

And here we can hardly fail to notice a very remarkable instance of what may be called the economical provisions of nature. How rarely, and in what small quantities, are the diamond and plumbago found ; and how abundantly does coal predominate in many parts of the world ! The Borrodale mine of plumbago in Cumberland is the most considerable source of that substance throughout Europe ; and the province of Golconda almost alone supplies the whole world with diamonds : and, probably, the accumulated weight of all the plumbago and of all the diamonds, which have ever been derived from those and other sources, would not equal a hundredth part of the weight of coal which is daily quarried in Great Britain. Suppose now that the case had been reversed ; and what would have been the consequence ? diamond and plumbago, though really combustible substances, yet from their slow combustibility could never have answered, in the place of coal, as a fuel for general purposes ; and, on the other hand, without that large supply of coal which nature has provided, what would have become of the domestic comforts and commercial speculations of the greater part of Europe, during the two last centuries ?

The value of the diamond is not derived solely from its transparency and lustre. Its remarkable hardness is another and a most useful pro-