

the two middle fingers of one hand, was beating time to the tune a young girl sung to hush a baby to sleep. The landlord with another little cherub on his knee—whose efforts were directed to “rubbing sleep from its eyes,” sat poring on the blazing fire, either cogitating on the ways and means to provide for his family, or perhaps arguing in his mind some new scheme, more likely to bring him an independence or encrease his wealth than that in which he was now embarked. His wife “with frugal care” was putting aside the relics of the evening repast they had just finished.—Several other personages, of more or less note occupied their station in this circle; but these it is unnecessary to describe. Our party having entered were respectfully and kindly received. The host depositing his little charge—rose and handed chairs, while the landlady with equal assiduity attended to the young female, procuring a candle and conducting her to another room.

“Who’ere has travell’d life’s dull round
Where’ere his weary steps have been,
May sigh to think, he always found
The warmest welcome at an Inn.”—

Supper was ordered and soon made its appearance. It was with equal celerity dispatched and the party retired to repose for the night. But as the sweet Bard has express’d it

“Linden saw another sight—
When the drums beat at the dead of night
Commanding fires of death to light,
The darkness of her scenery.”

There was sufficient interest in the scene they had witnessed to awaken a reflection in the minds of our travellers had they been in a mood for it: but the influence of the air had that effect, upon them which has been felt by all who have been exposed to it. They were but a short time in bed when “when all were steep’d in nature’s sweet repose.” But what a contrast, did the confusion ensuing in a few hours present to the tranquility of the evening’s scene. At the dead hour of midnight the whole inhabitants were aroused by the appalling cry of “Fire.” It had originated from some imperfection in the chimney in the roof of the Inn. All the buildings were of wood; and at this season of the year perfectly dry as tinder. There were no engines, but few hands to carry water; and even before they had been discovered the flames had made such progress as to be completely beyond the power of all their efforts to check. In the short space of one minute the whole house was one huge mass of flame. The inmates with our travellers among them having barely time to escape with their lives.—The jostling, crowding and confusion spoiled the best efforts to render any assistance. Every man was bustling in his neighbour’s way. The women were shrieking, amidst the alarm; and clasping their children as their dearest treasures to their naked bosoms. While the attention of all were directed to the Inn, now reduced to a heap of living coals; a cry was set up from another quarter; another house had caught fire, belonging to one of the poorest but most industrious and