

men, in the heyday of youth and good spirits, playing the part which is common to the higher classes of the law at Edinburgh, and which nearly resembles that of the young Templars in the days of Steele and Addison. An air of giddy gaiety mingled with the good sense, taste, and information which their conversation exhibited; and it seemed to be their object to unite the character of men of fashion and lovers of the polite arts. A fine gentleman, bred up in the thorough idleness and inanity of pursuit, which I understand is absolutely necessary to the character in perfection, might in all probability have traced a tinge of professional pedantry which marked the barrister in spite of his efforts, and something of active bustle in his companion, and would certainly have detected more than a fashionable mixture of information and animated interest in the language of both. But to me, who had no pretensions to be so critical, my companions seemed to form a very happy mixture of good-breeding and liberal information, with a disposition to lively rattle, pun, and jest, amusing to a grave man, because it is what he himself can least easily command.

The thin pale-faced man, whom their good-nature had brought into their society, looked out of place, as well as out of spirits, sate on the edge of his seat, and kept the chair at two feet distance from the table, thus incommoding himself considerably in conveying the victuals to his mouth, as if by way of penance for partaking of them in the company of his superiors. A short time after dinner, declining all entreaty to partake of the wine, which circulated freely round, he informed himself of the hour when the chaise had been ordered to attend; and saying he would be in readiness, modestly withdrew from the apartment.

'Jack,' said the barrister to his companion, 'I remember that poor fellow's face; you spoke more truly than you were aware of; he really is one of my clients, poor man.'

'Poor man!' echoed Halkit. 'I suppose you mean he is your one and only client?'

'That's not my fault, Jack,' replied the other, whose name I discovered was Hardie. 'You are to give me all your business, you know; and if you have none, the learned gentleman here knows nothing can come of nothing.'

'You seem to have brought something to nothing though, in the case of that honest man. He looks as if he were just about to honour with his residence the HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN.'

'You are mistaken: he is just delivered from it. Our friend