

to escape a tremendous storm of wind and rain from the west, which, had it caught the smack in which I sailed on the Frith, would have driven us all back to Fraserburgh, and, as the vessel was hardly sea-worthy at the time, perhaps a great deal farther. The passage had been stormy; and a very noble, but rather unsocial fellow-passenger—a fine specimen of the golden eagle—had been sea-sick, and evidently very uncomfortable, for the greater part of the way. The eagle must have been accustomed to motion a great deal more rapid than that of the vessel, but it was motion of a different kind; and so he fared as persons do who never feel a qualm when hurried along a railway at the rate of forty miles an hour, but who yet get very squeamish in a tossing boat, that creeps through a rough sea, at a speed not exceeding, in the same period of time, from four to five knots. The day preceding the storm was leaden-hued and sombre, and so calm, that though the little wind there was blew the right way, it carried us on, from the first light of morning, when we found ourselves abreast of the Bass, to only near Inchkeith; for when night fell, we saw the May light twinkling dimly far astern, and that of the Inch rising bright and high right ahead. I spent the greater part of the day on deck, marking, as they came into view, the various objects,—hill, and island, and seaport town, of which I had lost sight nearly ten years before; feeling, the while, not without some craven shrinkings, that, having got to the end, in the journey of life, of one very definite stage, with its peculiar scenery and sets of objects, I was just on the eve of entering upon another stage, in which the scenery and objects would be all unfamiliar and new. I was now two years turned of thirty; and though I could not hold that any very great amount of natural endowment was essentially necessary to the bank accountant, I knew that most men turned of thirty might in vain attempt acquiring the ability even of heading a pin with the necessary adroitness, and that I might fail, on the same principle, to pass muster as an accountant. I determined, however, obstinately to set myself to acquire, whatever might be the result; and entered Edinburgh in something like