

aware, though he was ignorant of them. If this was her object, then it was probable that she saw hope of their removal, and to this hope he clung. There was something so preternaturally overpowering in her appearance, words, and manner, that he was disposed to believe she not only possessed extraordinary means of information, but that she had substantial grounds for the advice she gave. There was something almost miraculous in her visit. The place where he had last seen her was twenty miles off. She had talked of the house of Lochandhu not being free from danger, yet she, though manifestly unwilling to be seen by its master, had fearlessly entered it,—how he knew not, more than he could guess whither she had gone.

Amherst lay perplexed with these conjectures for several hours; indeed, the moon had gone down, and the grey twilight of morning was beginning to appear, ere he again closed his eyes. When he did so, his dreams were haunted by the figure, now more minutely imprinted upon his recollection from being so long placed near his eyes.

When Amherst arose in the morning, he was so charmed by the beauty of the pastoral scenery,

on which he looked from his window, that he forgot for a moment the events of the preceding night in the ecstasy it awakened.

The back of the house stood but a few feet removed from the brink of a wooded bank, sweeping forwards from under it to right and left, and enclosing a lovely low meadow within its bosom. Beyond this appeared a portion of a very considerable lake, into which the great river of the valley expanded itself. At the distance of about a mile from the eye, the opposite shores presented every variety of knoll and hillock, rising one behind the other, and wooded with birches, hazles, and dwarf oaks. Over these some high mountains appeared, whilst, more to the left, the still loftier group of the Cairngorums rose in all their majesty.

The sun was dancing cheerily over the lake, and gilding its surrounding woods and pastures with gladness, and a large herd of cattle were feeding on the meadow. Every thing contributed to awaken ideas of rural purity and innocence in his mind ; and notwithstanding the caution he had received from his midnight visitor, he could hardly persuade himself that any thing like danger, or treachery, was to be apprehended from the

inhabitants of so soft a scene. From such thoughts he was speedily recalled by observing a number of men examining the cattle. Amongst these he descried Lochandhu, his natural brother Alexander, and Macrory. It was some little time before he was quite certain of his host, who having now relinquished the thralldom of the Lowland dress he had formerly worn, was clad in the more accommodating costume of the mountains.

After moving the animals about, and looking at them individually, the men began to drive them off in a long line, towards an opening in the wooded bank, where they disappeared, expressing, by frequent lowings, their unwillingness to leave the pasture. Lochandhu continued to walk backwards and forwards with his two companions for some time, as if in earnest conversation. Alexander Macgillivray and Macrory then followed the party who went with the cattle, and Lochandhu returned towards the house.

Amherst was received in the parlour by both his host and hostess, with every appearance of the kindest welcome. But the Carline's warning crossed his mind. He took care, however, to make a suitable return to their compliments and civilities. During breakfast, Lochandhu ran over to Am-

herst the various kinds of manly amusements the country afforded, leaving him to choose which he should first pursue.

“ Shall we to the hill, Mr Oakenwold, to kill a few grouse and black game,—or would you like to look nearer at home for a roebuck, where you may also get plenty of hares?—Or perhaps you would prefer salmon-fishing?—Or if you are fond of boating, you may shoot wild ducks upon the lake, and catch abundance of pike and trout. For ptarmigan or white hares, we must seek the highest tops of the mountains—as for red deer, we must have time to prepare for showing you a royal day with them.”

Amherst, like most young men, was extremely fond of such pursuits. This ample list of the animals of sport, made him forget the dubious situation he had placed himself in, by becoming an inhabitant of the house of Lochandhu. Remembering that he must wait the promised communication from his mysterious nocturnal visitant, he was rejoiced to find that he could do so without any risk of *tædium*. He felt the necessity of occupying himself, to keep down those distressing thoughts, resulting from his conversation

with Lord Eagleshome. He resolved, therefore, to partake of all these amusements in succession.

A good many days soon passed away, in making war upon the various creatures we have mentioned, Lochandhu generally acting as his guide and companion. His success was far beyond what he had ever before entertained any idea of. But much as he enjoyed such amusement, his pleasure was by no means confined to the mere trifling exultation arising from the extent of the murder committed, in which every sportsman has more or less felt the inclination of indulging himself. He had other and more exalted sources of delight from such excursions. As his foot trod lightly over the heathy hills in pursuit of his game,—as he inhaled the healthful breeze,—and as his eye roamed unconfined over the endless extent of brown moorland, where not a trace was to be seen of those pitiful barriers, raised by the sordid hand of all-grasping man, jealous of the intrusion of his fellow upon a few wretched feet of the surface of this earth,—he felt his soul expand with a freedom he had never before experienced. Nature seemed to be the only proprietor here, and her domain was without limits.

Such sentiments as these, more particularly suggested themselves to Amherst, during his expeditions to the Cairngorums, whither he went, nominally, indeed, in pursuit of ptarmigan and white hares, but, in reality, more for the purpose of enjoying the solemn scenery of the endless forest of pines, covering the stretch of country at their base, and of the wild lakes and glens in their hollows, as well as the boundless prospects to be had from their different summits. Amidst the enthusiasm of that rapture, excited in his ardent bosom by the contemplation of Nature, on a scale of savage grandeur he had never before an opportunity of beholding, he almost forgot what others would have considered as the chief object.

Often would he stop to give full scope to the pleasure he felt. Now, in the very depth of the forest, would he lean his back against the trunk of one of those gigantic fir-trees, of which there were many twenty or thirty feet in circumference, and looking out from beneath its bold free growing arms, and thick foliage, catch a view of some white summit, and watch the various effects produced by the light mists and clouds sweeping along its brow, like the fitful transitions of hu-

man emotions. Again, stretched upon a heathy bank, or moss-grown cairn, he would lie silently surveying the long drawn vista of one of those lonely woodless lakes, there so frequent;—its clear surface giving back the image of those overhanging cliffs, of height only accessible to the eagle, which sent down their foaming waterfalls, fed by the almost eternal beds of hardened snow hanging on their brow. Or lastly, rejoicing in those exhilarating feelings naturally arising from the occupation of a lofty and commanding position, he would throw his eyes from the ridge of the mountains, over the subjacent country, his field of vision reaching almost from sea to sea; and remarking how utterly all appearance of man and of his works was lost upon the face of the vast map below, he would think on the absolute insignificance of the creature, and on the vast—the immeasurable greatness,—the infinite power,—the eternity of the Creator!

It was after frequent instances of success in roe-shooting, that Lochandhu at length proposed to Amherst to try the nobler game.

“You have been well enough bled with the roebucks, Mr Oakenwold,” said Lochandhu to

him, one evening, as his guest returned from the woods; "we must now endeavour to flesh you with the deer. With your leave, we shall go to-morrow evening on an expedition against them."

Amherst readily agreed to Lochandhu's proposal, and every thing was arranged accordingly.



## CHAPTER X.

To drive the deer with hound and horn,  
Earl Percy took his way.

*Chevy Chase.*

But, see, his face is black, and full of blood ;  
His eye-balls further out than when he lived,  
Staring full ghostly, like a strangled man :  
His hair upreared, his nostrils stretched,  
His hands abroad, displayed, as one that grasped with struggling,  
And tugg'd for life, and was by strength subdued.

SHAKESPEARE.

Hark ! I hear the sound of coaches !  
The hour of attack approaches !  
To your arms, brave boys, and load !

*Beggars' Opera.*

ON the ensuing day, Amherst and his host set out on horseback, accompanied by O'Gollochar, and attended by several Highlanders on foot. They forded the river, and crossed the valley, and a little before night-fall they entered the

mouth of one of those glens, bringing down tributary streams, from that great mountain range, lying between the districts of Badenoch and Blair. The hills on both sides rose with steep acclivities, covered in most places with a forest of magnificent pines, but occasionally exhibiting precipitous rocks, or bare shattered stony fronts, where all vegetation was destroyed by the continual fall of loose materials. The path along which they rode was one of those slippery tracks, so common in mountainous countries, and every now and then, the aid of the stout attendants on foot became necessary, to prevent the horses from sliding down among the loose debris. They forded numerous torrents, roaring over the cliffs in cataracts, and appearing like sheeted spectres, when seen amidst the obscurity of night, that deepened the blackness of the yawning ravines down which they poured.

At length, after many hours hazardous riding, they reached a small bothy, or hovel of sod, erected by the hunters. Here a fire was soon kindled, for plenty of dry bog-fir was found ready heaped up. The custom is, that whoever avails himself of the shelter of such a place, is bound

to replace the fuel he may consume, by an equal quantity fresh gathered.

About one-third of the small area was occupied by a recently constructed heather-bed. This was ingeniously formed, by placing the new-plucked heather perpendicularly, and pressing the whole together laterally towards the walls of the bothy, so as to make a compact body, and then keeping it so, by confining it within a low sod fence, laid across the floor from one wall to the other, thus producing a couch, possessing the utmost firmness and elasticity. Here, after a hasty supper, Amherst and Lochandhu threw themselves down together to sleep, wrapped up, the one in his cloak, and the other in his plaid. O'Gollochar disposed of himself near the fire, and the rest were contented with the open air, and the shelter afforded by the lee-side of the bothy. The repose of those in the interior was short but sound. They were roused by their attendants long before the grey dawn, and after a hasty refreshment, the party proceeded up the glen on foot, the way being no further practicable for horses.

A walk of nearly two hours brought them

through a pass between two beetling crags, that frowned over against each other, into an amphitheatre, embosomed in the mountains, rising from either side of the stream with green sloping acclivities. A few large detached blocks of granite contributed to narrow the passage. Lochandhu told Amherst that they were here to take their stand; and they accordingly halted, and began to prepare for the sport. A number of guns were loaded and placed within reach of the gentlemen, and several large wire-haired greyhounds were put in leash, to be ready to slip at the deer if necessary.

They had not remained at their post above half an hour, when Lochandhu called to the party to keep close, and bidding Amherst look to the hills, he saw the deer bounding down their sloping sides in numerous small detachments. Distant shouts were then heard, intermingled at intervals with the deep notes of several slowhounds, and the shrill yelp of the rough Highland terriers. Confused sounds came from all directions, and the animals were seen pouring from various quarters into the glen.

The deer seemed to run together, rather as if compelled by the confined nature of the place

they were driven into, than from any inclination to intermix their various groups, for the leading harts showed a disposition to warfare, and butted violently at each other when they met. Though the motions of the vast congregated herd were tumultuous like those of swelling waters, they hardly as yet advanced towards the pass, but kept fluctuating about as if uncertain to what point they should direct their flight.

But now the shouts, and the yelling of the dogs became more and more audible, and, anon, a number of Highlanders, who had been gradually advancing in a circle, began to show themselves on the verge of the surrounding hills. Their clamours now became so incessant, as to unite into one continued volume of sound; and on a signal being given, they began to run down the steep sides of the hill, towards the army of deer below. At once the panic seized them, and they rushed down the glen towards the pass. Lochandhu cautioned Amherst to be ready with his arms, and to be particularly careful to shelter himself behind the stone where he was posted.

The dense body came thundering on, with such impetuosity, that many of the animals were jostled over into the stream. The sportsmen

stood in a state of anxious preparation. No sooner had the herd come within shot, than they gave fire, and two of the fattest bucks fell. The Highlanders who were with them immediately shouted, and then showed themselves from behind the rocks. Confounded by the shots, and by this sudden noise, the whole body of deer halted suddenly in mid career, and two more shots were fired at them by each of the sportsmen, in rapid succession, and with unerring aim. The whole herd turned round in extreme alarm. Some of them were thrown down by the shocks they received by rushing against each other, in the confusion that ensued; and some of them, dashing through the river, darted off individually in different directions, bounding up the slopes of the hills, each attempting to force a passage for itself as it best could.

Now the scene became animated beyond conception. Amherst and Lochandhu ran forward as they were making off, and began to use the remainder of their loaded fire-arms, promptly supplied to them by the men who were with them. One was killed in the act of crossing the water, and was pulled out by a sturdy Highlander, who caught it just as the stream was carrying it away.

Another was wounded as he was climbing the opposite bank, and was soon taken by the large greyhounds which were slipped at him. A third was shot taking to the hills close to where they were. But a noble hart of superb head, who was apparently the father of the herd, gave rise to an incident that excited much greater interest than any thing that occurred. He had hitherto escaped by some good fortune, and had retrograded with his head down, and his horns prepared for battle, covering the retreat of his more timorous' progeny from the assaults of the terriers, now rushing after them from the ambuscade. Before either of the sportsmen were reloaded, he darted off to a narrow point of rock, jutting out and overhanging the river, with the intention of leaping into it, not aware that the immense height of the precipice rendered his purpose impracticable, and before he could return to make his way in another direction, the dogs had barred the passage, and he was brought to bay.

Several of the yelping curs had already suffered from the fury of his defence, when one of the Highlanders gallantly ran forward, and, with his dirk unsheathed, made an attempt to get round him, with the intention of dispatching him. The

animal kept his eye upon him, and, turning round, made a furious bound at him. The spectators thought he was gone. But the lad had the good sense and coolness to throw himself, very adroitly, at full length flat upon the ground, before the creature could reach him. The stag stood over him, occupied in defending himself from the dogs, but every now and then attempting to gore the man.

Amherst ran to his assistance, hastily chose a position whence he could shoot without the risk of injuring the prostrate Highlander, and calling to him to be still, fired. The ball hit the hart right between the horns, and the distance being short, it penetrated to the brain. He sprang high into the air, and fell with a tremendous plunge into the pool far below. A shout of applause followed, and some of the men ran down a bank to intercept the floating body. The poor fellow, whose rashness had so nearly proved fatal to him, came up to Amherst, and, embracing his knees, broke forth in a torrent of thankful acknowledgments, which, however, being in Gaelic, would have been lost upon his preserver, had not his eyes and his expressive actions alone been sufficiently intelligible.



And now the shots from the Highlanders, scattered on the sides of the hills, burst on the ear like the independent firing of riflemen, awakening a thousand echoes; and several deer were brought down, as they attempted to pass between the men. The clamour of the people and of the dogs was excessive and continued, until the last of the animals was seen scouring over the brow of the mountain.

A large fire was now kindled near the huge stones where Amherst and Lochandhu had first stationed themselves;—the Highlanders came in from all quarters, and the dead game was collected. The deer were quickly paunched, and one of them was selected for immediate use. With this the stoutest youths began to make trials of their strength, vying with each other who should most adroitly and expeditiously wrench out the animal's joints. The cooking was equally speedy and inartificial. The flesh was cut up into steaks, broiled upon the fire, and greedily swallowed by the hungry fellows around, in the black and smoking state in which it came from the embers,—and then washed down with large potations of aqua-vitæ.

Amongst those who appeared, when the whole party assembled, was Alexander Macgillivray, with whom Amherst had not met since the night of his arrival at Lochandhu. He was accompanied by the same attendants who formed his party upon that occasion. Amherst and he coldly recognised each other, by distant salutation. The rest of the Highlanders were young men, who, at Lochandhu's request, had very willingly come to assist him in the sport. To these he behaved liberally in the division of the spoil.

Lochandhu, with his usual politeness, addressed Amherst, expressing a hope that he had been pleased with the sport of the day. Amherst declared himself highly gratified; but at the same time added, that he should have more pleasure in shooting a single deer by his own individual exertions, than in the murder they had committed by thus surrounding the whole herd, and slaying them like sheep; and he signified his intention of making such an attempt before leaving the country.

The legs of the deer being tied together with twisted birch-twigs, and hoisted on poles, each carried by two men, the whole party returned down the glen. When they reached the bothy

where their horses had been left, and while some of the attendants were in the act of putting the saddles upon them, Amherst was surprised by some one pulling his skirt. He looked round, and perceived the Highlander whose life he had saved, standing behind him. There were others near; and the man seemed to wish to communicate some private information. He spoke some words of Gaelic in an under tone; and whilst he did so, he looked timidly about him, as if afraid of being observed. Amherst's face showed him that he had not been understood. The Highlander looked unhappy. His features betrayed extreme anxiety; and thinking that he was not perceived by any one near him, he whispered Amherst again in broken English,—

“Tak him care o' hersel'; tak him care o' yon man!” and as he said so, he threw a side look towards Alexander Macgillivray, turning his thumb in the direction where he stood, and then instantly moved away.

Amherst was a good deal surprised with this caution. He had taken an unaccountable dislike to Lochandhu's natural brother, from the first moment he beheld him; and now that he look-

ed at him again, he thought he perceived a certain low cunning, and a cast of villany in his down-looking and unsteady eye, which assured him, if there was any reality in the danger his monitress had warned him of, it must be from this very man that it was to be apprehended. At all events, he resolved to be on his guard against him.

The horses being ready, the party proceeded on their route homewards. Amherst remarked, that during the greater part of the way, Alexander Macgillivray, who was on foot, slunk sullenly along in the rear, whispering from time to time with one of his own people,—a man who had the appearance, and partly the dress of a Lowlander, and who was of very unprepossessing physiognomy. Lochandhu himself rode in the van, talking loudly and merrily to the Highlanders around him, with whom he seemed to be very popular.

When they had reached the valley of the Spey, the men broke gradually off in different directions ; and the party diminished, till Lochandhu and his brother, and their attendants, were all that remained. Alexander Macgillivray now came up

to his brother's saddle-bow, and continued to walk with his hand on the pummel, maintaining an earnest conversation with him in Gaelic. Amherst watched them with some anxiety; but as well as he could guess from the expression of their countenances, the natural brother seemed to be giving Lochandhu some information to which the other listened with great attention; and from all he saw, he had no reason to believe that he formed any part of the subject of their conversation.

Some time before they reached the house of Lochandhu, Alexander Macgillivray and his party left them. The young Highlander who had spoken to Amherst at the bothy moved off along with them, but, catching his eye as he was going, he reminded him by a significant look of the caution he had given him.

Lochandhu having now initiated Amherst into all the mysteries of Highland hunting, left him more frequently to seek his own amusement. This was a source of great satisfaction to him, as he was glad to be left to the private indulgence of those sad but interesting thoughts, he neither had the power nor the will to banish from his mind. Soon satiated with the murder he committed on the in-

nocent inhabitants of the woods, the waters, and the mountains, he now followed the various sports they yielded rather as an apology for being alone, than from any pleasure he derived from such slaughter. The wild, romantic, and solitary scenes he wandered in, afforded him so much delight, that, expert as he now was in threading their mazes, he would often dispense even with the attendance of O'Gollochar, that he might indulge undisturbed in the enjoyment of those reveries they originated.

In this manner he sauntered down one evening to the lake, where he had been taught to expect a shot at a flock of wild swans. As he lay concealed by some bushes growing on the margin, near the lower end of it, he perceived something floating towards the sandy beach. It was already almost dusk, and for some time he paid little regard to it, having supposed it to be a log of wood. As the natural swell of the water, that set towards him, brought it nearer, he was surprised to see a human head. For some minutes he was led to believe that it was a man swimming for pleasure, and floating on his back, his face being upwards. But it advanced, and a wave soon threw the lifeless body endwise against

the sand, where it rested, with the lower extremities still in the water.

Amherst went towards it—but what was his horror when, upon closer inspection, he recognized the features, though much disfigured, of the young Highlander whose life he had saved a few days before, and who had afterwards taken occasion to give him the mysterious warning to beware of Alexander Macgillivray?

His body bore too evidently the marks of a violent death, to leave him a moment in doubt that he had been murdered. He seemed not to have yielded to his fate without a struggle. The eyes were open, and the teeth set together, and great part of his dress was rent off, the sleeve being entirely gone from the right arm. The marks of several severe blows appeared on the head, chest, and arms. One finger of the left hand was nearly separated, as if by some sharp instrument, and both hands were firmly clenched, and contained portions of long red hair, as if torn from the head of some one with whom the murdered man had been in desperate conflict; and the wrist of the right arm was deeply marked above and below, apparently by the teeth of his opponent. The neck

showed the blackened traces of strangulation, as it were by the gripe of a strong hand, and a stab in the region of the heart, like that of a dirk, seemed to have completed the dreadful work.

Amherst was so shocked by this unexpected sight, and particularly after recognizing the person, that he stood for some moments unable to act. It instantly occurred to him that the young man must have been observed, and suspected, at the time he conveyed the warning to him, and that it was upon his account he had died; and the sad spectacle he now beheld, seemed to present a type of the fate that hung over himself. So strongly was he affected by this posthumous warning of the unfortunate young man, that he looked unconsciously around him, in expectation of seeing the murderers about to rush upon him. Recollecting himself, however, he dragged the corpse beyond the water-mark, and laying it on a bank where it was hid by the bushes, he hied him homewards.

As he was approaching the house, he met Lochandhu, accompanied by his brother, and followed by one or two men, hurrying away as if on some urgent expedition. They were so engaged



in conversation, that they did not observe him till they were just upon him.

“When did his coach arrive, Sandy?” he heard Lochandhu ask as they approached.

“Two or three hours ago,” replied the other. “They will soon be all quiet; for Ewan heard them say they were to be off early in the morning; and the coach was left at the door with the trunks and luggage strapped on, just as it came in. But hush! there’s somebody coming.”

Amherst felt great repugnance to communicate his discovery of the murdered body to Lochandhu in presence of his brother. Begging of him, therefore, to return with him towards the house, he related to him in private, and in a few words, what he had seen, betraying the utmost horror as he did so. Lochandhu was moved during his narration, and eyed him with a scrutinizing look, as if endeavouring to read what impression had been made upon him by the circumstance. Then, after Amherst had finished speaking:—

“Aye,” said he, with a shrug, “poor fellow!—some drunken scuffle, I have no doubt.—He was given to quarrelling. But these things, though now becoming more rare than they were, are still

pretty frequent in the Highlands. I must send to have his body taken care of."

"But will you not also take immediate measures to discover the perpetrators of the horrid deed?"

"Oh, aye, surely, surely," replied Lochandhu in a careless tone, "I will write to-morrow to the procurator-fiscal, whose business it is to take up such matters. But there is little chance of any thing being made out;—and it is very likely, if the truth were known, poor Kennedy was as much to blame as those who did it."

"Good God, Sir!" exclaimed Amherst, "surely whatever the provocation may have been, you do not mean to say that any thing can excuse murder?"

Lochandhu threw a side glance at him as he spoke, and, dropping his eyes on the ground, said slowly, after the pause of a moment: "No, God forbid I should, Mr Oakenwold! I only meant to say, that the poor fellow has probably brought his death upon himself by some intemperance of his own. For there are many hot spirits among these mountains, with whom there is seldom more than a word and a blow, and then out with the

whinger.—But step you into the house; I am going a little way with Sandy about a small matter of business, and I will see into this affair. In the meanwhile, good evening to you.” And with these words, and his usual bow, he left him.

Amherst entered the house with no very favourable impression of the good feelings of his host. He found Mrs Macgillivray in the parlour, who immediately asked him to sit down with her to supper, saying that, as her husband’s business would probably detain him until a late hour, they should not wait for him. The lady seemed to have some weighty matter hanging upon her mind. Anxiety was in her face. She could not rest a moment upon her chair; but fidgetted continually about, and gave various indirect hints of the lateness of the hour, until Amherst, seeing that she wished him to go to bed, pretended weariness, and taking his candle, retired to his chamber.

The unpleasant occurrence at the lake, and the broken conversation he had heard pass between the brothers, so employed his thoughts, that he in vain tried to sleep. Tired with restlessness, he arose, towards midnight, to look out of the win-

dow. The moon was in full splendour, so that the smallest object was discernible in the meadow below. He could even see two hares frisking about, and feeding on the dewy grass; and he remained at the window for some time, amused by watching their gambols. Suddenly they stopped, with their ears erected in a listening attitude, and in an instant both scoured off to cover.

Amherst was curious to know the cause of their alarm, and he had not long to wait for an explanation of it; for, immediately afterwards, a party of men appeared straggling out from the wood, and began to cross the meadow diagonally, towards the path leading up to the house. They carried three or four large and heavy trunks, and when they came sufficiently near, he saw that it was Lochandhu, his brother, and the rest. He withdrew from the window, lest his figure might be noticed.

He had not lain long, when he heard the latch of the house-door gently opened. He rose quietly, and looked through the key-hole of his chamber-door, that afforded a view directly down the wooden stair upon the entrance. The outer-door was opened, and, by the moonlight that came in, he

saw the whole band enter, bearing the trunks, which they carried into the parlour.

There was a great deal of whispering below, and Mrs Macgillivray, dressed as he had left her, crossed the passage with a candle in her hand. As she passed, she held it down to examine one of the trunks, left standing on end against the wall near the door, and Amherst distinctly saw the letters S. H. M, formed with brass nails, upon its lid. She entered the parlour after the men.

Amherst then heard a noise as if the trunks were frequently lifted up and put down again, and as if attempts were making to force them open. After the lapse of half an hour, two men came out for the trunk in the passage, carried it in, and the sounds that followed, indicated the opening and examination of it also. Mrs Macgillivray now passed across, and again returned, dragging after her a large basket, and having some empty sacks hanging over her left arm. In a short time the parlour-door opened, and men passed across, bearing the sacks filled, and these were immediately afterwards followed by Lochandhu and Mrs Macgillivray, who, with some

difficulty, carried between them the large basket, now loaded with shirts, handkerchiefs, shawls, and wearing-apparel of various descriptions. The men who had taken in the sacks now came out, and the others issued from the parlour with the trunks, that, from the ease with which they were carried, were evidently empty. The whole party then disappeared by the outer-door, which they gently shut after them, and every thing was again silent.

Amherst stood for some moments astonished with what he had witnessed, and then returned to bed. From all the circumstances, there could now hardly be a doubt that the party had been engaged in the plunder of some travellers of note. Had he then lived so long as the guest of a professed robber?—Good heavens! Well might the Carline say that the house of Lochandhu was not without danger! and well might the unfortunate Kennedy warn him against Alexander Macgillivray! He was almost resolved to leave the house next morning, but he recollected that he had talked of a shooting excursion next day, as well as of several other successive plans, and that he could not possibly find an apology for so sud-

den and complete an alteration of his intentions, without exciting suspicions that might be fatal to him.

Then he recalled the command of the mysterious female, not to leave the Highlands until he should again see her. But so long a time had elapsed since she visited him, that he had nearly begun to despair of her fulfilling her promise. He remembered how she had employed Miss Malcolm's beloved name as a spell to ensure his obedience to her will. But might she not have used it for a nefarious purpose? Her cautions, now verified by circumstances, forbade him to give such an interpretation to her words.

He was much perplexed by these reflections; but the result of them was, that however unpleasant he now felt his residence at Lochandhu, from the disagreeable idea of submitting to receive the hospitality of an undoubted robber, as well as from motives of personal apprehension, he determined to postpone his departure at least for a day or two.