

forded me, that the Addison of Scotland had not done for the manners of his country what his illustrious prototype had done for those of England, — when my eye fell on the ninety-seventh number. I read the introductory sentences, and admired their truth and elegance. I had felt, in the contemplation of supereminent genius, the pleasure which the writer describes, and my thoughts reverted to my two friends, — the dead and the living. “In the view of highly superior talents, as in that of great and stupendous objects,” says the essayist, “there is a sublimity which fills the soul with wonder and delight, — which expands it, as it were, beyond its usual bounds, — and which, investing our nature with extraordinary powers and extraordinary honors, interests our curiosity and flatters our pride.”

I read on with increasing interest. It was evident, from the tone of the introduction, that some new luminary had arisen in the literary horizon; and I felt something like a schoolboy when, at his first play, he waits for the drawing up of the curtain. And the curtain at length rose. “The person,” continues the essayist, “to whom I allude” — and he alludes to him as a genius of no ordinary class — “is Robert Burns, an Ayrshire ploughman.” The effect on my nerves seemed electrical. I clapped my hands and sprung from my seat. “Was I not certain of it! Did I not foresee it!” I exclaimed. “My noble-minded friend, Robert Burns!” I ran hastily over the warm-hearted and generous critique, — so unlike the cold, timid, equivocal notices with which the professional critic has greeted, on their first appearance, so many works destined to immortality. It was M’Kenzie, the discriminating, the classical, the elegant, who assured me that the productions of this “heaven-taught ploughman were