

him ever since; and oh! I much fear he cannot now recover. Alas! my poor brother!—never, never was there a more affectionate heart.”

## CHAPTER VII.

A lowly muse!  
She sings of reptiles yet in song unknown.

I RETURNED to the vessel with a heavy heart; and it was nearly three months from this time ere I again set foot in Edinburgh. Alas for my unfortunate friend! He was now an inmate of the asylum, and on the verge of dissolution. I was thrown by accident, shortly after my arrival at this time, into the company of one of his boon companions. I had gone into a tavern with a brother sailor,—a shrewd, honest skipper from the north country; and, finding the place occupied by half-a-dozen young fellows, who were growing noisy over their liquor, I would have immediately gone out again, had I not caught, in the passing, a few words regarding my friend. And so, drawing to a side-table, I sat down.

“Believe me,” said one of the toppers, a dissolute-looking young man, “it’s all over with Bob Ferguson,—all over; and I knew it from the moment he grew religious. Had old Brown tried to convert me, I would have broken his face.”

“What Brown?” inquired one of his companions.

“Is that all you know?” rejoined the other. “Why, John Brown, of Haddington, the Seceder. Bob was at