

hurled them against the wall, first the one and then the other, until they came rebounding back across the room ; and then, with an exclamation that need not be repeated, he dashed himself down again. I did my best to comfort his poor mother, who seemed to feel very keenly the slight done to her son, and to anticipate with dread the scandal and gossip of which it would render her humble household the subject. She seemed sensible, however, that he had made an escape, and at once acquiesced in my suggestion, that all that should now be done would be to get every expense her son had been at in his preparations for housekeeping and the wedding, transferred to the shoulders of the other party. And such an arrangement could, I thought, be easily effected through the bride's brother, who seemed to be a reasonable man, and who would be aware also that a suit at law could be instituted in the case against his sister ; though in any such suit I held it might be best for both parties not to engage. And at the old woman's request, I set out with the carpenter to wait on the bride's brother, in order to see whether he was not prepared for some such arrangement as I suggested, and, besides, able to furnish us with some explanation of the extraordinary step taken by the bride.

We were overtaken, as we passed along the street, by a person who was, he said, in search of us, and who now requested us to accompany him ; and, threading our way, under his guidance, through a few narrow lanes that traverse the assemblage of houses on the west bank of the Ness, we stopped at the door of an obscure alehouse. This, said our conductor, we have found to be the retreat of the bride. He ushered us into a room occupied by some eight or ten persons, drawn up on the opposite sides, with a blank space between. On the one side sat the bride, a high-colored, buxom young girl, serene and erect as Britannia on the halfpennies, and guarded by two stout fellows, masons or slaters apparently, in their working dresses. They looked hard at the carpenter and me as we entered, of course regarding us as the assailants against whom they would have to maintain their prize. On the other side sat a group of the bride's relatives,—among the rest her