

in importance when we can deem it the earnest of future good fortune. I met, too, with a kind and influential friend in one of the professors, the late Dr. Wilkie, — alas! good, benevolent man! you may see his tomb yonder beside the wall; and on my return from St. Andrews at the close of the session, I found my father on his death-bed. My brother Henry, who had been unfortunate, and, I am afraid, something worse, had quitted the counting-house, and entered aboard of a man-of-war as a common sailor; and the poor old man, whose heart had been bound up in him, never held up his head after.

“On the evening of my father’s funeral I could have lain down and died. I never before felt how thoroughly I am unfitted for the world, how totally I want strength. My father, I have said, had intended me for the church; and in my progress onward from class to class, and from school to college, I had thought but little of each particular step as it engaged me for the time, and nothing of the ultimate objects to which it led. All my more vigorous aspirations were directed to a remote future and an unsubstantial shadow. But I had witnessed beside my father’s bed what had led me seriously to reflect on the ostensible aim for which I lived and studied; and the more carefully I weighed myself in the balance, the more did I find myself wanting. You have heard of Mr. Brown of the Secession, the author of the ‘Dictionary of the Bible.’ He was an old acquaintance of my father’s, and, on hearing of his illness, had come all the way from Haddington to see him. I felt, for the first time, as, kneeling beside his bed, I heard my father’s breathings becoming every moment shorter and more difficult, and listened to the prayers of the clergyman, that I had no business in the church. And thus I still