

on board, and getting alongside to avoid giving any umbrage or shewing distrust, the boats' crew and all of us went on board. The ship proved to be the Porcupine sloop of war, commanded by Captain John Ferguson, and mounting sixteen carriage guns. The Doctor saluted the officers on deck and was brought by the sailing master down to his cabin. I in a careless manner walked forward and backward upon the quarter deck, observed the Captain walking alone, who after eying me three or four times, came and went past and round me different times, then went to his cabin. I went to call the Doctor in order to depart, the master and he were drinking cheerfully together, to which he was rather partial; got a glass of grog, and the Doctor said he would be with me in a trice. I retired with an awkward bow. Upon my second application for departing, the Doctor who had got into his cups, said to the sailing master in my hearing by the great oath, "that is as good a gentleman as I am." After getting upon deck, the Doctor was told that we could not be allowed to depart before next day. We were consequently detained, boats' crew and all for the night.

The Porcupine sloop of war was stationed on the west coast to cruize and get information, to apprehend outlawed persons, and to burn and destroy the houses and effects of such as had been in arms against the government,* and also to transport troops to and from the mainland to the Islands. Captain Ferguson went early next morning to see and get what intelligence he could from Captain Allan M'Donald of Knock, in Slate, a part of the Isle of Skye, who was the greatest spy and informer in all Scotland, and by all accounts the greatest coward. Captain Ferguson told him that he believed he had last night taken young Borisdale cloathed in a manner to disguise him—but that he (Ferguson) knew by the first step he walked upon deck that he was a gentleman in disguise, tho' pretending not to understand a word of English, and that he answered exactly the description that he had of the person of the attainted young Borisdale. The Captain of the spies enquired minutely of Ferguson about the shape, size, colour of hair and eyes of the person detained, all which answered; and asked further whether he had any marks of sores or wounds about the neck, and was told he had. The spy Captain then said it was not Borisdale, but a greater rebel, who kept up a constant correspondance with the enemies of his Country, who was in every respect a very great rogue, and not to let him go, or even be admitted to bail, as he could by many evidences prove him guilty of different acts of high treason.

Capt. Ferguson on his return called for me upon deck, and clapping his hand upon my shoulder said, "you are my prisoner." I asked by what authority he presumed to take me. "Oh, ho!" he replied, you speak

* Coll. Borisdale's fine stone House of two stories high at Traigh in Knoidart, was burnt by this very Captain Ferguson. At Borisdale, old Borisdale's place, the houses were all burnt, the cattle and other effects of the people taken away by the soldiers. An old woman remarked to the plundering party, that altho' they took all moveables, they could not take away the strand which abounded in shell-fish, and upon this the party ploughed up the strand; to such a pitch of inveteracy were things carried on. The troops acted in the same manner in other Districts.