

hand ordinary men,—for the extraordinary rise above all the modifying influences of profession—are the processes through which tailors and hair-dressers put on their distinctive characters as such. A village smith hears well nigh as much gossip as a village barber; but he develops into an entirely different sort of man. He is not bound to please his customers by his talk; nor does his profession leave his breath free enough to talk fluently or much; and so he listens in grim and swarthy independence,—strikes his iron while it is hot,—and when, after thrusting it into the fire, he bends himself to the bellows, he drops, in rude phrase, a brief judicial remark, and again falls sturdily to work. Again, the shoemaker may be deemed, in the merely mechanical character of his profession, near of kin to the tailor. But such is not the case. He has to work amid paste, wax, oil, and blacking, and contracts a smell of leather. He cannot keep himself particularly clean; and, although a nicely-finished shoe be all well enough in its way, there is not much about it on which conceit can build. No man can set up as a beau on the strength of a prettily-shaped shoe; and so a beau the shoemaker is not, but, on the contrary, a careless, manly fellow, who, when not overmuch devoted to Saint Monday, gains, usually, in his course through life, a considerable amount of sense. Shoemakers are often in large proportions intelligent men; and Bloomfield, the poet, Gifford, the critic and satirist, and Carey, the missionary, must certainly be regarded as thoroughly respectable contributions from the profession, to the worlds of poetry, criticism and religion.

The professional character of the mason varies a good deal in the several provinces of Scotland, according to the various circumstances in which he is placed. He is in general a blunt manly, taciturn fellow, who, without much of the Radical or Chartist about him, especially if wages be good and employment abundant, rarely touches his hat to a gentleman. His employment is less purely mechanical than many others: he is not like a man carelessly engaged in pointing needles or fashioning pin-heads. On the contrary, every stone he lays or