

o'clock it was, when we awoke in the night-time, by the stars which we saw glimmering through the opening.

It was, in truth, a comfortless habitation for human creatures in a wet and gusty November, and the inmates were as rugged as their dwelling-place was rude. We need hardly say that none of them could regard it as a home. It was the gloomy season of the year, when the night falls fast, abridging the labours of the day; and ere they returned to their miserable hovel in the evening, all was deep twilight without, and all darkness within. The fuel had to be procured, the fire to be kindled, water to be brought from the well, and the unsavoury meal to be prepared; and all this by men stiff with fatigue, and not unfrequently soaked with wet. It was no easy matter at times to light the fire: the fuel often got damp, and, when at length lighted, burnt dead and cheerless. There was a singular want, too, of the ordinary providence among the inmates, and it could be shown in a matter slight as this. No provision was made in the morning for the fire of the night. If the rain fell, their fuel and their tempers were just so much the worse in consequence; and that was all. Does the reader remember Crabbe's admirable stroke of nature in his "Phoebe Dawson?" He describes the poor thing as almost heart-broken in her misery, and yet struggling with it in patient silence; but a single drop serves to make the full cup run over. When dragging herself painfully along the green, with her broken pitcher in her one hand, and sustaining her child with the other, she sinks ankle-deep in a quagmire. The mischance, slight as it may seem, is the single drop which more than fills the cup, and she bursts out into a hysteric fit of weeping. We have seen matters quite as slight rouse into fierceness, in the bothy, tempers already soured by bitter discontent. The inmates, if careless of their master's interests, were scarce less careless of their own comforts. A little hot water poured on a handful of oatmeal,