

tively high place in the social scale. Mr. Telford, like Mr. Miller, followed the profession of a stone-mason, before his industry and self-tuition qualified him for the higher functions of an architect and an engineer. And Mr. Watt and Mr. Rennie rose to wealth and fame without the aid of a university education. But, distinguished as these individuals were, none of them possessed those qualities of mind which Mr. Miller has exhibited in his writings; and, with the exception of Burns, the uneducated genius which has done honor to Scotland during the last century, has never displayed that mental refinement, and classical taste, and intellectual energy, which mark all the writings of our author. We wish that we could have gratified our readers with an authentic and even detailed narrative of the previous history of so remarkable a writer, and of the steps by which his knowledge was acquired, and the difficulties which he encountered in its pursuit; but though this is not, to any great extent, in our power, we shall at least be able, chiefly from Mr. Miller's own writings, to follow him throughout his geological career.

Mr. Miller was born at Cromarty, of humble but respectable parents, whose history would have possessed no inconsiderable interest, even if it had not derived one of a higher kind from the genius and fortunes of their child. By the paternal side he was descended from a race of sea-faring people, whose family burying-ground, if we judge from the past, seems to be the sea. Under its green waves his father sleeps: his grandfather, his two granduncles, one of whom sailed round the world with Anson, lie also there; and the same extensive cemetery contains the relics of several of his more distant relatives. His father was but an infant of scarcely a year old, at the death of our author's grandfather, and had to commence life as a poor ship-boy; but such was the energy of his mind, that, when little turned of thirty, he had become the master and owner of a fine large sloop, and had built himself a good house, which entitled his son to the franchise on the passing of the Reform Bill. Having unfortunately lost his sloop in a storm, he had to begin the world anew, and he soon became master and owner of another, and would have thriven, had he lived; but the hereditary fate was too strong for him, and when our author was a little boy of five summers, his father's fine new sloop foundered at sea in a terrible tempest, and he and his crew were never more heard of. Mr. Miller had two sisters younger than himself, both of whom died ere they attained