

## CHAPTER XV.

“See Inebriety, her wand she waves,  
And lo! her pale, and lo! her purple slaves.”

CRABBE.

I WAS joined in the course of a few weeks, in Peggy Russel's one-roomed cottage, by another lodger,—lodgers of the humbler class usually consociating together in pairs. My new companion had lived for some time, ere my arrival at Niddry, in a neighboring domicile, which, as he was what was termed a “quiet living man,” and as the inmates were turbulent and unsteady, he had, after bearing a good deal, been compelled to quit. Like our foreman, he was a strict Seceder, in full communion with his Church. Though merely a common laborer, with not more than half the wages of our skilled workmen, I had observed, ere our acquaintance began, that no mason in the squad was more comfortably attired on week-days than he, or wore a better suit on Sunday; and so I had set him down, from the circumstance, as a decent man. I now found that, like my uncle Sandy, he was a great reader of good books,—an admirer even of the same old authors,—deeply read, like him, in Durham and Rutherford,—and entertaining, too, a high respect for Baxter, Boston, old John Brown, and the Erskines. In one respect, however, he differed from both my uncles: he had begun to question the excellence of religious Establishments; nay, to hold that the country might be none the worse were its ecclesiastical en-