Book Third

The argument

Ascent of Skiddaw

Great preparations Setting off Crossing the river Great heat Labour

of the ascent Stuck in a bog Halting place View from it of

the vale of Keswick Derwent water & The summit Fine

prospect. <<period?>> Its particulars described, Keen cutting wind Descent

conclusion

<<decoration>>

The hills were obscured in a curtain of cloud

Every stern savage fell had its vapoury shroud

The dark veil of the east it was not yet withdrawn

And cheerless and drear the approach of the morn

As we looked on the clouds with great feelings of sorrow

How sadly we thought we must wait till tomorrow

Sometimes we did mope as appeared the blue sky

At length into distance the vapours were borne

And the dreary gloom yields to the rays of the morn

On the breast of the breeze were the clouds borne away

And the mountains again were revealed to the day

The rich outlines of Grasmoor distinctly were seen

And Helvellyn he lowrd in his silence serene

While the lakes gentle billows like pure molten gold

In soft and low murmurs succeedingly rolled

Wee gazed on the sky now so azure and bright

We gazed on that sky with unmingled delight

How high beat our hearts with the great expectation

And straight we began to make great preparation

Cakes sandwiches ham were by no means unhandy

And amongst other things we forgot not some brandy

We bustle and tustle and fidget about

And call all the servants and kick up a rout

We stretch and we yawn so impatient to go

And think that the time flies amazingly slow

We pull out our watch put it up to our Ear

Ah well I declare it is going I hear

Then in comes the hostess so prim and so neat

A very fine morning sir Tis maam indeed

I have brought sir some skirts for the ladies to ride in

Oh maam I declare you're extremely oblingin'g <<' ?>>

Oh sir pray dont speak of it While saying so

She maketh her exit in curtseying low

And now a loud clatter is heard in the yard

Where the steed for the journey at length were prepared

Such beautiful creatures I here must describe em

And the pleasure with which we expected to ride em

There was one that was white and another was grey

Such fine flowing tails and such long ears had they

They chomped at the bit and they snuffed up the wind

As if they intended to leave it behind

At length we set off quite delighted and gay

But determined to walk a small part of the way

Exapting myself who determined to ride

And so we set off by the clear river side

Then we came to the bridge of grey mosscovered stone

Which across the swift greta's bright ripples is thrown

On the top of that bridge for a moment we stay

To gaze on the torrent as't foams on its way

We gazed on the whirlpools as boiling they broke

In sheets of white foam on the surf beaten rock

We gazed on their eddies as circling they sweep

Amid the rough crags silent darkling and deep

We gazed on the currents as foaming they rush

And list to their murmurs as onward they gush

How wild were those murmurs as soothing and slow

In natures own numbers so softly they flow

At length we determined the bridge being past

On mounting our beautiful ponies at last

Oh what an affair of importance then made us

With sitting and helping and mounting the ladies

"I am sure I shall fall" "I am sure I am tumbling"

"O No maam youre safe" "But my steed is a stumbling"

"Oh maam he's the surefootest beast upon earth"

"My saddle is loose" "Shall I tighten the girth"

"Oh but look at him now he is stopping and feeding"

"Pull him up maam," "I cant," "Then I see I must lead him,"

Such pranks and such frolics our charges displayed

And such a great bustle and rumpus is made

At length being seated quite steady and firm

The heads of our horses towards Shkiddaw we turn

While laughing and talking swift onwards we trot

And all ills and all accidents soon are forgot

But some troubles still the ascending attended

For the road I must say wanted much to be mended

The quagmires were long and the quagmires were broad

And many and deep were the ruts in the road

And unless we kept on at a pretty brisk trot

Where'ere there was grass there our steeds made a <our> stop

And then if at all in a hurry we posted

With the heat of the sun we were like to be roasted

And while in the regions of heat we remained

Of the heat and the flies we all loudly complained

At last we arrived at the banks of a stream

Which dashed down a small and narrow ravine

Now all of our steeds were prodigiously dry

From the heat of the sun and the clear cloudless sky

how wistfed and thirsty did all of them look

As splashing we dashed through the waves of the brook

But one of them knowing the Miss on its back

Was not able to keep him in his proper track

Regardless of briars of stones or of trees

Sought a place where he might have drunk more at his ease

At length we contrived to turn him about

And leaving the stream we continued our route

Now a terrible quagmire lay right in our road

It was deep it was long and moreover twas broad

But we cared not for mud and we cared not for mire

For our bosoms beat high with a lofty desire

When the summit of Skiddaw was once in our view

Through all opposition resistless we flew

So headlong we dashed to the heart of the bog

Our horses we spur and our horses we flog

And splashing and dashing we floundered about

We got easily in and not easily out

We thought in the quag the we fairly were stuck

So tenacious so deep and so yielding the muck

Some of us sunk less and some of us sunk more

As struggling we spurred on our steeds to the shore

Such figures presenting bespattered with dirt

Which our horsetails upon us in flapping did flirt

The ladies bemoaning their gowns spoliation

The gentlemen mourning their coats spatteration

Such moans hones and groans were resounding around

There never was heard such a coat weeping sound

So mournful our cries so hear piercing our wails

Over what? Over what? Why upon our coat tails

They who oer such a subject refuse to bemoan

Have hearts that are hard as the nether millstone

And now we resumed our marching once more

But neither so gay or so clean as before

Of bogs and of brooks we began to be tired

For nobody likes to be soundly bemired

We began to complain of the cold and the wind

And some of our horses were lagging behind

Till having arrived at the breast of the hill

To rest and to breath we a moment stood still

Then we spurred up the breast of the mountain each steed

And we prest on each courser so gallant to speed

We struggled oer heather we struggled oer stone

Till each horses fetlocks were white with its foam

We leaned oer the manes of our charges which flow

Till they sweep oer the bells fo the heather below

How rich was that heather luxuriantly spread

Wherever the hoofs of our horses might tread

And how bright were its flowers of Tyrian dye

On the mountains green bosom neglected which lie

And now the steep hill being mounted we came

And much to our joy to a fine turfy plain

The grass was so rich and its hue was so bright

Like circles were fairies have danced through the night

How swiftly and lightly <and lightly> our palfreys swept oer

And how swiftly and lightly our palfreys us bore

Till we came to a spring which with gurgling sound

And bubbling and dancing sprung up from the ground

There stay we our steeds that we all might survey

The beautiful prospect before us which lay

The vapourless heaven shone bright overhead

The valley beneath us was widely outspread

And the forests arrayed in the clothing of green

On the sides of the mountains arising were seen

While through the wide valley meandering slow

The stream of the Derwent doth silently flow

How fair were the fields which the light lapping wave

Each following and followed succeeding doth lave

Till recklessly dancing and carelessly tost

In the deeps of the Derwent the billow is lost

We gazed on the lake Oh how calmly it lay

Scarce touched by the zephyrs oerts bosom which play

How bright its smooth surface deceitfully smiles

Embosomed in mountains and studded with isles

Whose trees richly clothed in a bright luring green

Again seemed to grow neath the surface serene

We gazed on the fells sternly rising which frowned

We gazed on the mountains dispersed around

Whose high craggy summits confusedly tost

In the vapours which floated around them were lost

But whose is that dwelling surrounded with trees

Whose rising smoke curls as it floats on the breeze

It is his who so deeply hath graven his name

It neer shall be razed from the annals of fame

It is his who hath swept oer Arabias sand

It is his who hath traveled the far foreign land

It is his who hath wakened the chords of the lyre

In the strength of its muse with celestial fire

Who can ride the wild winds and who proudly can sweep

Oer the fierce foaming billow the broad bursting deep

Apollo shall list when he touches the string

And the muses pay homage where Southey shall sing

Then we gazed down the lake where swift rush to the shore

The far sounding waters of distant Lowdore

As hurled down the chasm how thundering it broke

Rebounding from crag and rebounding from rock

And how brightly and lightly the sunny rays play

While spar'kling<< ' stray pen mark?>> amid clouds of far flashing spray

Then we looked to the south where the dark Borrowdale

Frowned dear oer the Derwent stern savage and fell

While under those cliffs een the surges that sweep

Seemed mournfully silent dark dismal and deep

While hidden in mist and obscured by storm

Gaunt Castle crag rose Oh how dreadful its form

As it guarded those jaws which seemed deep as the grave

As they frowned oer the foam the breast of the lake

We looked to the hills which oerhang Ladies Rake

There is a tradition of this peaceful dell

Which the crones of the Derwent will often times tell

It was night and the stars seemed in silence to rest

In ethereal splendour on th' waves gentle breast

And in heavenly splendour how softly they sleep

On that ocean of lustre that radiant deep

While before the bright moon as the light surges dance

In thousands of gems they reflected her glance

And as each swelling billow rolled on to the shore

Still greater refulgence their heaving breasts pour

And rolling the pebbles and heaving the Sands

In foaming bright diamonds break on the strand

Spray sprinkling the shore as they whispering sigh

Then sink in the waters for ever to die

Man rested in slumber so soft and so deep

And the scene it was plunged in the silence of sleep

The herds of the deer mid the woodlands did rest

And the sky-loving eagle reposed in its nest

But who wildly flies up the dread mountain vale

Her locks all disheveled her count pale

And the fitful night winds whistle loud through her hair

Which madly and trembling her clenched fingers tear

Tis the Countess of Derwent uncheered and unknown

She strays in the desert all dreary and lone.

Aurora withdraws the dark shades of the night

And peeps oer the hills with her blue eyes so bright

Her fair fingers the terrified vapours unfold

And twined round her brow is a circlet of gold

But that glens savage rocks a pale corse lies beneath

The visage distorted and ghastly in death

Oh winds sigh ye softly and oer her bemoan

Unburied who lies in the wilderness lone

And eer since that time at the still hour of night

Her sad spirit wings round Lords island its flight

Disturbedly flitting around its lone haunt

And notes all unknown it doth mournfully haunt

And its name from that flight the dark valley did take

And ever since then has been called ladies Rake.

Thus the beautiful prospect we all did survey

Then began to prepare for the rest of the way

Some Sandwiches take and some brandy we sip

Applying it just to the tip of the lip

And our spirits revived and restored our strength

We set off on the rest of our journey at length

How jollily onwards we all of us went

But our eyes to the ground we were forced to keep bent

For fear that our steeds in their progress should stumble

And that might produce a most unlucky tumble

Avoiding each hillock each stone each stick

The steps of our ponies we carefully pick

And still we ascended still higher and higher

And still to the summit came nigher and nigher

And still we kept laughing and talking and still

We trotted along on the side of the hill

Till we reached an ascent where low hillocks of green

Like mountainous motehills were everywhere seen

We dashed on our steeds and we spurred up the rise

(Oh sight most delightful that greeted our eyes)

A ridge we beheld (twas of loose slaty stone)

It led to the summit we'd wished for so long

But now our teeth chattered our noses looked blue

And our ears were assuming a Tyrian hue

For the wind (I should say that he blew from the east)

And that is an icyish quarter at best

I mean it is cold whensoever it blows

But now it had taken such hold of our nose

Then to guard gainst the cold we did button our coats

Protecting our bodies with mantles and cloaks

Then tight round our necks we did tie our cravats

More firm to our heads we did fasten our hats

Then steady and ready we made up our mind

To fight and to conquer the cold and the wind

So struggling we forced oer the ridge loose stone

Every second we thought we should over be blow

And although of its force we did loudly complain

The summit of Skiddaw at last we attain

Then oer swift eager eyes we impatiently threw

On th' extensive the wondrous the beautiful view.

Having rested a while we straight turned our eyes

Where the towers and domes of Carlisle did arise <<changed from arrive>>

We gazed on those towers we gazed on those domes

But felt not much interest in mortar and stones

So turning away from the noble Carlisle

We rested our eyes on the sea for a while

How fruitless the ocean says Homer the poet

The thought would be lovely if all didnt know it

but then Homer was wondering what it could mean

By being so barren and looking so green

Sure never a green was so beauteous before

Sure never a green will be so any more

But some hers will say that the ocean is blue

For some people like to dispute on a hue

Oh dear what a habit that of disputation

I find it the cause of much great botheration

And so with these people I will not dispute

Nor their arguments pretend to refute

But some Ill affirm blue the ocean have seen

And others admired quite as lively a green

For as changes the weather and changes the wind

The ocean in like manner changes its mind

Straight boiling and chafing quite into a passion

Not liking its colour it changes the fashion

When it lieth before us quite calm and serene

I need not then say that its colour is green

Except when the sky thats above it is blue

And then need I say that is also its hue

But when tired of these colours it wants to be black

Oh then it doth hich up a terrible rack

And rolling and roaring and chafing & boiling

Its noise is tremendous disturbed and turmoiling

When the waves with each other quadrilling do dance

From wondering England to wondering France

When the ocean scarce knoweth what it would be at

Oh need I then say tis as black as my hat

But let us abstain from this learned disputation

For as I said before I hate argumentation

And now we did look to a distance surprising

For we gazed where the hills of fair Scotland were rising

How high beat our hearts as that land we surveyed

Where so often the banner of freedom hath played

Where Bruce to the battle his followers hath led

Where Wallace hath fought in whose cause he hath bled

When freedom and glory arose in their breast

To death or to conquest how swiftly they prest

And libertyse banner and liberrtys brand

Broad bloody and bare it forsook not their hand

Now shifting the scene much delighted we gaze

On the far spreading sore with it capes and its bays

Till our wandering eyeballs were fixed at last

On the firth of the Solway that wide sandy waste

The tide was out and the quicksand they lay

A smooth and inviting but treacherous way

Though I think that a quicksands a dangerous rogue

And I dont think is likely to come into vogue.

Then looked us where Saddleback vast and gigantic

Rears high his huge head thats so old and so antique

His sides furrowed deep by a thousand ravines

Which echo the roar of their mountain born streams

As chafing and swelling by mossy crags bound

Earth trembles beneath them and quakes at the sound

How frowned the dark rocks which bare savage and wild

In heaps upon heaps were tremendously piled

And how vast the ravines which so craggy and deep

Down dreadful descending divided the steep

Stay, hark to the Eagle how shrill is its cry

From the beast of the hill which re-echos on high

Then born on the breezes which softly do play

Towrd the fells of the Derwent it dieth away

Again from those rocks it doth suddenly break

And sounding as shrilly it sweeps oer the lake

Then echoed again from gigantic Grasmoor

And sharply rebounding from shore unto shore

But where is the mountain bird Where doth he spring

Where beats the breeze backward the flap of his wing

Lo see where impelled by his tempest like force

In cloud hidden circles he wheels on his course

Oer the rock beating torrent he fearless is soaring

Scarce hearing its thunders that neer ceasing roaring

Then turned we around to the maze of the mountains

All teeming ans sparkling with thousand bright fountains

Where the brow of Helvellyn so tremendously lowred

Tost confusedly in clusters all barren and grim

While the clouds oer their sky braving battlements skim

Till their scarce discerned outlines all misty and grey

On the distant horizon they faded away

Then far far beneath us we giddily gaze

Where the spray tossing wave of broad Bassenthwaite plays

On the verge of the hill we precariously stood

And awe struck we gazed on the far rolling flood

Eternally murmuring Distant and deep

It stretched its coerulean waves at our feet

Delighted and eagerly catching the view

Our swift eager eyes round the prospect we threw

And although in a cutting and cold situation

We cared not to move from our high elevation

So blowing our fingers and blowing our nose

Not minding the cold that was pinching our toes

And combating weather and combating wind

Still still at the summit we lingered behind

But as all of us knew twas in vain to lament

So cheerfully all we began the descent

But as it was difficult stoney and steep

We judged it was better to trust to our feet

And as none of us chose down the mountain to ride

We left all our steeds to the care of the guide

Now upon the descent I can not say much more

Unless I describe what Ive told of before

We came to the halting place, past by the rill

And mounted our steeds at the foot of the hill

We forced through the bog and we came to the dell

Where the murmurs of the sparkling rivulet swell

Rode round about Latrigg to th' river came down

And at last we did safely arrive in the town

Now tell me Oh reader hast tasted repose

When toilings and labours have come to a close

Hast thou gloryed when thou hast successfully toiled

In overcome dangers and diff,culties foiled

Oh then and then only thou fitly canst tell

How our hearts lightly beat and our proud bosoms swell

Delighted we sat round the bright blazing fire

And talked of our hardships the mountain the mire

Though other things sink in the chaos of thought

And fly from our mem'ry Let all be forgot

As light chaff is borne on the face of the wind

Yet Skiddaw shall neer be erased from our mind