

fine, the quarantine seaport town that seemed at first to be most in danger appeared latterly to be almost the only place of any size in the locality exempted from its ravages. It approached, however, alarmingly near. The opening of the Cromarty Frith is little more than a mile across ; a glass of the ordinary power enables one to count every pane in the windows of the dwellings that mottle its northern shore, and to distinguish their inhabitants ;—and yet among these dwellings cholera was raging ; and we could see, in at least one instance, a dead body borne forth by two persons on a hand-barrow, and buried in a neighboring sand-bank. Stories, too, of the sad fate of individuals with whom the townsfolk were acquainted, and who had resided in well-known localities, told among them with powerful effect. Such was the general panic in the infected places, that the bodies of the dead were no longer carried to the churchyard, but huddled up in solitary holes and corners ; and the pictures suggested to the fancy, of familiar faces lying uncoffined in the ground beside some lonely wood, or in some dark morass or heathy moor, were fraught to many with a terror stronger than that of death. We knew that the corpse of a young robust fisherman, who used occasionally to act as one of the Cromarty ferrymen, and with whose appearance, in consequence, every one was familiar, lay festering in a sand-bank ; that the iron frame of a brawny blacksmith was decomposing in a mossy hole beside a thorn-bush ; that half of the inhabitants of the little fishing village of Inver were strewn in shallow furrows along the arid waste which surrounded their dwellings ; that houses divested of their tenants, and become foul dens of contagion, had been set on fire and burnt to the ground ; and that around the infected fishing-hamlets of Hilton and Balintore the country-people had drawn a sort of *barrier sanitaire*, and cooped up within the limits of their respective villages the wretched inhabitants. And in the general consternation,—a consternation much more extreme than that evinced when the disease actually visited the place,—it was asked by the townsfolk whether *they* ought not, so long as the place remained uninfected, to draw a similar *cordon* round themselves. A public