

cumstances seemed stamped on almost every field and outhouse of his farm. The stone-fences were ruinous ; the hedges gapped by the almost untended cattle ; a considerable sprinkling of corn-cars lay rotting on the lea ; and here and there an entire sheaf, that had fallen from the "leading-cart" at the close of harvest, might be seen still lying among the stubble, fastened to the earth by the germination of its grains. Some of the outhouses were miserable beyond description. There was a square of modern offices, in which the cattle and horses of the farm—appropriated by the landlord, at the time, under the law of hypothec—were tolerably well lodged ; but the hovel in which three of the farm-servants lived, and in which, for want of a better, my master and I had to cook and sleep, was one of the most miserable tumble-down erections I ever saw inhabited. It had formed part of an ancient set of offices that had been condemned about fourteen years before ; but the proprietor of the place becoming insolvent, it had been spared, in lack of a better, to accommodate the servants who wrought on the farm ; and it had now become not only a comfortless, but also a very unsafe dwelling. It would have formed no bad subject, with its bulging walls and gapped roof, that showed the bare ribs through the breaches, for the pencil of my friend William Ross ; but the cow or horse that had no better shelter than that which it afforded, could not be regarded as other than indifferently lodged. Every heavier shower found its way through the roof in torrents : I could even tell the hour of the night by the stars which passed over the long opening that ran along the ridge from gable to gable ; and in stormy evenings I have paused at every ruder blast, in the expectation of hearing the rafters crack and give way over my head. The distiller had introduced upon his farm, on a small scale, what has since been extensively known as the bothy system ; and this hovel was the bothy. There were, as I have said, but three farm-servants who lived in it at the time,—young, unmarried lads, extremely ignorant, and of gay, reckless dispositions, whose care for their master's interests might be read in the germinating sheaves that lay upon his