

which, so far as language or sentiment is concerned, might not have been written by a native of any part of the island. Even the scenes and characters of his great poems are partly English, and only to a small extent taken from Scott's own Lowlands. The Lowland Scotch generally were Presbyterians and Whigs: Scott was an Episcopalian and a Tory. He descended, and loved to trace his descent, from the wild Borderers who were not more Scotch than English. His solidity of character, his geniality, his shrewdness, like his massive head and shaggy brows, were of Southern Scotland; but a Southern Scotchman is a Northern Englishman. On the other hand, his genius and education were in an important sense Scotch, as not being classical: he knew no Greek, and his Latin was not so much classical as mediæval. He belonged entirely either to his own day or to the feudal age. Of Italian and Spanish Romance he had a tincture, but no deep dye.

The poetry of Scott flowed from a nature in which strength, high spirit, and active energy were united with tender sensibility and with an imagination wonderfully lively and directed by historic and antiquarian surroundings and by personal associations towards the feudal past. Homer may have been a warrior debarred from battle by blindness: Scott would perhaps have been a soldier if he had not been lame. War and its pageantry were his delight. He was the ardent quarter-master of a volunteer corps, and rode a hundred miles in twenty-four hours to muster, composing a poem by the way. It was not the only poem he composed on horseback. "Oh! man, I had many a grand gallop among those braes when I was thinking of Marmion." In boyhood, despite his lameness, he was renowned as a pugilist, both "in single fight and mixed affray," and in

after-life he was a keen sportsman, though he liked the chase best when it took him to historic scenes.

He loved to be, and to be thought, a man of action. Set to the law, though he did not love it, he faced the hard work gallantly, and could boast that when he was at the oar, no man pulled it harder: in fact it seems that had not his literary genius called him away he might have been a good lawyer. Of literature as a profession, he was not so proud as he ought to have been, though no man ever pursued it more steadily or made more by it. He thought much of his pedigree, which connected him through Border chiefs with the House of Buccleuch, and above all things he desired to be a gentleman. "Author as I am, I wish these good people would recollect that I began with being a gentleman and don't mean to give up the character." In his eagerness to become the owner of a lordship and of the rank attached to it, which had a romantic as well as a social value in his eyes, he wrecked his fortune and brought on his declining age tragic calamity, which he faced with unquailing courage. The character of the strong and proud man with the weaknesses attendant on pride underlies all his productions.

"The Violet" is the memorial of an early cross in love, which perhaps left its trace on Scott's character in a shade of pensiveness. He afterwards made a marriage of intellectual disparagement, but in his family as in his social relations he was happy. Loved by all, men and animals, he embraced in his sympathies everything that was not mean or cowardly. Though himself a keen Tory, he reconciled in his art Tory and Whig, Cavalier and Covenantant, Catholic and Puritan. He loves to depict the mutual courtesies of generous foes. Once he forgot his chivalry in attacking Fox; but in the introduction to