

IV.

THE WIDOW OF DUNSKAITH.

CHAPTER I.

“ Oh, mony a shriek, that waefu’ night,
Rose frae the stormy main;
An’ mony a bootless vow was made,
An’ mony a prayer vain;
An’ mithers wept, an’ widows mourned,
For mony a weary day;
An’ maidens, ance o’ blithest mood,
Grew sad, an’ pined away.”

THE northern Sutor of Cromarty is of a bolder character than even the southern one, abrupt and stern and precipitous as that is. It presents a loftier and more unbroken wall of rock; and, where it bounds on the Moray Frith, there is a savage magnificence in its cliffs and caves, and in the wild solitude of its beach, which we find nowhere equalled on the shores of the other. It is more exposed, too, in the time of tempest. The waves often rise, during the storms of winter, more than a hundred feet against its precipices, festooning them, even at that height, with wreaths of kelp and tangle; and for miles within the bay we may hear, at such seasons, the savage uproar that maddens amid its cliffs and caverns, coming booming over the lashings of the nearer waves like a roar of artillery. There is a sublimity of desolation on its shores, the effects