THREE CENTURIES OF SCOTTISH LITERATURE. VOL. II - THE UNION TO SCOTT

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Three Centuries of Scottish Literature. Vol. II - the Union to Scott by Hugh Walker

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HUGH WALKER

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THREE CENTURIES OF SCOTTISH LITERATURE

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VOL. 11

THE UNION TO SCOTT

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THREE CENTURIES OF SCOTTISH LITERATURE.

CHAPTER VII.

RAMSAY TO FERGUSSON.

In an earlier chapter reference has been made to the long and disastrous eclipse under which the native literature, and especially the poetry, of Scotland passed during the seventeenth century. The union of the Crown of Scotland with that of England would in any case have drawn talent from the smaller country; but if it had brought internal peace the loss would soon have been made good, and more than made good. But the Union did not bring peace. In the disturbed annals of Scotland there are periods of more violent commotion than the seventeenth century, but few if any more full of petty quarrels. Not only was the country shaken by the great civil struggle which convulsed England as well, but it was distracted also to a degree which England never experienced by religious differences. The mutual hatred of sects drained the strength of the nation; and on the whole it is little to be wondered at that there were only a few, like the Semples of Beltrees, who kept alive, in occasional compositions, the tradition of vernacular poetry.

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