

were original, the others were either revisions or purifications.

Every one is familiar in a general way with the life of Sir Walter Scott, but we may not have realized how he was on the one hand just an ordinary citizen of Edinburgh, address, 39 North Castle Street, and on the other at the time of his death the most celebrated individual in Northern Britain.

This taxpayer of Edinburgh was, in the republic of letters, the equal of Homer or of Shakespeare. Before he died, Scott had made a fortune for the owner of post-horses on the road to Flodden Field; he had been instrumental in bringing thousands upon thousands of persons and thousands upon thousands of pounds into the Lowlands and Highlands of Scotland every year; and the stream continues to increase in volume though it is some eighty years since Scott died.

Scott's greatness, his uniqueness, has made us forget him as an ordinary Edinburgh citizen; and his being an ordinary Edinburgh citizen has made us forget that, in the lame Scottish lawyer there walked an artist of supreme technique, a historian and antiquary of profound and detailed learning, a creator of types so life-like that we positively refuse to believe they did not live and move in the flesh. We really believe that Jeanie, Effie, and old Davie Deans *did* live in the King's Park, that the Laird of Dumbiedykes really *did* woo as related, that Sir Arthur Wardour *was* hauled over the cliff as described in the "Antiquary". For most of us, Scott's characters are far more real than the Kings of England; he is, in a word, supreme, unapproachable, classic—and yet he was Mr. Scott of 39 North Castle Street. It is this citizen-aspect that Carlyle forces on us in that paragraph of his really great essay when he says: "Shorn of this falsifying nimbus and reduced to his own natural dimensions, there remains the reality, Wal-

ter Scott", and he goes on to deny him the epithet "great". I fancy there are few whose opinion is worth anything who would agree with Carlyle that Scott's fame was a "falsifying nimbus". Whichever way you take Scott he was great, even in his ambition, as Carlyle does not fail to point out. Consider the capacity of this man, this semi-invalid; the sheer physical and mental capacity of the man who, dying at sixty-one, could be the author of half a hundred volumes of poetry, fiction, history, archaeology, biography, criticism—who could do his daily work in Edinburgh from ten till four like any one else, could perform his duties as Sheriff in the country, could entertain innumerable friends and be entertained by as many, could walk, ride, fish, shoot, as though he had no other life than that of the laird to live.

If any man was ever "all things to all men" it was Scott; the friend of Tom Purdy was also the President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh; the same man who would sup riotously with Johnny Ballantyne in St. John Street, Canongate, or with the Edinburgh Rifle Volunteers, could also dine with Pitt, with the Prince Regent, the Duchess of Kent and the future Queen Victoria. But more than all this: he is dashed from the heights of prosperity to the very depths of financial distress, acute distress to a man of Scott's sensitive honesty. But he is not dismayed; he takes Mrs. Brown's lodgings in North Saint David Street and begins to write "The Life of Napoleon" and "Woodstock" to pay off the debt—writes with his fingers covered with chilblains and away from his wife in her last illness. His wife dies before he can reach Abbotsford, and when he gets there he sees—not his Charlotte, but "a yellow mask with pinched features". "I will not look on it again; it is not my Charlotte." He comes back to the blankness of that. "I ask, if my Charlotte can actually be