

of old in the neighborhood of Cromarty, which, in the midst of the Highlands and *Moderate* indifference that characterized the greater part of the north of Scotland during the seventeenth century, had furnished the Bass with not a few of its most devoted victims. Mackilligen of Alness, Hogg of Kiltarn, and the Rosses of Tain and Kincardine, had been incarcerated in its dungeons; and, when laboring in the Cromarty quarries in early spring, I used to know that it was time to gather up my tools for the evening, when I saw the sun resting over the high-laying farm which formed the patrimony of another of its better-known victims,—young Fraser of Brea. And so I looked with a double interest on the bold sea-girt rock, and the sun-gilt cloud that rose over its scared forehead, like that still brighter halo which glorifies it in the memories of the Scottish people. Many a long-cherished association drew my thoughts to Edinburgh. I was acquainted with Ramsay, and Fergusson, and the “Humphrey Clinker” of Smollett, and had read the description of the place in the “Marmion” and the earlier novels of Scott; and I was not yet too old to feel as if I were approaching a great magical city,—like some of those in the “Arabian Nights,”—that was even more intensely poetical than Nature itself. I did somewhat chide the tantalizing mist, that, like a capricious showman, now raised one corner of its curtain, and anon another, and showed me the place at once very indistinctly, and only by bits at a time; and yet I know not that I could in reality have seen it to greater advantage, or after a mode more in harmony with my previous conceptions. The water in the harbor was too low, during the first hour or two after our arrival, to float our vessel, and we remained tacking in the roadstead, watching for the signal from the pier-head which was to intimate to us when the tide had risen high enough for our admission; and so I had sufficient time given me to con over the features of the scene, as presented in detail. At one time a flat reach of the New Town came full into view, along which, in the general dimness, the multitudinous chimneys stood up like stacks of corn in a field newly reaped; at another, the Castle loomed