

mittent gleam of the Inchkeith light now brightening and now fading, as the lanthorn revolved. In short, the winter passed not unpleasantly away : I had now nothing to annoy me in the work-shed ; and my only serious care arose from my unlucky house in Leith, for which I found myself summoned one morning by an officer-looking man, to pay nearly three pounds,—the last instalment which I owed, I was told, as one of the heritors of the place, for its fine new church. I must confess I was wicked enough to wish, on this occasion, that the property on the Coal-hill had been included in the judgment on the Musical Festival. But shortly after, not less to my astonishment than delight, I was informed by Mr. Veitch that he had at length found a purchaser for my house ; and, after getting myself served heir to my father before the court of the Canongate, and paying a larger arrear of feu-duty to that venerable corporation, in which I had to recognize my feudal superior, I got myself as surely dissevered from the Coal-hill as paper and parchment could do it, and pocketed, in virtue of the transaction, a balance of about fifty pounds. As nearly as I could calculate on what the property had cost us, from first to last, the *composition* which it paid was one of about five shillings in the pound. And such was the concluding passage in the history of a legacy which threatened for a time to be the ruin of the family. When I last passed along the Coal-hill, I saw my umquhile house existing as a bit of dingy wall, a single storey in height, and perforated by three narrow old-fashioned doors, jealously boarded up, and apparently, as in the days when it was mine, of no manner of use in the world. I trust, however, it is no longer the positive mischief to its proprietor that it was to me.

The busy season had now fairly commenced : wages were fast mounting up to the level of the former year, which they ultimately overtopped ; and employment had become very abundant. I found, however, that it might be well for me to return home for a few months. The dust of the stone which I had been hewing for the last two years had begun to affect my lungs, as they had been affected in the last autumn of my ap-