

contrast, that the others were nothing worse than just useful members of society, of the average character, lucklessly spoiled. It was the bothy system that had made them what they were. The fact, however, seems not unworthy of being noted, that the poacher should have come to harbour in such a place. He was a man living in a state of warfare with the upper classes,—a black fisher and a breaker into game preserves ; but no inmate of the bothy thought a whit the worse of him for his trade. He annoyed only people of the same class with their master, and could there be harm in that? Immediately after dinner, especially when the fuel was bad, most of the bothy-men disappeared. There was a small village about a mile away, to which they generally resorted. It had its smithy and its public-house ; and in the latter there were rustic dances got up at least once a fortnight, at which all the men of the bothy were sure to attend. A young jemmy lad,—the beau of the party, who used at times to wear his Sunday coat of red tartan at the plough, and who, had he been born to a more fitting sphere, would haply have smoked cigars and sported moustaches on Prince's Street,—had quite a knack at getting up these entertainments, and in providing his companions with partners from all the farm-houses round. It was generally late in the morning, on such occasions, ere they got home ; and the unsteady tread as they groped along the floor for their beds, or the previous fumbling at the latch, gave evidence in most cases that the protracted merry-making had terminated in drunkenness. But we find we must abridge our description. We may sum up the whole by remarking, that the evils of the bothy system are of a threefold character,—economic, intellectual, religious. Our agriculturists are, fortunately, becoming convinced of the first,—a conviction which may lead, in time, through the abolition of the system, to the removal of the others. It is scarce possible for the inmate of a bothy to cultivate his