary kindness shown him, no matter who may offer it. Where before he despised those who did not agree with his beliefs, now he pays tribute to the power of their holiness:

Not daring to look behind me, I crept on my way, and that night reached this hamlet on the Scottish border; and being grown reckless of danger, and hardened to scenes of horror, I took

up my lodging with a poor hind, who is a widower, and who could only accommodate me with a bed of rushes at his fire-side. At midnight I heard some strange sounds, too much resembling those to which I had of late been inured; but they kept at a distance, and I was soon persuaded that there was a power protected that house superior to those that contended for, or had the mastery over me. Overjoyed at finding such an asylum, I remained in the humble cot.

(p.235)

The next night I came to this house, where the farmer engaged me as a shepherd; and finding him a kind, worthy, and religious man, I accepted of his terms with great gladness. I had not, however, gone many times to the sheep, before all the rest of the shepherds told my master, that I knew nothing about herding, and begged of him to dismiss me. He perceived too well the truth of their intelligence; but being much taken with my learning, and religious conversation, he would not put me away, but set me to herd his cattle....

Still they kept aloof, and without doors; for this gentleman's house, like the cottage I was in formerly, seemed to be a sanctuary from all demoniacal power. He appears to be a good man and a just, and mocks at the idea of supernatural agency, or will not acknowledge it, though of late he appears much perturbed.

(pp.236-237)

The pride and aloofness which had isolated him in his younger days is destroyed by want and is replaced, if not by forgiveness, at least by resignation:

This day I have been informed, that I am to be banished the dwelling-house by night, and to sleep in an out-house by myself, to try if the family can get any rest when freed of my presence. I have peremptorily refused acquiescence, on which my master's brother struck me, and kicked me with his foot. My body being quite exhausted by suffering, I am grown weak and feeble both in mind and bodily frame, and actually unable to resent any insult or injury. I am the child of earthly misery and despair, if ever there was one existent.

(p.237)

However, his growing humility and acceptance of the need for charity, which seem slowly to be rendering him a more worthy member of society, are not sufficiently strong to counter the fears of damnation from which Gil-Martin's predestination offers a refuge. Fear alone had made him reject the advice of Scrape, as now it undoes the slow

regeneration of Robert's character, and now exposed to the redoubled assaults of the Devil, he loses confidence in gradually winning the mercy of Heaven through works, and prefers to embrace the doubtful salvation of justification by faith.

However, with conscious irony, Hogg has shown throughout his book how ready Heaven is to offer that mercy. Admittedly, Robert labours, from the very start of his life, under severe disadvantages. Both by birth and upbringing he seems a creature marked out for evil. Robert, as the old Laird tells his elder son, is "the third in a direct line who had all been children of adultery; and it was well known that all such were born half deils themselves" (p.46). This mysterious reference to Robert's irregular ancestry echoes an earlier hint, where his mother was called "the sole heiress and reputed daughter of a Baillie Orde, of Glasgow" (p.1). Though his tainted blood is sufficient in itself to single Robert out from the rest of mankind, the education he receives from his mother and presumed father, exposing him to their religious beliefs alone, further distorts his mind. That two brothers, sharing the same mother, should be so very different both outwardly and inwardly as George and Robert, can be explained both by their different paternity and their completely opposite education. However, neither nature nor nurture is allowed to be an insuperable handicap to Robert's salvation should he choose to redeem himself, for Heaven shows him especial favour by repeatedly offering him the opportunity for repentance. Robert is warned not only by human agents, but, at every stage of his decline, is also offered a vision which seeks to deter him by reminding him of the consequences of sin. Before Blanchard's murder, he sees weapons pointed at him, and hears a voice warning him, while before the unsuccessful attempt on George's life he meets a mysterious lady dressed in white who tells him he is following the road

to damnation. Ian Campbell, in his "Author and audience in Hogg's Confessions of a Justified Sinner",⁴¹ has shown how Hogg, both by explicit reference to the Bible and by subtly analogous repetitions of Biblical situations, has, by drawing on his audience's knowledge of Scripture, manipulated their sympathy in these passages so that they could not avoid the inference that these visions are sent by Heaven to counter Gil-Martin's influence and offer Robert a choice of destiny. It is Robert's tragedy that his weakness of character leads him to ignore the good and follow the bad. Warned by the advice of Heaven and the persecution of Hell, he still persists in his belief that his faith is sufficient to save him. He of all men should have realised that the means of salvation was always to hand but his fear and lack of trust, his inability to sympathise with his fellows and his eagerness to pay off old scores all prompt Robert to abide in the assurance that he is specially chosen. Towards the end of his life it appears that he could have saved himself, even at the mouth of Hell. But his final despair, which is, as the Editor tells us, the one act "for which, according to the tenets he embraced, there was no remission, and which consigned his memory and his name to everlasting detestation" (p.255), prevents him from availing himself of that last chance.

Hogg's argument about the relative importance of works and faith may now seem remote from our concerns, when few even of the most rigid Calvinists would place emphasis on justification before works, but it was still a very lively issue in the theologically-minded Scotland of his day. Louis Simpson tells of a time barely a century before when charges of antinomianism had caused a split in the Church of Scotland, while John Carey has shown that a book published in 1823, the year before The Confessions, had accused a group of Plymouth dissenters of antinomian beliefs.⁴² However, more important than this minor heresy

was the split caused in the main body of the Kirk by difference of belief in the two basic forms of Christianity. The constant struggle between the two main parties in the Church of Scotland, the Moderates and the Evangelicals, while finally crystallising round the issue of church government, was also a clash between works and faith. The Moderates, whose control over the Kirk, at its peak during Dundas' dominance in the last years of the eighteenth century, had rapidly declined in the nineteenth, had consistently been accused of esteeming the moral message of Christianity above its mysteries; the Evangelicals on the other hand, seeing themselves as the descendants of the reformers of the seventeenth century, emphasised in their preaching the more spiritual side of the gospel. The conflict was given added spice since the Moderates were predominantly Tory, the Evangelicals substantially Whig. Admittedly, by one of those paradoxes which bedevil the thinking of the early years of the nineteenth century, it was the Evangelicals who were the more active in the philanthropic activities of the Kirk, inspired by Whig agitation for reform, but, in profession at least, the two factions were split on the importance of works in the life of the Kirk. Hogg, as Douglas Mack has shown, though born of evangelical stock, had developed a dislike of religious fanaticism and of the reform for which the Whig party stood in both Kirk and State. While laying more stress on the importance of faith than many of his party, he still, as practically all his stories show, saw charity as the most important virtue in life. Therefore, when writing a book on the relative importance of faith and charity, it is not surprising that his moderate attitude to religion should lead to ally himself with the Moderate party in the Kirk, so that the book, though couched in general terms, played its part in a much wider contemporary debate. Douglas Mack sees the book as a satire on "a deformed version of

Calvinism",⁴³ but, I would suggest, it could also be read as a criticism of what Hogg saw as the possible consequences of too great a reliance on faith over charity in the Church of his day. A man in whose life religion still played a vital part, Hogg cast his arguments on this matter in the form of a romance and realised them with all the strength of his imagination. In an attempt to explain the book's extra-ordinary power, Douglas Mack has written: "For once Hogg was not writing with careless volubility on fashionable or remunerative subjects; he was writing with care on a subject about which he was passionately concerned, and on which he had no doubt meditated for many years."⁴⁴ The desire to convey his meaning stimulated Hogg's imagination into the production of one of the most powerful works of fantasy ever written.

The union of imagination and reason which was necessary to write a serious romance guided Hogg past the failings which had prevented his two earlier novels from achieving their full effect. Out of Hogg's imagination came the wealth of detail which makes the tale so evocative, but out of his reason came the greater unity of narrative which had been so noticeably wanting in both The Brownie of Bodsbeck and The Three Perils of Man. The Confessions of a Justified Sinner is remarkable, in a way that neither of these earlier works could be said to be, for its unity of plot. Hogg was kept from pursuing irrelevant sub-plots by the knowledge that he had a strong central thesis round which his plot could be structured. Like the earlier attempts at prose fiction, The Confessions is told in a succession of scenes, dialogues, and descriptions, which are given extended treatment within the forward movement of the narrative, but where, in The Brownie of Bodsbeck for example, one remembers only a few particularly effective incidents, which are frequently not the most important in the tale - Davie Tait's

prayer, John Hoy's interrogation - in The Confessions one is conscious that the scenes one remembers are all crucially linked up with the wider argument. Particular patches of dialogue do indeed stand out as especially memorable: John Barnet's shrewd evasions while being cross-examined by Rev Wringhim, or Robert's futile attempts to convert his gaoler in the Edinburgh Tolbooth are but two examples that spring to mind. But instead of impeding the narrative by their vividness, they actively further it, for it is essential to the argument of the book that the humanitarian Barnet should act as a counter-argument to the Pharisaic Wringhim, while the conflict between Robert and his gaoler is a neat deflation of the prisoner's pretensions to martyrdom and presents the popular attitude to his fanaticism. The book contains remarkably few irrelevances and moves onward with very few diversions to chase enticing byways. Even a set-piece like Scrape's tale of the Auchtermuchty preaching can hardly be said to be irrelevant, for it offers a parody of Robert's fall in the heightened idiom of a popular legend, while sparking off doubts in Robert's mind which are vital to the development of his character.

The imaginative nature of the story in which Hogg has clothed his thesis is of even greater importance in determining the success of his romance. Hogg's imagination is engaged throughout the writing of his book so that in The Confessions, unlike the earlier novels, where one frequently found passages of vivid description succeeded by the most bald reportage, no detail has not been visualised by the author. Even the most minor characters, such as the landlady who inadvertently gets caught up in the hysteria of Mrs Logan and Bell Calvert, are individualised in their brief appearance, while the action, such as the riot that breaks out against George and his companions in the High Street of Edinburgh (pp.26-30), clearly shows how deeply Hogg has thought himself into the events he describes. The dialogue, with its natural-sounding

Scots and skilfully parodied Biblical English, provides further evidence of the clarity of Hogg's imagination in this book, for it has clearly been "heard" before it was written down. The depth of his imaginative reconstruction of events may indeed account for the first-person form in which the book is cast and which has played such a large part in its success. Certainly, the bold stroke of telling the entire second part from Robert's point of view ensures that at no point in that section does the imagination falter, for every detail has to be transposed from the author's point of view to Robert's, undergoing a subtle change in the process. The slight distortion of perspective involved in presenting Robert's egocentric version of the events of the story means that Hogg must have in his mind a clear picture of the true nature of the event before he starts writing. But even in the first part, the voice of the Editor, though less sharply characterised than Robert's, is not that of Hogg, so that the events are to some extent transmuted. The Tory rationalist who is responsible for the opening narrative sees only part of the story, with the result that Hogg, for perhaps the first time in his career, must have had to draft the entire plot of his tale before starting to write it.

The use of two narrative figures, neither of whom is the author himself, solves Hogg's recurring problem of finding a suitable style of language for narrating the events of his stories. The dry tone of the Editor allows Hogg to sketch in events rapidly without the baldness of his other tales, for one is kept fully aware that it is a style very appropriate to the man of limited imagination who is supposed to be writing. Robert's more subjective account elicits a more imaginative and rhetorical style which can move into the sublime without jarring, because again it is natural that one whose Biblical training had been as rigorous as Robert's would adopt a similarly rhetorical style. The

personality of each narrator is readily identifiable from the language that he uses. The editor is scholarly but arch, making great play of Latinisms and abstractions, with a preference for indirect speech and an urbanely facetious demeanour:

The meek mind of Lady Dalcastle was somewhat disarranged by this sudden evolution. She felt that she was left rather in an awkward situation. However, to show her unconscionable spouse that she was resolved to hold fast her integrity, she kneeled down and prayed in terms so potent, that she deemed she was sure of making an impression on him. She did so; for in a short time the laird began to utter a response so fervent, that she was utterly astounded, and fairly driven from the chain of her orisons. He began, in truth, to sound a nasal bugle of no ordinary calibre, - the notes being little inferior to those of a military trumpet. The lady tried to proceed, but every returning note from the bed burst on her ear with a louder twang, and a longer peal, till the concord of sweet sounds became so truly pathetic, that the meek spirit of the dame was quite overcome; and after shedding a flood of tears, she arose from her knees, and retired to the chimney-corner with her Bible in her lap, there to spend the hours in holy meditation till such time as the inebriated trumpeter should awaken to a sense of propriety.

(pp.5-6)

Robert Colwan on the other hand is characterised by his Biblical phraseology, with its repetitions and oriental imagery, as well as by his insistence on himself and his concerns:

My life has been a life of trouble and turmoil; of change and vicissitude; of anger and exultation; of sorrow and of vengeance. My sorrows have all been for a slighted gospel, and my vengeance has been wreaked on its adversaries. Therefore, in the might of heaven I will sit down and write: I will let the wicked of this world know what I have done in the faith of the promises, and justification by grace, that they may read and tremble, and bless their gods of silver and of gold, that the minister of heaven was removed from their sphere before their blood was mingled with their sacrifices.

(p.97)

Not only does this mean that the narrative style of each section is remarkably consistent, but it also provides one more method for maintaining the imaginative momentum of the book, for it elicits

sympathy for a wide range of characters. The bias of the Editor in the first part of the narrative enables Hogg to win a great deal of sympathy for the Colwans and their aims, while understating the less pleasant aspects of their personalities. On the other hand, while the second part allows Robert to condemn himself out of his own mouth, it also places the reader in a position to empathise with Robert in his sufferings, and to identify with his feeble efforts at regeneration. The characters are therefore much more rounded than in, say, The Three Perils of Man, because Hogg has a means of presenting both good and evil facets of their personality and so winning from the reader a more complex response. Every feature of the book bears witness to the stimulus Hogg felt from the compulsion to unite an important thesis with the products of his imagination.

The compulsion under which Hogg was writing also seems to have enabled him, without compromising his imaginative vision, to make use of a wide range of sources in the creation of his romance. Of course, this conforms with a pattern which had been set up throughout Hogg's career, for behind each of his more important works one can see the presence of at least one influence which, if he is to write successfully, he must master and incorporate in the work he is writing. But behind The Confessions, the most original of all his works, can be perceived by far the greatest number. The narrative of The Confessions contains elements drawn from novels, history, chapbooks, and legends; suggestions for plot, for incidents, and for characters are taken from writers in both art and folk literature, but the book that results is the most coherent and consistent that Hogg wrote. So great was his inspiration that all the separate details could be welded into one unique work. The state of mind in which Hogg must have written The Confessions of a Justified Sinner can perhaps best be understood by

comparing William Godwin's account of the intense concentration with which he wrote Caleb Williams, when he, too, found no difficulty in incorporating existing material in his romance, without distorting the course, or the meaning, of his narrative:

When I had determined on the main purpose of my story, it was ever my method to get about me any productions of former authors that seemed to bear on my subject. I never entertained the fear, that in this way of proceeding I should be in danger of servilely copying my predecessors. I imagined that I had a vein of thinking that was properly my own, which would always preserve me from plagiarism. I read other authors, that I might see what they had done, or more properly, that I might forcibly hold my mind and occupy my thoughts in a particular train, I and my predecessors travelling in some sense to the same goal, at the same time that I struck out a path of my own, without ultimately heeding the direction they pursued, and disdain to enquire whether by any chance it for a few steps coincided or did not coincide with mine.⁴⁵

Hogg, though much less profound a philosopher, also had his own way of thinking; like Godwin, he found no difficulty in striking out on his own.

The most important single source of the plot of The Confessions of a Justified Sinner is to be found, as John Carey has shown so convincingly, in a tale by the German author E T A Hoffmann, Die Elixiere des Teufels, which had been published in 1816, eight years before Hogg's romance.⁴⁶ Hogg, who never claimed any aptitude for languages, must have learnt of this work from an anonymous translation which was published by Blackwood and Cadell. Though there is a superficial difficulty in this assumption, since this translation did not appear until the very month that Hogg's romance was published, in fact Hogg would in all likelihood have read the translation before it was printed, for the publishers, the printer, and above all, the translator were all men with whom he had been associated for many years. The Devil's Elixir,

as the translation was named, was the work of Robert Pearce Gillies (1788-1858) who had first met Hogg in 1813. Both men had been involved in Blackwood's Magazine from its inception, Gillies being responsible for an influential series of articles on German literature which appeared in its pages. Blackwood's had acknowledged his importance to the magazine by including him, like Hogg, in the drunken gatherings of the "Noctes Ambrosianae", where he is caricatured as Kempferhausen, a philosophy-loving German who enthuses incomprehensibly over Kant. Hogg and Gillies had shared an interest in each other's work from the start of their friendship. When Gillies published his first translation, a version of Muellner's tragedy Die Schuld brought out by Blackwood in 1819 under the English title Guilt, or The Anniversary, Hogg wrote to the publisher: "I am particularly delighted with the praises my friends have given to Honest Gillies. I am persuaded he will be an excellent translator. He is the very man for it a good scholar, a fine taste, and a polished mind but one who never gives himself the time or trouble to hunt for many original ideas - Here he does not need to do it."⁴⁷ Later, in 1827, Hogg was equally enthusiastic about a three volume collection called German Stories which had appeared the previous year:

I am in a great hurry and cannot get time for literary remarks a great deal of which I am longing to write to you. But once for all and I am sorry I forgot to mention it before. Of all the new works you have sent me I admire Gillies' stories by far the most. I have scarcely ever met with a work that pleased me better and was so truly composed to my mind. The ease and simple elegance of the stile is exquisite [.] That work should certainly have a great circulation.⁴⁸

Gillies, while admiring Hogg's poetry greatly, was more conscious of faults in his friend's prose, and sought to remedy its defects, which he thought the product of too hasty composition on Hogg's part:

Thoroughly aware that Hogg might do better as a prose writer if he would but take the trouble, I sometimes counselled him on the subject, but it was

of no avail. I insisted on the benefits that might accrue to literature, if authors mutually corrected their productions; for example, one party taking the prose, and the other the poetical department of critical emendation; to which he replied, that he "would willingly correct a' mainer of poyems, and pit some life into them, always excepting Petrarchan sonnets, which he could not abide." But as to allowing his own productions, whether prose or verse, it mattered not which, to be retouched, there was no man on earth, not Walter Scott, nor Lord Byron - no, nor Southey, "wi' a' his accuracy and awcumen," that he would allow to meddle with them. "As the tree falls, so let it lie," added he, "and if the Brownie happens no' to tak' your fancy, aiblins there may be ither folk - no sumphs neither - who may like it better." So the case was hopeless.⁴⁹

It is surely not an unwarranted assumption that among other ways Gillies tried to help his colleague was a suggestion that Hogg might find The Devil's Elixir a congenial work of fiction.

Gillies, in preparing Hoffmann's story for English publication, also took it upon him to bowdlerise passages which seemed too outspoken for his readers, but the translation he produced is lively and readable, giving, despite the excisions, a fair impression of what is anyhow not one of the best works written by the distinguished German author and musician. The title of Hoffmann's story refers to a legend that the Devil tempted St Anthony with bottles of a mysterious elixir, of which whoever drinks will be damned eternally. Moreover, "if two individuals should drink out of the same flask, they would henceforth become addicted to the same crimes, possessing a wonderful reciprocity of thoughts and feelings, yet mutually and unconsciously acting for the destruction of each other".⁵⁰ These bottles have been preserved at a German monastery into which, seemingly by chance, a young man of unknown parentage has been accepted as a novice. Despite temptations of the flesh, he becomes a monk, taking the name of Medardus, and, by reason of his great skill as a preacher,

rises to become the keeper of the convent's relics. However, flushed by spiritual pride, he drinks from one of the bottles, which has earlier been tasted by a visiting Count, and flees the convent life, under pretence of undertaking an errand to Rome. On his travels he unwittingly causes the death of a gentleman whom he startles into falling over a cliff. To his astonishment, Medardus is recognised by a servant of the nobleman's as his master and is guided by him to a castle where, it transpires, the count, disguised as a monk, had been having an affair with the owner's wife. The lady recognises him as her lover, Count Victorin, while the rest of the household assume him to be Medardus, who had been summoned to cure the insanity of her son. But Medardus is forced to flee when he is discovered assaulting the beautiful Aurelia, who had already caused him disquiet when she had visited the convent. In the confusion of his departure from the castle he meets with a bloody figure identical in appearance to himself. Dogged by a similar figure through many adventures, Medardus gradually unravels the story of his parentage and learns that the missing Victorin and he are brothers, the products of a complicated tangle of incest and adultery. The strain of this, together with the constant puzzle of having actions attributed to him for which he knows he is not responsible, so disorients him that, on the eve of his marriage to Aurelia, he imagines that he has stabbed his beloved and runs from pursuers until he collapses. When he comes to, he learns that he has been taken to Italy by a servant and so is unwittingly carrying out the instructions of his Superior by continuing his journey to Rome. Once he returns to his appointed task, his nightmare is virtually over and his sense of identity is once more secure. Having withstood the temptations of a corrupt Rome, and done severe penance for his lusts, Medardus retraces his steps, physically and mentally, to the convent. As he travels it becomes increasingly clear to him that his double has not

been, as he assumed, a spirit, but was in fact his identical brother Victorin, who had escaped alive but deranged from his initial fall over the cliff.

This bald summary of the extremely complicated plot of The Devil's Elixir may not seem to show much resemblance to The Confessions of a Justified Sinner but too many details in the books coincide for the resemblance to be merely accidental. Carey has noted several of these already. For example, he compares the description of Victorin's fall into the abyss to Robert's mental picture of his brother's falling body:

His mangled form must have dashed from point to point of the rocks in his descent. I heard one piercing yell of agony, which echoed through the immeasurable abyss, from which at last only a hollow moaning arose, which soon also died away.

I thought of the awful thing of plunging a fellow creature from the top of a cliff into the dark and misty void below - of his being dashed to pieces on the protruding rocks, and of hearing his shrieks as he descended the cloud, and beheld the shagged points on which he was to alight.⁵¹

He points the similarity of the situation of Hoffmann's hero, discovering himself armed when he thought himself helpless to Robert's shock at finding Gil-Martin's dagger in the pocket of his coat:

Thus I complained aloud, but at the moment when I uttered these words, I felt a painful pressure on my breast, which seemed to proceed from some hard substance in my waistcoat pocket. I grappled with it accordingly, and drew out, to my surprise, a small stiletto. Never had I worn any such implement since I had been in the prison. It must, of necessity, be the same which had been held up to me by my mysterious double. I recognized the glittering heft. It was the identical stiletto with which I had killed Hermogen, and which, for many weeks, I had been without!

With that he pointed to something on the inside of the breast of my frock-coat. I looked at it, and there certainly was the gilded haft of

a poniard, the same weapon I had seen and handled before, and which I knew my illustrious companion carried about with him; but till that moment I knew not that I was in possession of it.⁵²

Carey also suggests that the mysterious painter who follows Merdardus, acting as his conscience and recalling his crimes to him, suggested several aspects of Gil-Martin's figure to Hogg. There are other incidental similarities between the two books. The warning voices Medardus hears before drinking the elixir recall the voice that bids Robert refuse to murder Blanchard. Again, when first meeting Victorin's servant after the Count had plunged over the cliff, Medardus is surprised to find so ready an excuse when asked how he came to dispose of his uniform so quickly:

"As for that," replied I, "I threw it down the rocks into the water." - Yet these words were not mine! I only gave utterance, involuntarily and almost unconsciously, to expressions, which, by means of some supernatural influence, rose up within me.⁵³

Robert, escaping in Gil-Martin's clothes from the mob who are bringing his mother's corpse to him, is equally surprised at the alibi which comes unbidden to his lips and the ease with which his disguise is accepted:

My hall door and postern gate were both strongly guarded, and there were sundry armed people within, searching the closets; but all of them made way for me, and lifted their caps as I passed by them. Only one superior officer accosted me, asking if I had seen the culprit? I knew not what answer to make, but chanced to say, with great truth and propriety, "He is safe enough." The man beckoned with a smile, as much as to say, "Thank you, sir, that is quite sufficient;" and I walked deliberately away.
(p.208)

The emphasised connection between Robert's drunkenness and the trances into which he falls, when his evil-minded double takes over, seems to some extent to echo the similar properties attributed to the Devil's elixir.

However, far more important than these points of detail is the great similarity in the characterisation of the protagonists of the two books. Just as Robert's first encounter with Gil-Martin comes when he is most swollen with spiritual pride on hearing from his father the news of his justification, so Medardus starts to fall from the time when pride in his preaching abilities lead him to see himself as specially marked out by God to effect his will on mankind:

Thus vanity gradually, by imperceptible, but sure approaches, took possession of my heart. Almost unconsciously, I began to look upon myself as the one elect, - the pre-eminently chosen of Heaven. Then the miraculous circumstances attending my birth at the Lime-Tree; my father's forgiveness of a mortal crime; the visionary adventures of my childhood; - all seemed to indicate that my lofty spirit, in immediate commerce with supernatural beings, belonged not properly to earth, but to Heaven, and was but suffered, for a space, to wander here, for the benefit and consolation of mortals.⁵⁴

Certainly, both authors may share a common source in M G Lewis' portrait of the decline of the preacher Ambrosio in The Monk, but the telling juxtaposition which both Hogg and Hoffmann make between spiritual elation and immediate temptation is not nearly so sharply expressed in Lewis. Moreover, Medardus' conception of his spiritual duty to be the vehicle of God's vengeance seems definitely to have suggested the form of temptation into which Robert's pride leads him. Medardus continues to enjoy the favours of Victorin's mistress without guilt because he feels secured from mortal sin by his intention of eventually punishing the lady for her lust. Later, when murder comes to the castle - though it is in fact Victorin not Merdardus who commits it - Merdardus cries out "'Poor insane wretches! would you strive to interfere with and arrest that destiny, which inflicts only just and righteous punishment on the guilty?"⁵⁵ Robert Colwan is in an identical frame of mind when he involves himself in

murder.

Hogg's insight into the confusion of mind created when one is accused of crimes which are actually the fault of a double may have crystallised round the similar, though cruder, picture given by Hoffmann. Even before he knows of his double's existence, Medardus feels split in two by his unusual situation in the castle of Victorin's mistress, where one half of the household thinks him to be Victorin, while the other confronts him with his saintly mask of Medardus:

I had, indeed, virtually lost myself, for I could no longer recover any power of voluntary action. It was through the interference of my arm that Victorin had been hurled into the abyss; but it was chance, and no impulse of volition, by which I was guided on that occasion. "Now", said I to myself, "I come into his place; but then Reinhold knows Father Medardus, the preacher in the Capuchin Convent, and thus in his estimation I appear only that which I truly am. On the other hand, the adventure with the Baroness, which the Count had in contemplation, falls upon my shoulders, so that in this respect I become again Victorin! To myself an inexplicable riddle, thought becomes a mere chaos. Like the fabulous knight, who fought with his DOUBLE in the dark forest, I am at variance, and combating with myself.⁵⁶

Medardus is prompted to think that his two identities have taken over from his real personality, a feeling which, as the next quotation shows, he shares with Robert Colwan on his sickbed:

When I lay in bed, I deemed there were two of us in it; when I sat up, I always beheld another person, and always in the same position from the place where I sat or stood, which was about three places off me towards my left side. It mattered not how many or how few were present: this my second self was sure to be present in his place; and this occasioned a confusion in all my words and ideas that utterly astounded my friends, who all declared, that instead of being deranged in my intellect, they had never heard my conversation manifest so much energy or sublimity of conception; but for all that, over the singular delusion that I was two persons, my reasoning faculties had no power. The most perverse part of it was, that I rarely conceived myself to be any of the two persons.

I thought for the most part that my companion
 was one of them, and my brother the other;
 and I found, that to be obliged to speak and
 answer in the character of another man, was a
 most awkward business at the long run.

(p.154)

However the similarities in this respect are not ones which can be shown by quotation, however extensive. The resemblance between the two books is one of atmosphere as each evokes the bewilderment of a man of relatively fixed beliefs who finds himself moving in a world which operates by rules other than he expected. By telling their story through the eyes of this central character, both Hoffmann and Hogg arouse in their readers, for the greater part of their books, the same confusions as assail their protagonists. Characters disappear and reappear without apparent explanation, while only the details which would be available to the hero's perceptions are included. Hogg learnt from Hoffmann the power of the first person presentation of such a situation, while also using him as a guide-line in the bewildering problems such a situation creates for the writer's imagination, so that the information that Robert gives us presents a remarkably consistent story.

Hogg may also have taken, with Gillies' help, a lesson from Hoffmann in the importance of providing a stabilising frame to this constantly shifting picture. Gillies had omitted from his published translation of Hoffmann's story the short Introduction where an anonymous narrator finds Medardus' manuscript in the library of the monastery where he died, but, if one grants probability to the speculation that Gillies had shown his friend a translation of the story before he went to press, it is not excessive to suggest further that the translation Hogg saw included the opening section, a matter of a few paragraphs. Moreover, Gillies' printed translation does

include the epilogue to the book, "Additions by Father Spiridion, Librarian of the Capuchin Monastery at Koenigswald", which tell of Medardus' death in an odour of sanctity. The calm tone of this last section, so different from the fever of Medardus' narrative, is not far from the detached and limited viewpoint of the editor-figure in The Confessions. Spiridion is concerned only with outward details and does not attempt to understand Medardus' psychology; being a monk of mediocre mind, he wishes only to record the outward piety of the deceased's career. The supposed finding of Medardus' manuscript serves, like the incident of the suicide's grave in The Confessions, to link the events with normal life and so give verisimilitude to the narrative.⁵⁷

However, the very different use Hogg makes of that frame is but one piece of evidence for how much in The Confessions he did not take from Hoffmann. The mysterious events narrated in The Devil's Elixir are, the reader has learnt by the end, all capable of rational explanation. Medardus' double is not the result of diabolic intervention, less still a figment of his imagination, but rather he is a concrete human being, the brother of the hero, whose similarity in looks and behaviour can be fully accounted for by the workings of heredity. Medardus finds himself in inexplicable circumstances not because he is moving in a supernatural environment but because he has blundered into the middle of a complicated chain of events, whose inner logic is apparent only to those who are aware of all the facts. By the end of the book the only events which render it less than totally realistic are a few inconsistencies, not fully worked out by the author, and the figure of the Painter, whose affair with a spirit started the train of guilt which ends in Medardus, who was condemned to walk the earth until his line died out. Therefore, the prosaic style of Father Spiridion is not undercut by the preceding narrative and does not seem to falsify the close of the book. Instead

of multiplying its ambiguities, the frame allows The Devil's Elixir to end in stillness and tranquility and to distance Medardus' mental agonies from the comfortable real world. It was for Hogg to see the other use to which the frame could be put: his frame is as tranquil as Hoffmann's, but the jarring ironies which underlie it, far from distancing the reader from the hero's experiences, undermine the assurance of the Editor's voice, so that the end of The Confessions of a Justified Sinner, instead of relaxing tension in the reader, arouses greater disquiet than any other point of the novel.

The entire ethical world of the two books is also completely different. Despite the superficially more naturalistic setting of The Devil's Elixir, the action is much more deterministic than that of The Confessions: the characters, though outwardly less manipulated by supernatural forces than Robert and George, are allowed less free will than anyone in Hogg's romance. It might seem that Medardus had the choice of resisting the temptation to taste the Devil's elixir and so preventing the chain of events in which he was involved, but in point of fact the genetic situation was so complicated even by that stage that the confusions which he faced could have happened at any time without the supernatural provocation. The Devil's elixir acted as a mere catalyst by releasing him from restraint:

"Like a water distilled from pestilential herbs," said I, "it gave new strength to the seeds of vice and wickedness which lurked within me, till at length they burst from their concealment, and spread into luxuriant and multiplying growth!"⁵⁸

Once he started on his adventures, Medardus was at no point capable of choosing a course of action which would alter the outcome in any way; he could only persevere and let events take their course, secure in the knowledge that he would be saved by his genetic purity while Victorin would be damned by his genetic corruption. Genetics

do of course play some part in the downfall of Robert Colwan; it may well be that the stress laid on his being the "third in a direct line who had all been children of adultery" is a conscious echo of the unnatural ancestry of Medardus and Victorin. But Robert is never incapable of choice or of changing the course of his life, for the temptation to ride out the storm and see where he is carried is precisely one into which he must not fall, since his salvation can be obtained only by fighting to change his personality. Therefore, while outwardly similar in details of plot and character, the books are at heart completely different. Hogg has been able to take from Hoffmann only what he wanted, and to ignore all that would have distorted what he was trying to say.

However, it is not only Hoffman who contributes to The Confessions. Research has uncovered an ever-growing list of possible sources for elements of the plot of The Confessions, most of which seems to carry a considerable weight of probability. Louis Simpson has suggested that Robert's character may have been suggested by that of Nicol Muschet, a murderer who was hanged in 1721, and whose Confession, in which he lays the blame for his actions on a mysterious tempter, had been reprinted in 1818.⁵⁹ David Stevenson thinks a closer analogy would be the covenanting Major Weir, who was executed in 1670 for sexual crimes, and who has passed into tradition as a notorious warlock.⁶⁰ There may also be similarities with another notorious Scots criminal, one Robert Irvine, a puritanical divinity student who in 1717 murdered two boys to whom he was tutor in order to escape their accusations of misdemeanours on his part. The incident is connected with Hogg in that it took place in Gabriel's Road, where the Ambrose's Tavern of the "Noctes Ambrosianae" was originally situated, while Hogg's colleague Lockhart mentions the story in his Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk

as "one of the most striking illustrations I have ever met with, of the effects of puritanical superstition in destroying the moral feelings, when carried to the extreme in former days not uncommon in Scotland."⁶¹ Other details in Hogg's tale come from more literary sources. Marilyn Georgas has pointed remarkable similarities between the description of the tennis match between George Colwan and his friends which Robert interrupts and an Elizabethan account of a tension-fraught match between Sir Philip Sidney and the Earl of Oxford, of which Hogg could have learnt through Scott.⁶² The character of Gil-Martin, defying God by his whole-hearted evil, while obviously drawing heavily on Milton's portrait of Satan, may also be indebted to such daring villains as Montoni in Mrs Radcliffe's The Mysteries of Udolpho or Manfred in Walpole's The Castle of Otranto. The dual narrative has its basis not only in Hoffmann but also in the Gothic convention of the recovered manuscript which explains all mysteries, though, as Robert Kiely has well shown, the reversal of the usual form of supernatural followed by factual has a profound effect on the reader's attitude to the relative truth of the two narratives. Perhaps one can also hear echoes in the closing pages of Robert's narrative of the end of M G Lewis' The Monk, both in the characterisation of the central figure and in specific details. For example, Ambrosio, the monk of the title, like Robert, is eventually put in a position where the utterance of a terrible oath, though saving him from temporary danger, plunges him into eternal damnation, while Robert's recurring sensation of being hung over a chasm by fiends is reminiscent of the circumstances of Ambrosio's death.

Moreover, to these literary influences Hogg brings considerable traditional lore, so that the picture of Gil-Martin is constructed from traditional motifs. It will be remembered that Linton, the

printer's assistant with whom Robert lodges for a time, describes Gil-Martin as "Rather a gentlemanly personage - Green Circassian hunting coat and turban - Like a Foreigner" (p.223). That this is a traditional description of the Devil's appearance can be seen by comparing with it:

G303.5.2.2. Devil as a hunter in green

G303.5.2.1. Devil in green clothing with hat.

The turban Gil-Martin wears, which Robert elsewhere describes as "resembling a bishop's mitre" (p.208), again seems traditional when one recalls the mitres adorned with the shape of a half-moon worn by the devils in The Three Perils of Man. Robert's final days are spent in an atmosphere of folk belief; for instance the terrifying scene where he falls under the hoofs of horses that have been frightened by a supernatural visitor reflects:

E421.1.2. Ghost visible to horses alone.

Obviously, the quite specifically folk legend of the Devil's visit to Auchtermuchty contains the most concentrated display of knowledge. The story of the Devil in crow form (G303.3.3.3.2.) who disguises himself as a preacher (G303.3.1.8. Devil in form of priest) and whose identity is revealed by his cloven hoofs (G303.4.5.4.1. Devil is betrayed by his goat hoofs) is composed from beginning to end of traditional motifs.

At every level of The Confessions of a Justified Sinner, one finds the influence of other works of literature. Of course, this is in no way unique in Hogg's works: in fact, as we have seen, at each stage of his development Hogg relied on literary imitation to provide him with a structure round which to build his creations. In his early poems, he had imitated ballads, while later he had made similar use of the classics of poetry, and later still, when he turned

to prose, he found inspiration in popular history and traditional legends. More often than not, the success or failure of his work had depended on his ability to handle the problems posed by imitation: "Kilmeny", where the influences were shaped by the argument into one dynamic movement, showed, in consequence, the poet's individual voice, while Mador of the Moor, in which imitation was used to stimulate flagging inspiration, was static and impersonal. The two earlier novels, The Brownie of Bodsbeck and The Three Perils of Man, had succeeded only fitfully in coping with imitation and had, as a result, lacked internal consistency. However, success or failure, each of Hogg's previous works had sought to create anew pre-existing material. The Confessions of a Justified Sinner is the culmination of this pattern. In the writing of The Confessions, Hogg employs the widest range of influences of any of his works, yet produces what is unquestionably his most original and consistently satisfying creation. Where earlier, he had often failed to integrate borrowings and influences into the fabric of a unified action, in The Confessions each of the elements he has taken over has been completely reworked. If Hogg used the hints from criminal history which Simpson and Stevenson have seen as contributing to Robert's character, he showed such insight into the psychology of these criminals that he was able to imagine the world as viewed through the eyes of one who was like them only in details. The incidental material from Fulke Greville's Life of the Renowned Sir Philip Sidney and from the Gothic novels is given only its just weight in the course of the action and is never inconsistent with existing characterisation or with the onward movement of the book. The folk material is presented in a fully realised form so that even the reader who has no access to tradition will respond to the devil's figure in a traditional manner. From whatever source the individual

elements of Hogg's story have been taken, they have been shaped into one coherent and unique work of art. They have stimulated Hogg's imagination, and guided him in the conduct of a complex narrative, but they have always been recognised as aids to the author, not as ready-made sections of his work. The Confessions of a Justified Sinner could not have been written so successfully without their help, but ultimately its plot, its descriptions, and its message are all Hogg's.

That Hogg should have enjoyed in The Confessions of a Justified Sinner the success which had hitherto eluded him can be explained partly as a result of the experience he had gained in previous works. He had certainly become, over the years, considerably more accomplished in the techniques of literature and in the constructive use of imitation. But it was the particular form in which The Confessions is cast which resolved his difficulties. Writing with a clear purpose in mind, he subordinates his borrowings to his overriding message of divine charity and employs them only as one more means to the vivid expression of it. Having planned both theme and narrative in advance, he can pay more attention to the weight which each of the details he has assimilated can stand. Yet, by employing these details in a fantastic and visionary narrative, he was able to transform them with the power of his imagination from dead borrowings to living elements within the totality of his narrative. The rationality of the serious romance form imposed on them a structure which holds the book together, while its imagination ensured that they would be brought to the same level as the rest of the vision. This was something he had been feeling towards in The Brownie of Bodsbeck and The Three Perils of Man, for in each the most consistent feature is the theme, though in neither does it provide a structure sufficient to sustain the whole book. But in The Confessions, writing with confidence and sympathy for his

subject, he no longer finds this a problem.

The Confessions of a Justified Sinner is, in the literal sense of the word, Hogg's masterpiece, the example of his work which shows how much he has profited from his training and proves him a fit person to practise his craft. The skill with which he wrote was the product of a long apprenticeship in which he had sought to learn both from practise and from the example of other writers. The particular stimulus for success was Hogg's desire to give voice to his theme but it was his training which enabled him to appreciate how best he might do so. In many ways The Confessions does, as earlier critics have said, stand out from Hogg's career, not only in quality but also in the unique stimulus which prompted him to write it, but the imitative method he employed in its creation was one which was essential to his entire development. The Confessions was in no sense a fortunate accident, nor should it seem an astonishing deviation from his normal practise, for it is a logical consequence of an approach which he had followed from his earliest works. Hogg's persistence in that approach had eventually produced a work with an imaginative power that speaks directly even to an age which, like our own, is no longer concerned with the message which prompted Hogg to so high an achievement. Now halfway through the sixth decade of his life, Hogg had at last written a work of literature which could without disparagement be compared with the best of his time.

CHAPTER VII

The Final Years

I

Until the publication of The Confessions of a Justified Sinner in 1824, Hogg's development as a writer followed a clear and relatively consistent path. From his earliest publications he had sought to educate himself in the techniques of literature, forming his style on a variety of models, and trying his strength in many different kinds of writing. Persevering with his attempts to develop his talents, despite the necessarily partial successes which were the by-products of the process, Hogg reached final maturity in the creation of The Confessions, where tentativeness vanished and was replaced by a confident use of a personal manner. One would therefore expect that, having arrived at the goal to which his entire career was directed, Hogg would have consolidated his success in The Confessions, by producing a number of successors of equal worth. After all, he was by no means an old man and his comparatively late entry into literature should have meant that his literary resources were still far from exhausted by this one successful book. However, one does not need to read far in the prose and verse which Hogg wrote in the ten years that remained of his life to realise that The Confessions of a Justified Sinner was the summit of his career, after which the quality of his writing declined sharply. It is readily apparent that, in all but a few instances, Hogg not only fails to maintain the level of The Confessions but frequently descends to writing little better than in the earliest and least experienced years of his apprenticeship. The logical process of his development seems to have been deflected, thwarted from its true course by new considerations.

It must not be forgotten that, for all but five years of his life, Hogg's time was shared equally between writing and farming: only in the short period of his residence in Edinburgh after 1810 was Hogg a full-time professional writer. Throughout the 1820s Hogg was not only attempting to progress in literature, he was also the tenant of two sheep farms, Eltrieve Lake and Mount Benger. Admittedly, the tenancy of the former imposed few liabilities on him for it had been presented to him as a favour by the Duke of Buccleuch, who, Hogg wrote, "said, 'The rent shall be nominal;' but it has not even been nominal, for such a thing as rent has never once been mentioned".¹ However, the rent of Mount Benger had to be met, and both farms had to be stocked. Unfortunately, the 1820s were not a profitable decade for the small tenant farmer. Rents were still adjusted to the high prices which had prevailed during the recent wars with the French, while prices, especially following good harvests in the years from 1820 to 1823 and again from 1826 to 1829, were low.² By all accounts Hogg was not a very conscientious farmer, too ready to be distracted from his work by the need to offer hospitality to stray callers to give his farming the constant attention it required. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that, at a time when only the most secure farmers could ride the tide of fluctuating prices, Hogg should have found himself in difficulties. Mount Benger had been a drain on Hogg's resources since ever he had been forced to go into debt to stock it, but as the decade progressed, it became clear that this second farm, which had never been properly established, would not survive the unfavourable economic climate, despite further borrowing to meet liabilities. In 1827, Buccleuch's factors presented Hogg with an ultimatum, either to pay up his arrears of rent or to be evicted. Hogg managed somehow to evade that crisis but the respite was only temporary. Eventually, in 1830, he was not

allowed to renew his tenancy of the farm, and on 26 May that year he suffered the indignity of seeing the contents of Mount Benger sold off by public auction.³

Therefore, while earlier Hogg had been able to rely on the profits of his farming to support him while he developed as a writer, now he was forced to write principally for the purpose of paying off the debts he had incurred by his other profession. In fact, if Hogg's daughter is accurate in her memories, it was only his literary output which supported Hogg and his numerous family throughout these years:

We know so much of Hogg's publishing speculations, and we have so often mentioned his losses, that one may perhaps be led to wonder how he lived, and how his family were supported. And so it must be borne in mind, indeed, it seems but necessary to draw attention to the fact, that he wrote steadily for Blackwood and other magazines as well as for the Annuals of the day. These without exception paid him well. Even at this time of day, when brain work is so cheap, the magazines pay better than other branches of literature, and it was by no means a rare thing for Hogg to receive a handsome remittance from Mr. Blackwood for a poem or a story in "Maga."⁴

There was indeed, as Mrs Garden says, ample opportunity in the 1820s and 1830s for a writer to earn a good living from the magazines. The success of Blackwood's had encouraged the growth of many rivals, both in Edinburgh and London, who either from political opposition or commercial greed desired a share of the readership Blackwood had uncovered. These years also saw the brief vogue of the literary annual, a lavishly produced volume of innocuous verse and prose, well-bound and illustrated with engravings, which was designed for a female, and sometimes a juvenile, audience. The competition amongst various publications, especially among the annuals, for famous names to grace their title pages meant that it was easy for a known literary figure, such as Hogg had become through constant reference in Blackwood's to

get into print. Hogg took full advantage of the opportunities, publishing in the ten years after 1825 nearly one hundred separate prose pieces and more than one hundred and fifty individual poems and songs. However, as might be expected from so massive an output, the bulk of Hogg's contributions were hastily and carelessly written, frequently no more than half-finished scraps which had never been fully worked out. A careful editor, such as Blackwood or James Fraser, who wanted to uphold the quality of his magazine and who could afford, from the rates he paid to contributors, to be selective about what he printed, would reject such pieces out of hand: it is no coincidence that the best of Hogg's contributions are to be found in their magazines. But Hogg knew well that even if one of his pieces was rejected by these two giants of the magazine world, he would always be able to find a home for it in a publication whose editor was less scrupulous about what he printed. Editors who could not rely on the assured services of a Lockhart, a Wilson, or a Maginn, not to mention Hazlitt, Lamb, or Carlyle, were only too ready to publish an inferior piece for the sake of Hogg's name alone. This meant that not only did much of Hogg's writing see print that should never have left his wastepaper basket but also that, knowing that even his worst tales and poems could be published, he was less careful than he might otherwise have been in his writing.

However, the steady production of inferior work took its toll on Hogg, and he became more and more discouraged. The double failure in quick succession of The Confessions of a Justified Sinner and Queen Hynde seemed to mark the end of his career as a writer of repute. "Having been so much discouraged by the failure of 'Queen Hynde'," he wrote in his Memoir, "I gave up all thoughts of ever writing another

long poem but continued for six years to write fairy tales, ghost stories, songs, and poems of every description."⁵ And, in fact, his later books consist of collections of short stories, or of poems and songs, usually reprinting pieces which had earlier seen magazine publication. The continual rejection of his writings by Blackwood, a man whose judgement he greatly respected, also weakened his confidence: the correspondence between the two men during these years of pressure is a pathetic mixture of anger and pleading on the part of the author and reassurance and firmness on the part of the publisher. Hogg's resentment eventually caused a second break with Blackwood, which lasted from 1831 until shortly before William Blackwood's death in 1832. Hogg found further cause for discouragement in his dealings with other publishers. Longmans, having burnt their hands on The Three Perils of Man, The Confessions of a Justified Sinner, and Queen Hynde, refused the next collection they were offered, The Lives of Eminent Men, which then had to be hawked round other publishers until the last year of Hogg's life, when it appeared as Tales of the Wars of Montrose. A later project to publish a collected edition of Hogg's prose foundered after only one volume, Altrive Tales, had appeared in 1830, and later attempts to restart the series proved equally unsuccessful. At a time when Hogg was having to write more than was good for him, he had not even the reassurance that his reputation was increasing. Caught in a spiral, he wrote less well because he lacked the encouragement of his publishers and then found that no publisher would consider the inferior work he was producing.

The critic who would hope to deal adequately with this vast mass of material is faced with a number of problems. In the first place, it is almost impossible to perceive a pattern in work which was so

carelessly produced. Hogg's primary criterion in writing for the magazines was what would sell rather than what would best express a consistent attitude to his art. Therefore one would have to deal individually with each item, analysing its success or failure, and determining what prompted the author to adopt that particular style to tell that particular story. However, with so much of Hogg's output composed of consciously ephemeral material without depth of content or technique, the resulting analysis would only be a list of failures of different sorts, and would only serve to emphasise the decline in the author's talents without clarifying the general effect Hogg's circumstances had on him. Secondly, though Hogg wrote for magazine publication at every stage of his career, it is virtually impossible to determine, from internal evidence alone, at what point in his development a particular story or song was written. One of the main effects that writing under pressure had on Hogg was to freeze his development at the stage he had reached by the early 1820s so that there is considerable similarity between his very latest pieces and those which were written ten, twenty, or even thirty years previously. Therefore it is virtually impossible to perceive any development through time. Thirdly, the problem of the bulk of Hogg's output is aggravated by the fact that a definitive edition neither of prose nor of verse was ever prepared in the author's lifetime. Hogg did not greatly concern himself with preserving these writings for posterity, and was content to make the small profit from them which magazine publication brought him. He collected them into book form only when he saw a chance of wringing a little more out of them. The idea of a collected edition of his prose appealed to him not because it would ensure that it could be studied in total, but as yet one more shift for money: significantly, the project was first broached to Blackwood in the letter that informed him of the bankruptcy sale at

Mount Benger.⁶ In 1822 Hogg had published a collection of his most important verse to date, but, apart from a volume which reprinted his most popular songs, he seems to have been little concerned to do the same for his later verse. It was not till after Hogg's death that a far from complete six volume edition of his prose (1837), and a fuller collection of his verse in five volumes (1838-1840) appeared; these two editions formed the basis of the so-called Works of the Ettrick Shepherd which was edited by the Rev. Thomas Thomson in 1865, and which has remained the standard, though faulty, text for the study of Hogg's output ever since. The critic who wants more or who desires a text closer to the author's intention must seek out the original publication of each piece. One does not have the benefit of the author's guidance concerning which pieces he thought the most important nor does the arrangement of either collection do anything to point out any pattern of similarity between pieces. In this chapter I intend, therefore, to indicate only a selection of Hogg's most important faults as exemplified in a handful of typical pieces drawn from all stages of his career and to discuss in detail some of the more successful stories, songs, and poems.

One must be constantly on guard against the danger of adopting too high a standard of judgement with regard to Hogg's magazine contributions. They were not intended for the scholar but were written to be glanced through once by a contemporary reader who would, or so was the intention, be amused and relaxed by them. Hogg was a popular contributor and we have every reason to believe that his contemporaries considered him an amusing one: a profit-conscious businessman such as William Blackwood would not have devoted so much space to him had he not been. To that extent Hogg's writings fulfilled their purpose. When one is deciding whether Hogg's miscellaneous prose and verse is good or bad of its type, it must constantly be borne in mind that the type is not that

of the finely crafted literary essay, the profound novel, or the major poem, but that of the entertaining magazine article. One will usually look in vain for depth of thought or startling originality of perception, but one should hope to find either an interesting story told in a form which will make the maximum temporary effect, or a brief evocation of not too complex emotion encapsulated in competent verse. The content is often of negligible value, or so conventional that the author's technique is all that will distinguish this one telling from countless others. It is the formal success which determines the value of writing of this class.

Unfortunately, it is Hogg's failure to master form which forces one to say that his short stories show, despite their contemporary popularity, a decline in Hogg's abilities. Edith Batho may have some justification in her suggestion that it is the content which ultimately determines the success of one of Hogg's tales:

When a ghost or anything of its like comes in, Hogg knows what he is about and wastes no words, but when he has nothing behind him but his own invention, he tries to get out of difficulties by long and uninteresting descriptions or conversations, or heavy jesting. He needs something of the marvellous before he can make a story probable.⁷

But too often one finds two stories with practically identical subject matter, one of which seems dull and unimaginative, the other vivid and striking, purely according to the skill with which the author has expounded his narrative and paced the action. Both Edith Batho and Louis Simpson have shown clearly enough the confusions and uncertainties which result from Hogg's carelessness in writing these tales. They instance the ranting and uncertain English and the carelessness in planting information which forces Hogg to backtrack suddenly and insert in the wrong place a detail which should have been included earlier:

I should likewise have mentioned, as an instance of the same kind of deprivation of consciousness, that when the young lad who went first to the body of Adamson was questioned why he fled from the body at first, he denied that ever he fled; he was not conscious of having fled a foot, and never would have believed it, if he had not been seen by four eye-witnesses.

(55b, p.67)⁸

However such incidental failings could have been carried off had Hogg not been led by haste to fall once more into the fault which had proved fatal to The Brownie of Bodsbeck, that of failing to enter fully into the imaginative recreation of the story. Where the form of The Confessions had played a large part in helping him to avoid this, his most prevalent fault in prose fiction, the forms he adopted in writing his magazine prose, designed to produce fiction as quickly and with as little difficulty as possible, were such as constantly to tempt him into this deficiency and so to write once more in a cold and unemotional manner.

Despite his success with The Confessions of a Justified Sinner, Hogg was still too uncertain a hand at prose fiction to toss off a satisfactory short story without effort. The very success of The Confessions lay in its sidestepping of Hogg's usual difficulties in organising and imagining his material. By employing several centres of consciousness, Hogg had skilfully avoided the problem of finding a suitably authorial standpoint from which the events of the plot could be arranged into a well-paced narrative without the reader feeling cut off from their imaginative appeal. However, the method of The Confessions was not one that could be repeated indefinitely, it was, in fact, really suited only to a tale like that of Robert Colwan, where the manner in which events were perceived by the protagonist was nearly as important as the events themselves. In the more usual form of narrative, in which the author intermingles dialogue with authorial

description, he had as yet been only partially successful, failing repeatedly to give adequate weight to one half or other of the mixture, so that confusion or unimaginative dryness had been the consequence. Now, faced with the necessity of rapidly producing a large number of stories, he was forced to court these dangers before he was fully equipped to deal with them, for, like the majority of authors, he found it the most appropriate method for the majority of narratives. It is plain that he realised the dangers, for he employs a number of shifts to avoid them, sometimes showing complete mastery of form in the stories that he produced, but more usually compromising in order to disguise work which he knew to be inferior.

Hogg tried a number of ways to give to his stories a satisfactory structure. At the simplest level, he will tell a story without any apparent art, setting down the incidents as if he were merely recording them for their antiquarian interest. Little attempt is made to imagine either character or description or to build to a climax within the narration. He relies more on the inherent power of the story, usually a traditional one, to move the reader than on any emotion he could arouse by his art. He seems to be acting as the curator of vanishing traditions rather than as an author seeking to provide readers with a unique experience. For example, "Adam Bell", an early story which he wrote for The Spy, and later collected in Winter Evening Tales, is, like several stories in that book, which purported to be "collected among the cottagers of Scotland", told in a flat, documentary style which conveys the facts of the supernatural story, but ignores the emotions:

The tall gentleman appeared to have the advantage. He constantly gained ground on the other, and drove him half round the division of the garden in which they fought. Each of them strove to fight with his back towards the moon, so that she might shine full in the face of his opponent; and many rapid wheels were made for the purpose

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of gaining this position. The engagement was long and obstinate, and by the desperate thrusts that were frequently aimed on both sides, it was evident that they meant one another's destruction. They came at length within a few yards of the place where M'Millan still stood concealed. They were both out of breath, and at that instant a small cloud chancing to overshadow the moon, one of them called out, "Hold, we can't see." - They uncovered their heads - wiped their faces - and as soon as the moon emerged from the cloud, each resumed his guard.

(22b, pp. 102-103)

However, so bare a recital of fact, unshaped by any artistry on the part of the teller, makes dry reading after a while, and must be judged more as a contribution to our knowledge of popular traditions than as an attempt to elicit the emotional response appropriate to a work of fiction. It holds only a limited attraction for most readers, and the author too, on whose talents and imagination it makes few demands, would find little satisfaction in writing it. More satisfying are the tales where Hogg, while continuing to adopt his stance of the reteller of tradition, makes some attempt to recreate the story in dialogue and more fully realised descriptions. Some facts are noted briefly in the manner of a historian, but thereafter Hogg focuses on certain crucial scenes which he describes in more detail. The historical material is given sometimes at the very beginning of the tale, to establish it in the reader's mind:

This heroic young gentleman was bred up in the family of John, the eighth Earl of Mar, and was generally supposed to have been a near connection of that nobleman's, but whether legitimate, or illegitimate, is no where affirmed. It was indeed whispered among the domestics, that he sprung from a youthful amour between Lord Aston, of Forfar, and a nearer connection of the Mar family than I choose to insinuate. Certain it is, however, that the boy was christened by the name of Peter, and retained the surname of Aston to his dying day.

(137a, p.1)

On the 17th of July, 1746, there was a tall raw-boned Highlander came into the house of Inch-Croy, the property

of Stewart Shaw, Esq., in which there was apparently no person at the time but Mrs Shaw and her three daughters, for the Laird was in hiding, having joined the Mackintoshes, and lost two sons at Culloden.

(91a, p. 421)

At other times it is signalled as a digression in the course of the action:

On the 4th of May, 1645, the famous battle of Auchdearn was fought. And here I judge it requisite to be a little more particular on the events relating to this battle, than perhaps the thread of my narrative requires, because I am in possession of some information relating to it not possessed by any other person; it was originally taken from the lips of a gentleman who had a subordinate command in the royal army, and may be implicitly relied on. And, moreover, it proves to a certainty the authenticity of this tale.

(137a, pp. 75-76)

Throughout, a delight in circumstantial detail is evidence for the author's desire to be faithful to a supposed truth:

On a fine summer evening, about the beginning of July, on a year which must have been about the latter end of the reign of Queen Anne, or some years subsequent to that, as Adam Scott, farmer of Kildouglas, was sitting in a small public-house on North Tyne, refreshing himself on brown bread and English beer, and his hungry horse tearing up the grass about the kail-yard dike, he was accosted by a tall ungainly fellow, who entered the hut, and in the broadest Northumberland tongue, enquired if he was bound for Scotland.

(96a, p. 41)

Reference is made to the source of Hogg's information wherever possible, while Hogg insists that he is merely retelling the story as he heard it. Often, he will apologise for faulty information and repeatedly he makes use of the trick of giving a list of those involved and then regretting the omission of one name in the account he was given, implying that somewhere there is an original which can be reconstructed:

Mr Shaw, Captain Finlayson, Alexander M'Eachen, and another gentleman, whose name I have lost, mounted as King George's dragoons, effected their escape to Glasgow through a hundred dangers, mostly arising from their own friends.

(91a, p. 422)

However, his appeal to truth leads him to claim a privilege for his stories which, while rightly his if he were the repository of tradition, is unsatisfactory when allowed to a short story. At the end of Hogg's absurd historical romance, "The Bridal of Polmood", he writes:

Some may perhaps say, that this tale is ill-conceived, unnatural, and that the moral of it is not palpable; but let it be duly considered, that he who sits down to write a novel or romance - to produce something that is merely the creation of his own fancy, may be obliged to conform to certain rules and regulations; while he who transmits the traditions of his country to others - does wrong, if he do not transmit them as they are. He may be at liberty to tell them in his own way, but he ought by all means to conform to the incidents as handed down to him; because the greater part of these stories have their foundation in truth. (47a, p. 135)

Even if this were true (and when applied to "The Bridal of Polmood", whose improbability and formlessness is obviously the result of the author's frantic efforts to continue a story which has reached a dead end, it quite patently is not) it is an abdication of responsibility to leave needless ambiguity at the end of a tale. When Hogg arouses the reader's curiosity and then fobs him off with the lame excuse that he could find no more details, it utterly destroys the imaginative picture he has created and suggests that he has started the tale without any idea of how it will end. "The Fords of Callum", which opens strongly as a mysterious voice calls an old man to his daughter's rescue, lets the atmosphere which has been created escape when it tails off into vague hints of its meaning:

Among the mourners there was one gentleman quite unknown to every one who was present. Indeed, from the beginning, he took upon himself, as it were, the office of chief mourner, carrying the head almost the whole way to the churchyard, so that all the people supposed the elegant stranger some near relation of the deceased, sent for, from a distance, to take the father's part, and conduct the last obsequies. When they came to the grave, he took his station at the head of the corpse, which he lowered into the grave with great decency and decorum, appearing to be deeply affected. When the interment was over, he gave the sexton a guinea and walked away. He was afterwards seen riding towards Dumfries, with a page in full mourning riding at a distance behind him. How much were all the good people of Johnston astonished when they heard that neither father nor mother of the deceased, nor one present at the funeral knew any thing whatever of the gentleman; who he was; where he came from; or what brought him there. I have heard it reported, on what authority I do not know, that this stranger was subsequently traced to have been the late Duke of Q--. And as this unaccountable incident is well known to have happened when the late Mr. George Brown of Callum was a bridegroom, it settles the time to have been about sixty-six years ago.

(104a, pp. 195-196)

On another occasion, in "An awfu' leein'-like story", Hogg, while he has fully worked out the main action, has obviously been careless in his subplot and blithely confesses:

Now this story is true, but again needs explanation. But is it not a pity to explain away so good and so ridiculous a story, which was almost solemnly believed by the principal actor? All that I choose to tell you is this: The young man who received the £5000 was a surgeon and apothecary; the betrothed sweetheart, and shortly afterwards the husband, of Miss Sally Aymers, who, it will be remembered, was an offended girl of great shrewdness and activity. This is the main cue to the story; and after this, if any gentleman in Britain or her colonies (I except Ireland) will explain to me perfectly, how every circumstance was effected, I shall be in his debt for the best bowl of whisky-toddy ever was drunk. And if any lady do it, I shall be in hers for a song.

(114, p. 456)

Therefore, while Hogg's pretence at traditional and historical accuracy does to some extent give him a structure on which to build his tale, it also provides an over-ready expedient for the rushed author when he comes

to an impasse: at times a useful aid to writing, at others it merely increases Hogg's carelessness.

To other tales some measure of coherence is given by the introductory essay out of which they grow. "The school of misfortune" does so quite literally, for the opening paragraphs reprint an essay from The Spy, upon which Hogg proceeds to elaborate a practical example.⁹ More usual is, say, the story entitled "On the separate existence of the soul", which Hogg wrote in 1831. In the opening of that tale, Hogg, in his own person, discusses the opinions of philosophers concerning the nature of the soul and repeats his pet theory¹⁰ that the soul is the animating and individuating spirit which controls all human beings. Then, having concluded his argument, he changes tack:

However, I am no moral philosopher; indeed I am the farthest from it that any man can be, as I disapprove of the whole science, conceiving it to be dangerous to simple and vital religion, and to a firm reliance on the truth of revelation. I shall therefore proceed, as usual, to give a most pleasant and ludicrous instance of the truth of the above theory, as well as of the just judgements of Heaven exercised on a profane and rash blasphemer.

(115a, p. 529)

He then proceeds to tell in the normal dialogue and narrative form a fantastic story which proves his theories. It must be said that, while the desire to prove a theory had been stimulating in The Confessions, in this greatly inferior story it restricts Hogg and makes the characterisation and plotting conform mechanically to a preconceived idea. More satisfying is "George Dobson's expedition to Hell" where Hogg's opening remarks are confined to general comments on the nature of dreams which do not commit him to too rigid a set of theories:

There is no phenomenon in nature less understood, and about which greater nonsense is written, than dreaming. It is a strange thing. For my part, I do not understand it, nor have I any desire to do so; and I firmly believe that no philosopher that ever wrote knows a particle more about it than I do, however elaborate and subtle the theories he may advance concerning it.

(63bi, p. 131)

The story that follows is linked to these remarks only in the sense that it, too, is about dreams, so that Hogg's imagination can freely play.

However, while Hogg obtains by these methods some measure of control over his plots and can clearly establish both the broad outline of his narrative and the implications of the action, he must find other methods to bring them consistently to life. Unfortunately, the very nature of the narrative techniques he has adopted ensures that Hogg must write in an unimaginative style for at least some portion of the story, during which he will find difficulty in maintaining the interest of his story. Even when he employs a more normal style of narrative, in which he himself plays as little part as possible, he is usually only fitfully successful in realising his story. Frequently he arrests the reader's attention by plunging in medias res, opening in a dialogue which is strongly characterised and sets up the initial situation without further introduction:

"Have you heard any thing of the apparition which has been seen about Wineholm Place?" said the Dominie.

"Na, I never heard o' sic a thing as yet," quoth the smith; "but I wadna wonder muckle that the news should turn out to be true."

(65b, p. 311)

Hogg, gifted with a quick ear for Scots speech cadences, can give a considerable sense of reality to his opening exchanges by the accurate presentation of Scots dialogue. But having caught the reader's interest, Hogg often seems uncertain how to maintain it. No matter how broad the

Scots may be at the start, within a few pages the characters will once more be speaking a lifeless form of literary English, while the vividness of the opening impression is soon lost when the dialogue is succeeded with- in a few pages, as it is in the example I have just quoted from "The Laird of Wineholm", by narrative as cursory as the following:

It appeared from the evidence that Dr Davington had come to the village and set up as a surgeon - that he had used every endeavour to be employed in the Laird's family in vain, as the latter detested him. That he, however, found means of inducing his only daughter to elope with him, which put the Laird quite beside himself, and from thenceforward he became drowned in dissipation.
(65b, p. 332)

Admittedly, not all Hogg's descriptive writing is as uninteresting as that; for example, in "The long pack", a comparatively early tale, it is plain that Hogg has tried to retell the crucial incident in a manner that concentrates one's attention on the emotions of the characters involved:

Gracious Heaven! The blood gushed out upon the floor like a torrent, and a hideous roar, followed by the groans of death, issued from the pack. Edward dropped Copenhagen upon the ground, and ran into the kitchen like one distracted. The kitchen was darkish, for he had left the candle in the parlour; so taking to the door without being able to utter a word, he ran to the hills like a wild roe, looking over each shoulder as fast as he could turn his head from the one side to the other. Alice followed as fast as she could, but lost half the way of Edward. She was all the way sighing and crying most pitifully. Old Richard stood for a short space rather in a state of petrification, but, at length, after some hasty ejaculations, he went into the parlour. The whole floor flowed with blood. The pack had thrown itself upon the ground; but the groans and cries were ceased, and only a kind of guttural noise was heard from it. Knowing that then something must be done, he ran after his companions and called on them to come back.
(36b, p. 177)

A more metaphorical style has been adopted, while some attention has been given to the arrangement of the incidents in a climactic order. As a result, "The long pack" enjoys some success because the central incident is so strongly visualised. But such descriptions seem outweighed by

the barren stretches of unimagined prose of which the following is only too typical:

There was little cognizance taken of such matters in that reign; but on this occasion there was none. King James, perhaps, either knew of or suspected the plot, and kept quiet; and the only person who made a great outcry about it was poor Lucy, who tried all that she could to rouse the vassals to enquiry and revenge; and so far prevailed, that proclamation was made at the pier of Leith and the cross of Edinburgh, and rewards offered for the apprehension of those who had carried the ladies off, and kept them in concealment. Murder was not mentioned, as a thing not to be suspected.

But behold, in a few days, Lucy also disappeared, the great mover of all this; and her sweetheart, Alexander Graham, and her only brother Lowry, with many other relations among the peasantry, were left quite inconsolable, and knew not what course to take. They had resolved to take vengeance in their own hands, could they have discovered whither to have directed it; but the plot had been laid beyond their depth.
(112a, p. 580)

It is significant that this last example should come from "A story of Good Queen Bess", one of Hogg's many unsuccessful attempts at costume fiction. In the short stories Hogg produced in the final years of his life, one repeatedly finds him choosing plots of which he had little experience but which he knew to be marketable. The medieval romances and Jacobite tales which he poured out were of little concern to him but were attempts to make use of the demand which Scott had revealed. Hogg had not the knowledge of historical detail necessary to write such stories, so that inevitably he had to fall back on the most generalised of descriptions. The heroic tone which was the required diction for the central figures was not one in which he felt comfortable, so that the dialogue is completely lacking in personality. One grasps with relief at the occasional patches of Scots dialogue which show some connection with reality and some emotion with which the author feels sympathy. Even less appropriate to Hogg's talent are the stories which ape the sentimental fiction of lady novelists. The endless procession of lovers separated by death, maidens ruined by heartless seducers, and parents reduced

to misery by their children's conduct is pure pasteboard and makes only a token gesture at emotional reality. Even the happiest of love affairs is conveyed in a language so worn that no empathy is possible:

The parties were acquainted in one minute, for Mr Turnbull was a frank kind-hearted gentleman; ay, they were more than acquainted, for the very second or third look that George got of Margaret Turnbull, he loved her. And during the whole afternoon, every word that she spoke, every smile that she smiled, and every happy look that she turned on another, added to his flame; so that long ere the sun leaned his elbow on Skelfhill Pen, he was deeper in love than, perhaps, any other souter in this world ever was. It is needless to describe Miss Turnbull; she was just what a woman should be, and not exceeding twenty-five years of age. What a mense she would be to the town of Selkirk, and to a boot and shoemaker's parlour, as well as to the top of the councillor's seat every Sunday!

(63bii, pp. 171-172)

But tragic love affairs, in which Hogg attempts to rouse the tears of his readers, verge only on the comic, as he heaps up the stereotypes of romantic fiction:

Poor Marsali continued to assure her lover that she was getting a little better, and would soon be quite well; but alas! the blanched roses on her cheek, the pallid lip, and the languid eye, spoke a different language, while the frequent falling tear proclaimed the heart's consciousness of approaching dissolution.

(137a, p. 108)

Perhaps the conventional attitudes to romantic love and romantic death were not ones with which the author sympathised: perhaps he was conscious of the vast areas of his personal experience which did not accord with sentimental tradition. Certainly he seems little concerned to refashion the stereotypes into a more original picture of life.

The Confessions of a Justified Sinner had, of course, shown Hogg that one way of avoiding his difficulties in entering into the imaginative reality of a scene was to tell his story in the words of a persona, either the principal figure in the action or else a characterised

observer, the personal qualities of whose attitude to events could then be used to colour the narrative. Descriptions are sharper when the author alters his perceptions to suit those of his narrator-figure, while the reader's emotional response is less generalised once he has one central figure with whose reactions he can identify. Even when the narrator is not a participant in the action, but is merely repeating a story he has heard, the author has a means of commenting on the action without breaking the imaginative illusion of his tale by making the reader over-aware of his presence. In several instances Hogg uses as narrators the shepherds of his area, whose comments on their tales draw on the natural folk wisdom and common sense which Hogg so often suggests is the highest philosophy, as well as on their wide knowledge of the Bible. At other times Hogg embeds his story within a pastoral dialogue, in which it emerges as an example in the discourse of a wise shepherd.¹¹ On another occasion the commentator is Hogg's own mother, the principal source of his traditional lore, and considered by him to be the representative of all that was best in the folk culture.¹² The earliest tale in The Shepherd's Calendar, "Rob Dodds", is, unique in the volume, told by a narrator figure in the course of a conversation with his master on the dangers of overambitious farming, in which he draws on folk history to back up his arguments:

It is little mair than a hundred and forty years, sin' a' the land i' this country changed masters already; sin' every farmer in it was reduced, and the farms were a' ta'en by common people and strangers at half naething. The Welshes came here then, out o' a place they ca' Wales, in England; the Andersons came frae a place they ca' Rannoch, some gate i' the north; and your ain family came first to this country then frae some bit lairdship near Glasgow. There were a set o' Macgregors and Macdougals, said to have been great thieves, came into Yarrow then, and changed their names to Scotts; but they didna thrive; for they warna likit, and the hinderend o' them were in the Catslackburn. They ca'd them aye the Pinolys, frae the place they came frae; but I dinna ken where it was.

(53b, pp. 10-11)

In such instances, Hogg can comment on his tale in the words of an idealised projection of his own personality without actually speaking in his own voice.

The use of a Scots-speaking narrator also bypasses many of the difficulties Hogg faced in the use of English. Like many of his contemporary fellow-countrymen, Hogg found difficulty in expressing his emotions in vivid English, for English was always a second language to him and one which was divorced from speech. As both David Craig and David Daiches have separately shown,¹³ the literary prose written by Scots of the early nineteenth century tends in some degree to be desiccated and bookish precisely because it is not the language the authors would have used in conversation nor that in which, from the earliest days of childhood, they would have sought to express their feelings. Since English was used by them primarily for formal literary purposes they did not have access to more colloquial registers. A problem which hampered the development of highly educated men such as Scott and Lockhart inevitably proved almost insurmountable to one who, like Hogg, made extensive use of English only after the vocabulary in which he would express emotion had, to a great extent, been fixed in Scots. By that stage it was too late for the English vocabulary of feeling to possess the same range of resonances for him as for a native speaker, with the result that, when talking of emotion in English, Hogg is likely to take over English descriptions as an unfelt cliché which did not reflect his feelings to the full. However, when he can tell his story in the words of a Scots speaker, Hogg has access to the vocabulary in which he himself felt and so can express a more subtle and characteristic emotional response. Unfortunately, in writing his narrative in Scots, Hogg is confronted by yet another difficulty, for, by the time he was writing, English had so much become the accepted language for literary

prose that there was no tradition of sustained narrative in Scots. Written Scots could only reflect spoken Scots, which meant that while the writing of dialogue and anecdote was comparatively easy, there was no convention for the production of longer passages of description and detail. Moreover, the Scottish public was not Hogg's only audience: many of his pieces were designed for London based periodicals such as Fraser's Magazine, The Metropolitan, or the various annuals, which had to consider their reader's tolerance for the extended use of Scots. In consequence, we find that Hogg will start a story in Scots of great accuracy and feeling for the subtleties of the language, but cannot sustain it for more than a few paragraphs once he turns to the rapid exposition of his plot. Hogg was in no position to experiment in the evolution of a style for literary Scots prose: financial necessity insisted that he compromise and consider both his ease of writing and the demands of his publishers. It is rare indeed that Hogg manages to maintain his Scots for even as much as three pages; it can be said with certainty that he never succeeded in writing a story from beginning to end in consistent Scots. One can only be grateful for the occasional passage which flares into vernacular life, but one must also regret that such passages should stand out so obviously as "purple patches" amid so much dull writing.

The adoption of a first-person narrator also provided Hogg with a simple structure with which he could give shape to his stories no matter how hasty might be the writing of them. Essentially, a first-person narrative begins with the narrator's birth and ends with his death, or at least with his retiral from active life. The space between can be filled out with as many incidents as the author wishes to include, and need not be worked out in detail before writing commences. Hogg, with his concern for disguising his fiction as literal truth, would see that the very inconsequentiality and shapelessness of such narratives was an

almost too-perfect reflection of real life, a fact he emphasises by the less formal syntax he adopts in the narrative. He went out of his way to foster the impression that these first-person tales were taken from authentic historical accounts. Of one of them, "Adventures of Captain John Lochy" (119), he wrote to Blackwood:

Capt Lochie has run away with me altogether and grown far too long. It is grown very like an original document and as such I intend to pass it.¹⁴

At the start of the most successful of them, "The renowned adventures of Basil Lee", he assures the reader in a footnote that "The original of this extraordinary journal was lodged in my hands in the summer of 1810, by an old man, having the appearance of a decayed gentleman" (8b, p.1). Hogg could therefore set down carelessness in the details of writing as an attempt to reproduce the autobiographical style, and, so excuse himself from the necessity of carefully drafting his tales before writing them.

However, while such a practice will produce an adequate first-person narrative without any great effort, more attention is needed to produce a really good one. As well as imitating the methods and style of authentic autobiographies, Hogg also had the avowed intention of imitating the narratives of Daniel Defoe. Writing to Scott in 1826, he acknowledged the model of some of the tales which were later to be included in Tales of the Wars of Montrose:

I have yesterday finished a small work of between 200 and 300 pages entitled "Some remarkable passages in the life of an Edinr Baillie". It is on the plan of several of De Foe's works. I think you will like it. I have likewise a "Life of Colonel Aston" by me, a gentleman of the same period but it is more romantic and not so natural as the former.¹⁵

Defoe's influence can be seen behind much of Hogg's first-person fiction: there are historical tales, which echo Memoirs of a Cavalier, picaresques,

which take as their inspiration Moll Flanders, while there is even one, "The surpassing adventures of Alan Gordon" (147), which reads like an attempt to send Robinson Crusoe to the South Pole, where a friendly polar bear acts as his Man Friday. But Hogg did not take all that he might have done from the example of his predecessor. Defoe's greatest strength as a novelist rests in his ability to give a shape to the essentially formless material of autobiography without distorting its impression of reproducing reality. He is not content with the basic narrative of the hero's biography from birth to death which is the simplest version of the form. Rather he raises his fictional biographies to the level of art by providing them with a structure. Robinson Crusoe is given a sense of progression by its hero's development towards acceptance of the dictates of Providence, and by Defoe's emphasis of the seasonal round of Crusoe's stay on the island, while Moll Flanders is constructed partly round the heroine's moral regeneration but more especially it gains shape from the seemingly chance recurrence of a number of meetings in her life. Robert Colwan's spiritual progress in The Confessions of a Justified Sinner had shown Hogg to be capable of giving the necessary dynamic pattern to the haphazard string of events that is autobiography, but in general the methods he employs to structure his first-person narratives are less happy. Some shape can be given by the hero's quest for information, such as we find in "Adventures of Captain Lochy" (119) or "The Baron St. Gio" (95), but such stories quickly degenerate into a sequence of incidents with a false sense of climax when the mystery is resolved. Similarly, the story of a voyage of discovery, such as "Alan Gordon" (147) is structured only at departure and return but has no shape in the middle. More successful perhaps are those stories such as "The love adventures of Mr George Cochrane", in which the various incidents are examples of a theme which is stated at the beginning of the

narrative and echoed at stages throughout it. For example, in "George Cochrane" the linking device is the hero's search for the joys of matrimony:

I am fully persuaded, that if there is any calm, unruffled felicity, within the grasp of an erring and imperfect creature, subject to so many passions, wants, and infirmities, it is to be found in the married state. That I have missed it, has certainly been my own blame; for I have been many times most desperately in love, and never yet met with an unfavourable reception.
(15b, p. 219)

Cochrane, the narrator, then tells several stories of the embarrassments into which his search for a wife has led him. However, this is not really sufficient to hold the story together. "George Cochrane" cannot escape the suggestion that it is an infinitely extendable series, and, in point of fact, Hogg, when he came to publish it in Winter Evening Tales, expanded the original version in The Spy (15a) to seven times its length, merely by adding more variations on the theme.

To faults of structure Hogg added other failings in the content of these tales. The first-person form allows the author to convey the inner life of his central character in a very precise manner. Hogg, however, is hampered by the imprecise language in which he treats such emotions and by the subjects on which he chooses to write. Like many of the magazine writers of his day, as a glance at the contributions to The Spy by Hogg's friends will show, Hogg was obsessed with the sufferings of pure maidens who are led astray by guileful seducers. So common was this theme in magazine literature that any emotional content that it might have had was fossilised, for the very emotions were fixed by convention almost to the point where there was an iconography for such tales. Hogg, attracted to this sentimental manner partly by its ready-made availability and partly by its popularity, achieves the full awful-

ness of the style, raising the following passage, with its blatant use of tearjerking machinery, to something like classic status:

Those who may be least inclined to palliate my crime, would have pitied me had they known what I felt, while I wrapt the body of my child in a napkin, which I had received to keep in remembrance of its father, (for that was the only shroud I could provide), and having laid it in its rude coffin, delivered it to be consigned to the grave of a stranger.
(45, p. 206)

Hogg makes no attempt at emotional identification with the supposed narrator of the tale: he has not imaginatively placed himself in her position. While such feeble writing is the result of too little imagination on Hogg's part, it must be said that many other tales suffer from too much imagination being employed in their creation. The appeal to truth inherent in the first-person form encourages Hogg to use it in the telling of the most preposterous tales. When Hogg tells how he soared off in a balloon (93), or repeats the account of a man narooned on the Pole (147), or of a father whose son was stolen by African orang-outangs to be their king (90), his only contact with reality is that the account of a first-person narrator assumes the existence of the hero. But the power of granting probability to absurdity is a dangerous one to possess, for it tempts the author to pile up ever greater absurdities in the course of his story. On the other hand it is ideal if one is wanting to create a story quickly, for one merely allows one's imagination to run unrestrained and to conceive the biggest possible lie. However, without any pattern such vast falsehood easily becomes tiresome: fantasy needs to be harnessed to some purpose to be acceptable at any length.

While Hogg was tempted by economic necessity to write carelessly and to adopt the easiest solution to formal problems whenever one was available, he was also faced with the even bigger temptation to write

in a style which was totally alien to his background. As a regular contributor to Blackwood's he was expected to play his part in the elaborate masquerade of personae which had been invented to give the readers of the magazine the sense of being intimate with the secrets of the literary world. He was expected to contribute flippant and playful articles on the doings of Timothy Tickler, Morgan Odoherly, Christopher North, and the many other characters who were supposed to represent the spirit of Maga. He might protest at the distortion of his personality when others included him in such articles, but he was ready enough to adopt the role of "The Ettrick Shepherd" if he thought it might prove profitable: he was even ready to write his own version of the Noctes Ambrosianae for the rival Fraser's Magazine, though in the event the piece was not published.¹⁶ In his early venture into the magazine world, The Spy, he had already been compelled as editor to produce a similar flow of banter and facetiousness, contributing a mock biography of himself or inventing letters from imaginary correspondents who aired their not too serious grievances. But neither then nor later did Hogg show the lightness of touch necessary to make such pieces even slightly amusing: middle-class urbanity was best left to Wilson or Maginn. Interesting though Hogg's pieces are as examples of the general level of journalism in his day, and useful though they must have been in drawing attention to their author, they cannot really be said to add to his stature.

However, even the small measure of celebrity they gave him was sufficient to impart to him an air of authority as a controversialist, as a reviewer, and as an arbiter of taste and morals. His role as a contributor to Blackwood's obliged him to fire off the occasional anti-Whig squib or to play the part of the rhadamanthine literary critic.

As a reviewer Hogg is more than a little embarrassing for his attempts to imitate those critics who, like Francis Jeffrey or John Wilson Croker, judged literary style according to a rigorous code of critical standards leads him into pedantry, as he worries over trivial points of grammar and searches for adverse criticisms which will show his sternness.¹⁷ He is prevented by his lack of really strong political convictions from engaging to the full in interparty welfare. While loudly proclaiming his allegiance to Tory principles, he is obviously drawn to the Tories not out of belief in their ideology but out of respect for eminent Tory acquaintances such as Scott, Wilson, and Lockhart. More even than his fellows in Blackwood's circle, he relies on name-calling and blustering patriotism to browbeat his opponents. Even the crisis of the agitation for parliamentary reform could draw from him only a handful of would-be satirical poems and one article (143) in which, writing three years after the passing of the Reform Act, he ironically praises it for helping society by stimulating conversation, and aiding the economy by increasing the consumption of alcohol.

His attempts to lay down the law on morals and on art were similarly ill-fated, for he was no revolutionary thinker but was content to retail the conventional ideas of the end of the preceding century. As early as the "Letters on poetry" which he published in 1805 (2) one finds his typical message fully formed, praising the response of the natural taste and morality, unsophisticated by the prejudices of polite society, above the most complicated theories of philosophers and aesthetes:

My brother hath a very singular way of distinguishing whether a literary production be of this class, which is so highly admired, and eagerly coveted by our swains at the present day. How think you he does? just

reads them over, and then considers how they have pleased him; concluding, that a thing which is not natural can never be productive of any emotions of pleasing sensation: consequently, if they impell him involuntarily to claw his head or his elbow, he considers them as the most natural descriptions in the world.

(2, p. 353)

Twenty-five years later, defending the Scottish Psalter from the criticisms of William Tennant, the Fifeshire-born orientalist still remembered as the author of Anster Fair, Hogg's praise of the Psalms is based on the same qualities of unadorned simplicity (94). His distrust of philosophy finds its fullest expression in his volume of Lay Sermons, in which the ethical teachings of moral philosophers are treated as so many attempts to confuse the natural morality possessed by all but the most dissolute. The advice contained in the volume is therefore of the most banal kind, enjoining young women to cultivate qualities outside the merely decorative and young men to avoid bad company. When he attempts more metaphysical speculations, for example when he attempts to prove the immortality of the soul, which he sees as the means by which the mind can apprehend the glory of God, his logical arguments are soon replaced by an appeal to religious preconceptions:

I believe, that as its clay tabernacle descends slowly and miserably to dissolution, it begins to press through the apertures of its wretched habitation, and judge for itself as mortal judgement decays; but that when the body is lifeless, when the eye is shut for ever, and all communication with external objects ceased, then that power in man which observed the works of God, which discerned his wisdom in them, springs to a loftier and more sublime existence. Extinguished it can never be, else the Divine perfections would be confined in their operation to the narrow limits in which the soul of man is permitted to view them in this frail and imperfect state. Let us not believe it; let us not ever suppose that the organs of our mortal bodies are the only openings through which

we can view the wisdom and works of God. Such a sentiment entertained is too unworthy of the great Eternal Spirit that renovates all nature.

(130, pp. 177-178)

Though such writing was demanded of Hogg by his contemporaries, who, as is plain in Wilson's Noctes Ambrosianae, thought of him as the authentic voice of the untutored benevolencæ of the peasant class, it was inappropriate to a writer whose strength lay more in the presentation of emotion than of abstract thought.

The picture of Hogg's output of shorter prose so far presented in this chapter would seem to suggest that the years following the publication of The Confessions saw him squandering his talent in worthless potboilers, but it would be unfair to him not to mention the number of pieces in which he enjoys unequivocal success. Not only is this a necessary act of justice to Hogg, but also throws into sharp contrast the reasons for the failure of the bulk of the rest. It becomes clear that had he been less ready to adopt second-hand and stereo-typed ideas and had taken the trouble to transform them into his own style, he might have achieved more. For example, though his output of essay material on politics and morality, or on humorous subjects, is for the most part disappointing, much more successful are those factual essays in which he attempts to capture and reproduce for the increasingly urbanised community the realities of country life. It was with such articles that his career started when between 1802 and 1809 he contributed to the Scots Magazine the journals of several tours he had undertaken in the Scottish countryside.¹⁸ The earliest of these pieces are obvious prentice-work, written in a correct but unevocative style, and showing only the vaguest of attempts to appeal to the reader's imagination. However, the later tours show more interest in describing the emotions of the traveller and of the people that he meets on his

journey, and make tentative gestures in their use of dialogue towards a more fictionalised form. The experience Hogg gained in writing these journals, together with that of producing the dryly factual but authoritative The Shepherd's Guide in 1807, enabled him in his later descriptions of country life, such as the non-fiction pieces included in the heterogeneous Shepherd's Calendar,¹⁹ to reproduce the life in which he was most at home. The best of these, "Snow-Storms", which reprints an article first written in 1819, succeeds to a very great extent in conveying his experiences when trying to dig out sheep buried in the severe snow drifts of January 1974. Aware how remote such an incident would be to the readers even of his own time, Hogg concentrates on the details which characterise it, reproducing the behaviour of the shepherds in such situations, even down to the customary precautions taken against the cold:

We all agreed at once, that the sooner we were able to reach the sheep, the better chance we had to save a remnant; and as there were eight hundred excellent ewes, all in one lot, but a long way distant, and the most valuable lot of any on the farm, we resolved to make a bold effort to reach them. Our master made family worship, a duty he never neglected; but that morning, the manner in which he expressed our trust and confidence in Heaven, was particularly affecting. We took our breakfast - filled our pockets with bread and cheese - sewed our plaids around us - tied down our hats with napkins coming below our chins - and each taking a strong staff in his hand, we set out on the attempt.

(39c, p. 268)

The search for the lost sheep is told entirely through Hogg's experiences on the journey, so that the essay is at once factual in its details and imaginative in its reconstruction of the author's mental state as he wandered disorientated in the snow-bound landscape:

I was terrified for the water (Douglas Burn), for in the morning it was flooded and gorged up with snow in a dreadful manner, and I judged that it would be now quite impassable. At length I came to a place where I thought the water should be, and fell a-boring

and groping for it with my long staff. No: I could find no water, and began to dread that, in spite of my supposed accuracy, I had gone wrong. This greatly surprised me, and standing still to consider, I looked up towards Heaven, I shall not say for what cause, and to my utter amazement thought I beheld trees over my head, flourishing abroad over the whole sky. I never had seen such an optical delusion before; it was so like enchantment that I knew not what to think, but dreaded that some extraordinary thing was coming over me, and that I was deprived of my right senses. I concluded that the storm was a great judgement sent on us for our sins, and that this strange phantasy was connected with it, an illusion effected by evil spirits. I stood a good while in this painful trance; but at length, on making a bold exertion to escape from the fairy vision, I came all at once in contact with the Old Tower.

(39c, pp. 273-274)

To his insight into his own emotions at the time, Hogg adds a gently mocking awareness of the people among whom he was brought up; their beliefs, their superstitions, and their characteristic cast of speech. While celebrating the sense of community quickened by mutual disaster, he does not oversentimentalise the prejudices of a culture that was ready to assume that the storm was the direct consequence of the supposed attempts of Hogg's debating society to raise the Devil. The scene where Hogg's mother cross-examines a servant lass who was thought to have witnessed the ceremony conveys the richness of the speech and superstitions of the Ettrick community, but it also shows the limitations through which Hogg had to break in order to succeed as a writer:

"Did ye no hear them speaking naething about the deil?"

"Very little."

"What were they saying about him?"

"I thought I aince heard Jamie Fletcher saying there was nae deil ava."

"Ah! the unwordy rascal! How durst he for the life o' him! I wonder he didna thing shame."

"I fear aye he's something regardless, Jamie."

"I hope nane that belongs to me will ever join him in sic wickedness! But tell me, Mary, my woman, did ye no see nor hear naething uncanny about the house yoursell that night?"

"There was something like a plover cried twice i' the peat-neuk, in at the side o' Will's bed."

"A plover! His presence be about us! There was never a plover at this time o' the year. And in the house too! Ah, Mary, I'm feared and concerned about that night's wark! What thought ye it was that cried?"

"I didna ken what it was, - it cried just like a plover."

"Did the callants look as they war fear'd when they heard it?"

"They lookit geyan queer."

"What did they say?"

"Ane cried, 'What is that?' and another said, 'What can it mean?' - 'Hout,' quo' Jamie Fletcher, 'it's just some bit stray bird that has lost it-sell.' - 'I dinna ken,' quo' your Will, 'I dinna like it unco weel.'"

"Think ye, did nane o' the rest see ony thing?"

"I believe there was something seen."

"What was't?" (in a half whisper, with manifest alarm.)

"When Will gaed out to try if he could gang to the sheep, he met wi' a great big rough dog, that had very near worn him into a linn in the water."

(39c, pp. 288-290)

Dialogue such as the above, which is already close to fiction, is evidence for the distance Hogg went to recreate his experiences in this essay. The essay is given strength by Hogg's evident familiarity with the events and emotions he describes.

Hogg's personal knowledge of folk belief gives to certain of his tales of the supernatural a unique sense of authority. In countless instances Hogg poses as the recounter of folk narratives, adding one more narrative to a traditional cycle of tales which has gathered round some figure who has caught the popular fancy:

Where is the man, or where is the woman, or where is the wee bairn, between the falls of Cheviot and the tops of the Louth, who has not heard tell of Grizel Graham? I never met with any, and if there are any, I would like to see them, and then I could tell them how they ought to have known her, or heard of her, and perhaps convince them that they had done both.

(116, p. 374)

As I have been at great pains in drawing together all possible records and traditions during the troubled reign of Charles the First, and being aware that I have many of those relating to Scotland to which no other person ever had access, I must relate some incidents in the life of one extraordinary character; a character so well known to traditional lore, that I have but to name him to interest every Scotchman and woman in his heroic adventures. The hero I mean is Sir Simon Brodie, of Castle-Gar, whose romantic exploits well deserve to be kept in record.

(138, pp. 165-166)

Rarely is Hogg content with merely retelling tradition: often, especially in his pseudohistorical tales, one is extremely doubtful that there is in fact any traditional basis for the story. Even when one can find an analogue in tradition, one sees the more readily how much Hogg has added to it when he transformed it into written fiction. At the root of "John Gray o' Middleholm" (46) is the legend commonly known as "The Pedlar of Swaffham", a Scottish version of which Robert Chambers neatly summarises in his Popular Rhymes of Scotland:

Donald, the builder, was originally a poor man, but had the faculty of dreaming lucky dreams. Upon one occasion he dreamed, thrice in one night, that if he were to go to London Bridge, he would become a wealthy man. He went accordingly, saw a man looking over the parapet of the bridge, whom he accosted courteously, and, after a little conversation, intrusted with the secret of the occasion of his visiting London Bridge. The stranger told him that he had made a very foolish errand, for he himself had once had a similar vision, which directed him to go to a certain spot in Ayrshire, in Scotland, where he would find a vast treasure, and, for his part, he had never once thought of obeying the injunction. From his description of the spot, the sly Scotsman at once perceived that the treasure must be concealed in no other place than his own humble kail-yard at home, to which

he immediately repaired, in full expectation of finding it. Nor was he disappointed; for, after destroying many good and promising cabbages, and completely cracking credit with his wife, who esteemed him mad, he found a large potful of gold coin, with the proceeds of which he built a stout castle for himself, and became the founder of a flourishing family.²⁰

The same story provides the climax of Hogg's tale, but before it is reached, the situation is built up in dialogue and description for twenty-six pages, in which the workshy cobbler who finds the treasure is portrayed in greater detail than would be usual in a traditional narrative. Even once the kernel of the story is passed, Hogg adds further incidents to the central narrative. The original brief legend has been completely transformed into literary guise, with much greater emphasis on characterisation and variety of incident. However, no matter how much Hogg may adapt his folk sources, frequently his imagination seems in the resulting tales to be restrained by the details of the traditional story: instead of recreating the experience at the heart of the story, he is content to reproduce the external details of it. But the subtlety with which he could on occasion employ folk motifs to convey his own imaginings is shown in "Mary Burnet", which can be found, in a corrupt text, in The Shepherd's Calendar. The heroine of the title, having been summoned by supernatural means to meet her lover at night, disappears for seven years, though her would-be seducer meets a girl of her appearance at a market some time later and, accompanying her in a carriage, is found dashed to pieces at the foot of a cliff. At the end of the seven years Mary returns to her parents bringing two children with her but later rides off again. Louis Simpson, though praising the opening of the story, finds the end of it confused:

But the author, unfortunately, adds to his tale, and Mary turns up again as a fine lady in a coach, with two children. She visits her parents briefly and they rejoice in her happiness, but the reader is somewhat perplexed. If Mary is made of flesh and blood, what supernatural creature was it that Allanson met with? Or do spirits ride in coaches and have ordinary children?²¹

However, a careful reading of the tale, especially in the light of folk literature, removes the seeming inconsistencies. Allanson, we are told "uttered in his heart some unhallowed wish, and even repeated it so often, as to give the vagrant spirits of the wild a malicious interest in the event. He wished that some witch or fairy would influence his Mary to come to him in spite of her maidenly scruples and overstrained delicacy" (70a, p. 215).²² This suggestion of fairy agency is picked up later when Mary's appearance at the time she left home is described: she is seen, dressed in green and white, being driven off in a chariot. Allanson is reminded of her when he is accosted seven times by her image dressed in green and white, while he finally meets her coming out of a golden chariot whose liverymen are clad in green and gold. Such details contain a number of motifs associated with the fairies:

- F242.1.3. Fairy chariot of precious metal
- F236.1.3. Fairies in white clothes
- F236.1.6. Fairies in green clothes
- D1273.1.3. Seven as a magic number.

Mary's temporary reappearance to her parents is signalled after seven years by a dwarf who brings news of her to her father:

- F379.3. Man lives with fairies seven years
- F451.5.1 Helpful dwarfs.

Hogg, far from confusing his tale, has quite explicitly indicated the facts of Mary's disappearance in traditional terms: on being summoned by her seducer, she has fallen under the power of the fairies who have

taken her to live with them for seven years, while punishing her seducer by sending a destructive spirit to him in her image. In the time of her absence she has produced fairy children with whom she must return after her short visit to earth. By using his traditional material in an oblique fashion Hogg is able to evolve a new narrative in the folk style which will also prove effective for a literate public.

The best of the tales are those in which Hogg can adopt a new attitude to the conventional material he describes. By adopting the persona of another narrator he can consciously set up a tension between what the narrator says and the events of the story. One might easily despair of "Cousin Mattie" in Winter Evening Tales, assuming from the gushing tone of its opening paragraphs that it will be one more sentimental love story:

How I do love a little girl of that age! There is nothing in nature so fascinating, so lovely, so innocent; and, at the same time, so full of gayety and playfulness. The tender and delicate affections, to which their natures are moulded, are then beginning unconsciously to form, and every thing beautiful or affecting in nature, claims from them a deep but momentary interest.

(48a, p. 232)

But the progress of the tale exposes the hollowness of such sentimentality: the heroine who dreams that she is fated to die at the hands of her cousin within fourteen days, persists in her sentimental love for him, but when the prophecy is proved true after fourteen years, the story moves from the sentimental level. Hogg maintains suspense by the delayed fulfillment of the prophecy and rouses a false expectation by continuing to portray the love of Mattie and her cousin in weakly rosy colours. But this makes only the more unsettling the carefully placed final paragraph, in which the full implications of the events are revealed for the first time, moving the story from the world of romantic

love to a much harsher reality:

"Haud your auld souple untackit tongue. Gin I
hear sic another hint come ower the foul tap o't,
it sal be the waur for ye. But lown be it spoken,
an little be it said. Weel might the corpse be heavy,
an' the coffin deep! ay, weel might the coffin be
made deep, Matthew; for there was a stout lad bairn,
a poor little pale flower, that hardly ever saw the
light o' heaven, was streekit on her breast at the
same time wi' hersel'.

* * * * *

(48a, p. 243).

One suddenly realises that Hogg, whom one has been accusing of escapism, has kept hold on reality throughout the story and is himself aware, in this story if in few others, of how small an area of life the sentimental attitude depicts. Better still is "The Brownie of The Black Haggs", one of the very best Scottish short stories. This tale seems on the surface to be told in Hogg's worst third-person manner, with little dialogue and only the briefest descriptions, while the author breaks weak jokes and digresses into personal reminiscences. But from the very first paragraph there is evidence that the narrator is not what he seems:

When the Sprots were Lairds of Wheelhope, which is now a long time ago, there was one of the ladies who was very badly spoken of in the country. People did not just openly assert that Lady Wheelhope (for every landward laird's wife was then styled Lady) was a witch, but every one had an aversion even at hearing her named; and when by chance she happened to be mentioned, old men would shake their heads and say, "Ah! let us alane o' her! The less ye meddle wi' her the better." Old wives would give over spinning, and, as a pretence for hearing what might be said about her, poke in the fire with the tongs, cocking up their ears all the while; and then, after some meaning coughs, hems, and haws, would haply say, "Hech-wow, sirs! An a' be true that's said!" or something equally wise and decisive.

(73b, p. 285)

What seems unduly vague writing is, on closer examination, revealed to be the echo of the speech of a rather spinsterish narrator, familiar with the area, who finds difficulty in expressing the full extent of the

evil he must describe. His hasty character sketch of Lady Wheelhope in the following paragraph seems hardly to go far enough in its condemnation of her actions, and, while repeating that she was "very bad" and "very wicked", gives an account of crimes so evil that such descriptions appear feeble indeed. That such a voice should tell such a story heightens its horrors, while ensuring that at no point does it fall into melodrama. The adoption of this persona also allows Hogg, as had that of the Editor in The Confessions, to sketch in the outline of his narrative briefly without breaking the illusion. "The Brownie of the Black Haggs" presents in startlingly few details considerable depth of psychology in its two principal characters - the Lady who is capable of all evil and the weak Laird who is crushed in spirit by her crimes but who is incapable of opposing her. By focussing on a few incidents which typify the relationship Hogg conveys the essence of the characters. Unlike The Confessions, the whole point of "The Brownie of the Black Haggs" rests in the strangeness of the story and the manner in which it is told; the tension between the Lady's fantastic experiences at the hands of a supernatural persecutor and the rationalist assumptions of the narrator is evoked for its own atmosphere rather than as the vehicle for another message. But the tale is so finely crafted and the ambivalent atmosphere so carefully maintained that the art with which it is written is in itself sufficient source of pleasure.

In his first-person narratives Hogg never repeated the success of "The renowned adventures of Basil Lee" which he had published in Winter Evening Tales. Like many similar stories, "Basil Lee" is designed to give examples of the workings of a theme expounded in the opening paragraphs, in this case that a lack of stability of purpose is the most crippling weakness of character:

There is one great evil under the sun, from which, if youth is not warned, their success in life will be frustrated, and their old age without comfort and without respect. From it my misfortunes are all to be traced, and from it I am suffering at this day. I look back on the days that are past, and am grieved. I can now see all my incongruities, and wonder at my inadvertency in not being able to correct them.

The evil that I complain of, by which all my views in life have been frustrated, and by which thousands as well as myself have suffered, without attributing their disappointments to it, is neither more nor less than instability of mind - that youthful impatience, so notorious in every young and aspiring breast, which impels the possessor to fly from one study to another, and from one calling to another, without the chance of succeeding in any.

(8b, p.2)

However, while most of Hogg's autobiographical narratives degenerate into a string of incidents, in "Basil Lee" the author, by a number of devices, sustains the structure throughout his tale. Certainly a major unifying factor is the central character's instability of mind, as he changes from one profession or enthusiasm to another, in turn carpenter, merchant, farmer, soldier, traveller, and lover. But this would not be sufficient to support a tale of this length and variety, ranging geographically from the Scottish Borders to America, and compassing realistic comedy, farce, anti-war satire, and ghost stories, were not a wider unity and direction given by other means. In the first place Hogg imposes the semblance of a narrative on Basil's account by making him, in the second half of his life, when he returns in triumph from the American War of Independence, retrace his steps and meet again with some of those with whom he had dealings in his earliest adventures. The development of Basil's character also gives movement to the narrative, as he becomes increasingly aware of the foolish figure he cuts, until, in his final years, he must face the prospects of a solitary old age:

I had that day, after sitting two hours over my breakfast, thrown myself into an easy chair in a fit of despondence, and was ruminating on all the chequered scenes of my past life, and what was likely to be my future fate with this my whiskered spouse. "Pity me! O ye powers of love, pity me!" I exclaimed, and stretched myself back in one of those silent agonies which regret will sometimes shed over the most careless and dissipated mind. I saw I was going to place myself in a situation in which I would drag out an existence, without having one in the world that cared for me, or one that I loved and could be kind to; and the prospect of such a life of selfishness and insignificance my heart could not brook; never in my life did I experience such bitterness of heart.

(8b, pp. 94-95)

But more important than these is the unity of style and attitude that Hogg brings to his story. The style achieves that easy inconsequence which Defoe had employed in the best of his works, where the less formal sentence structure provides an impression of the spoken voice while retaining the clarity of written English:

I now began to consult seriously with myself what weapons I should make choice of. I could in nowise bow my mind to pistols, for I found that I could not stand and be shot at. I accounted myself as good a marksman as any in Britain, but that I reckoned of no avail. What did I care for killing the man? I had no wish to kill him, farther than by so doing I might prevent him from killing me at the next fire, and on that ground I would have aimed as sickerly as possible. I would not have minded so much had I been sure of being shot dead at once, but to have a ball lodged inside of me, and have my nerves wrecked and teased by bungling American surgeons trying to extract it, was the thing that I was determined on no consideration to submit to. I would not have a doctor twisting and mangling my entrails, in search of a crabbed pistol bullet, for no man's caprice, nor woman's neither; so I determined not to fight with pistols.

(8b, p. 26)

The carelessness of tone seems typical of Basil's easygoing nature and ensures that there are none of the sudden rises and falls that disfigure some of Hogg's other prose writings. To this unity of style Hogg adds a consistently anti-heroic outlook on life, as Basil at every stage fails to achieve the lofty ambitions he sets himself. In love, on the field

of honour, and in battle he is shown in a sorry light, endeavouring to preserve himself regardless of the cost to his dignity. Though Basil manages to keep the reader's sympathy throughout and at least tries to live up to his lofty ideals, the conventional heroic attitude, as in The Three Perils of Man, is seen to be barely applicable to this sordid world. Even at the end of the story, where Hogg contrives a reunion between Basil and Clifford Mackay, the girl he has loved for many years, is by no means a conventional happy ending. After all, it is the marriage of a half-pay captain and a former Inverness prostitute, both of whom have deceived each other on a number of occasions and who have few hopes ahead of them. Basil himself admits that the eventual marriage was by no means ideal:

Clifford and I were regularly married, and have now lived together eighteen years as man and wife, and I have always found her a kind, faithful, and good natured companion. It is true we have lived rather a dissipated, confused, irregular sort of life, such as might have been expected from the nature of our first connexion; but this has been wholly owing to my acquired habits, and not to any bias in her disposition towards such a life. She never controlled me in any one thing; and her mind was so soft and gentle, that it was like melted wax, and took the impression at once of the company with which it associated. We lived in affluence till the time that her son became of age, but since that period we feel a good deal of privation, although our wants are mostly artificial; and I believe I have loved her better than I could have loved any other, and as well as my unsteady mind was capable of loving any one.

(8b, p. 97)

By entering into the mind and attitudes of Basil Lee, Hogg is able to avoid the trap of sentimentality and to tell a tale which, if perhaps limited in its reductive tone, presents a lively full-length sketch of its narrator.

Yet despite these successes, one is faced with the fact that only some two dozen of Hogg's hundred and fifty prose pieces are successful

enough to merit reprinting, and even these are important more as well-told stories than as contributions to our knowledge of life's realities.²³ In his major works one can see Hogg's progress towards mastery over his material, imposing his personality on his borrowings from folk and literary tradition. But in the bulk of his shorter prose he is content to take over secondhand attitudes and forms, and to abandon his personality in order that he can produce yet one more magazine story. To have made such material personal to himself would have required more thought than he had time to give. When writing for the magazines, especially in the decade that followed The Confessions, Hogg largely ceased to develop, for pressures far more crippling than those of literary influence were upon him. They ensured that after the mid 1820s Hogg was no longer capable of consistently producing original prose that was worthy of him.

The pressures under which Hogg was writing in the last years of his life affected his poetry rather differently from his prose. He was of course forced to abandon his attempts at writing long narrative poems: it was no longer possible for him to stop publishing for a year or more in order to concentrate on one poem, as he had done at the time of The Queen's Wake. Instead he turned his attention to shorter poetry and to songs, of which he had produced an enormous quantity by the time of his death. He had certainly been writing songs throughout his life, some of his most characteristic being those contained in The Forest Minstrel of 1810, while shorter narrative and descriptive verse had been written by him at the same time as his epics, but from the years following 1828, the years when he was most financially straitened, date nearly one third of his three hundred and fifty pieces of poetry. Obviously, this abundance of verse would be less damaged than the prose by the speed with which it was written: it is much more possible to give thought to the composition of a song than to that of a hundred page tale, so that there is less obvious falling-off in quality. But it should be considered whether the need to produce so much shorter verse diverted Hogg's talent from attaining full maturity and whether his career was prematurely stunted as a result.

In his own lifetime, Hogg's greatest fame came from the hundreds of songs which he published in books, magazines, annuals, and song-sheets. His colleague John Wilson, writing in praise of Hogg's poetry after his friend's death, echoed the popular estimate of Hogg's career by singling out for especial praise his visionary poems and his songs:

And what can surpass many of the Shepherd's songs?
The most undefinable of all undefinable kinds of poetical
inspiration are surely - Songs. They seem to start

up indeed from the dew-sprinkled soil of a poet's soul, like flowers; the first stanza being root, the second leaf, the third bud, and all the rest blossom, till the song is like a stalk laden with its own beauty, and laying itself down in languid delight on the soft bed of moss - song and flower alike having the same "dying fall!"²⁴

Even when lengthier pieces of verse were rejected by his publishers, Hogg could always be certain of having one or two songs welcomed, and of receiving a steady flow of cash in return. A song could be dashed off without great effort for inclusion by Wilson in the latest of the Noctes Ambrosianae, even when it seemed that Blackwood no longer wanted to publish Hogg's prose. Hogg wrote his songs quickly, but with some care: when he came to collect them in 1831, he was assiduous in giving them their final coat of polish. Even when his career seemed most to be languishing Hogg was aware of the esteem in which his songs were held and was encouraged by the enthusiasm with which they were greeted by singers and listeners alike. As they were literally songs, they were most of them not intended to be considered apart from their music. Often Hogg will note the title of the tune he intended at the head of the song, and a good many of them first appeared as sheet music, attached to tunes which were sometimes the work of Hogg himself. There is evidence that Hogg on occasion composed the words of his songs by choosing a tune and then fitting syllables to the rhythm it suggested. In the notes which prefix two of the songs in the 1831 collection we find a clear suggestion that that had been his practice at least in these instances:

One evening in the winter of 1800, I was sawing away on the fiddle with great energy and elevation, and having executed the strathspey called Athol Cummers, much to my own satisfaction, my mother said to me, "Dear Jimmie, are there ony words to that tune?" - "No that ever I heard, mother." - "O man, it's a shame to hear sic a good tune an' nae words till't. Gae away ben the house, like a good lad, and mak' me a verser till't." The request was instantly complied with.²⁵

"The Flowers of Scotland" was written to the popular air of "The Blue Bells of Scotland," at the request of a most beautiful young lady, who sung it particularly well. But several years afterwards I heard her still singing the old ridiculous words, which really, like the song of the whilly-whawp, "is ane shame till heirre." I never thought her so bonny afterwards; but neither she was.²⁶

In this Hogg was following the pattern of Robert Burns, for his great predecessor would similarly start from a pre-existing tune which would define the metre and the mood of his songs. It may well be that, in discussing Hogg's songs without reference to their music, one does him as great a disservice as, in the opinion of David Daiches and Cedric Thorpe Davie, Burns scholars do when they talk only of the words of that poet's songs.²⁷ If the following discussion ignores the problem of the relationship between words and music in Hogg's songs it is evidence only for the present writer's incapacity, not the negligibility of the problem.

In the writing of his songs Hogg displays many of the difficulties that faced Scots songwriters after the death of Burns. The greatness of Burns' songs comes from their ability to give artistic shaping to folk expression, conveying the emotion of an unsophisticated rural society with the coherency expected of a literate writer. The seemingly spontaneous use of an imagery drawn from nature and the routine of country life, an imagery which patently was full of meaning for the writer, gives to the songs their special character, capable of speaking to both countryman and townsman, without seeming patronising to the one or alien to the other. By drawing on the vast reserves of genuine folk-song with which he was familiar and transforming them by his own creative genius, Burns was able to write poetry which was an expression of his own personal thoughts and character. Unfortunately, so great was Burns' success that a union of folk material and personal expression as

perfect as this was made extremely difficult for the songwriters who came after him. So much popular emotion had found a definitive literary form in his writings that it must have seemed to later writers that all that remained to them was to imitate Burns' creations. Instead of taking their imagery from the realities of country life Burns' successors were tempted to reproduce those details that they found in their model, even though the experiences which gave personal meaning to the imagery were ones in which they could not themselves share. Both in subject matter and in technique the songs became increasingly stereotyped, until the poets came to describe in their songs a genteel and Arcadian country life which Burns would never have recognised.

Hogg cannot be said entirely to have avoided this temptation. More than almost any of his fellow songwriters he had access to the same inspiration as Burns, for he was no town dweller waging nostalgic over country life but a farmer living and working in a rural community. However, one finds that his songs divide sharply between those whose origin is clearly literary and those which reflect his own experience. More notably, there is an equivalent division in content: pathetic incidents and pastoral idylls are almost always expressed in a literary style, while the more popular manner is used for humour and sturdy Jacobite patriotism. That his should be so reflects Hogg's uneasy position with regard to what his time would have called "the tender passions". For all writers but declared, and licensed, rebels such as Byron, the forthrightness with which a contemporary poet could without retribution speak on emotional matters was severely curtailed. Death and poverty were conventionally seen as pathetic, love was sweet and ennobling, without passion or sex. These partial truths were not likely to satisfy one who, like Hogg, had first-hand experience of death and poverty and frequently disconcerted

his contemporaries by his lack of regard for the conventional limits of discussion in sexual matters. Yet he lacked the courage to brave the wrath of publishers: the need to get as much into print as possible demanded that he suppress what he knew to be the realities of country life and offer instead the expurgated version which was the only one the public would accept. Burns, talking of country matters as experienced in the country, could describe them in the forms and language of country life. Hogg, on the other hand, forced to reproduce a country life which was a literary fabrication, inevitably had to use the language and style of literature to express it.

It is therefore no surprise that Hogg, when presenting a conventionalised emotion, should evoke it by conventional emotional stimuli. His "Pathetic Songs", as one of the divisions of The Forest Minstrel is entitled, abound with graves, withered flowers, deserted lovers, and beggars who arouse sentimental philanthropy. Each situation is drenched with the tears of the feeling observer. Thus, in "Cauld is the blast", the realisation that the war which has deprived him of a son has taken away a husband from the beggar woman he meets extracts from a philanthropist the appropriate sympathetic tear:

Pale, pale grew the traveller's visage so manly,
 An' down his grave cheek the big rollin' tear ran;
 "I am not alone in the loss has befa'n me!
 Oh wae to ambition the misery of man!
 But go to my hall; to the poor an' the needy
 My table is furnish'd, an' open my door;
 An' there I will cherish, an' there I will feed thee,
 And often together our loss we'll deplore."²⁸

"The last cradle song" finds its emotion in the inexhaustible pathos of children:

Bawloo, my bonnie baby, bawllililu,
 Here no more will I see thee;
 Bawloo, my bonnie baby, bawllililu,
 Oh, sair is my heart to lea' thee.

But far within yon sky so blue,
 In love that fail shall never,
 In valleys beyond the land of the dew,
 I'll sing to my baby for ever.²⁹

Hogg never resists the temptation to overdo the pathetic symbols: one can be certain that if the song mentions a dead mother, her young child will soon follow her. Even when the song has achieved some degree of pathos he will overplay his hand to extract the last drop of emotion. "The moon was a-waning" has an affecting simplicity in Hogg's picture of the dead lover lost in the snow who now has only a snow drift ("snow wreath" in Scots) as a memorial. But when the last verse increases the misfortune of his bereaved fiancée, one is conscious of the extent to which Hogg is manipulating emotions by means of conventional "tear-jerkers":

How painful the task
 The sad tidings to tell you! -
 An orphan you were
 Ere this misery befell you;
 And far in yon wild,
 Where the dead-tapers hover,
 So cold, cold and wan
 Lies the corpse of your lover.³⁰

So literary a pathos makes the diction in which these songs are written increasingly anglicised and abstract; for true feeling Hogg substitutes rhetoric and strained imagery. Admittedly, he rarely sinks to the level of one particularly unfortunate stanza in "Fair was thy blossom", a lament for a girl who died young:

The fatal shaft was on the wing,
 Thy spotless soul from guilt to sever;
 A tear of pity wet the string,
 That twang'd, and seal'd thine eye for ever.³¹

But the language, even at its best, betrays its descent from the sentimental verse of the closing years of the eighteenth century.

Even in songs where lofty literary emotion is abandoned for a more everyday picture, Hogg finds it difficult to shake off literary influence and write for himself. In his rustic love songs, he seems conscious of being in territory of which Burns was the acknowledged master, and in consequence these songs are made to correspond with a sentimentalised idea of the love Burns described. Frequently the songs that result are merely a reshuffling of the content and imagery of Burns. Thus, in "Moggy an' me", even though the couple described are ostensibly Margaret Phillips and Hogg himself, the picture of contented old age in the country is conditioned by "John Anderson, my Jo":

Aboon our auld heads we've a nice little biggin,
That keeps out the cauld when the simmer's awa;
We've twa wabs o' linen o' Moggy's ain spinnin',
As thick as silk velvet and white as the snaw;
We've kie in the byre, an' yauds in the stable,
A grumphie sae fat that she hardly can stand;
An' something, I guess, in yon auld painted press,
To cheer up the speerits an' steady the hand.³²

"Bonny Leezy" has at its back the familiar Burnsian formula of "I never knew what happiness was until I met so-and-so":

Though I've enjoyed my youth in health,
An' lived a life both free an' easy;
Yet real delight I never felt
Until I saw my bonny Leezy.
I've seen the Athol birk sae fair,
The mountain pine, an' simple daisy;
But nought I've seen can e'er compare
Wi' the modest gracefu' form o' Leezy.³³

The abandoned lover in "The Flower" is described in terms which found definitive form in "Ye banks and braes":

One sweetly scented summer eve,
To yonder bower I strayed,
While little birds from ev'ry bough,
Their music wild convey'd.³⁴

In a piece such as "Sing on, sing on, my bonny bird" one can see how Hogg is able to create a new song merely by reordering the conventional images, epithets, and even christian names of Burnsian song:

Sing on, sing on, my bonny bird,
 The sang ye sung yestreen, O,
 When here, aneath the hawthorn wild,
 I met my bonny Jean, O!
 My blude ran prinklin' through my veins,
 My hair begoud to steer, O;
 My heart play'd deep against my breast,
 When I beheld my dear, O!³⁵

One might say that in composing his songs out of a common stock of tropes Hogg is following the manner of the folk singer who, as A. L. Lloyd has described, will similarly create his songs out of conventional images:

This stock of commonplace lyrical "floaters" (so called because they float with ease from one song to another) is relatively restricted, comprising perhaps not many more than fifty tropes in all, but through the centuries singers have delighted in selecting them, matching them up, stringing them together as girls might string beads of various colours bought off a cheapjack's tray. The verses are usually concerned with love, especially love betrayed or denied, and a repertory of such verses provides a handy kit for making countless songs almost at will.³⁶

But in the first place Hogg, composing art rather than folk song, should be expected to show the greater originality of thought demanded by the permanency of print, and in the second, he can be criticised for perpetuating an image of country life which he must have known to be a false one.

However, it should be stressed that Hogg usually models his songs not on specific examples taken from Burns but on a picture of country life drawn from the more sentimental side of his predecessor's output. Rarely can one find a precise analogue in Burns for a song by Hogg, rarely even do the two poets set their songs to identical tunes. When Hogg does write words to a tune already used by Burns, in general it has been used by the Ayrshire poet for one of his less well-known pieces and bears not the slightest verbal resemblance to Hogg's version.

In no more than a handful of instances is Hogg obviously imitating a Burns song: when he does so, he invariably suffers in the comparison, and seems constrained by the knowledge of his imitation. Hogg writes in the note which prefixes his version of "Charlie is my darling" in Songs that it was "altered from the original at the request of a lady who sung it sweetly".³⁷ In effect, this meant that Hogg removed the sexuality of Burns' version and made the Jacobites into more heroic figures. The last stanza of Burns' song reads:

Its up yon hethery mountain,
And down yon scroggy glen,
We daur na gang a milking,
For Charlie and his men.³⁸

Hogg gives a picture more congenial to latter-day supporters of the Stuarts:

Our Highland hearts are true an' leal,
An' glow without a stain;
Our Highland swords are metal keen,
An' Charlie he's our ain.³⁹

Hogg, when writing a version of "My love she's but a lassie yet", is forced by the knowledge of his predecessor's version to proclaim his originality by the sheer extravagance of his similes:

She's neither proud nor saucy yet,
She's neither plump nor gaucy yet;
But just a jinking,
Bonny blinking,
Hilty-skilty lassie yet.
But O her artless smile's mair sweet
Than hinny or than marmalete;
An' right or wrang,
Ere it be lang,
I'll bring her to a parley yet.⁴⁰

For these songs to seem other than feeble copies the audience would need to be ignorant of Burns' original. In one instance only is the reader's prior acquaintance with the original required for Hogg's

song to make its full effect. In one of the many songs Hogg produced for the Noctes, "In Embro town they made a law",⁴¹ in which, in true Blackwood's fashion, he jibes at the Whigs of the Edinburgh Review by rejoicing in the inviolability of Christopher North and his friends in the face of libel actions, Hogg imitated the metre and even the very words of one of Burns' more cheerfully obscene poems.⁴² The association of Hogg's taunting words and a bawdy song was clearly designed to be the more wounding to the victims.

It may at first glance be surprising that Burns should have had so little direct influence on Hogg and that what influence there was should have been of so little benefit to him. Hogg's enthusiasm for his great predecessor was well on the far side of idolatry:

After I learned that we were both born on the 25th of Janr I determined to be his successor in Scottish poetry against all disadvantages and have at length attained that enviable distinction. But the queerest thing of all was that I had learned to identify myself so much with my predecessor that I expected to die at the same age and on the very same day of the month. So when the 21st of August began to approach I grew very ill - terribly ill and told the people who were waiting on me that I feared I was going to die. They said "they hopet no". But before midnight I was so ill and so frightened that I was skirling and hauling by the blankets but after the 21st was fairly over I grew better. It certainly was rather a singular coincidence that we should both have been born on the 25th of Janr and both in the middle of terrible snow storms. What would I give to have a son on the 25th of Janr for I am sure he would turn out the greatest poet of us all. I have done all that I could to have a son on the 25th of Janr and I came so near it once that I had a daughter on the 23d.⁴³

One of the projects in which Hogg was most wholeheartedly involved in the closing years of his life was the edition of Burns which appeared in 1834. Yet the apparent influence of Burns' poetry on him was negligible: in all Hogg's poetry only one poem, and that the very earliest

he published, is in the Standard Habbie stanza,⁴⁴ while the metre of "The Holy Fair" elicited only one piece of ephemeral magazine sniping.⁴⁵ Hogg, who was prepared to imitate Byron, Scott, Pope, and Milton, was plainly deterred from imitating the poet with whom he felt the most sympathy in cast of mind and way of life. Yet Hogg's reluctance to imitate Burns in the way he had other poets perhaps more than any other instance shows how conscious he was of how far imitation could be a creative form. Throughout his career he had striven to balance the influence of the great figures of literature, succeeding best when he was able to make his predecessor's style fit his purpose. But it is likely that he would feel the contest with Burns to be an unequal one, which could only result in him copying Burns' style. An author who was essentially unlike Hogg in his view of life, as E.T.A. Hoffmann had been, could be used creatively. But Burns, who was to Hogg the great pattern of Scottish poetry, was too close to him in spirit: to have attempted to imitate him would have resulted in the total destruction of Hogg's creative individuality.

The successes among Hogg's songs are to be found not among his sentimental love songs, where he falls under the influence of sub-Burns lyric verse, but in the much less critically respectable genres of comic songs and rousing patriotic choruses. When writing in these styles, Hogg is able to shake off the conventions of literary form and adopt something closer to the folk tone of voice. The closer Hogg gets to folk material the more the "reductive idiom" which David Craig has identified in Scots poetry comes into play.⁴⁶ The emotions which are praised so genteelly in Hogg's anglicised verse are held up in all their absurdity: love and courtship are in game rather than in earnest, and ribald enjoyment is of more importance than sentimental pathos. The lover is shown to be an absurd lunatic:

Ae morning, by the dawn o' day,
 I rase to theek the stable, O!
 I keust my coat, an' plied away
 As fast as I was able, O!
 I wrought that morning out an' out,
 As I'd been redding fire, O;
 When I had done an' look'd about,
 Gudefaith, it was the byre, O!
 O, love, love, love!
 Love is like a dizziness!
 It winna let a poor body
 Gang about his bizness!⁴⁷

Drink is the source of all enjoyment:

He that cheats can ne'er be just;
 He that prays is ne'er to trust;
 He that drinks to drauck his dust,
 Wha can say that wrang is done?
 Wha was't ne'er to fraud inclin'd?
 Never pray'd sin' he can mind?
 Ane wha's drouth there's few can find?
 The honest Laird o' Lamington.⁴⁸

Country women are not the pretty and elegant figures of love poetry:

Gin ye meet a bonny lassie,
 Gie her a kiss an' let her gae;
 But gin ye meet a dirty hussy,
 Fy gae rub her ower wi' strae.
 Nought is like a bonny lassie,
 Brisk an' bonny, blithe and gay;
 But gin ye meet a dirty hussy,
 Fy gae rub her ower wi' strae.⁴⁹

The desire to cut lofty attitudes down to size seems, as Craig has suggested, to be an attitude characteristic of the Scots, and consequently the native vocabulary is full of expressions which offer themselves to a poet who adopts such a stance. As a result, Hogg is here giving utterance to feelings which he can delineate precisely, for they are inextricably linked with his native tongue. A full discussion of Hogg as an example of the national schizophrenia which has beset all Scots writers writing in an English-dominated culture would require a study as long as the present, and must be left to another writer, but it is certainly true that added to the other problems that hampered Hogg's development were the difficulties he found in

adopting the language and attitudes of English. However, more research is needed before one can accept wholeheartedly the view that the use of English necessarily stunted him: the examples of The Confessions, a novel written for the most part in perfect standard English, and "Kilmeny", whose Scots is of the lightest kind, would suggest that the question is considerably more complicated than that. What must be agreed is that good Scots came more readily to him than good English, and that the adequate expression of his personal attitudes needed much greater care in English than in Scots. Therefore, at a time when careful writing was especially difficult for him, it was perhaps inevitable that his more successful songs should be those in which he employed native attitudes and vocabulary, rather than those in which he strove half heartedly to acquire those of another culture.

It might of course be objected, as it has been by David Craig, that a poetry based on the constant belittling of large emotions and on the praise of social enjoyment is essentially limited, for it is then incapable of expressing deep feeling when the need arises. Certainly the songs from which I have been quoting present only a small area of life, but it would be wrong to reject them for that reason alone, since there is much to admire in them. Hogg shows great virtuosity in fitting complicated metres to natural vernacular language:

"There's Cappie the cobbler, an' Tammie the tinman,
 An' Dickie the brewer, an' Peter the skinman,
 An' Geordie our deacon, for want of a better,
 An' Bess, wha delights in the sins that beset her.
 O, worthy St Andrew, we canna compel ye,
 But ye ken as weel as a body can tell ye,
 If these gang to heaven, we'll a' be sae shockit,
 Your garret o' blue will but thinly be stockit."⁵⁰

The Scots vocabulary employed is rich and extensive, evidence that Hogg, when writing close to his roots, found a precision mostly

wanting in his English verse. Moreover, one must accept that to present even a small area of life with the clarity and understanding Hogg does is an achievement. Amidst his jesting, coarse or gentle, there is a wry acceptance of harshness of country life which is greatly to be preferred to the stiff sentimentality of the pathetic songs. With easy self-mockery Hogg can laughingly present the problems of old age which assailed him now that he was in his sixties:

Frae royal Wull that wears the crown,
 To Yarrow's lowliest shepherd-clown,
 Time wears unchancy mortals doun,
 I've marked it late and air.
 The souplest knee at length will crack,
 The lythest arm, the sturdiest back -
 And little siller Sampson lack
 For cutting o' his hair.

Mysell for speed had not my marrow
 Thro' Teviot, Ettrick, Tweed, and Yarrow,
 Strang, straight, and swift like winged arrow,
 At market, tryst, or fair.
 But now I'm turn'd a hirplin' carle,
 My back it's ta'en the cobbler's swirl,
 And deil a bodle I need birle
 For cutting o' my hair.⁵¹

Less kindly, he definitively damns the middling Christian who does neither good nor ill, in the early song of "Tam Nelson":

Tam graned an dee't like ither men;
 O tell me, tell me, you wha know it -
 Will that poor donsy rise again?
 O sirs, I canna, winna trow it.

Nae doubt, but he wha made us a'
 Can the same form an' feelings gie him,
 Without a lack, without a flaw -
 But what the de'il wad he do wi' him?

He'd make nae scam in cavern vile,
 Nor place that ony living kens o'.
 He's no worth ony devil's while,
 Nor upright thing to take amends o'.

If borne aboon the fields o' day,
 Where rails o' gowd the valleys border,
 He'd aye be standing i' the way,
 And pitting a' things out of order.

I'll sing ye a wee bit sang,
 A sang i' the aulden style,
 It is of a bonny young lass
 Wha lived in merry Carlisle.
 An' O but this lass was bonny,
 An' O but this lass was braw,
 An' she had gowd in her coffers,
 An' that was best of a'
 Sing hey, hickerty dickerty,
 Hickerty dickerty dear;
 The lass that has gowd an' beauty
 Has naething on earth to fear!

This lassie had plenty o' wooers,
 As beauty an' wealth should hae;
 This lassie she took her a man,
 An' then she could get nae mae.
 This lassie had plenty o' weans,
 That keepit her hands astir;
 And then she dee'd and was buried,
 An' that was an end of her.
 Sing hey, hickerty dickerty,
 Hickerty dickerty dan,
 The best thing in life is to make
 The maist o't that we can!⁵⁴

Such verse is reductive only in that it scales potential tragedy down to manageable terms and sustains both writer and audience in the face of the realities of growing old age and wasted lives.

Above all one must bear in mind the social situation in which Hogg was writing. Already the communal culture was breaking down as life became more urbanised: the songs and dances which had united the people of Scotland were dying out. The genial tavern society of a century earlier was being replaced for the middle classes by that of the drawing room. In earlier days, feelings of social unity and good fellowship had been strengthened by the common enjoyment of the traditional culture, but this was fast disappearing. In such a situation it was for the poets to supply the new songs which would recreate the feelings of community and perform the functions that earlier had been filled by traditional songs. The delight one experienced in reading these songs would be increased when it was shared, so that

the fragmentation of society would be felt less keenly. In such cases the poet has a necessary role in society, and it must be said that Hogg performed it to the full. Hogg was very conscious of his position as social poet, whether he was writing weak complimentary verse, or choruses to the praise of the heir of the Buccleuch title. No Edinburgh celebratory dinner was complete without a song or two from the Ettrick Shepherd. He also took it upon him to provide little songs which took their place in social rites, a parting song, or a song in which the ladies of the company might ask the men to be more moderate in their drinking:

O the glass is no for you
 Bonny laddie O!
 The glass is no for you,
 Bonny laddie O!
 The glass is no for you,
 For it dyes your manly brow,
 An' it fills you roarin' fu'
 Bonny laddie O.

Then drive us not away
 Wi' your drinkin' O;
 We like your presence mair
 Than your thinkin' O';
 How happy will you be
 In our blithesome companye
 Taking innocence and glee
 For your drinking O!⁵⁵

Such things may not be great poetry, or add to one's knowledge of eternal truths, but they played an important part in the life of the Edinburgh community.

One can praise for similar reasons Hogg's Jacobite songs, which form one of the most sizeable categories in all his poetry. He writes in Songs:

It is a mercy that I live in a day when the genuine heir of the Stuarts fill their throne, else my head would only be a tenant at will of my shoulders. I have composed more national songs than all the bards of Britain put together.⁵⁶

Many of them are sentimental laments for the passing of Highland glory and the defeat of a highly romanticised Pretender, described in the terms of a vague Highland idyll which never existed:

Farewell to Glen-Shalloch,
 A farewell for ever!
 Farewell to my wee cot
 That stands by the river!
 The fall is loud sounding
 In voices that vary,
 And the echoes surrounding
 Lament with my Mary.⁵⁷

Hogg strikes a stiff heroic pose in them, and frequently writes in a kind of Ossianic dialect:

The target is torn from the arm of the just,
 The helmet is cleft on the brow of the brave,
 The claymore for ever in darkness must rust,
 But red is the sword of the stranger and slave;
 The hoof of the horse, and the foot of the proud,
 Have trod o'er the plumes on the bonnet of blue!
 Why slept the red bolt in the breast of the cloud
 When tyranny revell'd in blood of the true?
 Farewell, my young hero, the gallant and good!
 The crown of thy fathers is torn from thy brow!⁵⁸

Their language is anglicised and their emotions those of Hogg's more conventional songs. They are songs of nostalgia for a non-existent epic age, in which the passions raised by Jacobitism have dwindled into a romantic cult, so that Hogg has little to do but vary the accepted symbols of Jacobitism. However, he also writes more successful Jacobite songs in another vein, in which he draws on his researches for the two volumes of Jacobite Relics which he produced in 1819 and 1821. In such songs he tries to imitate, with frequent success, the lively and raucous songs which were actually sung at that time of the rebellion, confidently asserting Jacobite superiority. They seem negligible poetry but allied to their vigorous tunes they can whip any audience into fervour. A song like "Bonnie Prince Charlie" may seem little more than a string of names:

Cam ye by Athol, Glad wi' the philabeg,
 Down by the Tummel, or banks o' the Garry,
 Saw ye our lads, wi' their bonnets and white cockades,
 Leaving their mountains to follow Prince Charlie?
 Follow thee!. follow thee! wha wadna follow thee?
 Lang hast thou loved and trusted us fairly!
 Charlie, Charlie, wha wadna follow thee,
 King o' the Highland hearts, bonny Prince Charlie?⁵⁹

But anyone who has heard it sung even by a modern audience at a "folk" concert will not deny the sense of exhilaration and community which it can produce. For the time, regardless of their individual convictions, the singers feel like Jacobites. It is a Jacobitism of a kind which underlay the developing nationalism of the nineteenth century, irrational and emotional, but it is not as supine as that shown in the more sentimental Jacobite songs. It allowed the Scottish people to feel at least temporarily a sense of national identity.

At their best Hogg's songs are designed to supply the music for a society which was going through a period of extensive change. The more successful of them do so by remaking the traditional material which had been destroyed in the change: they preserve the attitude of mind in a more sophisticated and structured poetry. They are certainly slight, and seem limited in the depth and range of emotions that they can express, but they performed a highly necessary task in the lives of Hogg's contemporaries. The humourless literary critic might be tempted to regret that Hogg devoted so much time to them at the expense of deeper forms of literary creation, but in so doing the critic would wish to deprive an earlier age of the lively entertainment that a man of vivid imagination provided for it. The age is surely to be envied whose commercial songs are provided by some of the most talented writers of the day.

However, in the writing of both songs and prose, Hogg's development, apart from a few isolated examples, largely halted in the mid

1820s. There was no sudden change in style in the songs: examples can be quoted from all stages of his career, as they were in the above discussion, without any jarring of style being apparent. In the short prose pieces of his later years Hogg was still incapable of surmounting difficulties that had beset him in his earliest attempts. It is in poetry alone that one can trace any new departure in that unhappy final decade, when literary development was distorted by other pressures. In a small number of cases Hogg was able to continue the progression which had ceased when he turned from verse to prose in 1816 and to make use of the assurance of voice which had been granted him by the success of his imitations at that time. For some years after, he had written only songs, and songs continued to constitute the bulk of his output for the rest of his life. But he also wrote a good many narrative poems, shorter than those which had occupied him before, and, more importantly, a small handful of meditative poems in which he talked for the first time not of fictitious emotions but of those which most occupied his mind as he prepared for old age and death.

Admittedly, in his narrative poetry Hogg was for most of the time content to plough old furrows. His popular success with "Kilmeny" and "The Witch of Fife", and his own high opinion of his abilities as an imitator of traditional ballads, tempted him to rework these themes in the hope of repeating former triumphs. So important had these two poems been in establishing his career that it must have seemed indeed enticing at a time when his fame was declining to return to a style which had found such favour. But the more one reads of quatrains telling of old men carried off in wild flights or fragile couplets describing the visionary experiences of tender maidens, the more one realises that "Kilmeny" and "The Witch of Fife" stand out as his best poems only through the evident care that was expended on them, and that his attempts

to reproduce them were futile. They could not be repeated by a mechanical process for they had achieved their form only by clear and consistent thought, into which Hogg could reenter only with difficulty once the experience of writing them was completed. An impact which derived so much from the freshness and fecundity of imagination displayed in them could never be recaptured by stereotyping the imaginative features into a set of matrices for the production of poetry. Moreover, "The Witch of Fife" is unique not simply because of its qualities of imagination and wild fantasy but because its movement is consistently directed forwards by the structure which controls the images which challenge the reader's imagination. Not merely a series of mind-boggling lies, "The Witch of Fife" is also a fast-moving tale. Later attempts at this style of poem suggest that Hogg forgot the lesson he had learnt in writing it, for they show only the uninhibited imagination, without the forward-moving structure. A typical example is "The Good Man of Alloa", published in Blackwood's in 1828, which tells how the frantic ride of a supposed philanthropist across the treasure-stocked bed of the sea reveals the greed which is disguised by his professions of charity. Certainly, the scene where the Good Man first plunges into the sea is both exciting and imaginative:

When the old man came to the salt sea's brink,
 He quaked at the ocean faem;
 But the palfrey splash'd into the same,
 As it were its native hame.

"Now Christ us save!" cried the good old man;
 "Hath madness siezed thine head?
 For we shall sink in the ocean wave,
 And bluther quhill we be dead."

But the palfrey dash'd o'er the bounding wave,
 With snifter and with stenne;
 It was firmer nor the firmest sward
 In all the Deffane glen.

But the good old man he held as Death
 Holds by a sinner's tail,
 Or as a craven clings to life,
 When death does him assail.

And the little wee palfrey shot away,
 Like dragon's fiery train,
 And up the wave, and down the wave,
 Like meteor of the main.

And its streaming tail behind did sail
 With shimmer and with shine;
 And whenever it struck the mane of the wave,
 The flashes of fire were seen.⁶⁰

However, the description which embodies the old man's experience has been preceded by a ten-stanza soliloquy which establishes his character, while it is followed by a long description of the riches of the sea. The forward impetus of the stanzas quoted halts when the poem lingers so long over one point. The deft strokes which so quickly established the much more ambiguous figure of the husband in "The Witch of Fife" are replaced by tedious passages in which the old man's character is described, while the amused sympathy of the narrator of the earlier poem, mingling irony with wonder and giving the poem a rich texture, becomes prosaic and literal.⁶¹

The delicate and visionary atmosphere of "Kilmeny" was even more difficult to recreate than the lively farce of "The Witch of Fife". Later variations on the "Kilmeny" theme are careless in evoking the otherworldly surroundings of the action and much less subtle in the imaginative stimuli offered. In "Kilmeny" the poet had ensured that the reader's imagination would be able, from the montage of hints in which Heaven was described, to enter into Kilmeny's experiences, but later variants resort instead to bald statement. In "Elen of Reigh", an example of the style which he wrote in 1829, the poet does not even fulfil his responsibility of describing the heroine adequately:

But let bard describe her smile who can,
 For that is beyond the power of man;
 There never was pen that hand could frame,
 Nor tongue that falter'd at maiden's name,
 Could once a distant tint convey
 Of its lovely and benignant ray.
 You have seen the morning's folding vest
 Hang dense and pale upon the east,
 As if an angel's hand had strewn
 The dawning's couch with the eider down,
 And shrouded with a curtain gray
 The cradle of the infant day?
 And 'mid this orient dense and pale,
 Through one small window of the veil,
 You have seen the sun's first radiant hue
 Lightening the dells and vales of dew,
 With smile that seem'd through glory's rim
 From dwellings of the cherubim;
 And you have thought, with holy awe,
 A lovelier sight you never saw,
 Scorning the heart who dared to doubt it?
 Alas! you little knew about it!
 At beauty's shrine you ne'er have knelt,
 Nor felt the flame that I have felt;
 Nor chanced the virgin smile to see
 Of beauty's model, Elen of Reigh!⁶²

Hogg was forced to conceal his lack of inspiration by straining after descriptions and by resonantly uttering platitudes. But the more he piles up the metaphorical language, the further we are from visualising the heroine. One soon becomes aware that the description is mere embroidery, devoid of any conviction in the author. The powerful idea behind "Kilmeny" has been abandoned for sentimental decoration. Yet Hogg was convinced, or at least pretended to be, that "Elen of Reigh" was one of his best poems, insisting to Blackwood: "I hope you will acknowledge Elen of Reigh as my masterpiece Kilmeny not excepted and though it has been hurriedly written I shall be much disappointed if you do not".⁶³ One would hope that Hogg is here exaggerating for the benefit of a potential publisher, but at the very least that he could set such an absurdly wrongheaded value on this inferior poem is evident for how little effort he had put into the writing of it: a closer examination of it would surely have shown him the immeasurable distance between "Kilmeny"

and its descendant. The manner had now become so habitual to Hogg that he could turn out examples without thought. He was himself aware of how frequently he returned to the story, if perhaps less conscious than he might have been of the deterioration in quality that repetition was causing. As he wrote at the end of one of the most sickly of all his versions:

Thus ends my yearly offering bland,
The Laureate's Lay of the Fairy Land.⁶⁴

The imprecise epithet, "bland", condemns the author out of his own mouth: the penalty of returning so regularly to a story which had already been realised so definitively was that it would become more bland and superficial at each telling.⁶⁵ In the end, Hogg did the only thing he could to revivify this now sterile form of writing: he laughed at it. One of the final examples of Hogg's beauteous maidens is the heroine of "May of the Moril Glen", but instead of being a centre of peace, May is the cause of desire, murder and chaos. Alexander Scott has well shown, in one of the few exhaustive studies any poem by Hogg has received,⁶⁶ how carefully Hogg works to achieve the riotous comedy which pervades "May of the Moril Glen", and it would be pointless to attempt to improve on Mr Scott's analysis. Only for so long could Hogg turn out poems in praise of female chastity before his sense of humour demanded that he restore the balance in favour of reality by writing an equally one-sided picture of their destructive power. The reductive note was one that came easier to him than the solemn, with the result that "May of the Moril Glen" is infinitely more successful than any of Hogg's serious attempts to copy "Kilmeny". However, for the most part he merely attempts a repetition of earlier success.

Hogg was no more successful in the literary ballads which he produced towards the end of his career than he had been at the beginning

of it. A ballad such as "Jock Johnstone the Tinkler",⁶⁷ even though it was written in 1829, shows all the flaws which had marred the ballad imitations in The Mountain Bard and The Queen's Wake: it is unduly long, the action covers too great an area of space and time, there is an excess of discursive dialogue at the expense of action. The poem is too wordy to be an exciting narrative, yet is prevented by the ballad form from describing scenery or emotion. It is successful neither as an attempt to reproduce the manner of folk balladry, nor as an attempt to contain literary description within the ballad form. Twice only, and that in an earlier stage of Hogg's development, did the mixture of folk and literary elements blend satisfactorily, producing in one case a ballad close to that of the folk, and in the other a haunting piece of literary evocation. A ballad called "The Liddel Bower", first published in a volume of songs called Albyn's Anthology and later included in Hogg's four-volume collection of 1822, is remarkably successful in adapting the techniques of the oral poet to the expectations of a literate audience. It repays quotation in full:

"O will ye walk the wood, lady?
Or will ye walk the lea?
Or will ye gae to the Liddel Bower,
An' rest a while wi' me?"

"The deer lies in the wood, Douglas,
The wind blows on the lea;
An' when I gae to Liddel Bower
It shall not be wi' thee."

"The stag bells on my hills, lady,
The hart but and the hind;
My flocks lie in the Border dale,
My steeds outstrip the wind;

"At ae blast o' my bugle horn,
A thousand tend the ca':-
O gae wi' me to Liddel Bower -
What ill can thee befa'?

"D'ye mind when in that lonely bower
We met at even tide,
I kissed your young an' rosy lips,
An' wooed you for my bride?

"I saw the blush break on your cheek,
 The tear stand in your ee;
 Oh, could I ween, fair Lady Jane,
 That then you looedna me?"

"But sair, sair hae I rued that day,
 An' sairer yet may rue;
 Ye thoughtna on my maiden love,
 Nor yet my rosy hue,

"Ye thouthtna on my bridal bed,
 Nor vow nor tear o' mine;
 Ye thought upon the lands o' Nith,
 An' how they might be thine.

"Away! away! ye fause leman,
 Nae mair my bosom wring,
 There is a bird within yon bower,
 O gin ye heard it sing!"

Red grew the Douglas' dusky cheek,
 He turned his eye away,
 The gowden hilt fell to his hand;
 "What can the wee bird say?"

"It hirpled on the bough an' sang,
 'Oh, wae's me, dame, for thee,
 An' wae's me for the comely knight
 That sleeps aneath the tree!

"His cheek lies on the cauld cauld clay,
 Nae belt nor brand has he;
 His blood is on a kinsman's spear;
 Oh, wae's me, dame, for thee!"

"My yeomen line the wood, lady,
 My steed stands at the tree;
 An' ye maun dree a dulefu' wierd,
 Or mount and fly wi' me."

What gars Caerlaverock yeomen ride
 Sae fast in belt an' steel?
 What gars the Jardine mount his steed,
 An' scowr owre muir and dale?

Why seek they up by Liddel ford,
 An' down by Tarras linn?
 The heiress o' the lands o' Nith
 Is lost to a' her kin.

Oh, lang, lang may her mother greet,
 Down by the salt sea faem;
 An' lang, lang may the Maxwells look,
 Afore their bride come hame.

An' lang may every Douglas rue,
 An' ban the deed for aye:-
 This deed was done at Liddel Bower
 About the break of day.⁶⁸

Hogg clearly intended to suggest the techniques of folk balladry in the grouping of his stanzas, the grammatical structures within the stanza, and in the directness of the diction. More especially, he has also caught the dramatic cut and thrust of ballad dialogue, in which the subtextual conflict of the speeches creates as much of the sense of action as the descriptions of battles and chases. He has resisted the temptation to expand his story beyond this one exchange, so that "The Liddel Bower" has a concentration lacking in nearly all his other attempts at balladry. Yet Hogg has also structured "The Liddel Bower" in a way that ensures that a reader who was ignorant of traditional culture would be held by the action, for he reveals the story in a very literary fashion, obtaining the maximum suspense by requiring the reader to reconstruct the foregoing action and the relationship between the two speakers. The ambiguities of the closing stanzas, which hint at the outcome without explicitly narrating it, are also very much part of Hogg's literary inheritance. The confidence with which Hogg manipulates the exposition of his tale is matched by the assured consistency of the diction and the firmness of the characterisation. It was however a confidence which was easily lost when Hogg realised how different this more authentic ballad imitation was from the usual literary ballad. Significantly, when he came to revise this poem for the 1831 Songs, he replaced much of the oral quality of language and grammar with the more stagey and sentimental style which usually defaces his ballads. One need only compare the ninth and tenth stanzas of the original version with their revised equivalents to see how much weaker is the effect:

"Away, ye cruel fause leman!
 Nae mair my bosom wring;
 There is a bird in yon bower,
 O gin ye heard it sing!"
 "Lady, beware! Some words there are
 That secrets may betray -
 No utterance gives them to the air -
 What does your wee bird say?"⁶⁹

The folk voice, though one with which Hogg was familiar, was not one that he felt confident using in literary society.

The success of "The Mermaid", first published in 1819, though as great as that of "The Liddel Bower", is achieved by very different means. "The Mermaid" shows no trace of oral tradition: it takes from the traditional ballad only its metre, its concentration on the action that underlies the speaker's words, and the reticence of authorial comment. Instead of telling a story which requires the structure of patterned stanzas or of careful suspense, Hogg seeks in "The Mermaid" to distil an atmosphere which at one and the same time draws on folk material⁷⁰ and allies itself with sophisticated emotion. Hogg focuses on three scenes in his story of a young man destroyed by his love of a mermaid and makes no effort to connect them into a fluent narrative. The first scene contains the dialogue between the youth and the mermaid in which he expresses his longing for her and she warns him of the consequences. He plainly ignores her warnings for the next scene consists of the young man's lament to his mother as he prepares for death. But it is the final scene, no more than a dozen stanzas, which crystallises the atmosphere of corruption that pervades the poem. The mermaid is described singing a song which equivocally mingles hope for the young man's salvation with a sense of continuing evil:

Lie still, my love, lie still and sleep,
 Long is thy night of sorrow;
 Thy Maiden of the Mountain deep
 Shall meet thee on the morrow.

But oh, when shall that morrow be,
 That my true love shall waken?
 When shall we meet, refined an' free,
 Amid the moorland braken?

Full low and lonely is thy bed,
 The worm even flies thy pillow
 Where now the lips, so comely red,
 That kissed me 'neath the willow?

Oh I must laugh, do as I can,
 Even 'mid my song of mourning,
 At all the fuming freaks of man
 To which there's no returning.

Lie still, my love, lie still an' sleep -
 Hope lingers o'er thy slumber;
 What though thy years beneath the steep
 Should all its stones outnumber?

Though moons steal o'er, an' seasons fly
 On time's swift wing unstaying,
 Yet there's a spirit in the sky
 That lives o'er thy decaying!

In domes beneath the water-springs
 No end hath my sojourning;
 An' to this land of fading things
 Far hence be my returning;

For spirits now have left the deep,
 Their long last farewell taken:
 Lie still, my love, lie still an' sleep,
 Thy day is near the breaking!

When my loved flood from fading day
 No more its gleam shall borrow,
 Nor heath-fowl from the moorland gray
 Bid the blue dawn good-morrow;

The Mermaid o'er thy grave shall weep,
 Without one breath of scorning:
 Lie still, my love, lie still an' sleep,
 An' fare thee well till morning!⁷¹

The lushness of the imagery and the sense of suspended motion contradict the hope that she offers: the closing impression is not of the mermaid's decline but of her continuing fascination. No ballad imitation, "The Mermaid" is in the best sense a literary ballad, for it builds up for the

literate community the supernatural awe and the fantasy which a folk audience would obtain from its traditional ballads.

However, it is not in narrative poetry that Hogg's principle achievement in the 1820s and 1830s is to be found, but in the meditative and descriptive poetry which concentrates on the author himself and the emotions he experiences. Of course, not all of his attempts in this style are successful: in fact by far the largest part of them is trite in thought and falsely rhetorical in attitude. Hogg's talent and personality were ill-suited to public poetry, to the praise of the great, and the celebration of national events. Hogg's folk-based verse could achieve such flights only by overingenious imagery and the use of the grand rhetorical manner.⁷² His political satires degenerate into vulgar abuse.⁷³ His successes are to be found in those poems where he drops the mask of authorial pomposity and celebrates the emotions in which he really believed, such as companionship and good-fellowship, or individual grief. Though his attempts to write addresses to the great were usually failures, for his relationship to them was dictated by social and literary convention and drew only slightly on his own feelings, when the person addressed was a friend with whom he felt a special degree of intimacy, the desire to express his own feelings inspired him to originality. This is perhaps best exemplified in the verse address which he wrote to Scott congratulating him on the baronetcy which he received in the Spring of 1820.⁷⁴ The poem opens conventionally and rather stiffly:

Sound, my old Harp, thy boldest key
 To strain of high festivity!
 Can'st thou be silent in the brake,
 Loitering by Altrive's mountain lake,
 When he who gave the hand its sway
 That now has tuned thee many a day,
 Has gained the honours, trulier won,
 Than e'er by sword of Albyn's son?
 High guerdon of a soul refined,
 The meed of an exalted mind!

There is still a sense of the ceremonial pose about Hogg's manner in these lines, but this soon disappears when he turns from conventional laudation to remembrance of the companionship the two writers had shared for nearly twenty years. The verse style alters from the rhetorical to the easy and natural, in which the most everyday expressions can stand comfortably beside those in a more poetic register:

Mirth at the scene, and ever will;
 When o'er the fells we took our way,
 ('Tis twenty years, even to a day,
 Since we two sought the fabled urn
 Of marble blue by Rankleburn):
 No tomb appeared; but oft we traced
 Towns, camps, and battle-lines effaced,
 Which never were, nor could remain,
 Save in the bold enthusiast's brain:
 The same to us, - it turned our lays
 To chiefs and tales of ancient days.

One broken pot alone was found
 Deep in the rubbish under ground,
 In middle of the ancient fane,
 "A gallant helmet split in twain!"
 The truth was obvious; but in faith
 On you all words were waste of breath;
 You looked demure and sly,
 And sore the brow fell o'er the eye;
 You could not bear that you should ride
 O'er pathless waste and forest wide,
 Only to say that you had been
To see that nought was to be seen.

Scott emerges as a more rounded figure, capable of absurdity and touchiness, than a more usual oration would have described him. The style has all the fluence of the prose account of the incident given in Hogg's

Memoir:

Besides having been mentioned by Satchells, there was a remaining tradition in the country that there was a font stone of blue marble, out of which the ancient heirs of Buccleuch were baptized, covered up among the ruins of the old church. Mr Scott was curious to see if we could discover it; but on going among the ruins we found the rubbish at the spot, where the altar was known to have been, dug out to the foundation - we knew not by whom, but no font had

been found. As there appeared to have been a kind of recess in the eastern gable, we fell a turning over some loose stones, to see if the font was not concealed there, when we came to one half of a small pot, encrusted thick with rust. Mr Scott's eyes brightened, and he swore it was an ancient consecrated helmet. Laidlaw, however, scratching it minutely out, found it covered with a layer of pitch inside, and then said, "Ay, the truth is, sir, it is neither mair nor less than a piece of a tar pat that some o' the farmers hae been buisting their sheep out the auld kirk langsyne." Sir Walter's shaggy eyebrows dipped deep over his eyes, and suppressing a smile, he turned and strode away as fast as he could, saying, that "we had just rode all the way to see that there was nothing to be seen."⁷⁵

Certainly the anecdote is translated into the form of archaic diction that is basic to the poem: Hogg is not attempting to reproduce the language of speech. But this literary diction is rendered by its consistency the natural dialect for the poem, without the sudden changes in tone which suggest bathos or hollowness, while it pays a compliment to the subject of the poem by obviously imitating the style of the verse epistles which preface each canto of Marmion.

As Hogg entered his sixties it was perhaps natural that he should cast his mind over the fame of his achievements in previous years, and compare them with the hardship which he was suffering at the time. Aware that old age was upon him, he meditated in two of his finest poems - "St Mary of the Lowes" (1829) and "The Monitors" (1831) - on the consolations would help him to face the thought of approaching death. He makes no attempt to extract wider philosophical implications from his feelings, but instead describes them with such clarity that the reader is brought to experience the emotions himself and draw his own conclusions; the intimate relationship this creates between poet and reader is appropriate to the poems' personal note. In "St Mary of the Lowes"⁷⁶ Hogg meditates in the ruined chapel on the shores of St Mary's Loch, the tone of his thoughts being vividly conveyed by the picture

the opening stanza gives of a church where the only worshippers are wild animals and ghosts:

O lone St Mary of the waves,
 In ruin lies thine ancient aisle,
 While o'er thy green and lowly graves,
 The moorcocks bay, and plovers wail;
 But mountain spirits on the gale
 Oft o'er thee sound the requiem dread;
 And warrior shades, and spectres pale,
 Still linger by the quiet dead.

The impact of his surroundings leads him to consider in succeeding stanzas the many who are buried in the chapel - warriors and clergymen, shepherds and border beauties:

Here rural beauty low reposes,
 The blushing cheek, and beaming eye,
 The dimpling smile, the lip of roses,
 Attractors of the burning sigh,
 And love's delicious pangs, that lie
 Enswathed in pleasure's mellow mine:
 Maid, lover, parent, low and high,
 Are mingled in thy lonely shrine.

The wide variety of men he describes reminds the reader of the fact of mortality. Then, from the general picture, Hogg concentrates on one recent grave, in which lies the body of a young girl who has died as a consequence of her love:

And here lies one - here I must turn
 From all the noble and sublime,
 And, o'er thy new but sacred urn,
 Shed the heath-flower and mountain-thyme,
 And floods of sorrow, while I chime
 Above thy dust one requiem.
 Love was thine error, not thy crime,
 Thou mildest, sweetest, mortal gem!

The religious imagery in which he mourns her repeats the description in the opening stanza, drawing the poem together, and preparing us for the conclusion in which Hogg seeks relief in religion for the grief he feels for this girl, and, one feels from the structure of the poem, for the knowledge of the mortality that awaits all men, himself included.

As with much of his lesser poetry, his consolation rests in a simple and unquestioning acceptance of God's will:

I dare not of that holy shade,
 That's passed away, one thought allow;
 Not even a dream that might degrade
 The mercy before which I bow:
 Eternal God, what is it now?
 Thus asks my heart: but the reply
 I aim not, wish not, to foreknow;
 'Tis veiled within eternity.

But "St Mary of the Lowes" is too complex a poem for this solution to be satisfactory. Having so powerfully evoked the bleakness of death, Hogg acknowledges that while religious belief may be intellectually satisfying, man's emotions are not so easily assuaged:

But oh, this earthly flesh and heart
 Still cling to the dear form beneath,
 As when I saw its soul depart,
 As when I saw it calm in death:
 The dead rose and funereal wreath
 Above the breast of virgin snow,
 Far lovelier than in life and breath -
 I saw it then, and see it now.

It is with the emotions aroused by this picture of withered beauty that the poem ends, not with the tranquility that religion would demand:

Frail man! of all the arrows wounding
 Thy mortal heart, there is but one
 Whose poison'd dart is so astounding,
 That bear it, cure it, there can none.
 It is the thought of beauty won,
 To love in most supreme degree,
 And, by the hapless flame undone,
 Cut off from nature and from thee.

The knowledge of the transience of beauty and life was too strong in Hogg when he wrote this poem for him to falsify his emotions at its end: he recognises that the answer he gives to the questions he has raised simplifies a complex emotional problem. "St Mary of the Lowes" is the better poem in that he did not distort his emotions for the sake of intellectual neatness.

Perhaps Hogg's most personal poem is "The Monitors",⁷⁷ for it speaks of the feelings of the poet in the last years of his life, growing old without having achieved all that he expected, faced with poverty and public indifference. As with "St Mary of the Lowes", the opening stanzas establish a mood out of which the whole poem derives, sharply etching in the reader's mind a visual image of a cheerless winter world which provides the basis for the argument:

The lift looks cauldri' i' the west,
 The wan leaf wavers frae the tree,
 The wind touts on the mountain's breast
 A dirge o' waesome note to me.
 It tells me that the days o' glee,
 When summer's thrilling sweets entwined,
 An' love was blinkin' in the e'e,
 Are a' gane by an' far behind;

That winter wi' his joyless air,
 An' grizzely hue, is hasting nigh,
 An' that auld age, an' carkin' care,
 In my last stage afore me lie.
 Yon chill and cheerless winter sky,
 Troth but 'tis eereisome to see,
 For ah! it points me to descry
 The downfa's o' futuritye.

I daurna look unto the east,
 For there my morning shone sae sweet;
 An' when I turn me to the west,
 The gloaming's like to gar me greet.
 The deadly hues o' snaw and sleet
 Tell of a dreary onward path;
 Yon new moon on her cradle sheet,
 Looks like the Hainault scythe of death.

The rest of the poem looks for the means to keep Hogg from the utter dejection aroused in him by the bleakness of his surroundings. Against his present depression Hogg places what he can be thankful for, his fame as a poet and his esteem as a bard for Scotland:

Yes - I hae fought an' won the day;
 Come weel, come woe, I carena by;
 I am a king! My regal sway
 Stretches o'er Scotia's mountains high,
 And o'er the fairy vales that lie
 Beneath the glimpses o' the moon,
 Or round the ledges of the sky,
 In twilight's everlasting noon.

Who would not choose the high renown,
 'Mang Scotia's swains the chief to be,
 Than be a king, an' wear a crown,
 'Mid perils, pain an' treacherye?
 Hurra! The day's my own - I'm free
 Of statemen's guile, an' flattery's train;
 I'll blaw my reed of game an' glee,
 The Shepherd is himself again.

When his self-questioning returns he is able to counter it with his gratitude for the kindness others have shown him, and his contentment with the bare necessities of house and possessions, which have freely been granted him by his landlord, the Duke of Buccleuch. The poem closes with the true consolation for Hogg's doubts, the good fellowship and society which the poet loved and which lies behind so many of his best songs:

Goodwife - without a' sturt or strife,
 Bring ben the siller bowl wi' care;
 Ye are the best an' bonniest wife,
 That ever fell to poet's share;
 An' I'll send o'er for Frank - a pair
 O' right good-hearted chiels are we -
 We'll drink your health - an' what is mair,
 We'll drink our laird's wi' three times three.....

This world has mony ups an' downs,
 Atween the cradle an' the grave,
 O' blithesome haun's an' broken crowns,
 An' douks in chill misfortune's wave;
 All these determined to outbrave,
 O'er fancy's wilds I'll wing anew,
 As lang as I can lift a stave, -
 Kind winter Monitors, adieu!

However, "The Monitors" seems a less consistently successful poem than "St Mary of the Lowes". The opening desolation is so intensely felt that it would require a stronger counterbalance to relieve it: sociability and the drinking of toasts seem but poor consolation for so despairing a realisation of old age. The argument, though defensible intellectually, does not work emotionally, so that the end of the poem appears contrived. Perhaps Hogg himself realised this, perhaps the opening verses reminded him so strongly of his situation that the only

relief he could find from hopelessness was to ignore how deep his feeling was. But, even if only for its opening, the poem remains one of the minor masterpieces of Scottish verse, for though the cosy group round the fireplace may seem to be ignoring their problems, the picture of the winter outside lives on in the reader's mind.

Despite such moments of high achievement, however, Hogg's career gradually declined as he moved towards death. Where before he had matched his style against the greatest names in literature, now he was forced to ~~restrain~~ his ~~ambitions~~, and write only what would be marketable or what could be produced quickly and without effort. Literature had never come so easily to him that he could expect to produce his best work in such conditions. He could still, when writing a short story, a song, or a poem which stands out as an expression of his personality, but he no longer had the ability, or, it would seem, the desire, to extend his talents further. Where, before, each new work was an attempt to master fresh skills in a form of literature which he had yet to try, now Hogg was content to repeat his old successes: from imitating others in a spirit of emulation, he might almost be said to have turned to imitating himself, and the result was stagnancy. Those writers who might have directed him to fresh avenues, he no longer had the strength to confront. Scott could offer him only some historical trappings, which led him to try subjects which did not suit him, while Burns, who more than anyone should have opened Hogg's eyes to the range of subjects that could be encompassed in Scots verse, was the source only of tired rustic paraphernalia. Though Hogg had, in the early stages of his career, deliberately avoided the imitation of Burns, seeking his sources in writers more distant from him in background, a confrontation with the works of the earlier master,

once Hogg had shown in The Confessions how skilfully he could use imitation to stimulate his writing, might well have resulted in a late flowering of remarkable personal poetry. But that would have required a greater integrity of purpose than Hogg possessed in the last years of his life. The chance of further development was let pass and Hogg's career declined from the summit of The Confessions of a Justified Sinner. Unfortunately, an author's development follows a simple model only in theoretical discussions, for there comes a time when other factors - economic, social, or emotional - determine whether he will continue to progress. In Hogg's case, his literary talent was never so firmly established that he could withstand their pressures.

Conclusion

The forty years and more of the literary career of James Hogg were spent in the search for a style which was appropriate to his talents. Until the last years of his life, when other considerations distracted him from the task, it appeared that the search would be successful. He had started with the greatest disadvantages - illiteracy, poverty, obscurity - and had sought to overcome them, by learning the craft of literature from the study, and the imitation, of the greatest writers who had preceded him. By adopting numerous different manners of writing, Hogg hoped to acquire from his masters the strength and confidence to write poetry and prose which was personal to himself and which would bring to him the acclaim which was his greatest ambition. Sometimes, Hogg was able to weave the elements which he found in his source into a fabric that was truly his own; at other times, the product of the imitation was little more than a feeble copy of the original. From his development towards the position where he could, with full assurance, imitate without being influenced resulted his progress from his clumsy first attempts at poetry to the day when he could write, in The Confessions of a Justified Sinner, one of the most important works of fiction ever written by a Scotsman.

In his earliest poetry, of which the ballads and songs contained in The Mountain Bard are typical, Hogg took as his source the traditional literature amidst which he had been brought up in the Ettrick Forest, and of which he presumed he had such intimate knowledge that he could reproduce in his poems all the features which gave to the traditional ballads their appeal to both folk and literate audiences. By following these traditional

examples he hoped to write satisfactory verse even though he was aware of his inexperience in more conventional literary styles. Unfortunately, the poems he produced failed to realise his aims, partly because his confidence in traditional techniques had been weakened by his contact with more literary attitudes, and partly because the tradition with which he was acquainted was already in decline, so that the ballad imitations printed in The Mountain Bard lack the formalised structure of traditional narrative poetry while not yet possessing the subtleties of description and pace that are the hallmarks of good literary verse. However, in two of the poems in his next collection, The Queen's Wake, Hogg showed how rapidly he was developing his literary skills, for in "Kilmeny" and "The Witch of Fife", while still taking his subjects and many of the features of his style from tradition, he was able to impose on these traditional elements a wider structure which fulfils the expectations of a literate audience, and displayed in the process an ability successfully to take over into his poetry features he found in the works of Milton and of the Scots Makars. But while these two poems were successful, it was plain to Hogg that they had exhausted the potentialities of his development up to that point and, for some years after, he deliberately tried to extend his abilities into other fields, by writing to models found in Scott, in Byron, in Milton, and in many others. The three volumes that resulted were much the most literary of his compositions, conscious exercises in the manner of acknowledged masters in which he attempted to reshape his style in the accepted literary modes, though frequently paying the penalty of loss of individuality when he fell into the trap of merely copying his models. However, the experience taught

him much, although his growing confidence resulted in the production not of a major poem but of a great work of fiction, for the declining popularity of his verse prompted him to turn to the writing of prose. Setting himself once more to his apprenticeship, he returned to the familiar legends of his childhood, attempting, in The Brownie of Bodsbeck and The Three Perils of Man, to construct from them a successful full-length novel. Though he failed, in these two instances, to impose on his borrowings the coherency and unity which such a work demands, they were necessary stages in Hogg's progress towards The Confessions. They prepared him for the time when, writing under the compulsion of his desire to express his religious views, he found a way to surmount the difficulties which had so far impeded him, and adopting a form in which all the force of his imagination was controlled by the unifying power of his intellect, he produced that coherent and consistent work, totally personal in manner while drawing on the works of many predecessors, towards which he had been moving throughout his career. Unfortunately, this work proved to be the climax of his writing, for in the last ten years of his life, financial pressures kept him from the full realisation of his talents, tempting him carelessly to adopt the conventions of popular fiction and to attempt the mechanical repetition of his previous successes. In all but a very few instances, the works he produced show no advance in his abilities and possess nothing which marks them out as personal to their author.

However, the final sterility, while brought on by the financial pressures which prevented him from building on the strengths of The Confessions, was a danger which had lain in the path of Hogg's

development throughout his life. Literary imitation is an activity which demands a strength of purpose possessed by few authors. There is an everpresent risk that one will seek easy popularity by merely copying the successes of one's predecessors and give up the attempt to reshape one's imitations into personal work. Imitation also demands that the author raise his own abilities to the level of the writers from whom he is borrowing, if he would avoid producing work in which the borrowings are stuck on like brightly coloured patches. But most important of all, one must persist in the path of imitation even when the activity is misunderstood by one's contemporaries and in the face of charges of plagiarism, for if guilt about imitating should begin to overwhelm one's knowledge of one's integrity then the careful balance needed for the constructive use of the technique is destroyed and sterility will result. These were dangers with which Hogg was ill-equipped to cope. A deeply sensitive man who was painfully conscious of his unusual position in literary society, he often found it difficult to write in any manner which would have seemed unacceptable to the majority of his readers. Aware of the transience of the vogue for his writings, which was in many instances based on the public's patronising surprise that a writer of Hogg's background should be so gifted, he did not avoid as often as he should have done the temptation to bolster his popularity by adopting a more famous man's style. This is apparent in every passage of his work where he ceases to think for himself and produces what he hopes the public will want. Again, the danger of inconsistency affected his writing throughout his career. Hogg stood in greatest need of acquiring the basic skills of literature - the construction of a well-paced narrative, the organisation of material in a logical manner, the ability to enter fully into the

imaginative reality of the work - but the imitative manner was more likely to draw to his attention the striking effects achieved by other authors than their more necessary, if less immediately apparent, strength of basic technique. He could learn that only with practice, but the narratives he produced in the process were seldom successful in more than a few of their scenes. It is significant that the form of his most powerful tale, The Confessions of a Justified Sinner, satisfies the reader largely because of its very eccentricity, and not because of the author's skilful handling of more conventional literary techniques.

The gravest danger, that of feeling guilt at his imitative activities, had an equally large part to play in keeping Hogg from developing as he might. As was seen in the earlier discussion of The Poetic Mirror, attitudes towards literary imitation in Hogg's day were already confused. While the majority of contemporary critics still regarded it as an acceptable activity, if perhaps a limited one, others, such as the publishers who bridled at Hogg's imitations of Moore, or the critic who rejected as a mere copy The Brownie of Bodsbeck, had moved to a position closer to that of a later stage in literary history, where imitation was viewed as close to plagiarism. Though Hogg's persistence in this manner of writing, and his frequent success in the constructive use of borrowing, would suggest that such doubts were far from him, it is plain that at other times he was more ready to admit to them. How else can one account for the fact that Hogg, who at every stage of his career moulded his style on the examples of his predecessors, should have so loudly proclaimed his freedom from the influence of any other writer, and his determination to

evolve his style by his own abilities? Robert Pearce Gillies, both in his Memoirs of a Literary Veteran¹ and in the later reminiscences he wrote for Fraser's Magazine² stresses that Hogg repeatedly asserted his independence of voice and refused suggestions from those who offered him appropriate models. Yet this is plainly contradicted by the works Hogg wrote. So intent was he on convincing his readers that he was an untaught genius that, just as in the myth he himself propagated that he never corrected his work, a myth which the many revisions his poems and prose underwent between editions firmly belie, he deliberately made himself out to be a more careless writer than he actually was. But his denials also betray an insecurity about imitation which would not help him to develop his talents to their full capacity and which could, if, as happened towards the end of his life, pressures prevented him from giving his work his undivided attention, eventually thwart his development.

However, though Hogg did not develop as far or as consistently as he might have done, the distance he had travelled by the time he came to write The Confessions must not be underestimated. The oblique method used to portray Robert Colwan demands considerable control over language and over the conduct of the plot for the author's conception of the character to pass clearly to the reader. Again, the many descriptions which enliven the Editor's narrative - the riot in the High Street of Edinburgh, George's entranced pleasure at the rainbow in the mist, Bell Calvert's account of George's murder - all bear witness to Hogg's skill in realising his imaginings in fictional form. Equally, the careful evocation of the speech of many of the minor characters, and the authentic note which runs through Scrape's tale of the Auchtermuchty Preaching,

show how successful he could on occasion be in incorporating popular and folk material in a literary context. Skill in language, in description, and in characterisation were all techniques which he would never have mastered so well had he not found appropriate models in the works of more experienced writers. Both directly, as in the elements of the plot which Hogg found in others, and indirectly, in the craft with which he could make use of them, The Confessions of a Justified Sinner is the result of the direction of his development up to that book. Therefore, while Hogg's development through imitation carried with it the seeds of sterility, it was also directly responsible for the success of his most important work.

On looking back over Hogg's career, we see him constantly balancing contrary impulses: the desire to create with the fear of criticism, the demands of literature with the insights of oral culture, the need to imitate with the search for originality. Most often the awareness of the struggle led him to err to one side or the other, but in a very few instances he steers a course exactly between the rival impulses and produces work of power, originality, and clear insight. Only the contrasting pulls which stimulated him into activity ensured that he would produce varied work in which he matured, for without the struggle his talent would have remained static and he would have produced no more than a handful of songs. Had Hogg been a stronger man, more sure of himself and his powers, the struggle might have been less hard and the victories more frequent, but perhaps he would then have lacked his compassion for those who, like Robert Colwan, are destroyed by life. One can only be grateful that out of the struggle emerged that handful of poems and tales that move us, and, above everything, that it produced The Confessions of a Justified Sinner.

Appendix

A chronological bibliography of Hogg's prose.

The aim of this bibliography is to provide the reader with some idea of the scale of Hogg's output of prose at all stages of his career, as well as to facilitate reference to a wide range of examples in Chapter VII of the thesis. Hogg wrote profusely for a large number of publications, frequently reprinting a story several times under different titles and with slightly different content. Much of this writing was ephemeral, but even more lasting pieces soon disappeared from view because they were never reprinted outside the magazines. The would-be collected edition of 1837 is far from exhaustive, and is unsystematic in what it chooses to reprint: it relies almost entirely on the stories which had appeared in book form during Hogg's life, together with the best of the stories included in Blackwood's Magazine before 1831, and in a few of the annuals. Only one of the many stories that appeared in Fraser's Magazine is included, and other important magazines are completely ignored. Plainly, the editor, whoever he may have been, did not look far to find the stories he included. One therefore lacks easy access to a large area of Hogg's work, and has no guidance in establishing a definitive text for many of his stories. Even when a story is included in the collected edition, one soon finds that the text is by no means definitive, since the editor chooses texts not for their completeness but for their moral and stylistic "correctness". Hogg's stories underwent much expurgation in their passage from magazine to book, frequently without the editor's express approval, a fact siezed on gratefully by the editor of Tales and Sketches in order to produce a collection which would not offend popular taste. Therefore, a modern critic will in most cases want to go beyond the collected edition to the original texts, whether the story has been reprinted

or not.

This is made easier to do by Edith C Batho's bibliography to her The Ettrick Shepherd, in which she lists, with only a few omissions which later writers have pointed out, all Hogg's output in both prose and verse. However, though the accuracy of Miss Batho's work has lasted well, her bibliography is awkward to use, for it is not indexed and is inadequately crossreferenced, so that one frequently has difficulty in identifying how often a story was reprinted. Moreover, she is far from systematic in noting the revisions that each piece underwent. Therefore, this Appendix lists the various forms in which each of Hogg's stories and articles appeared in his lifetime, and gives an alphabetical index to their titles. Each tale is numbered chronologically according to the date of the appearance of its earliest version, the various versions of the tale then being identified by a letter. References to an individual printing of any one article within the text of Chapter VII therefore take the form: (8b, p.1). Substantial variations between texts, as well as references to Hogg's letters when they suggest a date of writing considerably earlier than that of publication, are noted after each entry.

I have relied for the most part on Miss Batho's bibliography in establishing Hogg's output, silently correcting her few errors in citation, and supplementing her list with the additional items listed in her own "Notes on the bibliography of James Hogg, the "Ettrick Shepherd," The Library, Fourth series, XVI (Dec 1935), 309-326 and in two more recent articles: B M H Carr, "The Ettrick Shepherd: two unnoted articles;" Notes and Queries, CXCIV (2 September 1950), 388-390, and Derek Law, "The bibliography of James Hogg: five unrecorded items," The Bibliothek, VII: 3 (1975), 79-80. Printings later than Thomas Thomson's Works of the Ettrick Shepherd (1865) are not included

unless the piece had not previously appeared.

I make no apology for not supplying a similar list of verse items. The collected edition of the verse is much more inclusive than that of the prose, since so much more of Hogg's verse was published in book form in his lifetime. Moreover, there are fewer textual problems, the version printed in the collected edition usually being the one possessing the most authority. A reader who looks at the verse reprinted either in the 1838 Poetical Works or Thomson's Works has read more than 80% of Hogg's verse writing.

Hogg published the following volumes of prose in his lifetime:

The Shepherd's Guide (Edinburgh: Constable, 1807)

The Brownie of Bodsbeck, and Other Tales, 2 vols.
Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1818)

Winter Evening Tales, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: Oliver
and Boyd, 1820)

The Three Perils of Man, 3 vols. (London: Longman,
1822) ,

The Three Perils of Woman, 3 vols. (London: Longman,
1823)

The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified
Sinner (London: Longman, 1824)

The Shepherd's Calendar, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: Blackwood,
1824)

Altrive Tales (London: Cochrane, 1832)

Domestic Manners and Private Life of Sir Walter Scott
Glasgow: Reid, 1834)

A Series of Lay Sermons on Good Principles and Good Breeding
(London: Fraser, 1834)

The Works of Robert Burns, 5 vols. (Glasgow: Fullarton,
1834)

Tales of the Wars of Montrose, 3 vols. (London: Cochrane,
1835)

After his death appeared:

Tales and Sketches, 6 vols. (Glasgow: Blackie, 1837)

The Works of the Ettrick Shepherd Vol.I: Tales
and Sketches (London: Blackie, 1865)

A Tour of the Highlands in 1803 (Paisley: Gardner,
1888)

a) Chronological Bibliography

1. "A journey through the Highlands of Scotland, in the months of July and August 1802," Scots Magazine, LXIV (Oct 1802), 813-818; (Dec 1802), 956-963; LXV (Feb 1803), 89-95; (April 1803), 251-254; (May 1803), 312-314; (June 1803), 382-386.
Never reprinted.
2. "Letters on poetry," Scots Magazine, LXVII (May 1805), 352-354; LXVIII (Jan 1806), 17-18.
Never reprinted.
3. "Journal of an excursion into the counties of Stirling, Perth, and Kinross," Scots Magazine, LXVII (Sept 1805), 664-668; (Oct 1805), 657-660; (Nov 1805), 835-838.
Never reprinted.
4. The Shepherd's Guide (Edinburgh, 1807).
Never reprinted.
5. "A journey through the Highlands and Western Isles, in the summer of 1804," Scots Magazine, LXX (June 1808), 423-426; (Aug 1808), 569-572; (Sept 1808), 672-674; (Oct 1808), 735-738; (Nov 1808), 809-811; LXXI (Jan 1809), 14-17; (Feb 1809), 99-101; (March 1809), 181-184.
Never reprinted.
6. "The Spy's account of himself," The Spy (1 Sept 1810), 1-8.
Never reprinted.
7. "Mr Shuffleton's allegorical survey of the Scottish poets of the present day," The Spy (8 Sept 1810), 9-15; (29 Sept 1810), 33-39; (3 November 1810), 73-79.
Never reprinted.
- 8a. "The dangers of changing occupations," The Spy (15 September 1810), 17-24; (22 Sept 1810), 23-32.
- b. "The renowned adventures of Basil Lee," Winter Evening Tales, I, 1-99.
- c. -----, Tales and Sketches, III, 49-131.
- d. -----, Works, I, 237-265.
8a contains only the first twenty-seven pages of 8b.
9. "Letter signed Alice Brand," The Spy (13 October 1810), 49-51.
Never reprinted.
10. "Fanny Lively's letter on the impropriety of ladies withdrawing from table," The Spy (13 October 1810), 51-55.
Never reprinted.
11. "The Spy's encounter with John Miller," The Spy (17 November 1810), 89-92.
Never reprinted.

- 12a. "Description of a peasant's funeral," The Spy (17 Nov 1810), 92-95.
- b. "A peasant's funeral," Winter Evening Tales, I, 185-190.
- c. "A country funeral," Tales and Sketches, III, 196-200.
- d. -----, Works, I, 290-291.
13. "Remarks on the Edinburgh company of players," The Spy (24 Nov 1810), 97-101.
Never reprinted.
- 14a. "Dreadful narrative of the death of Major Macpherson," The Spy (24 Nov 1810), 101-103.
- b. "Dreadful story of Macpherson," Winter Evening Tales, I, 190-194.
Some small variants.
- 15a. "Misery of an old batchelor," The Spy (15 Dec 1810), 121-127.
- b. "Love adventures of Mr George Cochrane," Winter Evening Tales, I, 217-303.
15a corresponds to 15b as far as p.228.
- 16a. "Amusing story of two Highlanders," The Spy (22 Dec 1810), 132-134.
- b. "Story of two Highlanders," Winter Evening Tales, I, 194-197.
- c. -----, Tales and Sketches, IV, 270-272.
- d. -----, Works, I, 428-429.
- 17a. "Story of the Ghost of Lochmaben," The Spy (29 Dec 1810), 142-144.
- b. "The Wife of Lochmaben," Winter Evening Tales, II, 223-231.
- c. -----, Tales and Sketches, II, 172-179.
- d. -----, Works, I, 157-159.
The later texts contain a totally rewritten version of 17a.
18. "New Year paper," The Spy (5 Jan 1811), 145-151.
Never reprinted.
- 19a. "The country laird," The Spy (9 Feb 1811), 149-155; (16 Feb 1811), 157-164; (23 Feb 1811), 165-206 (mispaged).
- b. "The wool gatherer," The Brownie of Bodsbeck, II, 89-228.
- c. -----, Tales and Sketches, I, 180-241.
- d. -----, Works, I, 62-85.
"The wool-gatherer" is an extensive revision of 19a.
- 20a. "On the folly of anger and impatience under misfortune," The Spy (16 March 1811), 225-230.
- b. "The school of misfortune," The Shepherd's Calendar, I, 112-130.
- c. -----, Tales and Sketches, III, 276-288.
- d. -----, Works, I, 307-310.
Pages 225 to 228 of 20a are identical to pages 112 to 119 of 20b.
21. "Satirical directions to every class in Edinburgh, in what manner to keep the Sabbath," The Spy (30 March 1811), 241-246.
Never reprinted.
- 22a. "Dangerous consequences of the love of fame," The Spy (27 April 1811), 273-277.

- 22b. "Adam Bell," Winter Evening Tales, I, 99-104.
 c. -----, Tales and Sketches, III, 131-136.
 d. -----, Works, I, 266-268.
23. "Solomon's comical letter to the Spy," The Spy (27 April 1811), 277-280.
 Never reprinted.
24. "On the principle of curiosity," The Spy (25 May 1811), 281-283.
 Never reprinted.
25. "Singularity censured," The Spy (25 May 1811), 305-311.
 Never reprinted.
- 26a. "Malise's journey to the Trossachs," The Spy (1 June 1811), 313-317; (29 June 1811), 345-350.
 b. "Highland adventures," Winter Evening Tales, I, 141-157.
 Slightly revised.
27. "Miss Capias's letter to the Spy, offering herself to him in marriage," The Spy (22 June 1811), 341-342.
 Never reprinted.
- 28a. "Evil speaking, ridiculed by an allegorical dream," The Spy (27 July 1811), 377-382.
 b. "Singular dream, from a correspondent," Winter Evening Tales, I, 208-217.
 Slightly expanded in later text.
- 29a. "History of the life of Duncan Campbell," The Spy (3 Aug 1811), 383-341 (mispaged); (17 Aug 1811), 351-408.
 b. "Duncan Campbell," Winter Evening Tales, I, 105-129.
 c. The History of Duncan Campbell and his Dog Oscar (Glasgow, 1821).
 d. -----, Tales and Sketches, III, 136-159.
 e. -----, Works, I, 268-276.
30. "The Spy's farewell to his readers," The Spy (17 Sept 1811), 409-415.
 Never reprinted.
31. "The history of Rose Selby," The Scots Magazine, LXXIV (March 1812), 179-183.
 Never reprinted.
- 32a. "Tales and anecdotes of the pastoral life," Blackwood's, I (April 1817), 22-25; (May 1817), 143-147; (June 1817), 247-250.
 b. "The Shepherd's Calendar. Storms and country wedding," Winter Evening Tales, II, 152-204.
 c. "A shepherd's wedding," Tales and Sketches, II, 150-171.
 d. "A country wedding," Works, I, 149-157.
33. "Translation from an ancient Chaldee manuscript," Blackwood's, II, (Oct 1817), 89-96.
 Never reprinted.

- 34ai "Further anecdotes of the shepherd's dog," Blackwood's, II (March 1818), 621-626.
- aii "The Shepherd's Calendar. Class IV. Dogs," Blackwood's, XV (Feb 1824), 177-183.
- b. "The Shepherd's dog," The Shepherd's Calendar, II, 293-326.
- c. -----, Tales and Sketches, IV, 241-264.
- d. -----, Works, I, 418-426.
- Later texts consist of ai and aii combined and slightly revised.
35. To the Editor of the Glasgow Chronicle (Edinburgh, 1818).
Never reprinted.
- 36a. The Long Pack (Newcastle, 1818).
- b. -----, Winter Evening Tales, I, 162-184.
- c. -----, Tales and Sketches, III, 182-196.
- d. -----, Works, I, 285-289.
- For other chapbook versions see Miss Batho's bibliography.
- 37a. "The Brownie of Bodsbeck," The Brownie of Bodsbeck, I; II, 1-86.
- b. -----, Tales and Sketches, I, 1-180.
- c. -----, Works, I, 1-61.
- The date when this story was written is discussed in Chapter IV of this study. The variants between each text are discussed in Douglas Mack's edition.
- 38a. "The Hunt of Eildon," The Brownie of Bodsbeck, II, 229-346.
- b. -----, Tales and Sketches, III, 1-48.
- c. -----, Works, I, 220-236.
- 39a. "The Shepherd's Calendar. Storms," Blackwood's, V (April 1819), 75-81; (May 1819), 210-216.
- b. "The Shepherd's Calendar. Storms and country wedding," Winter Evening Tales, II, 152-204.
- c. "Snow-storms," The Shepherd's Calendar, II, 254-292.
- d. "Storms," Tales and Sketches, II, 124-149.
- e. -----, Works, I, 140-149.
- The slightly revised text of 39b is used in later printings.
See also 32.
40. "Letter from the Ettrick Shepherd," Blackwood's, VI (Jan 1820), 390-393.
Miss Batho doubts that this is, in fact, Hogg's. Never reprinted.
41. "Letter from the Ettrick Shepherd," Blackwood's, VI (March 1820), 630-632.
Never reprinted.
42. "Letter from James Hogg to his reviewer," Blackwood's, VIII (Oct 1820), 67-75.
Never reprinted.
43. "Letter," Blackwood's, VIII (Oct 1820), 75-76.
Never reprinted.
- 44a. "An old soldier's tale," Winter Evening Tales, I, 129-141.

- 44b. "An old soldier's tale," Tales and Sketches, III, 160-171.
 c. -----, Works, I, 276-280.
 This tale had been rejected by Blackwood in June 1818 (see NLS MS 4003 f.93).
45. "Maria's tale, written by herself," Winter Evening Tales, I, 198-207.
 Never reprinted.
46. "John Gray of Middleholm," Winter Evening Tales, I, 303-340.
 Never reprinted.
- 47a. "The Bridal of Polmood," Winter Evening Tales, II, 1-136.
 b. -----, Tales and Sketches, II, 1-123.
 c. -----, Works, I, 98-139.
 The original version contains an Introduction which is missing in 47b and 47c. Hogg mentions this story as written in January 1817 (see NLS MS 4002 f.155).
- 48a. "Cousin Mattie," Winter Evening Tales, II, 145-243.
 b. -----, Tales and Sketches, II, 179-190.
- 49a. "Welldean Hall," Winter Evening Tales, II, 243-321.
 b. -----, Tales and Sketches, II, 190-262.
 c. -----, Works, I, 160-185.
- 50a. "Tibby Johnston's wraith," Winter Evening Tales, II, 322-335.
 b. -----, Tales and Sketches, II, 262-274.
 c. -----, Works, I, 185-190.
- 51a. The Three Perils of Man (London, 1822).
 b. "The Siege of Roxburgh," Tales and Sketches, VI, 67-274.
 The later text represents a severely cut version (see Douglas Gifford's edition for details). Fragments of the original were also printed as:
 c. "Marion's Jock", Altrive Tales, pp.164-190.
 d. "The three sisters," Fraser's, XI (June 1835), 666-679.
52. "The Honourable Captain Napier and Ettrick Forest," Blackwood's, XIII (Feb 1823), 175-188.
 Never reprinted.
- 53a. "The Shepherd's Calendar. Class Second. Deaths, judgements, and providences," Blackwood's, XIII (March 1823), 311-320.
 b. "Rob Dodds," The Shepherd's Calendar, I, 1-32.
 c. -----, Tales and Sketches, III, 203-223.
 d. -----, Works, I, 292-299.
 A few small expurgations in the later texts.
- 54a. The Three Perils of Woman (London, 1823).
 b. Les Trois Ecueils des Femmes (Paris, 1825).
 The latter is an anonymous and very free French translation of Hogg's book. It was never reprinted in English.
- 55a. "The Shepherd's Calendar. Class Second. Deaths, judgements, and providences," Blackwood's, XIII (June 1823), 629-640.
 b. "Mr Adamson of Laverhope," The Shepherd's Calendar, I, 33-68.

- 55c. "Mr Adamson of Laverhope," Tales and Sketches, III, 224-247.
 d. -----, Works, I, 299-307.
 The later texts are bowdlerised and anglicised versions of the original.
56. "A Scots mummy," Blackwood's, XIV (Aug 1823), 188-190.
 This letter is reprinted in a slightly shorter form in 57.
- 57a. The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner
 (London 1824).
 b. The Suicide's Grave (London 1828).
 c. "The private memoirs and confessions of a fanatic," Tales and Sketches, V, 4-209.
 d. -----, Works, I, 462-533.
 The variants between texts are discussed in John Carey's edition.
- 58a. "The Shepherd's Calendar. Class V. The lasses," Blackwood's,
 XV (March 1824), 296-304; XVII (Feb 1825), 180-186.
 b. "Window Wat's courtship," The Shepherd's Calendar, II, 1-48.
 c. -----, Tales and Sketches, IV, 74-106.
 d. -----, Works, I, 359-370.
 There are numerous small variants between 58a and 58b; the later texts reproduce 58b.
59. "Some passages in the life of Colonel Cloud," Blackwood's, XVIII
 (July 1825), 32-40.
 Never reprinted.
60. "Annals of sporting. No 1. John Paterson's mare," The Newcastle Magazine, IV (Jan 1825), 1-12.
 This has been offered to Blackwood as early as 1818 (see NLS MS 4003 f.97) but was rejected: Hogg tried again in the first half of 1822, but again without success.
61. "The Border chronicler," Literary Souvenir (1826), 257-279.
 Never reprinted.
- 62a. "The Shepherd's Calendar. General anecdotes. Sheep. Prayers. Odd Characters," Blackwood's, XXI (April 1827), 434-448.
 b. "Sheep," "Prayers," "Odd Characters," The Shepherd's Calendar, II, 185-192; 193-204; 205-229.
 c. -----, Tales and Sketches, IV, 197-201; 202-209; 209-225.
 d. -----, Works, I, 402-404; 404-407; 407-412.
 The first section of 62a is slightly altered in later printings, the second is reprinted verbatim, but the last is shortened and expurgated for its publication in book form.
- 63a. "The Shepherd's Calendar. Containing George Dobson's expedition to Hell, and the Soutars of Selkirk," Blackwood's, XXI
 (May 1827), 549-562.
 bi "George Dobson's expedition to Hell," The Shepherd's Calendar, I, 131-147.
 bii "The Soutars of Selkirk," The Shepherd's Calendar, I, 148-175.
 c. -----, Tales and Sketches, III, 288-299; 299-318.
 d. -----, Works, I, 310-314; 314-321.
 63bi is reprinted from the original without any substantial variants; 63bii is slightly shorter in book form than in the magazine.

- 64a. "The Shepherd's Calendar. Dreams and apparitions. Part II, containing Tibby Hislop's Dream, and the sequel," Blackwood's, XXI (June 1827), 664-676.
- b. "Tibby Hislop's dream," The Shepherd's Calendar, I, 212-246.
- c. -----, Tales and Sketches, IV, 5-28.
- d. -----, Works, I, 335-343.
- 64a is substantially rewritten, partly to clarify the action, partly to expurgate, for its publication in The Shepherd's Calendar.
- 65a. "The Shepherd's Calendar. Dreams and apparitions, containing Smithy cracks, etc.," Blackwood's, XXII (July 1827), 64-73.
- b. "The Laird of Wineholm," The Shepherd's Calendar, I, 311-341.
- c. -----, Tales and Sketches, IV, 53-73.
- d. -----, Works, I, 352-359.
- Slightly altered and expurgated for later printings.
- 66a. "The Shepherd's Calendar. Dreams and apparitions. Part IV," Blackwood's, XXII (Aug 1827), 173-185.
- b. "The Laird of Cassway," The Shepherd's Calendar, I, 176-211.
- c. -----, Tales and Sketches, III, 318-342.
- d. -----, Works, I, 321-329.
- The later texts present a much shortened and expurgated version of 66a.
- 67a. "The marvellous doctor," Blackwood's, XXII (Sept 1827), 349-361.
- b. -----, The Shepherd's Calendar, II, 108-149.
- c. -----, Tales and Sketches, IV, 145-173.
- d. -----, Works, I, 384-394.
- While the later texts are virtually verbatim reprints of the magazine version, letters which passed between Hogg and Blackwood between April and August 1827 show that Hogg's manuscript was expurgated by his nephew Robert before it saw print (see NLS MSS 4019 ff. 191, 195; 4719 f. 200; Acc 5643 B6 pp.128, 173, 261).
68. "The true art of reviewing," Newcastle Magazine, VI (Jan 1827), 3-7.
- A letter from the Editor in Vol.VII (Nov 1828), 499-501 of this publication proved that Hogg had, in the strictest sense of the word, plagiarised an essay by Dr Johnson in this article. It has, of course, never been reprinted under Hogg's name.
- 69a. "Trials of temper," Blackwood's, XXIII (Jan 1828), 40-46.
- b. -----, Works, I, 206-210.
- 70a. "The Shepherd's Calendar. Class IX. Fairies, brownies, and witches," Blackwood's, XXIII (Feb 1828), 214-227.
- b. "Mary Burnet," The Shepherd's Calendar, I, 247-284.
- c. -----, Tales and Sketches, IV, 28-53.
- d. -----, Works, I, 343-359.
- Later texts print a bowdlerised version of 70a.
- 71a. "The Shepherd's Calendar. Class IX. Fairies, deils, and witches," Blackwood's, XXIII (April 1828), 509-519.
- b. "The witches of Traquair," The Shepherd's Calendar, II, 150-184.
- c. -----, Tales and Sketches, IV, 173-196.

- 71d. "The witches of Traquair," Works, I, 394-402.
Slight variants between 71a and later printings.
- 72a. "A strange secret," Blackwood's, XXIII (June 1828), 822-826.
b. -----, The Shepherd's Calendar, II, 49-107.
c. -----, Tales and Sketches, IV, 106-145.
d. -----, Works, I, 370-384.
72a prints only the equivalent of pp.49-63 of 72b, despite the promise that the story will be continued; even that early portion is extensively revised in the later printings.
- 73a. "The Brownie of the Black Hags," Blackwood's, XXIV (Oct 1828), 489-496.
b. -----, The Shepherd's Calendar, I, 285-310.
c. -----, Tales and Sketches, III, 342-359.
d. -----, Works, I, 329-335.
Variants from 73a are few, but serve to improve this, one of Hogg's best tales.
74. "A letter from Yarrow," Edinburgh Literary Journal, II (15 Nov 1828), 9-10.
Never reprinted.
75. "Noctes Bengerianae," Edinburgh Literary Journal, II (27 Dec 1828), 87-90.
Never reprinted.
- 76a. "The prodigal son," The Shepherd's Calendar, I, 69-111.
b. -----, Tales and Sketches, III, 248-276.
- 77a. "Nancy Chisholm," The Shepherd's Calendar, II, 230-253.
b. -----, Tales and Sketches, IV, 226-241.
c. -----, Works, I, 412-418.
78. "The wanderer's tale," Edinburgh Literary Journal, I (3 Jan 1829), 109-110.
Never reprinted.
79. "Remarks on certain diseases in sheep," Quarterly Journal of Agriculture, II (Nov 1829-Feb 1831), 697-706.
Never reprinted.
80. "Noctes Bengerianae. No II," Edinburgh Literary Journal, I (21 March 1829), 258-260.
Prose passages never reprinted.
81. "Mary Melrose," Blackwood's, XXV (April 1829), 411-420.
Never reprinted.
82. "An Eskdale anecdote," Edinburgh Literary Journal, I (25 April 1829), 337-338.
Never reprinted.
83. "Reminiscences of former days. My first interview with Allan Cunningham," Edinburgh Literary Journal, I (16 May 1829), 374-375.
Reprinted in the "Memoir" that prefaces Altrive Tales.

84. "Reminiscences of former days. My first interview with Sir Walter Scott," Edinburgh Literary Journal, II (27 June 1829), 51-52.
Reprinted in the "Memoir" that prefaces Altrive Tales.
- 85a. "Sound morality," Blackwood's, XXV (June 1829), 741-747.
b. -----, Works, I, 200-205.
Small variants.
- 86a. "A tale of the martyrs," Blackwood's, XXVI (July 1829), 48-51.
b. -----, Tales and Sketches, IV, 289-293.
c. -----, Works, I, 435-437.
87. "A letter about men and women," Blackwood's, XXVI (Aug 1829), 245-250.
Never reprinted, though part of the material is dramatised in 148.
88. "Wat the Prophet," Edinburgh Literary Journal, II (12 Sept 1829), 207-210.
Blackwood had rejected this article on 28 Feb 1829 (see NLS Acc 5643 B8, p.219).
89. "Anecdotes of Highlanders," Edinburgh Literary Journal, II (24 Oct 1829), 293-295.
Never reprinted.
- 90a. "A singular letter from Southern Africa," Blackwood's, XXVI, (Nov 1829), 809-816.
b. "The Pongos: a letter from Southern Africa," Altrive Tales, pp.143-163.
- 91a. "A story of the Forty-Six," Edinburgh Literary Journal, II (26 Dec 1829), 421-422.
b. -----, Tales and Sketches, IV, 282-286.
c. -----, Works, I, 433-434.
- 92a. "The Cameronian Preacher's tale," The Anniversary (1829), 170-191.
b. -----, Tales and Sketches, II, 339-354.
c. -----, Works, I, 214-219.
93. "Dr David Dale's account of a grand aerial voyage," Edinburgh Literary Journal, III (23 Jan 1830), 50-54.
Probably a descendant of the "Balloon Noctes" mentioned in October 1828 (see NLS MS 4021 f.282). Prose never reprinted.
94. "A letter from Yarrow. The Scottish Psalmody defended," Edinburgh Literary Journal, III (13 March 1830), 162-163.
Never reprinted.
- 95a. "Some remarkable passages in the remarkable life of the Baron St.Gio," Blackwood's, XXVIII (June 1830), 891-905.
b. "The Baron St.Gio," Tales and Sketches, IV, 306-335.
c. -----, Works, I, 442-452.

- 96a. "Story of Adam Scott," Blackwood's, XXVIII (July 1830), 41-46.
 b. "Adam Scott," Tales and Sketches, IV, 294-305.
 c. -----, Works, I, 438-442.
97. "The unearthly witness," Fraser's, II (Sept 1830), 171-178.
 Never reprinted.
- 98a. "A horrible instance of the effects of clanship," Blackwood's,
 XXVIII (Oct 1830), 680-687.
 b. "Julia M'Kenzie," Tales of the Wars of Montrose, II, 117-163.
 c. -----, Tales and Sketches, V, 339-359.
 d. -----, Works, I, 579-586.
 The later versions are longer and more explicit than the somewhat clumsy version contained in 98a.
99. "Some remarks on the life of Sandy Elshinder," Edinburgh Literary Journal, IV (30 Oct 1830), 280-282.
 This article had been offered to, and rejected by, Blackwood in August 1830 (see NLS MS 4027 ff.190, 192 and Acc 5643 B9, p.81).
 Never reprinted.
- 100a.. "The mysterious bride," Blackwood's, XXVIII (Dec 1830), 943-950.
 b. -----, Tales and Sketches, IV, 335-352.
 c. -----, Works, I, 453-458.
101. "Strange letter of a lunatic," Fraser's, II (Dec 1830), 526-532.
 Rejected by Blackwood in April that year (see NLS MS 4027 f.185).
 Never reprinted.
102. "A story of the black art," Edinburgh Literary Journal, IV
 (25 Dec 1830), 396-399; V (1 Jan 1831), 10-12.
 Rejected by Blackwood in April that year (see NLS MS 4027 f.185).
 Never reprinted.
103. "What is sin?" Ackerman's Juvenile Forget Me Not, I (1830),
 222-227.
 Never reprinted.
- 104a. "The Fords of Callum," Friendship's Offering (1830), 187-196.
 b. -----, Works, I, 211-214.
 104b contains a slightly shortened version of the original.
- 105a. "A tale of Pentland," The Amulet (1830), 219-241.
 b. -----, Tales and Sketches, I, 317-332.
 c. -----, Works, I, 85-90.
106. "Seeking the houdy," Forget Me Not (1830), 399-413.
 Never reprinted.
107. "The Laidlaws and the Scotts," The Club Book (London, 1831),
 III, 143-164.
108. "The bogle o' the brae," The Club Book (London, 1831), III,
 231-264.
109. "On the changes in the habits, amusements, and conditions of
 the Scottish peasantry," Quarterly Journal of Agriculture,
 III (Feb 1831-Sept 1832), 256-263.
 Never reprinted.

110. "The barber of Duncrow," Fraser's, III (March 1831), 174-180.
Never reprinted.
111. "The Minister's Annie," Edinburgh Literary Journal, V (26 March 1831), 189-192.
This had been sent to Blackwood in February 1831 (see NLS Acc 5643 B9, p.154). Never reprinted.
- 112a. "A Story of Good Queen Bess," Blackwood's, XXIX (April 1831), 579-593.
b. -----, Works, I, 190-200.
A reference in 112a to the origins of this tale is omitted in 112b.
113. "Aunt Susan," Fraser's, III (July 1831), 720-726.
Never reprinted.
114. "An awfu' leein'-like story," Blackwood's, XXX (Sept 1831), 448-456.
Never reprinted.
- 115a. "On the separate existence of the soul," Fraser's, IV (Dec 1831), 529-537.
b. "Robin Roole," Hogg's Weekly Instructor, I (17 May 1845), 183-187.
In September 1831 Blackwood had rejected this tale as likely to offend his readers (see NLS Acc 5643 B9, p.225). The later printing, in a periodical edited by one of Hogg's sons, claims to print the story for the first time, and contains a completely rewritten text.
116. "Grizel Graham," Edinburgh Literary Journal, VI (24 Dec 1831), 374-377; (31 Dec 1831), 385-387.
Never reprinted.
117. "The poachers," Ackerman's Juvenile Forget Me Not, II (1831), 99-116.
Never reprinted.
118. "A sea story," Forget Me Not (1831), 19-31.
Never reprinted.
119. "Adventures of Captain John Lochy," Altrive Tales, pp.1-141.
This had been offered to Blackwood and revised at his request between August and October 1830 (see NLS MSS 4027 ff.192-196; 4719 f.181; Acc 5643 B9, pp.66, 81. Never reprinted.
120. "A tale of an old Highlander," The Metropolitan, III (Feb 1832), 113-120.
Never reprinted.
121. "Some terrible letters from Scotland," The Metropolitan, III (April 1832), 113-120.
Never reprinted.
122. "The mountain-dew men," Fraser's, VI (Sept 1832), 161-170.
Never reprinted.

123. "Gallery of literary characters: No XXX. Sir David Brewster K.H.," Fraser's, VI (Nov 1832), 416.
Never reprinted.
- 124a. "Ewan M'Gabhar," Fraser's, VI (Nov 1832), 450-459.
b. -----, Tales and Sketches, I, 333-352.
c. -----, Works, I, 91-98.
Rejected by Blackwood in June the previous year (see NLS MS 4029 f.255).
125. "Statistics of Selkirkshire," Prize Essays and Transactions of the Highland Society of Scotland, Second ser., III (1832), 281-306.
Mentioned as ready in November 1830 (see NLS MS 4027 f.201).
Never reprinted.
126. "Letter to Oliver Yorke," Fraser's, VII (Jan 1833), 16.
Never reprinted.
127. "A remarkable Egyptian story," Fraser's, VII (Feb 1833), 147-158.
Sent to Blackwood in February 1828 (see NLS MS 4021 f.275).
Never reprinted.
128. "The Shepherd's Noctes, and the reason why they do not appear in Fraser's Magazine," Fraser's, VIII (July 1833), 49-54.
Prose passages never reprinted.
129. "Letter from Hogg," Fraser's, VIII (Nov 1833), 635.
Never reprinted.
130. A Series of Lay Sermons on Good Principles and Good Breeding (London, 1834).
Never reprinted.
- 131a. Familiar Anecdotes of Sir Walter Scott (New York, 1834).
b. Domestic Manners and Private Life of Sir Walter Scott (Glasgow, 1834).
132. "Extraordinary history of a Border beauty," Fraser's, IX (Jan 1834), 97-110.
The second part of this story, though promised, was never published. Never reprinted.
133. "The Frasers in the correi," Fraser's, IX (March 1834), 273-278.
Prose never reprinted.
134. "Scottish haymakers," Forget Me Not (1834), 327-335.
Never reprinted.
135. The Works of Robert Burns (Glasgow, 1834).
See Miss Batho's later article for details of Hogg's contribution to this edition.
- 136a. "Some remarkable passages in the life of an Edinburgh baillie," Tales of the Wars of Montrose, I, 1-297.
b. -----, Tales and Sketches, V, 210-338.
c. -----, Works, I, 534-579.
Hogg mentions this to Scott as completed in March 1826 (See NLS MS 3902 f.105) and thereafter it became part of the unpublished. Lives of Eminent Men (See NLS

MSS 4014 f.289; 4021 f.275; 4719 f.153).

- 137a. "The adventures of Colonel Peter Aston," Tales of the Wars of Montrose, II, 1-115.
 b.-----, Tales and Sketches, VI, 275-323.
 c.-----, Works, I, 681-698.
 This has a similar history to 136 but later caused a violent quarrel between Hogg and Blackwood in 1831, when Blackwood refused to print an article attacking a publisher whom Hogg accused of plagiarising his story (see NLS MSS 4029 ff.262-264; 9657 f.80; Acc 5643 B9, pp.242, 255).
138. "The remarkable adventures of Sir Simon Brodie," Tales of the Wars of Montrose, II, 165-274.
 Never reprinted.
- 139a. "Wat Pringle o' the Yair," Tales of the Wars of Montrose, III, 1-95.
 b.-----, Tales and Sketches, VI, 335-360.
 c.-----, Works, I, 703-712.
 139a is shortened by about a third in the later texts.
- 140a. "Mary Montgomery," Tales of the Wars of Montrose, III, 97-258.
 b.-----, Tales and Sketches, VI, 5-66.
 c.-----, Works, I, 587-608.
141. "Anecdotes of ghosts and apparitions. I. David Hunter and Phemie; II. Robert Armstrong and Kennedy," Fraser's, XI (Jan 1835), 103-112.
 Never reprinted.
142. "A very ridiculous sermon," Fraser's, XI (Feb 1835), 226-231.
 Never reprinted.
143. "A screed on politics," Blackwood's, XXXVII (April 1835), 634-642.
 Never reprinted.
144. "The Turners," Fraser's, XIII (May 1836), 609-619.
 Never reprinted.
145. "The Ettrick Shepherd's last tale. Helen Crocket," Fraser's, XIV (Oct 1836), 425-440.
 Never reprinted.
146. "A letter to the Ettrick Shepherd, signed Alice Brand," The Amulet (1836), 212-225.
 Never reprinted.
147. "The surpassing adventures of Alan Gordon," Tales and Sketches, I, 241-316.
 This appears to be an article rejected by Blackwood in 1827 (see MLS MSS 2245 ff.110, 120; 4007 f.48; 4021 ff.271, 273).
 Never reprinted.
148. "The bush aboon Traquair," Tales and Sketches, II, 275-338.
 Possibly one of a series of pastoral dramas offered to Blackwood in 1826 (NLS MS 4017 f.139) or perhaps the one mentioned in January 1828 (4021 f.271).
 Never reprinted.

- 149a. "Katie Cheyne," Tales and Sketches, III, 171-182.
 b. -----, Works, I, 280-284.
 Another pastoral drama, which may share the same history as 148.
- 150a. "Emigration," Tales and Sketches, IV, 265-269.
 b. -----, Works, I, 426-428.
- 151a. "The watchmaker," Tales and Sketches, IV, 273-282.
 b. -----, Works, I, 429-432.
 William Chambers received this in April 1833 (NLS MS 2245 f.220)
 but does not appear to have published it.
- 152a. "Nature's magic lantern," Tales and Sketches, IV, 352-360.
 b. -----, Works, I, 459-462.
- 153a. "Gordon and Gipsey," Tales and Sketches, VI, 324-334.
 b. -----, Works, I, 699-702.
154. A Tour of the Highlands in 1803 (Paisley, 1888).
 Never reprinted.

b) Index of Short Titles

NOTE The numerous separate articles all bearing the general title "The Shepherd's Calendar" have been arranged in chronological order.

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| Woolgatherer, The | 19 b,c,d. |
| <u>Works of Robert Burns, The</u> | 135. |

Notes and References

CHAPTER I: The Mountain Bard.

1. LVI (Oct 1794), 624.
2. Scottish Pastorals, Poems, Songs (Edinburgh, 1801).
3. "A journey through the Highlands of Scotland, in the months of July and August 1802," Scots Magazine, LXIV (Oct 1802), 815-816.
4. Memoir of the Author's Life and Familiar Anecdotes of Sir Walter Scott, ed. Douglas S Mack (Edinburgh, 1972), pp.61-62. My account of Hogg's early years draws heavily on this source.
5. Memoir, p.5.
6. Memoir, p.8.
7. See Albert B Lord, The Singer of Tales (Cambridge, Mass., 1960), Bertrand Harris Bronson, "Mrs Brown and the ballad," The Ballad as Song (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969), and David Buchan, The Ballad and the Folk (London, 1972).
8. The Ballad and the Folk, p.52.
9. Francis James Child, ed., The English and Scottish Popular Ballads (New York, 1965), IV, 234. Further citations from this collection will take the form "Child 222A", referring to the editor's numbering of individual versions of each ballad.
10. See John Gibson Lockhart, The Life of Sir Walter Scott, Edinburgh edition (Edinburgh, 1902), II, 103 (Chap XI), in which Lockhart quotes a letter to this effect written by Scott to his publisher on 21 April 1803.
11. Memoir, p.16.
12. Review of The Mountain Bard, The Poetical Register, VI (1806-1807), 548-549.
13. The Mountain Bard (Edinburgh, 1807).
14. National Library of Scotland MS 3874 f.114. Hogg to Scott. 30 June 1802.
15. Reprinted in Child, IV, 447.
16. Reprinted in Child, IV, 446.
17. Reprinted in Child, IV, 502.
18. The verses can be found in Child, IV, 501.

19. See Child, IV, 477.
20. For an example of how this literature entered the culture see Hogg's account of his first acquaintance with the works of Burns in Memoir, p.11.
21. NLS MS 3874 f.194. Hogg to Scott. 7 Jan 1803.
22. For an example of Hogg's protests see NLS MS 3875 f.172. Hogg to Scott. 21 May 1806.
23. See Familiar Anecdotes, p.140.
24. Sir Walter Scott, "Introduction," Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, ed. T F Henderson (Edinburgh, 1902), I, 167-168. This Introduction dates from the earliest edition of Scott's collection.
25. Minstrelsy, III, 327.
26. Minstrelsy, III, 356-357. For the sake of brevity the refrain has been omitted from each of these versions.
27. Minstrelsy, III, 358.
28. Minstrelsy, III, 327.
29. Minstrelsy, III, 342-343.
30. Minstrelsy, III, 345. A more sympathetic account of Scott's editorial practice in the Minstrelsy can be found in M R Dobie, "The development of Scott's 'Minstrelsy': an attempt at a reconstruction," Edinburgh Bibliographical Society Transactions, II (1938-1945), 65-87. However, other grounds for criticism are raised in William Montgomerie, "Sir Walter Scott as ballad editor," Review of English Studies, New ser., VII:26 (1956), 158-163.
31. Sir Walter Scott, "The Gray Brother," Minstrelsy, IV, 206.
32. Sir Walter Scott, "The Eve of St. John," Minstrelsy, IV, 161.
33. Minstrelsy, IV, 336.
34. Minstrelsy, IV, 329.

CHAPTER III: The Queen's Wake.

1. Memoir, p.18.
2. NLS MS 3877 f.41. Hogg to Scott. ? May 1808.
3. NLS MS 3878 f.97. Hogg to Scott. 28 July 1809.

4. Memoir, p.18.
5. NLS MS 3881 f.107.
6. See NLS MS 7200 f.202. Hogg to Constable. 24 September 1812.
7. Memoir, p.23.
8. See NLS MS 3875 f.163. Hogg to Scott. 18 April 1806.
9. Memoir, p.30.
10. Review of The Queen's Wake, Edinburgh Review, XXIV (Nov 1814), 161.
11. The Queen's Wake (Edinburgh, 1813), pp.45-46.
12. Memoir, p.30.
13. Northrop Frye, "Towards defining an age of sensibility," Eighteenth Century English Literature: Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. James L Clifford (New York, 1959).
14. Minstrelsy, II, 366-367.
15. Douglas S Mack, "The development of Hogg's poetry," Scottish Literary News, III (April 1973), 4.
16. "Hogg's May of the Moril Glen," Scottish Literary News, III (April 1973), 9.
17. See for example the versions of the legend printed in Katharine M Briggs, A Dictionary of British Folk-Tales in the English Language, Part B: Folk Legends (London, 1971), I, 183-184, 337-338.
18. The Queen's Wake, 5th ed. (Edinburgh, 1819), p.176. For the sake of clarity all quotations from "Kilmeny" will come from this edition, in reality the third, for which Hogg adopted a more standard Scots orthography.
19. "Hogg's Kilmeny: an interpretation," Studies in Scottish Literature, IV (July 1967), 44.
20. James Hogg: A Critical Study (Edinburgh, 1962), p.90.
21. "A note on Hogg's Kilmeny," Scottish Literary News, III (April 1973), 20.
22. See The Faerie Queene, I, x, and II, ix-x. Also Paradise Lost, Bks. XI-XII.
23. "An hour's talk about poetry," The Works of Professor Wilson, ed. Professor Ferrier (Edinburgh, 1857), IX, 202.

CHAPTER III: From Mador of the Moor to The Poetic Mirror.

1. NLS MS 1002 f.85. George Goldie to Bernard Barton. 28 October 1813.
2. Review of The Pilgrims of the Sun, The New Annual Register, XXXVI (1815), 431.
3. Review of The Pilgrims of the Sun, The Eclectic Review, 2nd ser., III (March 1815), 281.
4. Review of Mador of the Moor, The British Critic, New ser., VII (Jan 1817), 97.
5. Review of Mador of the Moor, The Monthly Review, LXXXI (Dec 1816), 439.
6. Edith C. Batho, The Ettrick Shepherd (Cambridge, 1927), pp.74-75.
7. James Hogg: A Critical Study, p.92.
8. NLS MS 2245 f.4. Hogg to Robert Southey. 4 June 1814.
9. NLS MS 1809 f.155. Transcript of letter from Byron to Hogg. 1 March 1816.
10. Memoir, p.38.
11. Horace and James Smith, Rejected Addresses, or The New Theatrum Poetarum, New Universal Library ed. (London, 1905), pp.viii-ix.
12. Rejected Addresses, pp.63-64.
13. Rejected Addresses, pp.69-70.
14. The Poetic Mirror, or The Living Bards of Britain (London, 1816), p.22.
15. NLS MS 2245 f.9. Southey to Hogg. 24 December 1814.
16. Memoir, pp.70-71.
17. Memoir, p.69.
18. Coleridge the Poet (London, 1966), pp.6-7.
19. Watson, p.36.
20. Review of The Poetic Mirror, The Critical Review, 5th ser., IV (Nov 1816), 456-471.
21. Review of The Poetic Mirror, The Quarterly Review, XV (July 1816) 469.
22. Pp.470, 471.

23. Review of The Poetic Mirror, The Eclectic Review, 2nd ser., VI (Nov 1816), 508.
24. Harold Bloom, The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry (New York, 1973), p.13.
25. The Anxiety of Influence, p.27.
26. The Ettrick Shepherd, p.154.
27. James Hogg: A Critical Study, p.80.
28. Thomas Moore, "The Minstrel Boy," Poetical Works (London, 1845), p.190.
29. James Hogg, "The Minstrel Boy," Songs, by the Ettrick Shepherd (Edinburgh, 1831), pp.20-21.
30. Songs, p.71.
31. NLS MS 2245 f.23. John Ballantyne to Hogg. 10 October 1816.
32. Review of The Poetic Mirror, Scots Magazine, LXXIX (Jan 1817), 47.
33. The Winter's Tale, IV, iv, 252-261.
34. Mador of the Moor (Edinburgh, 1816), p.v.
35. The Pilgrims of the Sun (Edinburgh, 1815), pp.22-24.
36. Coleridge the Poet, pp.40-41.
37. On Hogg's original intention in Mador of the Moor see Memoir, pp.31-32.
38. For Milton's description see Paradise Lost, II, 1045-55.
39. For Hogg's professed high opinion of Queen Hynde, see Memoir, pp.40-41.
40. Some of these poems are discussed in Chapter VII of this thesis.

CHAPTER IV: The Brownie of Bodsbeck.

1. Details of these early prose writings can be found in the Appendix.
2. NLS MS 3884 f.122. Hogg to Scott. 3 April 1813.
3. Tales and Sketches (Glasgow, 1837), I, 3.

4. "A journey through the Highlands of Scotland," Scots Magazine, LXIV (October 1802), 816.
5. Reprint of 3rd ed. (Detroit, 1969), pp.325-326.
6. The Brownie of Bodsbeck, ed. Douglas S Mack (Edinburgh, 1976), p.161. All quotations are taken from this recent edition, which prints for the first time a text close to Hogg's intention, without the excisions forced on him by his publishers.
7. I am indebted for this information to Mr Robert Moffat, elder son of the present farmer of Bodesbeck (as the farm is now spelt).
8. The Mountain Bard, pp.69-70.
9. See NLS MS 3874 f.114. Hogg to Scott. 30 June 1802.
10. NLS MS 865 f.74. Hogg to Scott. 23 October 1806.
11. The Shepherd's Calendar (Edinburgh, 1829), II, 196.
12. See, for example, J G Fyfe, ed., Scottish Diaries and Memoirs, 1746-1843 (Stirling, 1942), p.273, where evidence is given of the esteem in which Wodrow's History was held by Lothian peasants in the 1770s.
13. A History of Scotland (London, 1970), p.269.
14. The History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland, ed. Rev. Robert Burns (Glasgow, 1838), IV, 181-182.
15. History, IV, 250.
16. History, IV, 255-256.
17. See Brownie, pp.68-70.
18. History, IV, 210.
19. History, IV, 218.
20. Review of The Brownie of Bodsbeck, The British Critic, New ser., X (October 1818), 403, 404.
21. Memoir, pp.44-45.
22. The Life and Letters of James Hogg, Vol.I (Lubbock, Texas, 1946), pp.145-148. Volume II of this collection has never appeared.
23. See Mr Mack's edition of the novel, pp.xiii-xvii.
- 24, 25. NLS MS 4003 f.86. Hogg to Blackwood. 13 Jan 1818.
26. Pp.105-106.
27. Tales and Sketches, I, 3.

28. P.418.

CHAPTER V: The Three Perils of Man.

1. The full title is The Three Perils of Man: War, Women and Witchcraft.
2. Memoir, p.55.
3. Ed. Douglas Gifford (Edinburgh, 1972). All quotations from The Three Perils of Man in this chapter refer to this edition.
4. NLS MS 4004 f.156. Hogg to Blackwood. 16 November 1819.
5. NLS MS 4004 f.158. Hogg to Blackwood. 30 November 1819.
6. NLS MS 4005 f.148. Hogg to Blackwood. 10 January 1820.
7. NLS MS 2245 f.42. Blackwood to Hogg. 3 August 1820.
8. NLS MS 2245 f.44. Blackwood to Hogg. 15 August 1820.
9. NLS MS 4005 f.162. Hogg to Blackwood. 20 August 1820.
10. NLS MS 4005 f.164. Hogg to Blackwood. 7 October 1820.
11. NLS MS 3892 f.180. Hogg to Scott. 26 June 1821.
12. NLS MS 3893 f.159. Hogg to Scott. 16 November 1821.
13. See NLS MS 3893 f.181. Hogg to Scott. 10 December 1821.
14. Stith Thompson, Motif-Index of Folk Literature, 6 vols., Revised ed.(Bloomington, 1955).
15. The story is told in "Snow-storms," The Shepherd's Calendar, II, 282-290.
16. Henry Bett, English Legends (London, 1950), p.39. The ruse by which Sir Thomas persuades the friar of his guilt shows close similarity to Christopher Marlowe's The Jew of Malta, IV, i.
17. "Folk narrative," Folklore and Folklife: An Introduction, ed. Richard M Dorson (Chicago, 1972).
18. "Folk narrative," p.73.
19. "Folk narrative," p.74.
20. See NLS MS 4005 f.148. Hogg to Blackwood. 10 January 1820.
21. Blackwood's, XXVIII (December 1830), 943. It must be stressed that Hogg is here referring not to The Abbot but to Scott's Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft which did not appear until 1830.

22. See The Monastery, Chap.XXXVI. It seems likely that the character of Will Laidlaw jokingly refers to the Borderer of the same name who had been Scott's amanuensis for many years.
23. The Lay of the Last Minstrel, Canto II, Stanza XIX.
24. NLS MS 3875 f.163. Hogg to Scott. 18 April 1806. The same criticism is repeated in an article by Hogg in The Spy for 3 November 1810.
25. See pp.318-324 for this scene.

CHAPTER VI: The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner

1. A Literary History of Scotland (London, 1903), p.531.
2. "Love and friendship," TLS, 29 May 1969, p.589.
3. The Confessions of a Justified Sinner, with an Introduction by André Gide, Paperback ed. (London, 1970), p.7.
4. The Scottish Tradition in Literature (Edinburgh, 1958), p.247.
5. "Hogg," Essays in English Literature, 1780-1860 (London, 1890), pp.62-63.
6. The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner, with an Introduction by T Earle Welby, New ed. (London, 1926), pp. 7-8.
7. James Hogg: A Critical Study, pp.192-199.
8. Memoir, pp.55-56.
9. NLS MS 4012 f.184. Hogg to Blackwood. 28 June 1824.
10. "A Scots mummy," Blackwood's, XIV (August 1823), 188-190.
11. NLS Acc 5643 B6 p.386. Blackwood to Hogg. 23 September 1826.
12. The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding (Harmondsworth, 1963), Chap.1.
13. Confessions, ed. Gide, pp.12-13.
14. Barbara Royle Bloedé, "James Hogg's Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner: the genesis of the Double," Etudes Anglaises, XXVI:2 (1973), 174-186.
15. Quoted in The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner, ed. John Carey (London, 1969), pp.257-258.
16. "Hogg," pp.61-62.

17. Confessions, ed. Carey, p.1. All references to The Confessions cite this, the best and most recent edition.
18. Tales and Sketches, IV, 352-360.
19. "James Hogg's Confessions and the fall into division," Studies in Scottish Literature, IX (July 1971), 30-31.
20. The Shepherd's Calendar, I, 203.
21. The Shepherd's Calendar, I, 248-249.
22. The Shepherd's Calendar, I, 253-254.
23. It is interesting that Scott too associated the wraith with the Double. In Chap.XXXVII of Quentin Durward we find: "'Art thou sure yonder armed leader is not thy wraith, thy double-man, as these Flemings call it?'"
24. The Shepherd's Calendar, I, 309-310.
25. Scottish Literature and the Scottish People, 1680-1830 (London, 1961), pp.193-194.
26. James Hogg: A Critical Study, p.190.
27. "James Hogg's Confessions and the fall into division," p.37.
28. Scottish Literature and the Scottish People, p.194.
29. No! in Thunder: Essays on Myth and Literature (London, 1963), pp.77-89.
30. Robert Louis Stevenson and Romantic Tradition (Princeton, New Jersey, 1966), pp.12-14.
31. Quoted in the Introduction to the Everyman ed. of Robert Louis Stevenson, The Master of Ballantrae and Weir of Hermiston, ed. M R Ridley (London, 1968), pp.vi-vii.
32. Quoted in the Introduction to Horace Walpole, The Castle of Otranto, ed. W S Lewis (London, 1969), p.ix.
33. An account of this development can be found in J M S Tompkins, The Popular Novel in England, 1770-1800 (London, 1932), Chap.VIII.
34. Quoted from Godwin's Preface to the "Standard Novels" edition of Fleetwood in William Godwin, Caleb Williams, ed. David McCracken (London, 1970), pp.336-337.
35. Mary Shelley, Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus, ed. M K Joseph (London, 1969), p.9.
36. Caleb Williams, p.338.
37. The Romantic Novel in England (Cambridge, Mass., 1972), p.220.

38. "Hogg's religion and The Confessions of a Justified Sinner," Studies in Scottish Literature, VII (April 1970), 272-275.
39. "Hogg's 'Confessions of a Justified Sinner'," Liturgical Review, II (November 1972), 28.
40. See Matthew 7.20 and 7.12.
41. Scottish Literary News, II (June 1972), 66-76.
42. See James Hogg: A Critical Study, pp.170-173, and The Confessions, ed. Carey, pp.xxii-xxiii.
43. "Hogg's religion and The Confessions of a Justified Sinner," p.274.
44. "Hogg's religion and The Confessions of a Justified Sinner," pp.274-275.
45. Caleb Williams, pp.339-340.
46. The connection between Hogg and Hoffmann has been noted independently of Carey in Edwin M Eigner, Robert Louis Stevenson and Romantic Tradition, p.25.
47. NLS MS 4004 f.158. Hogg to Blackwood. 30 November 1819.
48. NLS MS 4019 f.187. Hogg to Blackwood. 5 April 1827.
49. "Some recollections of James Hogg," Fraser's Magazine, XX (October 1839), 423.
50. E T A Hoffmann, The Devil's Elixir (Edinburgh, 1824), I, 46.
51. The Devil's Elixir, I, 104; Confessions, p.160.
52. The Devil's Elixir, II, 57-58; Confessions, pp.212-213.
53. The Devil's Elixir, I, 105.
54. The Devil's Elixir, I, 54-55.
55. The Devil's Elixir, I, 175.
56. The Devil's Elixir, I, 137-138.
57. Dr David Buchan has pointed out to me the probably coincidental similarity of the names Spiridion of Koenigswald (King's Wood) and Lockhart of Chiefswood.
58. The Devil's Elixir, II, 229.
59. James Hogg: A Critical Study, pp. 190-192.
60. "Major Weir: A Justified Sinner?" Scottish Studies, XVI:2 (1972), 161-173.

61. (Edinburgh, 1819), II, 198. A fuller version of the story is given in Robert Chambers, Traditions of Edinburgh, New ed. (London, 1869), pp.385-386.
62. "A new source for Hogg's Justified Sinner: Greville's Life of Sidney," Nineteenth-Century Fiction, XXIX (December 1974), 338-345.

CHAPTER VII: The Final Years

1. Memoir, p.53.
2. See R H Campbell, Scotland Since 1707: The Rise of an Industrial Society (Oxford, 1965), p.152.
3. The story of Hogg's difficulties with Mount Benger can be found set out in the following letters in the National Library of Scotland: 3904 f.31; 3912 f.27; 4036 f.102.
4. Mrs Garden, Memorials of James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd (Paisley, 1887), pp.277-278.
5. Memoir, p.58.
6. See NLS MS 4036 f.102. Hogg to Blackwood. 26 May 1830.
7. The Ettrick Shepherd, p.123.
8. Throughout this chapter references to Hogg's shorter prose will take the same form as the present example. The Arabic numeral refers to the number given to the tale in the chronological bibliography of Hogg's prose to be found in the Appendix, while the lower case letter refers to the specific printing of that tale which is being quoted. Thus, "55b" refers to the story "Mr Adamson of Laverhope" as printed in The Shepherd's Calendar.
9. See "On the folly of anger and impatience under misfortune" (20a) and "The school of misfortune" (20b).
10. This theory is also expressed in A Series of Lay Sermons (London, 1834), Chap.VI.
11. See, for example, "Sound morality" (85).
12. See "The marvellous doctor" (67).
13. David Craig, Scottish Literature and the Scottish People, pp.235-269, and David Daiches, The Paradox of Scottish Culture: The Eighteenth-Century Experience (London, 1964), pp.19-23.
14. NLS MS 4027 f.196. Hogg to Blackwood. 8 October 1830.

15. NLS MS 3902 f.105. Hogg to Scott. 4 March 1826. Hogg is here referring to "Some remarkable passages in the life of an Edinburgh baillie" (136) and "The adventures of Colonel Peter Aston" (137).
16. See "The Shepherd's Noctes" (128), and also "Noctes Bengelianae" (75 and 80), though in these latter examples Hogg himself plays only a minor role.
17. See, for example, "Letter from James Hogg to his reviewer" (42), "The Honourable Captain Napier and Ettrick Forest" (52), and "Some remarks on the life of Sandy Elshinder" (99).
18. See "A journey through the Highlands of Scotland" (1), "Journal of an excursion into the counties of Stirling etc" (3), and "A journey through the Highlands and Western Isles" (5), as well as "Malise's journey to the Trossachs" (26a).
19. See "The Shepherd's dog" (34b), "Snow-storms" (39c), and "Sheep", "Prayers", and "Odd Characters" (62b).
20. Pp.237-238. The central motif of the story is indexed as N531.1. Dream of treasure on the bridge.
21. James Hogg: A Critical Study, p.166.
22. Reference has been made to the earlier version of the story (70a) because the text in The Shepherd's Calendar (70b), having been expurgated by Hogg's nephew Robert, fails to make its point as clearly as the more explicit first version.
23. My own personal selection, drawn from every stage of Hogg's career, would be: of the essays, "Mr Shuffleton's allegorical survey of the Scottish poets" (7), "A shepherd's wedding" (32c), "Translation from an ancient Chaldee manuscript" (33), "Snow-storms" (39c), and "Nature's magic lantern" (152); and of the fiction, "The renowned adventures of Basil Lee" (8b), "Love adventures of Mr George Cochrane" (15b), "The country laird" (19a), "The long pack" (36b), "John Gray of Middleholm" (46), "Cousin Mattie" (48a), "Window Wat's courtship" (58b), "The Shepherd's Calendar. Dreams and apparitions. Part IV" (66a), "The marvellous doctor" (67a), "The Shepherd's Calendar. Class IX" (70a), "The Brownie of the Black Hags" (736), "Mary Melrose" (81), "The Cameronian Preacher's Tale" (92a), "Some remarkable passages in the life of the Baron St. Gio" (95a), "The mysterious bride" (100a), "Strange letter of a lunatic" (101), "The barbar of Duncrow" (110), "Some remarkable passages in the life of an Edinburgh baillie" (136a), and "The watchmaker" (151a).
24. "An hour's talk about poetry," p.204.
25. Songs, p.191.
26. Songs, p.143.

27. David Daiches, Robert Burns, Revised ed. (London, 1966), Chap. VII, and Cedric Thorpe Davie, "Robert Burns, Writer of Songs," Critical Essays on Robert Burns, ed. Donald A Low (London, 1975). An attempt to discuss the songs of Walter Scott in relation to their tunes can be found in Charles G Zug, III, "Sir Walter Scott and George Thomson, the Friend of Burns," Studies in Scottish Literature, XII (July 1974), 33-50.
28. The Forest Minstrel (Edinburgh, 1810), p.24.
29. Poetical Works (Edinburgh 1822), IV, 323-324.
30. Songs, p.255.
31. Songs, p.203.
32. Fraser's, VIII (July 1833), 51.
33. The Forest Minstrel, p.94.
34. The Forest Minstrel, p.7.
35. Songs, p.183.
36. Folk Song in England (London, 1967), p.190.
37. Songs, p.96.
38. Poems and Songs, ed. James Kinsley (London, 1969), p.667.
39. Songs, p.97.
40. Songs, p.231.
41. Blackwood's, XXIII (May 1828), 782.
42. "Act Sederunt of the Session," Poems and Songs, pp.570-571.
43. NLS MS 811 f.3. Transcript of letter from Hogg to G H Gilchrist. 21 April 1834. Hogg's conviction that he was born on 25 January was, of course, wishful thinking.
44. "The Mistakes of a Night," Scots Magazine, LVI (October 1794), 624. Even when the content of a poem has obvious affinity with "Habbie Simpson", as does "Geordie Fa's Dirge" in Scottish Pastorals, Hogg will still use another metre, in that case the tetrameter couplet.
45. "Verses for the eye of Mr David Tweedie of that Ilk," Edinburgh Literary Journal, III (8 May 1830), 276-277.
46. Scottish Literature and the Scottish People, pp.72-110.
47. "Love's like a dizziness," Songs, p.115.
48. "The Laird of Lamington," The Border Garland (Edinburgh 1819), p.19.

49. "Gin ye meet a bonny lassie," Fraser's, VIII (July 1833), 51.
50. "The Village of Balmaquhapple," Songs, p.43.
51. "The cutting o' my hair," Blackwood's, XXVIII (August 1830), 406.
52. Blackwood's, XX (October 1826), 623. This song had first been published in the Scots Magazine in 1814.
53. Blackwood's, XXVI (Sept 1829), 403-404.
54. "The Lass o' Carlisle," Songs, pp.228-229.
55. "The Ladies' Evening Song," Songs, pp.108-109.
56. Songs, p.133.
57. "Farewell to Glen-Shalloch," Songs, p.22.
58. "Flora Macdonald's Farewell," Songs, p.12.
59. Songs, p.13.
60. A Queer Book (Edinburgh, 1832), pp.100-101.
61. Other poems of this kind include "Connell of Dee", "The Powris of Moseke", "The Wife of Ezdel-More", and "Jock Tait's Expedition to Heaven".
62. A Queer Book, pp.76-77.
63. NLS MS 4024 f.297. Hogg to Blackwood. n.d. /1829/?.
64. "A Greek Pastoral," A Queer Book, p.344.
65. Other versions can be found in "The Origin of the Fairies" and "Lyttil Pinkie".
66. "Hogg's May of the Moril Glen," Scottish Literary News, III (April 1973), 9-16.
67. A Queer Book, pp.117-129.
68. Poetical Works (1822), III, 363-367.
69. Songs, p.171.
70. For the folk material contained in the poem see K M Briggs, "Folklore in nineteenth-century English literature," Folklore, LXXXIII (Autumn 1972), 194-209.
71. Poetical Works (1822), II, 235-237. The full poem can be found in James Hogg, Selected Poems, ed. Douglas S Mack (London, 1970), pp.88-91.
72. See, for example, "Busaco" and "On the death of Mr Pitt" in Songs.

73. See "The Magic Mirror," Blackwood's, XXX (October 1831), 652-655.
74. "Lines to Sir Walter Scott, Bart.," Poetical Works (1822), IV, 133-140. The full poem is reprinted in Selected Poems, pp.92-96.
75. Memoir, pp.63-64.
76. A Queer Book, pp.252-256. The full poem is reprinted in Selected Poems, pp.103-107.
77. Blackwood's, XXX (November 1831), 843-844. The full poem is reprinted in Selected Poems, pp.107-110.

CONCLUSION

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2. "Some recollections of James Hogg", 420-421, 423.

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 2524 ff.39-41.
 2528 f.40.
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 3879 ff.184, 204.
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 3886 ff.84, 229, 241.
 3892 ff.148, 180.
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 3912 ff.27, 219.
 4001 ff.207-209, 266.
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c) Secondary material.

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