

nevertheless, the circumstances of the Highlands still give the proprietors of land a degree of power over their immediate dependants, which is not seen in the more commercial parts of the kingdom.—This cannot be said equally of *all* the Highlands; for, in the southern and more improved districts, things are approaching to a similarity with the rest of Scotland; but in remoter situations there is still a considerable remnant of the arbitrary spirit of the feudal times.

From the observations that have been made on the general state of society in the Highlands, it will be understood that no man can live there as an independent labourer; that every inhabitant of the country is under an absolute necessity of obtaining a possession of land; and as the competitors for such possessions are so numerous that all cannot be accommodated, every one who is not determined on quitting the country, feels himself very much at the mercy of the proprietor, on whom he depends for the means of remaining. To this is to be added the poverty of the lower orders; the great extent of particular estates; the remote insulated situation of many; their distance from the ordinary courts of justice, and the great expense which must on that account be incurred by an attempt to procure redress for any wrong.—All these circumstances combine to give a landlord in these remote situations an extraordinary degree of personal weight; and the regular authority of a magistrate being superadded, no individual among his dependants can venture to contest his power.

The laws passed after the year 1745, for abolishing the feudal jurisdictions in the Highlands, were certainly useful in so far as they had an effect, but were of much less consequence than they have sometimes been supposed.