

had it become mine, than, in consequence of some alterations in the harbor, the greater part of the shipping that used to lie at the Coal-hill removed to a lower reach: the tap-room business suddenly fell off, and the rent sank, during the course of one twelvemonth, from twenty-four to twelve pounds. And then, in its sere and wintry state, the unhappy house came to be inhabited by a series of miserable tenants, who, though they sanguinely engaged to pay the twelve pounds, never paid them. I still remember the brief, curt letters from our agent, the late Mr. Veitch, town-clerk of Leith, that never failed to fill my mother with terror and dismay, and very much resembled, in at least the narrative parts, jottings by the poet Crabbe for some projected poem on the profligate poor. Two of our tenants made moonlight flittings just on the eve of the term; and though the little furniture which they left behind them was duly roused at the cross, such was the inevitable expense of the transaction, that none of the proceeds of the sale reached Cromarty. The house was next inhabited by a stout female, who kept a certain description of lady-lodgers; and for the first half-year she paid the rent most conscientiously; but the authorities interfering, there was another house found for her and her ladies in the neighborhood of the Calton, and the rent of the second half-year remained unpaid. And as the house lost, in consequence of her occupation, the modicum of character which it had previously retained, it lay for five years wholly untenanted, save by a mischievous spirit,—the ghost, it was said, of a murdered gentleman, whose throat had been cut in an inner apartment by the ladies, and his body flung by night into the deep mud of the harbor. The ghost was, however, at length detected by the police, couching, in the form of one of the ladies themselves, on a lair of straw in the corner of one of the rooms, and exorcised into Bridewell; and then the house came to be inhabited by a tenant who had both the will and the ability to pay. One year's rent, however, had to be expended in repairs; and ere the next year passed, the heritors of the parish were rated for the erection of the magnificent parish church of North Leith, with its tall