

the face, which prostrated him in an instant; and then, cocking the piece and presenting it, he commanded the other two, on peril of their lives, to stand aloof. Odds of weapons, when there is courage to avail one's self of them, forms a thorough counterbalance to odds of number. After an engagement of a brief half-minute, Thomson's assailants left him in quiet possession of the field; and he found, on his way home, that he could trace their route by the blood of the young farmer. There went abroad an exaggerated and very erroneous edition of the story, highly unfavorable to the salmon-fisher; and he received an intimation shortly after that his visits at the farm-house were no longer expected. But the intimation came not from Lillias.

The second year of his speculation had well-nigh come to a close, and, in calculating on the quantum of his shipments and the state of the markets, he could deem it a more successful one than even the first. But his agent seemed to be assuming a new and worse character. He rather substituted promises and apologies for his usual remittances, or neglected writing altogether; and, as the fisherman was employed one day in dismantling his wears for the season, his worst fears were realized by the astounding intelligence that the embarrassments of the merchant had at length terminated in a final suspension of payments!

"There," said he, with a coolness which partook in its nature in no slight degree of that insensibility of pain and injury which follows a violent blow, — "there go well-nigh all my hard-earned savings of twelve years, and all my hopes of happiness with Lillias!" He gathered up his utensils with an automaton-like carefulness, and, throwing them over his shoulders, struck across the sands in the direction of the cottage. "I must see her," he said, "once