

under a better system of things till its influence had become coëxtensive with civilized man. Hume had produced his inimitable history, and Adam Smith his wonderful work which was to revolutionize and new-model the economy of all the governments of the earth. And there in my little library were the histories of Henry and Robertson, the philosophy of Kames and Reid, the novels of Smollett and M'Kenzie, and the poetry of Beattie and Home. But if there was no lack of Scottish intellect in the literature of the time, there was a decided lack of Scottish manners; and I knew too much of my humble countrymen not to regret it. True, I had before me the writings of Ramsay and my unfortunate friend Ferguson; but there was a radical meanness in the first that lowered the tone of his coloring far beneath the freshness of truth; and the second, whom I had seen perish, — too soon, alas! for literature and his country, — had given us but a few specimens of his power when his hand was arrested for ever.

My vessel, after a profitable though somewhat tedious voyage, had again arrived at Liverpool. It was late in December, 1786; and I was passing the long evening in my cabin, engaged with a whole sheaf of pamphlets and magazines which had been sent me from the shore. "The Lounger" was at this time in course of publication. I had ever been an admirer of the quiet elegance and exquisite tenderness of M'Kenzie; and though I might not be quite disposed to think, with Johnson, that "the chief glory of every people arises from its authors," I certainly felt all the prouder of my country from the circumstance that so accomplished a writer was one of my countrymen. I had read this evening some of the more recent numbers, — half-disposed to regret, however, amid all the pleasure they af-