

dren, on the threshold of the place of her nativity. His story we need not here tell. He had fallen into the hands of the enemy; he had been retained four months on board their vessel: and when a storm had arisen and hope was gone he had saved her from being lost and her crew from perishing. In reward for his services, his own vessel had been restored to him, and he was returned to his country, after an absence of eighteen months, richer than when he left, and laden with honours. The rest is soon told. After Tibby and her husband had wept upon each other's neck, and he had kissed his children, and again their mother, with his youngest child on one arm, and his wife resting on the other, he hastened from the spot that had been the scene of such bitterness and transport. In a few years more William Gordon having obtained a competency, they re-purchased the cottage in the glen, where Tibby Fowler lived to see her children's children, and died at a good old age in the house in which she had been born; the remains of which, we have only to add, for the edification of the curious, may be seen until this day.

MY BLACK COAT;

OR,

THE BREAKING OF THE BRIDE'S CHINA.

Gentle reader, the simple circumstances I am about to relate to you, hang upon what is termed—a bad omen. There are few amongst the uneducated who have not a degree of faith in omens; and even amongst the better educated and well informed, there are many who, while they profess to disbelieve them, and, indeed, do disbelieve them, yet feel them in their hours of solitude. I have known individuals who, in the hour of danger, would have braved the cannon's mouth, or defied death to his teeth, who nevertheless, would have buried their head in the bedclothes at the howling of a dog at midnight, or spent a sleepless night from hearing the tick, tick, of the spider, or the untiring song of the kitchen-fire musician—the jolly little cricket. The age of omens, however, is drawing to a close: for Truth in its progress is trampling delusion of every kind under its feet; yet, after all, though a belief in omens is a superstition, it is one that carries with it a portion of the poetry of our nature. But to proceed with our story.

Several years ago, I was on my way from

B—— to Edinburgh; and being as familiar with every cottage, tree, shrub, and whin-bush on the Dunbar and Lauder roads, as with the face of an acquaintance, I made choice of the less frequented path by Longformacus. I always took a secret pleasure in contemplating the dreariness of the wild spreading desolation; and, next to looking on the sea, when its waves dance to the music of a hurricane, I loved to gaze upon the heath-covered wilderness, where the blue horizon only girded its purple bosom. It was no season to look upon the heath in the beauty of barrenness, yet I purposely diverged from the main road. About an hour, therefore, after I had descended from the region of the Lammermoors, and entered the Lothians, I became sensible I was pursuing a path which was not forwarding my footsteps to Edinburgh. It was December; the sun had just gone down; I was not very partial to travelling in darkness, neither did I wish to trust to chance for finding a comfortable resting-place for the night. Perceiving a farm stead and water-mill about a quarter of a mile from the road, I resolved to turn towards them, and make inquiry respecting the right path, or, at least, to request to be directed to the nearest inn.

The "town," as the three or four houses and mill were called, was all bustle and confusion. The female inhabitants were cleaning and scouring, and running to and fro. I quickly learned that all this note of preparation arose from the "maister" being to be married within three days. Seeing me a stranger, he came from his house towards me. He was a tall, stout, good-looking, jolly-faced farmer and miller. His manner of accosting me partook more of kindness than civility; and his enquiries were not free from the familiar, prying curiosity which prevails in every corner of our island, and, I must say, in the north in particular.

"Where do you come fra, na—if it be a fair question?" inquired he.

"From B——," was the brief and merely civil reply.

"An' hae ye come frae there the day?" he continued.

"Yes," was the answer.

"Ay, man, an' ye come frae B——, do ye?" added he; "then, nae doot, ye'll ken a person they ca Mr.——?"

"Did he come originally from Dunse?" returned I, mentioning also the occupation of the person referred to.

"The very same," rejoined the miller;