

# ALECK, THE ORKNEY PILOT,

AND OTHER SKETCHES.



A Trip to the Orkney Isles.

**O**n a wild October night, many years ago, Aleck Baikie, the pilot, returned to his hut on the mainland of Orkney. He had been busy all day superintending the wintering of the laird's cattle, for Aleck was "grieve" as well as pilot. Seated at his cozy fire of driftwood, with his youngest child Jeanie on his knee, he repeated to his wife the unmistakable signs which he had observed that the night would prove fearfully stormy. His cabin was on the lee side of the cliffs, which are

at least two hundred feet in height. About five in the morning he thought he heard spray dashing upon his roof. He started up and listened. Amid the howling of the wind he heard a muffled sound from the sea. It was a signal gun.

In a few minutes Aleck was on his way to Stromness to alarm the fishermen, and before day dawned many an anxious, kindly face was peering from the cliffs into the thick fog which covered the tempest-tossed ocean. Too well the hardy fishermen knew