

CHAPTER V.

"The wise
Shook their white aged heads o'er me, and said,
Of such materials wretched men were made."

BYRON.

THE report went abroad about this time, not without some foundation, that Miss Bond purposed patronizing me. The copy of my verses which had fallen into her hands—a genuine holograph—bore atop a magnificent view of the Doocot, in which horrid crags of burnt umber were perforated by yawning caverns of Indian-ink, and crested by a dense pine forest of sap-green; while vast waves, blue on the one side and green on the other, and bearing blotches of white lead atop, rolled frightfully beneath. And Miss Bond had concluded, it was said, that such a genius as that evinced by the sketch and the "poem" for those sister arts of painting and poesy in which she herself excelled, should not be left to waste itself uncared for in the desert wilderness. She had published, shortly before, a work, in two slim volumes, entitled, "Letters of a Village Governess,"—a curious kind of medley, little amenable to the ordinary rules, but a genial book, notwithstanding, with more heart than head about it; and not a few of the incidents which it related had the merit of being true. It was an unlucky merit for poor Miss Bond. She dated her book from Fortrose, where she taught what was designated in the Almanac as the boarding-school of the place, but which, accord-