

CHAPTER V.

O, Ferguson ! thy glorious parts
Ill suited law's dry, musty arts!
My curse upon your whunstone hearts,
Ye Embrugh gentry!
The tithe o' what ye waste at cartes
Wad stowed his pantry!

BURNS.

I VISITED Edinburgh for the first time in the latter part of the autumn of 1773, about two months after I had sailed from Boston. It was on a fine calm morning, — one of those clear sunshiny mornings of October when the gossamer goes sailing about in long cottony threads, so light and fleecy that they seem the skeleton remains of extinct cloudlets, and when the distant hills, with their covering of gray frost-rime, seem, through the clear close atmosphere, as if chiselled in marble. The sun was rising over the town through a deep blood-colored haze, — the smoke of a thousand fires; and the huge fantastic piles of masonry that stretched along the ridge looked dim and spectral through the cloud, like the ghosts of an army of giants. I felt half a foot taller as I strode on towards the town. It was Edinburgh I was approaching, — the scene of so many proud associations to a lover of Scotland; and I was going to meet, as an early friend, one of the first of Scottish poets. I entered the town. There was a book-stall in a corner of the street, and I turned aside for half a minute to glance my eye over the books.

“Ferguson's Poems!” I exclaimed, taking up a little