

the insignia of heraldry the sun shone on suits of armour, trophies of the chase, fine furniture, and still finer pictures. Panelling of oak and cedar and carved ceilings relieved by coats of arms in their correct colour added to the beauty of the great writer's treasure-house. More land was purchased, until Scott owned nearly 1,000 acres, and it is estimated that the building cost him over £25,000. A neighbouring Roman road with a ford used in olden days by the abbots of Melrose suggested the name of Abbotsford (see Scott, Sir Walter).

**ABBREVIATIONS.** In writing compositions and in printing articles in books, magazines, and newspapers, only certain abbreviations are used, which are sanctioned by established custom. Signs like "£" and "&" are not, properly speaking, abbreviations, but symbols, though we can see in the sign "&" the Latin word et ("and") from which it arose. Letters in abbreviations are sometimes doubled to indicate a plural or superlative. Thus *p.* means "page," and *pp.* means "pages"; *f* in music means "loudly" (*forte*), and *ff* "very loudly" (*fortissimo*).

**ABELARD, PETER** (1079-1142). All was astir about the cathedral of Paris—not the great Gothic Notre Dame of our day, but its plainer and smaller predecessor of the early 12th century. For the morning bell had rung and from the taverns and hospices and boarding-houses a motley stream of students, laughing and chattering in a mixture of Latin and their mother tongues, was pouring into the enclosures to listen to the lectures of the various masters. In the class-rooms they sat upon the straw-strewn floor, the right knee raised to support the waxed tablets, and for six or seven hours they industriously took notes. In those early days books were few and the teaching was almost all by word of mouth.

Of all the masters, Abelard was the most learned and the most brilliant. The eldest son of the lord of a village in Brittany, he had left castle, the chase, and the life of a noble to become a scholar.

For a time he himself had studied in Paris; but he soon surpassed his teacher in learning, and at the early age of 22 he too had become a master and had begun to teach. He was especially interested in logic, or the art of reasoning, which was not unlike the debating of to-day.

Later he became proficient in theology also, and was soon known as the leading scholar of his time. Students flocked by thousands to hear his lectures and his books in hand-written copies—especially "Sic et Non" ("Yes and No")—were read by all learned men. This book was so called because it was made up of such questions as these:

Should human faith be based upon reason, or no?  
Is God one, or no?  
Is God a substance, or no?

Then came Abelard's romantic but unhappy love affair with Héloïse, a beautiful and accomplished girl, one of his pupils. As marriage would interfere with his rising in the Church, Abelard and Héloïse were secretly united. Their union soon became known and they separated in circumstances of the greatest pain and anguish.

Abelard's popularity made enemies for him among those who were jealous of his influence, and others disagreed with his teachings. For he taught that nothing should be accepted unless it could be proved true, while they believed that religious faith should come first. These opponents, led by Saint Bernard, finally triumphed, and Abelard was condemned as a heretic. Broken in health and saddened by his unhappy love affair, he retired to a monastery where he soon died. But his fame lived after him, and largely as a result of his teachings the University of Paris soon became the chief centre of learning in all Europe.

The noble character of Héloïse, as shown in her letters to Abelard after their separation, has won the admiration of all ages. When she died, after long living as a nun, she was buried by his side. In 1800 their remains were removed to Paris, where they now rest in the cemetery of Père-la-Chaise. A figure of Abelard reclines on the tomb and by its side stands a statue of Héloïse.

**ABERCROMBY (SIR RALPH)** (1734-1801). Perhaps the greatest compliment that can be paid to a soldier is for an enemy to praise him. This happened to Sir Ralph Abercromby, who showed exceptional skill in Holland during the Duke of York's disastrous campaign in 1799, and thereby won the admiration of the Dutch. His chief claim to fame, however, was his brilliant victory at Alexandria in 1801.

Nelson, at the Battle of the Nile, had already cut off Napoleon Bonaparte's expeditionary army from France, to which country its commander had returned. Arriving safely in the

#### PRaised BY ENEMIES



Sir Ralph Abercromby, one of Scotland's heroes, whom even his enemies praised.