

passed through the village for the last time, he could see the waving of bludgcons, and hear the formidable war-cry of one of the clans, with the equally formidable "Hilloa! help for Cromarty!" echoing on every side of him. He kept coolly on his way, however, without waiting the result; and, while yet several miles from the shores of Udoll, daylight had departed, and the moon at full had risen, red and huge in the frosty atmosphere, over the bleak hill of Nigg.

He had reached the Burn of Newhall, — a small stream which, after winding for several miles between its double row of alders and its thickets of gorse and hazel, falls into the upper part of the bay, — and was cautiously picking his way, by the light of the moon, along a narrow pathway which winds among the bushes. There are few places in the country of worse repute among believers in the supernatural than the Burn of Newhall; and its character seventy years ago was even worse than it is at present. Witch meetings without number have been held on its banks, and dead-lights have been seen hovering over its deeper pools; sportsmen have charged their fowling-pieces with silver when crossing it in the night-time; and I remember an old man who never approached it after dark without fixing a bayonet on the head of his staff. Thomson, however, was but little influenced by the beliefs of the period; and he was passing under the shadow of the alders, with more of this world than of the other in his thoughts, when the silence was suddenly broken by a burst of threats and exclamations, as if several men had fallen a-fighting, scarcely fifty yards away, without any preliminary quarrel; and with the gruffer voices there mingled the shrieks and entreaties of a female. Thomson grasped his stick, and sprang forward. He reached an opening among the bushes,