

first abridging, and at length wholly interdicting, my evening walks ; and having no other place to which to retire, save the dark, gousty hay-loft, into which a light was never admitted, I had to seek the shelter of the barrack, and succeeded usually in finding a seat within at least *sight* of the fire. The place was greatly over-crowded ; and, as in all over-large companies, it had commonly its four or five groupes of talkers, each group furnished with a topic of its own. The elderly men spoke about the state of the markets, and speculated, in especial, on the price of oatmeal ; the apprentices talked about lasses ; while knots of intermediate age discussed occasionally both markets and lasses too, or spoke of old companions, their peculiarities and history, or expatiated on the adventures of former work seasons, and the character of the neighboring lairds. Politics proper I never heard. During the whole season a newspaper never once entered the barrack door. At times a song or a story secured the attention of the whole barrack ; and there was in especial one story-teller whose powers of commanding attention were very great. He was a middle-aged Highlander, not very skilful as a workman, and but indifferently provided with English ; and as there usually attaches a nickname to persons in the humbler walks that are marked by any eccentricity of character, he was better known among his brother workmen as Jock Mo-ghoal, *i. e.* John my Darling, than by his proper name. Of all Jock Mo-ghoal's stories Jock Mo-ghoal was himself the hero ; and certainly most wonderful was the invention of the man. As recorded in his narratives, his life was one long epic poem, filled with strange and startling adventure, and furnished with an extraordinary machinery of the wild and supernatural ; and though all knew that Jock made imagination supply, in his histories, the place of memory, not even Ulysses or Æneas,—men who, unless very much indebted to their poets, must have been of a similar turn,—could have attracted more notice at the courts of Alcinous or Dido, than Jock in the barrack. The workmen used, on the mornings after his greater narratives, to look one another full in the face, and ask, with a smile rather in-