

VIII.

GEORGE ROSS, THE SCOTCH AGENT.

CHAPTER I.

Men resemble the gods in nothing so much as in doing good to their fellow-creatures. — CICERO.

IN the letter in which Junius accuses the Duke of Grafton of having sold a patent-place in the collection of customs to one Mr. Hine, he informs the reader that the person employed by his grace in negotiating the business "was George Ross, the Scotch Agent, and worthy confidant of Lord Mansfield. And no sale by the candle," he adds, "was ever conducted with greater formality." Now, slight as this notice is, there is something in it sufficiently tangible for the imagination to lay hold of. If the reader thinks of the Scotch Agent at all, he probably thinks of him as one of those convenient creatures so necessary to the practical statesman, whose merit does not consist more in their being ingenious in a great degree, than in their being honest in a very small one. So mixed a thing is poor human nature, however, that, though the statement of Junius has never yet been fairly controverted, no possible estimate of character could be more unjust. The Scotch