

sixty-eight years ago ; and he had entered into an advantageous contract with Catherine of Russia, for furnishing all the philosophical instruments of a new college then erecting in St. Petersburg, a contract which promised to secure about two years' profitable employment to himself and seven workmen. In the ten years which had intervened between the dates of his two letters, Kenneth M'Culloch had become one of the most skilful and inventive mechanics in London, perhaps in the world. He rose gradually into affluence and celebrity, and for a considerable period before his death his gains were estimated at about a thousand a year. His story, however, illustrates rather the wisdom of nature than that of Kenneth M'Culloch. We think all the more highly of Franklin for being so excellent a printer, and of Burns for excelling all his companions in the labors of the field ; nor did the skill or vigor with which they pursued their ordinary employments hinder the one from taking his place among the first philosophers and first statesmen of the age, nor prevent the other from achieving his wide-spread celebrity as at once the most original and most popular of modern poets. Be it remembered, however, that there is a narrow and limited cast of genius, unlike that of either Burns or Franklin, which, though of incalculable value in its own sphere, is of no use whatever in any other ; and to precipitate it on its proper object by the pressure of external circumstances, and the general inaptitude of its possessor for other pursuits, seems to be part of the wise economy of Providence. Had Kenneth M'Culloch betaken himself to the plough, like his father and grandfather, he would have been, like them, the tacksman of Woodside, and nothing more ; had he found his proper vocation in cabinet-making, he would have made tables and chairs for life, like his ingenious master Donald Sandison.