The Lake of Coniston, anciently called Thurstan Water, stands third amongst the lakes of England, and first amongst those of Lancashire, in point of magnitude. In length it extends about six miles north and south, and its breadth rarely exceeds half-a-mile: it is, therefore, more river-like in form than even its sister-water, which some one apostrophizes as "Wooded Windermere, the river-lake."

The depth of Coniston Water is stated by recent authorities to be 160 feet; but a chart in my possession, made from actual survey by a resident upon its banks, gives 40 fathoms or 240 feet as its greatest depth. It is many years, however, since this survey was made, and it is quite possible that the enormous masses of fine sand that have been brought down by the stream from the ore-dressing works at the copper mines, and partly thrown up in huge banks upon its western shore near the mouth of the stream but, probably, much more extensively deposited in the bed of the lake, have so reduced its depth as to make the lesser figures the more correct; otherwise, Coniston would be as deep as Windermere and surpassed in depth only by Wastwater. Its fish are chiefly perch and pike, which abound. Formerly its char, said to be the finest in the world, were equally abundant, but now that rare and valuable fish has become almost, if not entirely,
extinct in its waters. Various causes have been assigned for this unfortunate disappearance. Some have ascribed it to wasteful and unseasonable "drawing" of the breeding grounds with nets, long practised by the lessees of the fishery; others, to the pike, which increased largely in numbers and voracity during the time that the char was declining. Others, again, have attributed it to the spawn on the breeding banks having been overlaid and buried, year after year, by the washed down sand already noticed; and, lastly, some say that the fish have been poisoned by the minerals held in solution by the water from the mines. It is very probable that all these causes have combined to rob Coniston of its most famous and most important fish; but whatever the cause may be, the result is equally apparent and deplorable. Trout, also, was formerly plentiful; but it too has all but disappeared. Within my recollection solitary fish of this species have been taken, from time to time, of great size (one weighing fourteen pounds) and possessing a flavour and firmness superior even to those of the char itself; but no young or breeding specimens of trout or char have been found for many years.

At its lower extremity Coniston Water is said to be tame; and one of the writers—happily few—who have essayed the facetious in describing the lakes says, "Like most of her "sisters, she is plain about the feet." In so far as the adjacent heights are of much inferior elevation and the whole scenery less strikingly varied at the foot than at the head of the lake, it must be admitted that the Water-foot is comparatively tame and plain; but in any other vicinity—with almost any other standard whereby to judge it—it would be thought anything rather than tame.

The river Crake, issuing from the extreme foot of the lake, runs its lively five-mile course to Morecambe Bay, with a fall of about twenty-eight feet to the mile, through one of the prettiest pastoral valleys in the kingdom; and where it leaves
the lake, the coppice-clad heights of Nibthwaite, the hamlet on its eastern side, and the green meadows and fields, with the scattered homesteads, the brown hills and grey rocks of the little chapelry of Blawith on the west, form a scene that in any other part of England would be thought exceedingly diversified and beautiful. The names of these two places suggest that the derivations of the local nomenclature hereabout are equally various as are the beauties of the scenery. Nibthwaite—"the clearing on the headland"—is Norse. Blawith—"the lair of the wolf"—is Celtic; while the parishes of which they form parts—Colton and Ulverston—and the lake they adjoin—Coniston—are compounds of Celtic, Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon.

The port of Nibthwaite, with its miniature docks and piers, was formerly a spot of some little bustle and liveliness, from being the place of discharge, on their way to Ulverston, for the mineral products of the Coniston hills, which, with quantities of small timber, were brought down the lake in large boats. The trade of Nibthwaite, however, like that of many more important emporia, has been annihilated by the formation of a railway, and the Lake-foot now lies in a state of almost primeval quietude, broken only by an occasional pleasure boat, or the steam gondola on her daily voyages during the months of summer.

A visitor, wishing to see Coniston to advantage on his approach to it, may hardly do better than take a passage up the lake in this screw-propelled gondola, so styled. His attention would probably be first attracted by the fine wooded promontory on which stands the pretty house called Waterpark, and which, until it is doubled by the steamer, seems to landlock the water below it. On the opposite shore—the western—the scenery consists of successive but irregular and often precipitous ranges of rock or crag, grey with lichen or green with ivy, and separated by intervals of purple heath.
and green bracken beds or greener pasture-lands. Beyond these it is broken up into dark, craggy knolls, rising into hills of the same character, pre-eminent amongst which is one bold cone bearing the name of the Beacon Hill—a name suggestive of the times when, as Macaulay sings,

"Skiddaw saw the fire that burn'd on Gaunt's embattled pile,
"And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers of Carlisle."

There can be little doubt but these beacon fires were used at, as well as before and after the date of the event upon which the poet-historian made the fine ballad I have quoted from; but, without disputing his general accuracy, we must remark that the interposition of some of the highest ground in England between Skiddaw and Lancaster would necessitate the use of some intermediate stations like this of Blawith, from which the town and castle of John o' Gaunt are distinctly visible, though more than twenty miles away.

The next prominent object is a bold rocky island which rises steeply from the water and is called Peel Island or Montague Island; but by the country people, following out their custom, already remarked upon, of bestowing on natural objects the names of some homely implement, utensil or garment, suggested by their form, this island is called "the Gridiron." It may be said to be the only island Coniston possesses, for that named "the Fir Island," about half-way up the lake, is so near the eastern strand as to be peninsular, except in wet weather; and a floating island which this water also boasts, is so apt to ground on the shore and remain there till an unusual rise of the lake concurs with a favourable wind to set it afloat again, that it can scarcely be called an island, floating or stationary. When it is afloat and drifting about the lake, however, it must be a pleasing object, being some twenty yards across and covered with young timber. But few have seen it under those circumstances.
Above the Gridiron, and on the western side, the lake receives a small stream called in old charters "the Black Beck of Torver." It drains the primitive little chapelry from which it has its name. The most interesting circumstance connected with Torver is that the faculty for interments in the burial ground of its humble chapel bears the signature of Cranmer. The little church, which was rebuilt about twenty years ago, was, previous to that time, a good specimen of the old chapels in the dales. The deed referred to implies
that other church rites had been performed there long before its date. In the petition for this deed, "ob juga montium interposita," is the reason assigned by the parishioners for asking to be allowed to bury at home, instead of carrying their dead to the mother-church at Ulverston. Near the embouchure of Torver Beck are seen a large bobbin mill, a very pretty farm and, up the hillside at some distance from the farm, a small lonely-looking building, which is a Baptist chapel—one of the many places of worship belonging to that body of dissenters that lie scattered over this district, generally in situations remote and secluded as this. It has been said of these meeting-houses that they were so located to avoid interruption of worship and to escape persecution.

For more than a mile here the lake on either shore possesses little scenic and no historic interest; but after passing the long height called Torver Common we find under its northern shoulder several farms in picturesque situations. One of these called Brackenbarrow occupies the place of the ancient seat of a family, long extinct, of the same name. The adjoining beautiful estate of Hawthwaite and other lands in "Torferghe," "with reasonable ingress and egress from Lidchate of Brakenbergh, to the said land," were given to the monks of Conishead Priory by a Roger de Brakenberg. Sir Robert Brakenbury, who was Lieutenant of the Tower in the reigns of Edward IV and Richard III is said to have been a member of this family, but I have not been able to authenticate the fact.

On the opposite shore, embosomed in the close hanging wood from which it derives its name, nestles the pretty villa called Brantwood, the residence of the foremost and best of our engravers on wood—W. J. Linton, whose wife, Elizabeth Lynn Linton, is well known as one of the many popular
lady novelists of the present day. It was, some years ago, occupied by Gerald Massey, the peasant or artizan-poet; and before its purchase by Mr. Linton, it was for several years of his boyhood and youth the home of the Rev. Charles Hudson, who, as may be remembered, was one of the victims in the terrible accident that occurred on the Matterhorn in 1865. The *Saturday Review*, a periodical not much given to amiable comment, called this lamented gentleman, in an article on the catastrophe by which he perished, "the best and bravest "and stoutest of foot of all the Alpine brotherhood." He was one of the founders of the Alpine club, and one of the party of young Englishmen who first ascended Mont Blanc without guides. It is probable that his early rambles over the rugged and steep fells of Coniston created the taste for mountain adventure which his friends (amongst the earliest of whom I feel a sad pleasure in reckoning myself) have had such awful cause to deplore.

The glorious mountain range of Coniston opens here upon the voyager in all its grandeur and sublimity. These noble hills are of no great altitude—their highest point, "the Old "Man," being only 2,655 feet above the sea; and it may be that their advanced and, apparently, detached position gives them an advantage over the neighbouring fells, or that few others are seen from equally favourable points of view, or perhaps that I have had more opportunity of studying, and taken more pains to make myself acquainted with, their beauties, but I certainly believe that the group of mountains, known as the Coniston range, exhibit more of the picturesque than any other within the four seas of Britain. I have attempted to describe them elsewhere and they have been described by many abler hands; it is therefore unnecessary to repeat such description here.

At the apex or bight of a wide bay nearly opposite to Brantwood stands Coniston Hall, the fine old seat of the
Flemings, now of Rydal. It has for many years been converted into a farm-house, but still shews many traces of its former grandeur. An enthusiastic local author and artist, writing half a century ago, says of Coniston Hall:—"It was, till lately, a splendid ruin, and is yet such when seen from the south and west, but the view from the north is frightful, and must affect with mixed feelings of disgust and sorrow every lover of the picturesque. By way of improvement, the projecting wings have been severed from the main body of the building, and without leaving 'a wreck behind.' All has, however, been scraped down and smoothed to as even a surface as the rugged nature of the materials would allow, without going to the expense of mortar and whitewash;—half way between end and end, has been constructed in an inclined plane, a cart road from the ground to the huge doors of a granary, the chambers of this ancient hall being now used as a depository for corn." Shorn of its original fair proportions and reduced from its ancient dignity as Coniston Hall undoubtedly is, there is still much about it to please any admirer of the substantial domestic architecture of the period when fortification had ceased to be a necessity, and convenience had superseded security as the primary consideration in erecting a hall even in the northern counties. The very thickness of the walls—the massive and lofty chimneys now almost buried in ivy—the stairs, each a long square log of solid oak—the garde-robe formed in the thickness of the wall, on a level with the upper floor—its sedicula also a block of native oak, perforated—the flooring and wainscot-work of the banqueting hall, now a barn, or, as Green says, a granary, and the evidences still remaining of its once much greater extent, all and each present something to interest the lover of antiquity, and must convey to every spectator a vivid idea of its early grandeur and importance.

The family, of which this hall was for several centuries the
principal seat, traces its descent from the second son of Sir Michael le Fleming, who settled, and held large possessions in Furness soon after the Norman Conquest.

The foundation charter of Furness Abbey, executed in 1127 by Stephen, Earl of Mortaigne and Boulogne—afterwards King—grants to that community, amongst other possessions, "quidquid intra Furnes continetur, preter terram Michitis. "Flemengo," who was himself one of the earliest benefactors of the Abbey. The learned and laborious local historian, West, strives to identify this Sir Michael le Fleming with the leader of the same name who was sent by his kinsman Baldwin, Earl of Flanders, in command of his contingent to aid William in the conquest of England, and was much employed by the Conqueror in the intestine wars that followed that great event. The only grounds on which the supposition rests, that this warrior lived for eighty-seven years after the invasion that brought him to England, his last charter to Furness Abbey bearing the date of 1153, are found in the concluding words of that deed—saltem vespertinum being taken as signifying the gift to be an offering to God made in extreme old age—and in the fact that his son and heir was named after the Conqueror. It is, however, much more probable that he was the son or grandson of the Flemish leader than that warrior himself, though no doubt he would be the Michael le Fleming named in the foundation charter sixty-one years after the Conquest.

The line founded by the eldest son of this Sir Michael lapsed by marriage into the name of De Cancefield, then into the house of Harrington, which terminated in that victim of the ambition of others, Lady Jane Grey. The junior branch of the Flemings settled at Carnarvon Castle, the foundations of which are still to be traced near to the village of Becker-mont in Cumberland; but after only two descents they returned to Furness on the acquisition of Coniston and other
manors by marriage with the daughter and heir of Adam de Urswick, and there founded the family of Fleming of Coniston, now represented, as regards possession of the family property, by General le Fleming (late Hughes) of Rydal hall, while the title, following the male line, is borne by Sir Michael le Fleming, a settler in New Zealand. This gentleman, destined probably to establish an old English name and title in a new land, stands, I think, twenty-sixth in descent from his namesake, so often mentioned, Sir Michael of Aldingham. The line of le Fleming has boasted several members worthy of their descent. One served in the Scottish wars of Edward the First and for his services, especially at the famous siege of Carlaverock, received honours and rewards.* Another distinguished himself on board the first ship that discovered the Spanish Armada. Sir Daniel Fleming, who, like his father, suffered severely for his loyalty to the Stuarts, lived, during the interregnum, in studious retirement at Rydal, their Westmoreland manor—acquired by marriage with the heiress of the De Lancasters—became a famous scholar, genealogist, antiquary and annotator—was knighted after the Restoration, and appointed by Charles the Second his first High Sheriff for Cumberland with license under the privy seal to reside out of his Sheriff-dom—sat in Parliament for the borough of Cockermouth and was the father of fifteen children. The eldest of these, Sir William, was the first baronet of the family, and represented Westmoreland during his father's lifetime—the fifth son, Sir George, was Bishop of Carlisle—and the sixth, Michael, whose son came to the title and estates, was major in the Earl of Derby's regiment and served with distinction through the great wars in Flanders. Sir Daniel Fleming,† it is said, left a vast mass of manuscript on archæ-

* So stated by West—but the name is not on the "Roll of Carlaverock."
† The article, le, in this name was generally dropped for many generations. Sir William Fleming restored it baptismally at the christening of his son, the late Sir Michael le Fleming, who is claimed as "my friend" by James Boswell.
ology, local history, and contemporary public events, which, it is to be regretted, has never been put to the uses to which no doubt it was intended by the honoured writer.

The only distinct trace of the residence of this family, besides the hall, that remains at Coniston, is an inscription upon a small and very plain plate of brass let into the wall of the church over a pew assigned to Coniston Hall. It runs thus:

To the living memory of Alice Fleming of Coningston Hall, in the County Palatine of Lancaster, widow (late wife of William Fleming, of Coningston Hall aforesaid Esq., and eldest daughter of Roger Kirkby, of Kirkby, in the said county Esq.,) and of John Kirkby, gentleman, her second brother, was this monument by her three sorrowful sons, Sir Daniel Fleming, Knight, Roger Fleming and William Fleming, gentlemen, to their dear mother and uncle, here erected. The said John Kirkby (having lived above thirty years with his sister, and having given to the churches and poor of Kirkby and Coningston the sum of £150,) died a bachelor at Coningston Hall aforesaid, September 23 A.D. 1680, and was buried near unto this place the next day. And the said Alice Fleming died also (having outlived her late husband about 27 years, and survived five out of her eight children,) at Coningston Hall aforesaid, Feb. 26, 1680, and was buried in this church close by her said brother, Feb. 28, 1680; in the same grave where ye Lady Bold (second wife to John Fleming, Esq., uncle to ye said W. Fleming) had, about 56 years before, been interred.

EPITAPH.

Spectator, stay and view the sacred ground; 
See, it contains such love on earth scarce found; 
A brother and a sister—and you see 
She seeks to find him in mortality. 
First he did leave us, then she stayed and tryed 
To live without him—liked it not, and died. 
Here they ly buried, whose religious zeal 
Appeared sincere to Prince, Church, Commonweal;
Kind to their kindred, faithful to their friends,
Clear in their lives, and cheerful at their ends.
They were both dear to them, whose good intent
Makes them both live in this one monument.
So dear is sacred love, though th’ outward part
Turn dust, it still shall linger round the heart.

I may mention that the Lady Bold whose connection with their family the Flemings thought worthy of placing thus upon record, was the widow of Sir Thomas Bold of Bold Hall and daughter of Sir William Norris of Speke, Knight of the Bath.

Lying westward of Coniston Hall, and curiously sprinkled along the foot of the broken declivity that connects the floor of the vale with the fells, is the village of Church Coniston—distributed in irregular clusters of humble dwellings—some upon the declivity and some below it, but every one of them possessing beauties of its own and every one having its separate designation. These names are of some interest as illustrating the manner in which the early settlers in the dales distinguished their homesteads, for most of them are probably as old as the manor itself. Beginning at the south, we have Parkgate, Outrake, Smartfield, Spoonhall, Piper hole, Hawsebank, The Ghyll, Jenkin syke, Bowmanstead, Doe how, Heethwaite, Catbank, Wraysdale, Gateside, The Brow, Dixon ground, Brigg-end, The Forge, 'Boon beck, Holy-wath, Far-end, Yewdale-bridge &c., or some two dozen distinct groups of houses, mostly of the cottage class, constituting one mile-long village of about 1300 inhabitants, who are chiefly supported by the copper mines and slate quarries.

The church of Coniston, which occupies a position central to the village, is a Chapel of Ease under Ulverston, with a stipend of £146, recently augmented, derived from land, houses, bounty, dividends and fees. It was rebuilt in 1819 on the site of an older edifice. The only part of the former
church that remains is the belfry tower, which, being out of keeping with and small in proportion to the body of the present building, confers but little ecclesiastical and no architectural distinction upon it. The new building is plain even to meanness; but being now well screened by trees and flourishing evergreens—and I may state that evergreens grow here with a luxuriance that I have not seen elsewhere—it is not so offensive to the eye as formerly. The interior has been greatly beautified by improvements made in 1857, the cost being defrayed by subscription. The addition of a reading desk, pulpit, reredos and altar rail in handsomely carved oak, the painting of what used to be an unsightly expanse of white ceiling, in imitation of oak panelling, and the spare but tasteful introduction of tinted glass into the windows, have made the inside as handsome as it is likely to be whilst the pews are allowed to remain. The parish register dates back to 1594. In the vestry is stored a library, chiefly of works on divinity, sermons &c., which have been purchased from time to time with the interest of different sums left by the Fleming family, commencing with £5 under the will of Roger Fleming of Coniston, dated February, 1699. In the vestibule of the southern entrance to the church is kept one of those curious old chests, made from a solid block of oak, like that containing the muniments of the Grammar School at Hawkshead. The only contents of this are a number of slips of paper, each bearing the almost illegible affidavit of two women that the corpse of each person interred was shrouded in cloth only made of woollen material. These worn and fragile evidences of a curious old protective law—for I infer it could only be enacted to support the landed interest—serve, if they do nothing else, to explain the line in Pope which has puzzled many modern readers—

“Odious!—in woollen!—‘twould a saint provoke.”
The following is a copy of one of the most legible of these fugitive records:

Lancr. P.ociall Cappell de Coniston.

We Jennet Dickson wife of Thomas Dickson and Isabella Fleming widow—doe severally make oath that the Corps of Isabel Dickson widow was buryed March ye 15th Ano. Dmj. 1692. And was not putt in, wrapt or wound up in any Shirt, Shift, Sheet or Shroud, Made or mingled with flax, Hemp, Hair, Gold or Silver, &c: nor in any Coffin lined or faced with Cloath &c: nor in any other material but Sheeps wooll onely According to Act of Parliament. In Testimony whereof we ye 2d Jennet Dickson and Isabel Fleming have hereunto putt our Hands and seales the 15th day of March:

Ano. Dmj 1692.

Cap't et Jur' coram me

Henri Mattinson Cust-
de Torver dicimo nono

die Mariij Anno Dom 1693

JENNET DICKSON

her × m²

ISABEL FLEMING

her × m²

The average annual number of marriages in this chapelry is 10; of births 51; of deaths 31; making the rate of mortality rather heavy for a rural population.

The copper mines, which have long been the principal source of employment to the people of Coniston, are situated in a fine basin amongst the hills to the north-west of the village, and are approached by a steep, romantic roadway, cut in the fell-side along the verge of a craggy ravine, called locally a ghyll, down which a stream rushes, forming in its way several fine waterfalls. These mines are of vast extent and great antiquity. There is reason to believe that they were worked by the primeval inhabitants of this country before its occupation by the Romans—weapons and vessels of copper being in common use amongst them before the art of obtaining and working iron was generally known. Recent operations, too, have from time to time disclosed old workings which have obviously been made at a very early period, by the primitive method of lighting great fires upon the veins
containing ore and, when sufficiently heated, pouring cold water upon the rock, and so, by the sudden abstraction of caloric, rending, cracking and making a circumscribed portion workable by the rude implements then in use, specimens of which are still found occasionally in the very ancient parts of the mines, especially small quadrangular wedges perforated for the reception of a handle. This carries our imaginations back to the still earlier times when the great Carthaginian general formed a road for his army over the Alps by somewhat similar means. It is also asserted that these copper mines have been in operation, more or less extensively, since the time of the Romans, and without any intermission, except during the rule of Oliver Cromwell, when they were abandoned for a few years, probably on account of the persecution suffered by the owners, who, as I have said, were obnoxious to the government of that day.

After the Restoration mining operations were resumed here and, as said, have never been entirely suspended since. Between thirty and forty years ago, however, these operations were of a very limited character, being carried on by two or three native miners working on their own account on what is called the tribute principle—that is, allotting a certain fixed proportion of their "gettings" to the lord of the manor. About that time, however, the present Coniston Mining Company took possession of the ground and soon made a great alteration in the manner of working their mines. For many years their shipments averaged 300 tons per month and employed from five to six hundred people. From various causes, however, the mining interests of Coniston have for some years been declining and the number of hands employed do not now exceed two hundred. These mines, I have said, are of vast extent. Levels, as horizontal workings are called, at many different depths, run far into the bowels of the mountains, while shafts, or perpendicular works, communicating
with the levels, have been sunk to the great depth of 236 fathoms or 1416 feet, requiring the workmen employed in them to descend in going to, and to climb in returning from their daily work, a quarter of a mile of perpendicular ladders—an amount of toil that to most of us would be a sufficient day's work of itself. A description in ample detail of this vast system of "shafts and levels," with all the dressing works and other machinery belonging to them—which, though written almost twenty years ago, is tolerably applicable to their present condition—may be found in a little volume called "The Old Man," a copy of which is, I believe, in the library of this Society.

The other great industrial institution of Coniston is the slate quarries, which were formerly wrought much more extensively than now. For many years, notwithstanding the superiority of their slate, both in colour and texture, the quarries of Coniston, in consequence of their distance from, and the heavy expense of cartage to a port, were unable to compete with those of Kirkby, which are close to the sea; consequently they were for many years all but abandoned. Since the formation of the Coniston railway, however, the slate workers there have recovered much of their old spirit and activity; the Coniston and Tilberthwaite quarries employ upwards of a hundred men, and their exports are annually increasing in amount, reaching in the present year about three thousand tons. For an account of the old quarries in this and the neighbouring vale of Tilberthwaite, some of which are very extensively and curiously excavated, I would again refer to the little work just named.

Amongst the Coniston fells and far above the mines several of those small sheets of water called Tarns, common in the lake country, are seen, occupying sites at considerable elevations. In a line beyond the mines from the village lies Leverswater, the largest of the Coniston tarns, being about a
mile in circumference and at a height of 1350 feet above the sea. Another, curiously enough named Low-water, lies under the precipice called Buckbarrow Crags in the eastern side of the Old Man mountain, with an elevation of 1786 feet. A third, at 1646 feet, called Gaits, or Goat's water, probably from being all but inaccessible to any four-footed animal less active than the goat, occupies a deep basin with the Old Man on the eastern, and the towering column-mural rocks called Dow Crags on the west. A fourth, called Blind Tarn, from the curious circumstance that it has no visible inlet or outlet, lies not far from Gaitswater, under the conical peak called Brown Pike. The situations of all these Tarns are wild and romantic in the extreme: some of them abound in trout and small char, and to some odd superstitions and legends are attached.

On the eastern or Monk Coniston side of the lake the scenery is altogether destitute of the grandeur that confronts it on the west. But on the two miles of fairly wooded and cultivated slope that intervenes between Brantwood and the Waterhead are several residences most pleasantly situated and all commanding a view rarely paralleled for richness and variety. In a very agreeable, though, as regards the people, not very accurate, description of the lake district in Knight's "Land we live in," the author, a lady who knows the country well, says of this locality—"There the traveller will assuredly pause, and hope he may never forget what he now sees. He has probably never beheld a scene which conveyed a stronger impression of joyful charm; of fertility, prosperity, comfort nestling in the bosom of the rarest beauty, with the scattered dwellings under their sheltering woods,—the cheerful town, the rich slopes and the dark gorge and summits of Yewdale behind; while the broad water lies as still as heaven between shore and shore." One of the less modern houses on this side of the lake called
Bank-ground, is traditionally said to have been in monkish times the residence of the priest detached from the brotherhood of Furness to administer the offices of his religion to the dales-people around. Another residence, Tent Lodge, was the property and home of the family of which Miss Elizabeth Smith was a member. This estimable lady's virtues and learning I have already alluded to, when noticing her monument in Hawkshead church, but I would recommend the chapter devoted to her and her family history in De Quincey's delightful papers on Lake Society, as remarkably worthy of perusal. In more recent times Tent Lodge has been honoured in being the residence, for two summers, of Alfred Tennyson, who, however, seems to prefer the milder breezes of the Isle of Wight to the bracing gales of Coniston. But as if to maintain its distinction, this tasteful house has, for some years, been tenanted by a near descendant of George Romney, the great painter, the rival and, in genius, said to be the superior of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

The grounds of Tent Lodge adjoin those of Monk Coniston Park, the magnificent seat of Mr. James Garth Marshall, one of the great manufacturing family of that name at Leeds, different members of which have acquired estates in the Lake district of wide extent and great beauty. The term magnificent can hardly be applied to the mansion of Monk Coniston Park, but the demesne surrounding, and the estate connected with it surpass nearly all others in the loveliness, wildness and diversity of the scenery they comprise within their boundaries.

The old Waterhead Inn formerly stood exactly at the head of Coniston water. Its place knows it no more; but it is well remembered by tourists and neighbours as one of the best of those snug old-fashioned houses of entertainment which are fast disappearing, though once so numerous in the rural parts of this country. Many who now approach Conis-
ton by the usual road from Hawkshead or Ambleside seem, as they come upon the blank left by the removal of this hostelry, to miss the expected greeting of an old friend, a feeling that is scarcely removed by the more splendid accommodation and,
as regards scenery, superior site of the new Waterhead Inn, which stands about half a mile from the head of the lake and the same distance from the centre of the village, out upon the fair and fertile plain that with the lake itself forms the appropriate floor of this exquisite valley; and there, assured that I could not leave my friends in better quarters, I must close this section of my subject.