

friend as Mr. Sloan. I am prodigal enough at times, but I will not part with such a treasure as that.

I can easily enter into the *embarras* of your present situation. You know my favourite quotation from Young—

On Reason build RESOLVE!
That column of true majesty in man,—

and that other favourite one from Thomson's "Alfred"—

What proves the hero truly GREAT,
Is, never, never to despair.

Or, shall I quote you an author of your acquaintance?—

Whether DOING, SUFFERING, or FORBEARING,
You may do miracles by—PERSEVERING.

I have nothing new to tell you. The few friends we have are going on in the old way. I sold my crop on this day se'ennight, and sold it very well. A guinea an acre, on an average, above value. But such a scene of drunkenness was hardly ever seen in this country. After the roup was over, about thirty people engaged in a battle, every man for his own hand, and fought it out for three hours. Nor was the scene much better in the house. No fighting, indeed, but folks lying drunk on the floor, and decanting, until both my dogs got so drunk by attending them, that they could not stand. You will easily guess how I enjoyed the scene, as I was no farther over than you used to see me.

Mrs. B. and family have been in Ayrshire these many weeks.

Farewell! and God bless you, my dear Friend! R. B.

CLXVII.—TO MR. AINSLIE.

ELLISLAND, 1791.

MY DEAR AINSLIE,—Can you minister to a mind diseased? can you, amid the horrors of penitence, regret, remorse, head-ache, nausea, and all the rest of the damn'd hounds of hell that beset a poor wretch who has been

guilty of the sin of drunkenness—can you speak peace to a troubled soul?

Miserable perdu that I am, I have tried every thing that used to amuse me, but in vain: here must I sit, a monument of the vengeance laid up in store for the wicked, slowly counting every click of the clock as it slowly, slowly numbers over these lazy scoundrels of hours, who, damn them, are ranked up before me, every one at his neighbour's backside, and every one with a burthen of anguish on his back, to pour on my devoted head—and there is none to pity me. My wife scolds me, my business torments me, and my sins come staring me in the face, every one telling a more bitter tale than his fellow.—When I tell you even — has lost its power to please, you will guess something of my hell within, and all around me.—I began *Elibanks* and *Elibraes*, but the stanzas fell unenjoyed and unfinished from my listless tongue: at last I luckily thought of reading over an old letter of yours, that lay by me in my bookcase, and I felt something for the first time since I opened my eyes, of pleasurable existence.—Well—I begin to breathe a little, since I began to write to you. How are you, and what are you doing? How goes Law? Apropos, for correction's sake do not address to me supervisor, for that is an honour I cannot pretend to—I am on the list, as we call it, for a supervisor, and will be called out by-and-by to act as one; but at present I am a simple gauger, tho' t'other day I got an appointment to an excise division of £25 *per annum* better than the rest. My present income, down money, is £70 *per annum*.

I have one or two good fellows here whom you would be glad to know.

R. B.

CLXVIII.—TO MISS DAVIES.

It is impossible, Madam, that the generous warmth and angelic purity of your youthful mind can have any idea of that moral disease under which I unhappily must rank as