

the accident, that he threw her down and broke her arm. A single anecdote, though of a lighter cast, preserves the recollection of Mr. Forsyth's ship-building at Fortrose. The vessel was nearly finished; and a half-witted knave, named Tam Reid, who had the knack of tricking everybody, — even himself at times, — was despatched by Mr. Forsyth with a bottle of turpentine to the painters. Tam, however, who had never more than heard of wine, and who seems to have taken it for granted that the bottle he carried contained nothing worse, contrived to drink the better half of it by the way, and was drugged almost to death for his pains. When afterwards humorously charged by Mr. Forsyth with breach of trust, and urged to confess, truly, whether he had actually drunk the whole of the missing turpentine, he is said to have replied, in great wrath, that he “widna gie a'e glass o' whiskey for a' the wine i' the warld.”

Mr. Forsyth's vessels were at first employed almost exclusively in the Dutch trade; but the commerce of the country gradually shifted its old channels, and in his latter days they were engaged mostly in trading between the north of Scotland and the ports of Leith, London, and Newcastle. There are curious traditionary anecdotes of his sailors still afloat among the people, which illustrate the credulous and imaginative character of the age. Stories of this class may be regarded as the fossils of history; they show the nature and place of the formation in which they occur. The Scotch sailors of ninety years ago were in many respects a very different sort of persons from the sailors of the present day. They formed one of the most religious classes of the community. There were even founders of sects among them. The too famous John Gibb was a sailor of Borrowstounness; and the worthy Scotchman