

stakes around it into the floor, to keep the outer sleeper from rolling off,—for the wall served to secure the position of the inner one,—we succeeded in constructing, by our joint efforts, a luxurious bed. There was but one serious drawback on its comforts: the roof overhead was bad, and there was an obstinate drop that used, during every shower which fell in the season of sleep, to make a dead set at my face, and try me at times with the water-torture of the old story, mayhap half a dozen times in the course of a single night.

Our barrack fairly fitted up, I set out with my comrade, whose knowledge of Gaelic enabled him to act as my interpreter, to a neighboring group of cottages, to secure a laborer for the work of the morrow. The evening was now beginning to darken; but there was still light enough to show me that the little fields I passed through on my way resembled very much those of Lilliput, as described by Gulliver. They were, however, though equally small, greatly more irregular, and had peculiarities, too, altogether their own. The land had originally been stony; and as it showed, according to the Highland phrase, its “bare bones through its skin,”—large bosses of the rock beneath coming here and there to the surface,—the Highlanders had gathered the stones in great pyramidal heaps on the bare bosses; and so very numerous were these in some of the fields, that they looked as if some malignant sorcerer had, in the time of harvest, converted all their shocks into stone. On approaching the cottage of our future laborer, I was attracted by a door of very peculiar construction that lay against the wall. It had been brought from the ancient pine forest on the western bank of Loch Maree, and was formed of the roots of trees so curiously interlaced by nature, that when cut out of the soil, which it had covered over like a piece of net-work, it remained firmly together, and now formed a door which the mere imitator of the rustic might in vain attempt to rival. We entered the cottage, and plunging downwards two feet or so, found ourselves upon the dunghill of the establishment, which in this part of the country usually occupied at the time an ante-chamber which corresponded to that occupied by