

but the second "year of his time," who used to fret even her temper, and who, after making trial of I know not how many other professions, now began to find that his genius did not lie to the mallet. Davie was stage-mad; but for the stage nature seemed to have fitted him rather indifferently: she had given him a squat ungainly figure, an inexpressive face, a voice that in its intonations somewhat resembled the grating of a carpenter's saw, and, withal, no very nice conception of either comic or serious character; but he could recite in the "big bow-wow style," and think and dream of only plays and play-actors. To Davie the world and its concerns seemed unworthy of a moment's care, and the stage appeared the only great reality. He was engaged, when I first made his acquaintance, in writing a play, with which he had already filled a whole quire of foolscap, without, however, having quite entered upon the plot; and he read to me some of the scenes in tones of such energy, that the whole village heard. Though written in the kind of verse which Dr. Young believed to be the language of angels, his play was sad stuff; and when he paused for my approbation, I ventured to suggest an alteration in one of the speeches. "There, Sir," said Davie, in the vein of Cambyses, "take the pen; let me see, Sir, how *you* would turn it." I accordingly took the pen, and re-wrote the speech. "Hum," said Davie, as he ran his eye along the lines, "that, Sir, is mere poetry. What, think you, could the great Kean make of feeble stuff like that? Let me tell you, Sir, you have no notion whatever of stage effect." I, of course, at once acquiesced; and Davie, mollified by my submission, read to me yet another scene. Cha, however, of whom he stood a good deal in awe, used to tease him not a little about his play. I have heard him inquire sedulously about the development of the story and the management of the characters, and whether he was writing the several parts with a due eye to the capabilities of the leading actors of the day; and Davie, not quite sure, apparently, whether Cha was in joke or earnest, was usually on these occasions very chary of reply.

Davie, had he but the means of securing access, would have