

with the world he ever knew. Never, at least, have I met with any one who exerted a more wholesome influence, through the force of moral character, on those around him. We sat down to a plain and homely supper. The slave question had about this time begun to draw the attention of a few of the more excellent and intelligent among the people, and the elder Burns seemed deeply interested in it.

“This is but homely fare, Mr. Lindsay,” he said, pointing to the simple viands before us, “and the apologists of slavery among us would tell you how inferior we are to the poor negroes, who fare so much better. But surely ‘man does not live by bread alone!’ Our fathers who died for Christ on the hill-side and the scaffold were noble men, and never, never shall slavery produce such; and yet they toiled as hard, and fared as meanly, as we their children.”

I could feel, in the cottage of such a peasant, and seated beside such men as his two sons, the full force of the remark. And yet I have heard the miserable sophism of unprincipled power against which it is directed — a sophism so insulting to the dignity of honest poverty — a thousand times repeated.

Supper over, the family circle widened round the hearth; and the old man, taking down a large clasped Bible, seated himself beside the iron lamp which now lighted the apartment. There was deep silence among us as he turned over the leaves. Never shall I forget his appearance. He was tall and thin, and, though his frame was still vigorous, considerably bent. His features were high and massy; the complexion still retained much of the freshness of youth, and the eye all its intelligence; but his locks were waxing thin and gray round his high,