

THE AYRSHIRE LEGATEES

of her progenitors are set out for a show, that tells her visitors, they are but seldom put to use. As for the town of Brighton, it's what I would call a gawky piece of London. I could see nothing in it but a wheen idlers, hearing twa lads, at night, crying, "Five, six, seven for a shilling," in the booksellers' shops, with a play-actor lady singing in a corner, because her voice would not do for the players' stage. Therefore, having seen the Captain and Mrs. Sabre off to France, we came home to London; but it's not to be told what we had to pay at the hotel where we staid in Brighton. Howsomever, having come back to London, we settled our counts, and, buying a few necessars, we prepared for Scotland,—and here we are. But travelling has surely a fine effect in enlarging the understanding; for both the Doctor and me thought, as we came along, that everything had a smaller and poorer look than when we went away; and I dinna think this room is just what it used to be. What think ye o't, Miss Isabella? How would ye like to spend your days in't?

Miss Isabella reddened at this question; but Mrs. Pringle, who was as prudent as she was observant, affecting not to notice this, turned round to Miss Mally Glencairn, and said softly in her ear,—'Rachel was Bell's confidante, and has told us all about what's going on between her and Mr. Snodgrass. We have agreed no to stand in their way, as soon as the Doctor can get a mailing or two to secure his money upon.'

Meantime, the Doctor received from the elders a very satisfactory account of all that had happened among his people, both in and out of the Session, during his absence; and he was vastly pleased to find there had been no inordinate increase of wickedness; at the same time, he was grieved for the condition in which the poor weavers still continued, saying, that among other things of which he had been of late meditating, was the setting up of a lending bank in the parish for the labouring classes, where, when they were out of work, 'bits of loans for a house-rent, or a brat of claes, or sic like, might be granted, to be repaid when trade grew better, and thereby take away the objection that an honest pride had to receiving help from the Session.'

Then some lighter general conversation ensued, in which the Doctor gave his worthy counsellors a very jocose description of many of the lesser sort of adventures which he had met