

style of living was reduced to the most modest expenditure; his habits of life were changed that he might devote himself unremittingly to his great task. In two years, between January 1826 and January 1828, he earned nearly £40,000 for his creditors. By the close of 1830 he had lessened the indebtedness of Ballantyne & Co. by £63,000, and had his health been continued a few years longer, he would doubtless have accomplished his undertaking. But before he was fifty, his constitution had already given signs of being seriously impaired, doubtless the result of too continuous application; in 1819 his life had been for a time in danger, and from this date he was physically an old man. It was inevitable that the prodigious exertions which he put forth after the bankruptcy should tell upon his strength. There were besides worry and nervous tension of various kinds. His wife died; sadness and sorrow in various forms gathered about him. Symptoms of paralysis became apparent; his mind, as he himself felt, no longer worked in the old fashion. "I have suffered terribly, that is the truth," he writes in his diary, May 1831, "rather in body than in mind, and I often wish I could lie down and sleep without waking. But I will fight it out if I can." As the disease of the brain made progress he was seized with the happy illusion that he had paid all his debts. After an unsuccessful attempt to improve his health by a voyage to Italy, he returned, to die, Sept. 21st, 1832, in his own Ahbotsford, amidst the scenes which he knew and loved so well. In 1847, the object he so manfully struggled for was attained. From the proceeds of his works, his life insurance, and the copyright of his *Life* which his biographer and son-in-law, Lockhart, generously devoted to this purpose, the debts were paid in full, and the estate of Ahbotsford left free of incumbrance; but his ambition to found a family was not realized; the male line became extinct not many years after Sir Walter's death, and the estate of Ahbotsford fell to a great granddaughter—his only surviving descendant.

It is impossible within the limits of this brief sketch to give any adequate idea of Scott's varied and active life, and of the many ways in which he came into contact with men and things. But it is sufficiently evident that he was no recluse like Wordsworth, that his temperament was not one which led him to think profoundly, to search out the inner meanings and less obvious aspects of things, or to brood over his own moods and feelings. He found happiness in activity and in social life. Though a literary man, and, from childhood, a great reader, he was not prone, as bookish people often are, to over-estimate