

in 1738 was there an English book produced by a Scotchman within the limits of the country, which Englishmen could recognise as really written in their own tongue. But the necessary mastery of the language once acquired, it was an inevitable consequence of the native mass and quality of the Scottish mind that it should make itself felt in British literature; though, of course, why it should have given to Britain at nearly the same time its two greatest historians, its first and greatest political economist, and a philosophy destined to be known as peculiarly the Scotch philosophy all over the world, cannot, of course, be so readily shown.

It is greatly easier to say why such talent should have found a permanent centre in Edinburgh. Simple as it may seem, the prescriptive right of the capital to draft to its pulpits the *elite* of the Established clergy did more for it than almost aught else. Robertson the historian had been minister of Gladsmuir; Henry the historian, minister of a Presbyterian congregation in Berwick; Hugh Blair, minister of Collessie; Finlayson, so distinguished at one time for his sermons, and a meritorious Logic Professor in the University, had been minister of Borthwick; Macknight, the Harmonist of the Gospels, minister of Jedburgh; and Dr John Erskine, minister of Kirkintilloch. But after they had succeeded in making themselves known by their writings, they were all concentrated in Edinburgh, with not a few other able and brilliant men; and, in an age in which the Scottish clergy, whatever might be their merely professional merits as a class, were perhaps the most literary in Europe, such a privilege could not fail to reflect much honour on the favoured city for whose special benefit it was exerted. The University, too, was singularly fortunate in its professors, and in especial in its school of anatomy and medicine, long maintained in high repute by the Monroes, Cullens, and Gregories, and which reckoned among its offshoots, though they concentrated their