

LETTER III.

THE population of Sweden has been estimated from two millions and a half to three millions; a small number for such an immense tract of country, of which only so much is cultivated—and that in the simplest manner—as is absolutely requisite to supply the necessaries of life; and near the seashore, whence herrings are easily procured, there scarcely appears a vestige of cultivation. The scattered huts that stand shivering on the naked rocks, braving the pitiless elements, are formed of logs of wood rudely hewn; and so little pains are taken with the craggy foundation that nothing like a pathway points out the door.

Gathered into himself by the cold, lowering his visage to avoid the cutting blast, is it surprising that the churlish pleasure of drinking drams takes place of social enjoyments amongst the poor, especially if we take into the account that they mostly live on high-seasoned provision and rye bread? Hard enough, you may imagine, as it is baked only once a year. The servants also, in most families, eat this kind of bread, and have a different kind of food from their masters, which, in spite of all the arguments I have heard to vindicate the custom, appears to me a remnant of barbarism.

In fact, the situation of the servants in every respect, particularly that of the women, shows how far the Swedes are from having a just conception of rational