

plank and beam of which he had superintended in the laying down, and a prime sailer to boot ; and so, though he had to satisfy himself with the accommodation of the old domicile, with its little rooms and its small windows, and to let the other house to a tenant, he began to thrive again as before. Meanwhile his aged cousin was gradually sinking. The master was absent on one of his longer voyages, and she too truly felt that she could not survive till his return. She called to her bedside her two young friends, the sisters, who had been unwearied in their attentions to her, and poured out her blessing on them ; first on the elder, and then on the younger. "But as for you, Harriet," she added, addressing the latter,—“there waits for you one of the best blessings of this world also,—the blessing of a good husband ; you will be a gainer in the end, even in this life, through your kindness to the poor childless widow.” The prophecy was a true one ; the old woman had shrewdly marked where the eyes of her cousin had been falling of late ; and in about a twelvemonth after her death, her young friend and pupil had become the master's wife. There was a very considerable disparity between their ages,—the master was forty-four, and his wife only eighteen,—but never was there a happier marriage. The young wife was simple, confiding, and affectionate, and the master of a soft and genial nature, with a large amount of buoyant humor about him, and so equable in temper, that, during six years of wedded life, his wife never saw him angry but once. I have heard her speak of the exceptional instance, however, as too terrible to be readily forgotten.

She had accompanied him on ship-board, during their first year of married life, to the upper parts of the Cromarty Frith, where his sloop was taking in a cargo of grain, and lay quietly embayed within two hundred yards of the southern shore. His mate had gone away for the night to the opposite side of the bay, to visit his parents, who resided in that neighborhood ; and the remaining crew consisted of but two seamen, both young and somewhat reckless men, and the ship-boy. Taking the boy with them to keep the ship's boat afloat, and