

We parted. The poet, sadly and unwillingly, went to copy deeds in the office of the commissary-clerk; and I, almost reconciled to obscurity and hard labor, to assist in unlading a Baltic trader in the harbor of Leith.

## CHAPTER VI.

Speech without aim, and without end employ.

CRABBE.

AFTER the lapse of nine months, I again returned to Edinburgh. During that period I had been so shut out from literature and the world, that I had heard nothing of my friend the poet; and it was with a beating heart I left the vessel, on my first leisure evening, to pay him a visit. It was about the middle of July. The day had been close and sultry, and the heavens overcharged with gray ponderous clouds; and as I passed hurriedly along the walk which leads from Leith to Edinburgh, I could hear the newly-awakened thunder, bellowing far in the south, peal after peal, like the artillery of two hostile armies. I reached the door of the poet's humble domicile, and had raised my hand to the knocker, when I heard some one singing from within, in a voice by far the most touchingly mournful I had ever listened to. The tones struck on my heart; and a frightful suspicion crossed my mind, as I set down the knocker, that the singer was no other than my friend. But in what wretched circumstances! what fearful state of mind! I shuddered as I listened, and heard the strain waxing louder and yet more