

## Nova-Scotia Magazine,

FOR FEBRUARY, 1790.

MEMOIRS OF EDWARD LORD THURLOW, LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR.

[From the *European Magazine*.]

OF the various roads to fortune, and the several avenues to fame, which present themselves in Great-Britain, the profession of the law has conducted its votaries to both riches and honour, far beyond any other that can be pointed out. From the law a very great proportion of the noble families of this kingdom derive their origin. To the law they are indebted for most of their wealth and respectability. In this pursuit birth and family connections are of small importance. Without either, the exercise of shining talents will lead their possessors to rank and consequence, with little assistance from the great. Of the truth of this, the nobleman who is the subject of our present consideration is a distinguished instance.

In an obscure village called Ashfield, in Suffolk, Lord Thurlow was born. His father was a clergyman, and has been said to have been in some manner related to the famous Secretary to Oliver Cromwell. How far this may be true is of little importance. From the present object of our attention the family will certainly derive more honour than from any other person belonging to it. He was educated partly by his father and partly at a neighbouring school; and it redounds to his honour, that some of his school-fellows have to boast of favours conferred on them unsolicited since his elevation. During his school days he exhibited but few marks of laudable distinction. If he was then entitled to any praise, it was more for

enterprize than decorum. His literature was not much. With that small portion which he had acquired, he was at a proper age sent to Cambridge, and entered of Caius College, under the tuition of Dr. Smith, the present master; who, though they parted from each other without any cordiality, it is again to be recorded to his Lordship's honour, that he offered and prevailed on Dr. Smith to accept a considerable preferment without any solicitation.

At Cambridge Lord Thurlow continued not long enough to take any degree. A conduct marked rather by a violation of, than an adherence to, order, governed our young academic, who appeared neither to like the place, the regulations, or the studies of a college; and in return had little favour from the heads of the society or affection from his tutor. A series of deviation from regularity produced the usual consequences. Academic censures were inflicted without reformation; and in the end, to avoid the disgrace of the highest punishment, it was recommended to him to quit the College for another sphere of action. This advice was taken, and he quitted Cambridge for London.

He was entered of the Inner Temple; but for many years the most sagacious observer of human life could not have discovered any signs by which he might have prognosticated his present elevation. Dissipation and indolence seemed to be unformountable obstacles. He attended Westminster without business, unknown