

chosen the liberal professions, had fairer prospects than I ; and as for the item of good looks, had she set her affections on even the least likely of them, I could have addressed him, with perfect sincerity, in the words of the old ballad :—

“Nae wonder, nae wonder, Gil Morrice,  
My lady lo’es ye weel :  
The fairest part o’ my body  
Is blacker than thy heel.”

Strange to say, however, much about the time that I made my discovery, my young friend succeeded in making a discovery also ;—the maid’s husband shared on her part the same fate as the bachelor’s wife did on mine ; and her visits to the churchyard suddenly ceased.

A twelvemonth had passed ere we succeeded in finding all this out ; but the young lady’s mother had seen the danger somewhat earlier ; and deeming, as was quite right and proper, an operative mason no very fitting mate for her daughter, my opportunities of meeting my friend at *conversazione* or tea-party had become few. I, however, took my usual evening walk through the woods of the Hill ; and as my friend’s avocations set her free at the same delightful hour, and as she also was a walker on the Hill, we did sometimes meet, and witness together, from amid the deep solitudes of its bosky slopes, the sun sinking behind the distant Ben Wevis. These were very happy evenings ; the hour we passed together always seemed exceedingly short ; but, to make amends for its briefness, there were at length few working days in the milder season of which it did not form the terminal one ;—from the circumstance, of course, that the similarity of our tastes for natural scenery led us always into the same lonely walks about the same delicious sun-set hour. For months together, even during this second stage of our friendship, there was one interesting subject on which we never talked. At length, however, we came to a mutual understanding. It was settled that we should remain for three years more in Scotland on the existing terms ; and if, during that time, there should open to me no suitable field of exertion at home, we should