

Here burst forth a torrent of oaths, which might have appalled the fallen angels, directed to no one in particular, but poured out with such fierce vehemence, as he thrust his arms into his great coat, and seized his hat and a huge stick for the journey. Stop, I'll take the gig, he says, turning to me, and for this once, just come with me, in order that you may see what your boasted religion does for this precious parish. The people I am going to see are a family of colliers out at Pitfurly. It is the day after the pay, and there has doubtless been a jolly fight and some broken heads. Come away quick and I'll tell you something more about them as we drive out. In less than five minutes we were in the gig and on our way. "Now, he began, you know perhaps, that there are about one hundred and fifty men, besides boys, children, working in this Pitfurly pit. Its owner is making out of it, eight or ten thousand a year, and yet the people who make this money for him, are as ignorant as brute beasts. Not a child is ever sent to school—there is no school, but almost as soon as they can walk, they are put down into a miniature pandemonium, and made to draw huge hutches of coal, after them. There are not three families in the whole line of stone huts built for them, that have ever been in Church. There is but one Sunday coat among the whole of them, which is at Church as regularly as the parson himself, seeing that it has to do service on every christening occasion. For these poor creatures, though as real undiluted heathens as the mother of Caractacus, must, Heaven bless the mark, have all their children baptised, and the rite being over, drink two or three gallons of whiskey on the head of it! Oh! it is shocking, utterly blasphemous, he continued with intense bitterness, and yet who cares for these poor, ignorant, degraded people? Not the vile scum who employs them, it is his supposed interest to keep them brutalised. Not that besmirched parson, who never even thinks that they may have a soul in their body." He talked so vehemently and continuously that we had no opportunity, if we had been ever so anxious, to say a word. But the long line of cottages were now in view, and in a few minutes more, a scene was presented to me, which I shall never forget.

The house consisted of a single room, in which, with the exception of a sort of table and a bed, there did not appear to be an article of furniture. In the bed lay a woman moaning deeply, as if in extreme pain. Three other women, neighbours, stood around it, comforting her in their own rude way. By the fireside sat the husband upon a huge piece of coal, which did duty for a chair. He was holding the side of his head with both hands, through which the blood was trickling somewhat freely. In the centre of the earthen floor lay the debris of a large iron goblet, bearing witness that a rough passage at arms had taken place not very long before. "What is

the matter here?" said the doctor in his gruffest manner! "Oh, doctor," cried one of the attendants, "Peggy's bitten by the doug, all over, Geordie set him on her." "The inhuman brute, the infernal monster," but we will not write all the expletives of the justly indignant physician. He proceeded to examine the wounds, which presented a sight truly shocking. Both the poor woman's legs were bitten and torn in at least a dozen places. The doctor was now very quiet; he gave the women standing about, the necessary orders about getting warm water, and with the utmost tenderness and care, proceeded to dress the wounds. The operation completed, and the patient being softly happed, and told to keep very quiet, she would have every attention, he now had time to inquire into the cause of the melee, which had ended in this shocking manner. "I'll just tell you hoo it was, doctor, without a word of a lee, one way or another," said one of the foremost of the bel-dames, "Geordie, you see, cam in for his sipper, and Peggy had the porridge ploutin on the fire, and maist ready. 'Whar's the sipper, Peggy,' says he. 'It'll be dished in nae time, Geordie,' and before she had time to say another word, he gave her sick a crack on the side of the head that it stotted back frae the wa' iike a ball. Wi' that she lifted the goblet of boiling porridge, and cam down straight on her crown with her full wecht." "Well," said the doctor, apparently interested, and beginning to be amused, "and—" "Weel, what does Geordie do, but he cries out, 'Gleg, Gleg, come here, Gleg?' that, sir, is Geordie's fechtin doug, and he sets the brute on his ain wife, and made him bite her tim and again, though he did na want to do it." The doctor's whole form seemed to expand at this horrible narration, as he went up to the gloomy savage,—who still kept seated on the coal, holding his bloody head,—as if about to inflict upon him summary punishment,—a fierce growl was heard, and turning round, we saw "Gleg" sneaking forth from under the bed, and making towards the doctor with mischief in his eye. He was a low set, ugly, savage-looking brute of the real bull-dog breed, and the terror of the whole neighbourhood. The doctor grasped firmly his huge stick, and dealt upon its head a single blow, which shattered its skull, and it fell never to rise again. "And now you cowardly scoundrel," he said, turning to Geordie, who had risen to his feet in a state of great excitement, "I have a great mind to break every bone in your miserable body, but you have been tolerably well punished already, and I hope it will be a lesson to you." "You'll pay for that doug, if there's law in the land. I could hae gotten a five pound note for him last week and wud na tak it." "Be thankful, my man, be thankful, and now let me tell you that I will be here to-morrow morning; you will go into town and get some wine for your wife, and if you disturb her by speaking a single word.