

broken ships and drowned men, the sloop was seen stretching out in a long tack into the open sea. "Miller's seamanship has saved him once more!" said Matheson, the Cromarty skipper, as, quitting his place of outlook, he returned to his cabin; but the night fell tempestuous and wild, and no vestige of the hapless sloop was ever after seen. It was supposed that, heavily laden, and laboring in a mountainous sea, she must have started a plank and foundered. And thus perished—to borrow from the simple eulogium of one of his seafaring friends, whom I heard long after condoling with my mother—"one of the best sailors that ever sailed the Moray Frith."

The fatal tempest, as it had prevailed chiefly on the eastern coasts of England and the south of Scotland, was represented in the north by but a few bleak, sullen days, in which, with little wind, a heavy ground-swell came rolling in coastwards from the east, and sent up its surf high against the precipices of the Northern Sutor. There were no forebodings in the master's dwelling; for his Peterhead letter—a brief but hopeful missive—had been just received; and my mother was sitting, on the evening after, beside the household fire, plying the cheerful needle, when the house-door, which had been left unfastened, fell open, and I was despatched from her side to shut it. What follows must simply be regarded as the recollection, though a very vivid one, of a boy who had completed his fifth year only a month before. Day had not wholly disappeared, but it was fast posting on to night, and a gray haze spread a neutral tint of dimness over every more distant object, but left the nearer ones comparatively distinct, when I saw at the open door, within less than a yard of my breast, as plainly as ever I saw anything, a dissevered hand and arm stretched towards me. Hand and arm were apparently those of a female; they bore a livid and sodden appearance; and directly fronting me, where the body ought to have been, there was only blank, transparent space, through which I could see the dim forms of the objects beyond. I was fearfully startled, and ran shrieking to my mother, telling what I had seen; and the house-girl, whom she next sent to shut the door, apparently affected