

RAMBLE No. 3.

KELD KIDSON FORCE, CAUTERBY SCAR, &c.

Commencing our third ramble on a bright October morning, from Hawes (where we ended our first ramble), we retraced our steps along the Hawes and Muker Pass until we gained the summit between Staggs Fell (2213 feet) on the right, and Great Shunnor Fell (2351) feet on the left. At this point we left the high road and ascended to the summit of the latter, in order to gratify our curiosity by surveying the extended prospect furnished by the highest elevation in the neighbourhood, which, in point of height, ranks next to Mickle Fell (2591 feet), and therefore the second hill in the North Riding.

On the summit there is a pile of stones, and on this mound we took our stand. To the west, High Seat was the first object that struck our attention. Carrying our eyes in a northern direction, the next eminence is Nine Standards (2153 feet), separated from the former by Birkdale. Still further in this

direction we could perceive the Westmoreland Fells; but owing to a thick, hazy atmosphere, we could only just distinguish the varied forms and broken outlines of the lake mountains in the back ground. In the intermediate space we perceive Birkdale tarn glistening in the sunshine, and surrounded by a wide expanse of brown heath. This sheet of water is a little desolate lake, or tarn, over the brow of the hill, about a quarter of a mile from the highroad passing from Keld to Kirkby Stephen as the traveller enters Birkdale. It is about 20 acres in extent, and is bordered with sedges and moss. Due north from this point is Rogans Seat (2204 feet), and still further with the aid of our glass we could distinguish Mickle Fell at the source of the river Tees. Further east was Great Pin Seat, 1914 feet; Calvey, 1599 feet; and a number of other hills too numerous to mention had we known their names. To the south the prospect is still more extensive and varied, embracing Whernside, Peneghent, Buckden Gable, Great Whernside, &c., which came out in bold relief bounding the horizon in this direction. Below us, looking east, the River Swale meanders in the bottom of a romantic valley, being fed by a thousand mountain rills, which are precipitated down the mountain sides, and ever and anon form gushing waterfalls in their passage to the river.

We returned to the high road, and descending towards the village of Thwaite we had confronting us the rounded mass of Kisden, an insular hill which has imposed itself in the middle of the dale and completely divided Swaledale at this point into two branches.

On arriving at the village of Thwaite, which rests on one of the spurs of Shunnor Fell, we proceeded along the southern side of Kisdén to the village of Keld. From this place we followed the high road to Canterbury Scar, a long escarpment of perpendicular limestone cliffs running for about one thousand yards along the north bank of the Swale.

The light colour and extraordinary thickness of this bed of calcareous deposit indicates that it is the main limestone of the Yoredale series which about a mile further west entirely disappears. The strata in the bed of the river being in a position of inclination about 25 degrees from the western horizon. Beneath the limestone there is a layer of grit, which forms a small fall at the eastern extremity of this range of rocks, and known by the name of Hoggart's Leap. Standing below the fall the spectator has a splendid view. In front is the falling cascade, and in the background a long range of perpendicular or slightly overhanging scars, crowned with elm trees and mountain ash. The hard outlines of the rocks are softened by the gorgeous hues of the ripening foliage as they throw their brown and yellow tints from almost every crevice and cranny.

From this point we returned towards Keld. A walk of half a mile brought us opposite a farm house on our left, called Park House. Behind this house there is a larger fall, at a distance of about 100 yards from the road, where the Swale is propelled over a scar in three parallel columns, in the centre of an amphitheatre of rocks.

About 50 yards below this, West Stonesdale Beck falls into the Swale, emptying itself over a

shelving rock, and forming another fall, broken three times in its descent, at the confluence of the two streams. Both falls are in full view at one and the same time. We followed the stream down for about a hundred yards to another fall, called "Wainby" or "Wainwath" Force or Rapids. Taking our stand in the bed of the river below this, and looking up the stream, the eye takes in at one glance both this cascade and the triple fall we have just previously left behind at Park House.

Each bank of the river is clothed with trees and decked in foliage. A considerable fall of rain had recently swollen the stream, and the river was consequently in full flow. The torrent dashing over the rocks in white spray and with a deafening roar, and thence rolling among the scattered fragments of rock, only to be again precipitated over another frowning precipice, and hurled into another deep basin at every two or three hundred yards of its course.

We immediately re-enter Keld, an antiquated looking village, on the western spur of Kisdan Fell. There is in this village an Independent Chapel, a day school, and a literary institute, forming three sides of a square. This chapel is mentioned by the famous old topographer Lelland, so far back as the year 1540, when it formed a place of worship belonging to the Established Church. In a Churchwarden's account, bearing the date 1695, the following item appears: "For walling up Keld Chapel door, £0 1s. 3d." About twelve years after this the sacred edifice was in ruins, the Episcopalians being evidently too careless and indifferent about spiritual things to keep the chapel in decent repair.

In the year 1789, the place was rebuilt as an Independent Chapel, with a dwelling house for the minister in close proximity, at a cost of £700. The cost was raised by voluntary contributions. Mr. Stillman, the minister, is said to have made a begging excursion from Keld to London, a distance of nearly 300 miles, which he walked on foot and successfully accomplished, his expenses amounting to the infinitesimal sum of *sixpence*—one of the most remarkable feats on record. The school house was built in the year 1842, at a cost of £84 12s. 4½d., and is used as both a day and Sunday school. The present schoolmaster, Mr. Fawcett, of Angram, kindly admitted us into the institute, and gave us free access to the library, consisting of about 400 volumes. This structure was opened in June, 1862, and was erected at a cost of somewhere about £119 0s. 0d. It has doubtless been a great boon to the neighbourhood, and was founded by the unwearied efforts of the late Rev. J. Wilkinson, whose name is a household word in Upper Swaledale.

We are now upon *classic* ground! Keld having given birth to that mighty poet and most versatile novelist of the present age, to wit, John Close, of Poet's Hall, Kirkby Stephen! and of Bowness, Windermere, the last and we may say (with some dubiousness) the greatest of the lake school of poets, "ahem." Although this remarkable embodiment of precocious genius! (who at the age of 16 sent forth his first volume of poems entitled "The Satyrist, or every man in his humour") first drew breath among the rugged rocks and secluded glens of upper Swaledale was he doomed—

"To bloom and blush unseen
And waste his fragrance on the desert air?"