

dismal muir of Dinnet,—a fit spot for the doings of the witches in *Macbeth*—we reached our destination in the quiet “auld-wairld” looking hamlet of Tullich, having been some 8 or 9 hours on our journey of 40 miles. We were cordially and affectionately received by the relatives, named Paterson, whom we had come to visit. The household consisted of two brothers and a sister, none of whom had ever married, the trio having lived together, in a plain and economical manner, from their earliest years, and they continued to reside with each other until only one of them survived. James, or Jamie, as he was generally called, was the patriarch of the household, his brother William being younger than he and than Lizzie their sister. They occupied a small farm on the haugh land between the public road and the river, to which was attached a pretty extensive grazing (as grazings go in that quarter of Scotland) for sheep and black cattle, on the hill and moorland lying to the north of the little hamlet. William took the direction of the farm, doing all the business connected with the purchase and sale of stock and produce, while Jamie, clad in his shepherd’s plaid, and carrying a good sized cudgel, acted as cow-herd and shepherd, being assisted in this important department by a sagacious and well-trained colley dog, of the purest breed, whose services could not have been dispensed with. At the time of our visit, our worthy friends were preparing to occupy a newly erected dwelling house,—small in size, but substantially built and comfortable inside, though its walls knew neither lath nor plaster,—which shortly superseded the old and weather-beaten “biggin” they were then occupying, whose limited accommodations consisted of a “butt, a ben and a mid.” This cabin was guiltless of chimneys, the smoke, from the peat fires on the hearths at the gables, finding its way through holes in the roof, over which were placed square wooden “lums.” The rafters, unceiled, were jet black and shining, as with an artificial varnish, from the effects of the peat smoke, of which a thin blue cloud constantly floated through the upper region of the cottage. Attached to one end of this humble structure was a small out-house or “toofall”^{*} fitted up with a counter, shelves, nests of drawers, &c., in which Lizzie dispensed to her neighbours, in her own unpretending and leisurely way, tea, sugar and other groceries with tobacco and snuff, and, as I soon discovered, her stock of merchandise included a selection of confectionary dainties, by the frequently gratuitous dispensation of which to the juveniles sent on errands to her little shop, she earned a reputation for kindness, which, I believe, is still remembered in the hamlet, although she has been resting in the kirk-yard of Tullich for more than thirty years. The manners of the brothers and sister, though plain, had no taint of coarseness, and their conversation showed that they had each, to a greater or less extent, profited by the education they had obtained at the parish school. They all enjoyed excellent health, and, being well off as regards means, they were always in good spirits, although never rising far out of the region of Scotch

^{*} According to Jamieson’s Scottish Dictionary, derived from the Teutonic, and meaning a building annexed to the wall of a larger one.