

his knees. But though he sometimes stole to his bed when John chanced to be a little later in taking the book than usual, and got into a profound slumber ere the prayer began, he deferred to the majority, and gave us no active opposition. He was not a vicious man: his intellect had slept through life, and he had as little religion as an old horse or dog; but he was quiet and honest, and, to the measure of his failing ability, a faithful worker in his humble employments. His religious training, like that of his brother villagers, seemed to have been sadly neglected. Had he gone to the parish church on Sunday, he would have heard a respectable moral essay read from the pulpit, and would, of course, have slept under it; but William, like most of his neighbors, preferred sleeping out the day at home, and never did go to the church; and as certainly as he went not to the teacher of religion, the teacher of religion never came to him. During the ten months which I spent in the neighborhood of Niddry Mill, I saw neither minister nor missionary. But if the village furnished no advantageous ground on which to fight the battle of religious Establishments,—seeing that the Establishment was of no manner of use there,—it furnished ground quite as unsuitable for the class of Voluntaries who hold that the supply of religious instruction should, as in the case of all other commodities, be regulated by the demand. Demand and supply were admirably well balanced in the village of Niddry: there was no religious instruction, and no wish or desire for it.

The masons at Niddry House were paid fortnightly, on a Saturday night. Wages were high,—we received two pounds eight shillings for our two weeks' work; but scarce half-a-dozen in the squad could claim at settlement the full tale, as the Monday and Tuesday after pay-night were usually blank days, devoted by two-thirds of the whole to drinking and debauchery. Not often has wages been more sadly misspent than by my poor work-fellows at Niddry, during this period of abundant and largely-remunerated employment. On receiving their money, they set straightway off for Edinburgh, in parties of threes and fours; and until the evening of the following Mon-