

they have broken his heart; and then they will go to his grave too. O, dearest mother! do lay your cool hand on my brow."

He lay silent and exhausted, and in a few minutes I could hope, from the hardness of his breathing, that he had fallen asleep.

"How long," I inquired of his sister, in a low whisper, "has Mr. Ferguson been so unwell; and what has injured his head?"

"Alas!" said the girl, "my brother has been unsettled in mind for nearly the last six months. We first knew it one evening on his coming home from the country, where he had been for a few days with a friend. He burnt a large heap of papers that he had been employed on for weeks before, — songs and poems that, his friends say, were the finest things he ever wrote; but he burnt them all, for he was going to be a preacher of the Word, he said, and it did not become a preacher of the Word to be a writer of light rhymes. And O, sir! his mind has been carried ever since; but he has been always gentle and affectionate, and his sole delight has lain in reading the Bible. Good Dr. Erskine, of the Gray-friars, often comes to our house, and sits with him for hours together: for there are times when his mind seems stronger than ever; and he sees wonderful things, that seem to hover, the minister says, between the extravagance natural to his present sad condition, and the higher flights of a philosophic genius. And we had hoped that he was getting better; but O, sir! our hopes have had a sad ending. He went out, a few evenings ago, to call on an old acquaintance; and, in descending a stair, missed footing, and fell to the bottom; and his head has been fearfully injured by the stones. He has been just as you have seen