

Humboldt, who, uniting a profound and universal acquaintance with the physical and natural sciences, with an elevated genius and quickness of perception, has—assisted by the patronage and encouraged by the honours which his sovereign and countrymen have so readily granted—done more for the science of meteorology, and, we might add, every branch of natural history, than any other modern philosopher. But while we rejoice in the honour and success of this great man, we mourn over the neglect under which many not less gifted or aspiring minds are compelled to stifle their energies, or support a cruel oppression. The estimate which men form of the talents and capabilities of their fellow-men is not founded upon their intelligence, and the honesty and sagacity with which they pursue their object, but upon their success. Publicity is a painful condition to a man of a fearful temperament; it is only suited to the mind that can bear with the same composure the honours that are lavished upon success, and the scorn, contempt, and bitter contumely, that more certainly follow a failure. The sun itself may be eclipsed, or its radiance may be intercepted by the cloud that breeds a tempest, which desolates and lays low the noblest tree of the forest,—but the cloud is soon dissipated, and the source of light, heat, and life, pours down upon the scene of its wonted energy the fulness of its glory, dries every leaf, and gives new power to the drooping vegetation; so genius is often shadowed by the thick though fleeting atmosphere of envenomed jealousy and spite, which for a time may obscure its rays, and induce many to ask, Where is now its glory? but when the cloud is overpast, and the friends who forsake in misfortune feel again its influence and tell of its praises, as the birds sing when the sun shines, then it seeks not to destroy by the power of its ability, but to instruct and bless. A great mind is not the slave of public opinion; it appreciates the honour or the blame as it may be deserved, and if fortune frowns upon exertion, and failure attends its progress, it waits in patience for that moment when its energies may be advantageously displayed, or, if necessary, bequeaths its attempts to posterity. It cannot, however, be denied, that those who attain honours in the present day have usually a claim to them; and none of those who have attempted to climb the steep pass that leads to fame, will be unwilling to allow, that of all those who have in our own day obtained the