

of them, but not nearly all, were school exercises, studies of some of the English poets—Thomson, Gray, and Crabbe were the subjects of three of them. They were of a very elaborate character for a schoolboy of fourteen or fifteen, closely analytical, thoughtful in their judgments, and certainly contained all the biographical information that could possibly have been gathered from the rather scanty libraries at his command. His deepest interest in his younger days was literature, though good thinking and the perfect expression of it, perhaps always appealed to him more than purely imaginative qualities. The study of literature was begun very early, and carried on without much help at school or college, where the opportunities, so far, at least, as English literature is concerned, were scanty enough.

“He had early artistic tastes, if not ambitions, and used to spend much time with a cousin painting landscapes and interiors in water colours. As to his character and demeanour as a young boy, he was sober in manner, very equable in temper, and an inexhaustible asker of questions.”

At sixteen, he entered Aberdeen University,