

day or Tuesday I saw no more of them. They would then come dropping in, pale, dirty, disconsolate-looking,—almost always in the re-actionary state of unhappiness which succeeds intoxication—(they themselves used to term it “*the horrors*”)—and with their nervous system so shaken, that rarely until a day or two after did they recover their ordinary working ability. Narratives of their adventures, however, would then begin to circulate through the squad,—adventures commonly of the “Tom and Jerry” type; and always, the more extravagant they were, the more was the admiration which they excited. On one occasion, I remember (for it was much spoken about as a manifestation of high spirit) that three of them, hiring a coach, drove out on the Sunday to visit Roslin and Hawthornden, and in this way spent their six pounds so much in the style of gentlemen, that they were able to get back to the mallet without a farthing on the evening of Monday. And as they were at work on Tuesday in consequence, they succeeded, as they said, in saving the wages of a day usually lost, just by doing the thing so genteely. Edinburgh had in those times a not very efficient police, and, in some of its less reputable localities, must have been dangerous. Burke found its West Port a fitting scene for his horrid trade a good many years after; and from the stories of some of our bolder spirits, which, though mayhap exaggerated, had evidently their nucleus of truth, there was not a little of the violent and the lawless perpetrated in its viler haunts during the years of the speculation mania. Four of our masons found, one Saturday evening, a country lad bound hand and foot on the floor of a dark inner room in one of the dens of the High Street; and such was the state of exhaustion to which he was reduced, mainly through the compression of an old apron wrapped tightly round his face, that though they set him loose, it was some time ere he could muster strength enough to crawl away. He had been robbed by a bevy of women whom he had been foolish enough to treat; and on threatening to call in the watchman, they had fallen upon a way of keeping him quiet, which, save for the interference of my wild fellow-workmen,