

the primitive implement to which we have already alluded ; now twirling the spindle half at arm's length, and now coiling up the thread. Her girls were teasing wool, which they stored up in a large spherical basket, wattled all round, except at a little square opening. A cloud of smoke, thick and flat as a ceiling, rested overhead ; and there hung, as if dropping out of it, a dark drapery of herring-nets. The inner walls, as shown by the red glare of the fire, were formed of undressed stone, uncemented by mortar ; but the interstices had been carefully caulked with dried moss. The furniture was somewhat of the scantiest. There were a few deal-seats, and a rude bed-frame in a corner, half-filled with heath,—the sleeping-place of the boys ; a few wooden cogs occupied a recess behind the woman ; and there was a large pot suspended over the fire from the roof. But what we chiefly remarked was, that the place, rude as it was, had what by much the greater number of the dwellings of our south-country hinds have not,—the luxury of an inner apartment : the wicker door opened through a stone-wall ; the thick turf roof was at least water-tight, except where, beside the gables (not over the fire), there were two openings to admit air and light, and to give egress to the smoke. Our readers would smile were we to associate ideas of comfort with such a dwelling. Certain it was, however, that its inmates could do so ; and all can at least associate ideas of decency with it. The construction of Red Murouch's house was quite as primitive as the tillage of his little croft, or the tackle of his boat, or the distaff and spindle employed by his wife. His grandfather removed by twenty generations had lived, in all probability, in just such another ; but it served Murouch quite as well as its antitype had served his remote ancestor. Besides, if he wished it better or larger, could he not improve or add to it ? There was space enough outside ; vast abundance of stone everywhere, and wood in the neighbouring hollow ; and