

lander whom we were desirous to engage as a labourer, and who lived in the nearer village. Twilight was falling, but there remained light enough to enable us to examine the surrounding forms of things. The cottage we sought was a low, long, dark building, whose roof and walls sloped in nearly the same angle, without any aperture for windows, except along the ridge of the roof, and with a door raised little more than four feet above the threshold. In these north-western regions, where there falls about twice as much rain as on any part of the eastern coast, and where, at some seasons, the almost incessant showers beat at an angle of inclination varying from thirty to sixty, it is imperatively necessary to render the side-walls of a building as impervious as the roof; and hence the slope of the walls,—a slope given them by filling up a bulwark of solid turf against the comparatively erect line of stone. Our first step into the interior was into a pit fully two feet in depth. In this outer chamber, according to the custom of the district, the ashes produced by the turf and peat burnt during the year had been suffered to accumulate, for the purposes of manure; and as it was now early in summer, the place had been but lately cleared out. It was intensely dark, and filled with smoke; and we had some difficulty in finding the inner door, the threshold of which we found raised to the level of the door without. A step brought us into what proved to be the middle apartment of the cottage. A fire of turf, enlivened by a few pieces of moss fir, blazed on a flat stone in the middle of the floor, with no protecting back to screen any part of the building, so that the flames shone equally all around on the rude walls and the equally rude furniture. On one side the fire sat the master and builder of the mansion,—a strongly-built, red-haired, red-whiskered Highlander,—with two boys, his sons; on the other, the mistress,—a thin, sallow woman,—with her three daughters. The woman was busied in spinning with