

Murouch, unsophisticated, like all his neighbours, by the scheme of dividing labour, which, while it adds to the skill of the community, lowers mightily that of the individual, was a master of the entire art of building such houses.

Just six months after quitting the Highlands, we were residing in one of the richest districts in the Lowlands of Scotland,—one of those centres of cultivation from which the art of the agriculturist has spread itself over all the more accessible portions of the kingdom. The rent of land in the neighbourhood averaged somewhat above five pounds per acre: the yearly rental of the parish in which we lived was estimated at about twenty-eight thousand pounds. The Scottish metropolis lay not three hours' walk away. Considerably more than two hundred miles intervened between us and the scene of our last year's labour. We have often thought whether it would not be equally correct to say that we had travelled in advance of it at least a thousand years. The whole seemed, viewed in recollection from amid the fertile fields of the south, as if belonging rather to the remote past than to the present. Even the most unpractised eye could not fail being struck by the superior style of the husbandry in the *modern* district. How very close the plough had contrived to skirt the well-dressed fences! How straight the furrows!—how equal the braird! How thoroughly had the land been cleared of weeds! And then, what an air of snugness seemed to pervade the farm-houses of the district, and how palpably had the experience of ages been concentrated on the means and appliances of their several steadings. The jealous neatness, too, with which the various gentlemen's seats in the neighbourhood were kept, their general style, the appearance of the surrounding grounds, their woods, and gardens, and belts of shrubbery,—all testified to the elegant tastes and habits of the possessors. Whatever belonged immediately to the upper classes had but one character,—