

inactive works than the most exact scholarship which is the aim of university training. Scott said that if his father had left him an estate of five or six hundred pounds he should have spent his lifetime in miscellaneous reading and not in working. How much the world owes to his lack of inherited wealth is plain in the case of Walter Scott, and is illustrated in that of hundreds of other great writers.

To the copious stores of learning to be found in books Walter added a wonderful keen observation of men and manners. His perceptive faculties were of the first order, and with his extraordinary natural gifts of memory and early-formed habits of reproducing what he heard or read or saw which was most striking, he acquired a gift of expression, of rare facility, vividness and power.

But more than all, and above all, perhaps, in influence upon Scott's imagination, must be ranked the wild and beautiful scenery of his native land. Born in 1771 in Edinburgh, the most picturesque of British cities, under the shadow of Edinburgh Castle, whose towering and splendid architecture overtops a frowning precipice of four hundred feet in height, Scott soon became an enthusiast for all that was stately and beautiful and grand in nature and in art. His early excursions made him acquainted with the finest scenery in the Lowlands, and the more rugged and mountainous Highlands afterwards became to him familiar ground. The river Tweed, which he had rendered as famous as the Rhine or the Tiber, runs for a hundred miles through a region presenting almost every variety of scenery of which Scotland can boast.

With all these influences contributing to form his character, with all-devouring reading of works of imagination, with the intercourse of scholars and ballad-dealers, and antiquarians full of legendary lore, with the splendid scenery of Scotland ever before his eyes, what wonder that Walter Scott became a poet and a writer of fiction? His intellect was steeped in romance from the cradle.

If we turn from Scott the writer to Scott the man we shall find a character full of simplicity, energy, kindness and devotion to his work. Walter Scott was a manly, brave, high-souled gentleman. Cast physically in an ample mould, fully six feet in height,