

## The Village Blacksmith.

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and, in accordance with local custom, addressing the farmer by the name of his farm rather than that of his family, he exclaimed ; “ Hoo’s a’ wi’ ye the nicht, Borland? Man, I didna notice ye comin’ up the road.”

“ I was sayin’, James,” rejoined the farmer, “ that we’re sair in need o’ rain for the crops.”

“ Aye, Borland, the drouth’s lasted just rather lang. I’ll no deny but a drap o’ rain wad hae gien a better show o’ green amang the flooers, and some o’ them micht hae been just a wee thocht lairger. But we get mair o’ them, and I canna but think their colours is brichter in this sunny wather ; and sometimes they’re just smoored in leaf a’thegither whan the wather’s bye ordinar wat.”

“ That’s maybe a’ vera true, James ; but the corn’s unco backward for want o’ rain. I’m feared we’ll no hae half a crop the year ; and hoo we’re tae pay oor rents oot o’ that, I dinna see.”

“ That’ll be a sair misfortune for ither for, for- by the fairmers, Borland. Dear bread maks hard times for us a’, but spaicially for the puir.”

“ Ye’re richt there, James ; and I was thinkin’ that, as Mr. Hamilton here’s sae thick wi’ the minister, and ca’ jell him about thae things a hantle nicer