

other. He has explored the interminable regions of fancy; and, both in story and in song, has poured forth upon a wondering world the produce of his labours, and made them no less subservient to the amusement than to the real happiness of a grateful and enlightened society. He has penetrated the darkest and most intricate recesses of history, and laid open to our view the transactions of man in every age, from the earliest period of his existence to the present times—thus bringing him in contact with his own moral and physical character, and, by the experience of the past, presenting to his mind an accurate prospect of his future greatness or misfortunes. He has imitated nature in all that is sublime, beautiful and wonderful—he has spread her colours on canvass in all the glow and freshness of the morning—he has pencilled her rugged but picturesque wildness in the various hues and shades of the living model—and represented her virgin flowerets in all their feminine and aromatic beauty. He has painted and chiselled out his own form with the precision and accuracy of a being who had only been denied the power of implanting life in the workmanship of his hands, and traced the image of the living God in the cold and inanimate stone. He has conceived, invented, and attuned an artificial lyre with organs capable of expressing, in palpable and articulate sounds, all the emotions of the mind, and of cheering the heart, and alleviating its sufferings under all the circumstances of a precarious and ever-changing life. In the art of conveying his ideas he has made a progress, and arrived at a maturity which conveys no less honour upon himself than it reflects glory upon the source from which it sprung; and the deeper the mind searches into the faculties of man, the more truly great do the power and influence of oratory render him in the sight of his fellow-beings. He has reared superstructures that have, not only lasted for ages, but out-lived all memorials of himself, his power, and his inventions. By the aid of mechanism he has assumed a power over the very elements themselves; and, by circumscribing them within proper bounds, and placing them in operative contact, the one with the other, has rendered them no less subservient than useful to the comfort and happiness of the present existence. In a word, the progress of man in every species of improvement—whether with regard to his own moral faculties—to his discoveries in the arts—or his researches in the sciences—has been alike wonderful and gratifying to his best propensities; and is of such a character as may naturally be supposed to entail upon him the highest degree of favour and prosperity which the dictates of an enlightened mind can claim, or the fervour of a religious heart can solicit! But, alas! the same history which presents us with this splendid and enviable picture of human greatness—of the talents, the acquirements, and inventions of man—has also the candour to inform us, that his march to this exalted condition in the region of moral and intellectual improvement has been irregular and various—ininitely slow in the beginning, and increasing by degrees with redoubled velocity. Ages of laborious ascent have been followed by a moment of rapid downfall; and the several climates of the globe have felt the vicissitudes of light and darkness. If they have basked in the meridian sun-shine of science and wisdom, they have also been doomed to grope their way in the dark storm of adversity and ignorance. Egypt, though the fruitful mother of superstition, was also the original parent of learning and human jurisprudence. A mysterious mixture of gross and illusive pomp had, indeed, always ac-