

beam which projected from the highest window of the warehouse, somewhat in the form of a gallows; from this beam depended a thick rope, which, to the eye of an inlander, must have added to the sinister appearance of the machine; but in the iron clicks at the end, and the blocks of the upper part, a denizen of the coast might recognize that sort of tackle by which heavy goods are hoisted into the warehouse. The affairs of the counting-house were managed under the master's superintendence, by a youth whose name was Alick Dumfries, a distant relation of the late Mrs. Drysdell, (for the baillie was now a widower,) and was permitted to look forward to a share in the concern. The domestic economy was under the sole direction of an only daughter, named Jennie. She was a fair-haired, blue-eyed, clear-complexioned Scottish lassie, as gay as the lark singing in the morning sun, and as sweet and modest and graceful as the primrose of the spring. She was the light of her father's eye, and the pride of his heart; and so complete was her dominion over his affection, that, in the common phrase, she could have turned the old man round her finger.

Her power over the baillie was often a source of great comfort to Alick Dumfries, who, although clever and steady in the main, was apt to take "camsteerie fits," as his master termed them. In fact, he was somewhat self-willed on all occasions; but except in the said fits, contrived to gain his end by artful manœuvres, rather than open rebellion,—so much so, indeed, as frequently to appear to give in with willingness to schemes which he had himself suggested. The firmness of the youth's character, at length, in some measure, got the mastery over the milkier soul of his master, and except on great occasions, when the wrath of the latter was raised to a pitch which the clerk did not think fit to tempt further. Jennie was rather the mediator between the two rival powers, than a pleader for mercy in favor of the weaker party. Her mediation very seldom failed of its effect, for she was as powerful with Dumfries as with her father. Whether it was gratitude for her kind offices which had ripened into a warmer attachment, or

Accident, blind contact, or the strong
Necessity of loving,

I know not; but Alick did love his cousin, (twenty times removed,) with a vehemence proportionate to the turbulent strength of his character. The baillie was not perfectly satisfied with the evident partiality of the young people. Alick, to be sure, was come of gentle

kind, and was a shrewd, active fellow, and by this time, well nigh indispensable in the business; but his whole income amounted to no more than fifty pounds per annum, and even that, together with his future prospects, depended on the baillie himself. The father, too, was proud of his daughter, and thought, perhaps with good reason, that she might aspire to a much higher notch. She was the admiration of all the young men of the town, who toasted her health in huge tumblers of whiskey toddy, after the fashion of Burnt-Island; and even the strangers, he observed, whom business brought occasionally to this rising port, threw "sheep's eyes" at her as she tripped along. More than one of his mercantile correspondents, too—good men and warm—who had experienced his hospitality, remembered in their letters, the sweetness of the May-flower, as they gallantly termed her, and inquired warmly after her health. No positive declaration, however, had, as yet, been made by any of the admirers, and the baillie left the affair to chance or destiny.

Alick Dumfries was not discouraged either by his own poverty, or the baillie's sour looks; he was secure of Jennie's affection, and he was determined to marry her. Of this he did not make any secret, but, with an impudence peculiar to himself, took every opportunity of insinuating his purpose to his employer. This produced much dissension between them, but at length answered the knave's purpose completely; the wrath of the baillie became less bitter every time, and at length the dose was repeated so frequently, that it ceased to be offensive, and, by degrees, imperceptible to himself, he came to look on Alick Dumfries as his future son-in-law.

Matters were in this position, when the West Indian Argosy arrived, and, for a while, drove all thoughts of his daughter's marriage out of the baillie's head. Even Dumfries was so completely engaged by the multiplicity of business which the event produced, that he saw very little of Jennie till after the discharge of the vessel. At length the bustle was over, and things subsided into their usual state; the ship was laid up in the dock to undergo some repairs; the cargo was shipped off by coasters to other ports, or hoisted into the warehouse; and the counting-house assumed its accustomed appearance of quiet industry. It might almost have been forgotten that such an event had occurred, so totally were all vestiges of its effects removed or concealed, but for some troublesome memento, which now began to