

rugged hills of gneiss that, viewed from an eminence, resembled a tumbling sea, suddenly sank into low brown promontories, unbroken by ravines, and whose eminences were mere flat swellings; and in the hope of finding some change of formation coincident with the change of scenery, I set out with my comrade for the nearest point at which the broken outline passed into the rectilinear or merely undulatory one. But though I did expect a change, it was not without some degree of surprise that, immediately after passing the point of junction, I found myself in a district of red sandstone. It was a hard, compact, dark-colored stone, but dressed readily to pick and hammer, and made excellent corner-stones and ashlar; and it would have furnished us with even hewn work for our building, had not our employer, unacquainted, like every one else at the time, with the mineral capabilities of the locality, brought his hewing stone in a sloop, at no small expense, through the Caledonian Canal, from one of the quarries of Moray,—a circuitous voyage of more than two hundred miles.

Immediately beside where we opened our quarry, there was a little solitary shieling: it was well-nigh such an edifice as I used to erect when a boy,—some eight or ten feet in length, and of so humble an altitude, that, when standing erect in the midst, I could lay my hand on the roof-tree. A heath-bed occupied one of the corners; a few gray embers were smouldering in the middle of the floor; a pot lay beside them, ready for use, half-filled with cockles and razor-fish, the spoils of the morning ebb; and a cog of milk occupied a small shelf that projected from the gable above. Such were the contents of the shieling. Its only inmate, a lively little old man, sat outside, at once tending a few cows grouped on the moor, and employed in stripping with a pocket-knife, long slender filaments from off a piece of moss fir; and as he wrought and watched, he crooned a Gaelic song not very musically, mayhap, but, like the happy song of the humble bee, there was perfect content in every tone. He had a great many curious questions to ask in his native Gaelic, of my comrade, regard-