

the Royal Society, or the court of France. The great Printer, though recognized by accomplished politicians as a profound statesman, and by men of solid science as "the most rational of the philosophers," was regarded by his poor brother compositors as merely an odd fellow, who did not conform to their drinking usages, and whom it was therefore fair to teaze and annoy as a contemner of the *sacrament* of the *chapel*.\*

The life of my friend was, however, pitched on a better and higher tone than that of most of his brother unionists. It was intellectual and moral, and its happier hours were its hours of quiet self-improvement, when, throwing himself on the resources within, he forgot for the time the unions and combinations that entailed upon him much troublesome occupation, but never did him any service. I regretted, however, to find that a distrust of his own powers was still growing upon him, and narrowing his circle of enjoyment. On asking him whether he still amused himself with his flute, he turned, after replying with a brief "Oh no," to a comrade with whom he had lived for years, and quietly said to him, by way of explaining the question, "Robert, I suppose you don't know I was once a grand flute-player!" And sure enough Robert did not know. He had given up, too, his water-color drawing, in which his taste was decidedly fine; and even in oils, with which he still occasionally engaged himself, instead of casting himself full on nature, as at an earlier period, he had become a copyist of the late Rev. Mr. Thomson of Duddingstone, at

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\* The kind of club into which the compositors of a printing-house always form themselves has from time immemorial been termed a *chapel*; and the petty tricks by which Franklin was annoyed were said to be played him by the chapel ghost. "My employer desiring," he says, "after some weeks, to have me in the composing-room, I left the pressmen. A new *bien venu* for drink, being five shillings, was demanded of me by the compositors. I thought it an imposition, as I had paid one to the pressmen. The master thought so too, and forbade my paying it. I stood out two or three weeks, was accordingly considered as an *excommunicate*, and had so many little pieces of private malice practiced on me by mixing my sorts, transposing and breaking my matter, &c., &c., if ever I stepped out of the room, and all ascribed to the *chapel ghost*, which, they said, ever haunted those not regularly admitted, that, notwithstanding my master's protection, found myself obliged to comply and pay the money."