THREE ESSAYS:

ON
PICTURESQUE BEAUTY;
ON
PICTURESQUE TRAVEL;
AND ON
SKETCHING LANDSCAPE:
TO WHICH IS ADDED A POEM, ON
LANDSCAPE PAINTING.

BY WILLIAM GILPIN, M. A.
PREBENDARY OF SALISBURY; AND
VICAR OF SOLORE IN NEW FOREST, NEAR LYMINGTON.

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TO

WILLIAM LOCK, Esq;

OF

NORBURY-PARK, in SURREY.

DEAR SIR,

The following essays, and poem,
I beg leave to inscribe to you. Indeed I do
little more, than return your own: for the
best remarks, and observations in them, are
yours. Such as may be cavilled at, I am
persuaded, must be mine.

A published work is certainly a fair object
of criticism: but I think, my dear sir, we
picturesque people are a little misunderstood
with regard to our general intention. I have
A several
times been surprized at finding us
represented, as supposing, all beauty to consist
in picturesque beauty—and the face of nature
to be examined only by the rules of painting.
Whereas, in fact, we always speak a different
language. We speak of the grand scenes of
nature, tho uninteresting in a picturesque light,
as having a strong effect on the imagination—
often a stronger, than when they are pro-
perly disposed for the pencil. We every where
make a distinction between scenes, that are
beautiful, and amusing; and scenes that are
picturesque. We examine, and admire both.
Even artificial objects we admire, whether in a
grand, or in a humble style, tho unconnected
with picturesque beauty—the palace, and the
cottage—the improved garden-scene, and the
neat homestead. Works of tillage also afford
us equal delight—the plough, the mower, the
reaper, the hay-field, and the harvest-wane.
In a word, we reverence, and admire the works
of God; and look with benevolence, and
pleasure, on the works of men.

In
( iii )

In what then do we offend? At the expence of no other species of beauty, we merely endeavour to illustrate, and recommend one species more; which, tho' among the most interesting, hath never yet, so far as I know, been made the set object of investigation. From scenes indeed of the *pictureque kind* we exclude the appendages of tillage, and in general the works of men; which too often introduce preciFéness, and formality. But excluding artificial objects from one species of beauty, is not degrading them from all. We leave then the general admirer of the beauties of nature to his own pursuits; nay we admire them with him: all we desire, is, that he would leave us as quietly in the possession of our amusements.

Under this apology, my dear sir, I have ventured, in the following essays, to inlarge a little both on our theory, and practice. In the first essay (that we may be fairly understood) the distinguishing characteristic is marked,

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of such beautiful objects, as are suited to the pencil. In the second, the mode of amusement is pointed out, that may arise from viewing the scenes of nature in a picturesque light: and in the third, a few rules are given for sketching landscape after nature. I have practiced drawing as an amusement, and relaxation, for many years; and here offer the result of my experience. Some readiness in *execution* indeed, it is supposed, is necessary, before these rules can be of much service. They mean to take the young artist up, where the drawing-master leaves him.—I have only to add farther, that as several of the rules, and principles here laid down, have been touched in different picturesque works, which I have given the public, I have endeavoured not to repeat myself: and where I could not throw new light on a subject, I have hastened over it;—only in a work of this kind, it was necessary to bring all my principles together.

With
With regard to the poem, annexed to these essays, something more should be said. As that small part of the public, who personally know me; and that still smaller part, whom I have the honour to call my friends, may think me guilty of presumption in attempting a work of this kind, I beg leave to give the following history of it.

Several years ago, I amused myself with writing a few lines in verse on landscape-painting; and afterwards sent them, as a fragment (for they were not finished) to amuse a friend.* I had no other purpose. My friend told me, he could not say much for my poetry; but as my rules, he thought, were good, he wished me to finish my fragment; and if I should not like it as a poem, I might turn it into an essay or prose.—As this was only what I expected, I was not disappointed; tho' not encouraged to proceed. So

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* Edward Forster Esq; of Walthamstow.

I trou-

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* Rev. Mr. Madan.
good-nature therefore generally gave way, and suffered many lines to stand, and many alterations to be made, which his own good taste could not approve.* I am afraid therefore I must appear to the world, as having spoiled a good poem; and must shelter myself, and it under those learned reasons, which have been given for putting Propria que maribus, and As in præfenti, into verse. If the rules have injured the poetry; as rules at least, I

* Extract of a letter from Mr. Mason.

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"I have inferred conditionally every word, and phrase, you have altered; except the awkward word stamp, which I have uniformly discarded, whenever it offered itself to me in my English garden, which you may imagine it did frequently; in it's stead I have always used try. I have ventured therefore to insert it adjectively; and I hope, I shall be forgiven. Except in this single instance, I know not that I have deviated in the least from the alterations, you fear. — I now quit all that relates to the poem, not without some self-satisfaction in thinking it is over: for, to own the truth, had I thought you would have expected such almost mathematical exactitude of terms, as I find you do; and in consequence turned lines tolerably poetical, into prose, for the sake of precision, I should never have ventured to give you my assistance."

hope, they will meet your approbation. I am, dear sir, with the greatest esteem, and regard,

Your sincere,

and most obedient,

humble servant,

WILLIAM GILPIN.

Flam's-hill,
Oct. 18, 1771.
ESSAY I.

ON

PICTURESQUE BEAUTY.
E S S A Y I.

Disputes about beauty might perhaps be involved in less confusion, if a distinction were established, which certainly exists, between such objects as are beautiful, and such as are picturesque—between those, which please the eye in their natural state, and those, which please from some quality, capable of being illustrated in painting.

Ideas of beauty vary with the object, and with the eye of the spectator. Those artificial forms appear generally the most beautiful, with which we have been the most conversant. Thus the stone-mason sees beauties in a well-jointed wall, which escape the architect, who surveys the building under a different idea. And thus the painter, who compares his object with the rules of his art, sees it in a different light from the man of general taste, who surveys it only as simply beautiful.

As this difference therefore between the beautiful, and the picturesque appears really to exist, and must depend on some peculiar construction of the object; it may be worth while to examine, what that peculiar construction is. We inquire not into the general sources of beauty, either in nature, or in representation. This would lead into a nice, and scientific discussion, in which it is not our purpose to engage. The question simply is, What is that quality in objects, which particularly marks them as picturesque?

In examining the real object, we shall find, one source of beauty arises from that species of elegance, which we call smoothness, or neatness; for the terms are nearly synonymous. The higher the marble is polished, the brighter the silver is rubbed, and the more the mahogany shines, the more each is considered as an object of beauty: as if the eye delighted in gliding smoothly over a surface.

In the class of larger objects the same idea prevails. In a pile of building we wish to see
see neatness in every part added to the elegance of the architecture. And if we examine a piece of improved pleasure-ground, every thing rough, and slovenly offends.

Mr. Burke, enumerating the properties of beauty, considers smoothness as one of the most essential. "A very considerable part of the effect of beauty, says he, is owing to this quality; indeed the most considerable: for take any beautiful object, and give it a broken, and rugged surface, and however well-formed it may be in other respects, it pleases no longer. Whereas, let it want ever so many of the other constituents, if it want not this, it becomes more pleasing, than almost all the others without it." How far Mr. Burke may be right in making smoothness the most considerable source of beauty, I rather doubt. A considerable one it certainly is.

Thus

* Upon the sublime and beautiful, p. 213.

† Mr. Burke is probably not very accurate in what he farther says on the connection between beauty, and diminutives. —Beauty excites love; and a loved object is generally characterized by diminutives. But it does not follow, that all objects characterized by diminutives, tho' they may be so because they are loved, are therefore beautiful. We often love them for their moral qualities; their affections; their gentleness; or their docility. Beauty, no doubt, awakens love; but it also excites admiration, and respect. This combination forms the sentiment, which prevails, when we look at the Apollo of Belvidere, and the Niobe. No man of nice discernment would characterize these names by diminutives. —There is then a beauty, between which and diminutives there is no relation; but which, on the contrary, excludes them: and in the description of figures, particular of that species of beauty, we seek for terms, which recommend them more to our admiration, than our love.
The surfaces of bodies: when we speak of their delineation, we use the word ruggedness. Both ideas however equally enter into the picturesque; and both are observable in the smaller, as well as in the larger parts of nature—in the outline, and bark of a tree, as in the rude summit, and craggy sides of a mountain.

Let us then examine our theory by an appeal to experience; and try how far these qualities enter into the idea of picturesque beauty; and how far they mark that difference among objects, which is the ground of our inquiry.

A piece of Palladian architecture may be elegant in the last degree. The proportion of it's parts—the propriety of it's ornaments—and the symmetry of the whole, may be highly pleasing. But if we introduce it in a picture, it immediately becomes a formal object, and ceases to please. Should we wish to give it picturesque beauty, we must use the mallet, instead of the chisel: we must beat down one half of it, deface the other, and throw the mutilated members around in heaps. In short, from a smooth building we must turn it into a rough

rough ruin. No painter, who had the choice of the two objects, would hesitate a moment.

Again, why does an elegant piece of garden-ground make no figure on canvas? The shape is pleasing; the combination of the objects, harmonious; and the winding of the walk in the very line of beauty. All this is true; but the smoothness of the whole, the right, and as it should be in nature, offends in picture. Turn the lawn into a piece of broken ground: plant rugged oaks instead of flowering shrubs: break the edges of the walk: give it the rudeness of a road: mark it with wheel-tracks; and scatter around a few stones, and brushwood; in a word, instead of making the whole smooth, make it rough; and you make it also picturesque. All the other ingredients of beauty it already possessed.

You fit for your picture. The master, at your desire, paints your head combed smooth, and powdered from the barber's hand. This may give it a more striking likeness, as it is more the resemblance of the real object. But is it therefore a more pleasing picture? I fear not. Leave Reynolds to himself, and he will make it picturesque: he will throw the hair dishevelled about your shoulders. Virgil would have
have done the same. It was his usual practice in all his portraits. In his figure of Acanthus, we have the *faux crines*; and in his portrait of Venus, which is highly finished in every part, the artist has given her hair, 

![Diffusae voceis.]

That lovely face of youth smiling with all it's sweet, dimpling charms, how attractive is it in life! how beautiful in representation! It is one of those objects, that please, as many do, both in nature, and on canvas. But

* The roughness, which Virgil gives the hair of Venus, and Acanthus, we may suppose to be of a different kind from the squawd roughness, which he attributes to Charon:

**Pavorque has horrendus aquis, et fumina fervas,**
**Terribili squamore Charon, cui plurima mento**
**Caustice inculta jacet.**

Charon's roughness is, in it's kind, picturesque also; but the roughness here intended, and which can only be introduced in elegant figures, is of that kind, which is merely opposed to hair in nice order. In describing Venus, Virgil probably thought hair, when *streaming in the wind*, both beautiful, and picturesque, from it's undulating form, and varied tints; and from a kind of life, which it affirms in motion; the perhaps it's chief recommendation to him, at the moment, was, that it was a feature of the character, which Venus was then affumigating.

![Would you see the human face in it's highest form of picturesque beauty, examine that patriarchal head. What is it, which gives that dignity of character; that force of expression; those lines of wisdom, and experience; that energetic meaning, so far beyond the rosy hue, or even the bewitching smile of youth? What is it, but the forehead furrowed with wrinkles; the prominent cheek-bone, catching the light; the muscles of the cheek strongly marked, and losting themselves in the shaggy beard? and, above all, the austere brow, projecting over the eye—that feature which particularly struck Homer in his idea of Jupiter.]

* It is much more probable, that the poet copied forms from the sculptors, who must have supposed to understand them better, from having studied them more; than that the sculptor should copy them from the poet. Artists however have taken advantage of the pre-pollution of the world for Homer to induce approbation to their works by acknowledging them to be reflected images of his conceptions. So Phidias offered his countrymen, that he had taken his Jupiter from the description of that god in the first book of Homer. The fact is, none of the features contained in that image, except the brow, can be rendered by sculpgure. But he knew what advantage such ideas, as his art could express, would receive from being connected in the mind of the spectator with those furnished by poetry; and from the just partiality of men for such a poet.
he had probably been finely represented in some statue; in a word, what is it, but the rough touches of age?

As an object of the mixed kind, partaking both of the beautiful, and the picturesque, we admire the human figure also. The lines, and surface of a beautiful human form are so infinitely varied; the lights and shades, which it receives, are so exquisitely tender in some parts, and yet so round, and bold in others; its proportions are so just; and its limbs so fitted to receive all the beauties of grace, and contrast; that even the face, in which the charms of intelligence, and sensibility reside, is almost lost in the comparison. But still the human form, in a quiescent state, is thus

beautiful; yet the more it's smooth surface is ruffled, if I may so speak, the more picturesque it appears. When it is agitated by passion, and it's muscles swoln by strong exertion, the whole frame is shewn to the most advantage.—But when we speak of muscles swoln by exertion, we mean only natural exertions, not an affected display of anatomy, in which the muscles, tho' justly placed, may still be overcharged.

It is true, we are better pleased with the usual representations we meet with of the human form in a quiescent state, than in an agitated one: but this is merely owing to our seldom seeing it naturally represented in strong action. Even among the best masters we see little knowledge of anatomy. One will inflate the muscles violently to produce some trifling effect; another will force swell them in the production of a laboured one. The eye soon learns to see a defect, tho' unable to remedy it. But when the anatomy is perfectly just, the human body will always be more picturesque in action, than at rest. The great difficulty indeed of representing strong muscular motion, seems to have struck the ancient masters of sculpture: for it is certainly much harder to model

poet. He seems therefore to have been as well acquainted with the mind of man, as with his shape, and face.—If by ancient we understand, as I think we may, a projecting brow, which calls a broad, and deep shadow over the eye, Clarke has rendered it ill by satis saperdilis, which most people would confute into black eye-brows. Nor has Pope, tho' he affected a knowledge of painting, translated it more happily by jadl brow.—But if Phidias had had nothing to recommend him, except his having availed himself of the only feature in the poet, which was accommodated to his art, we should not have heard of inquirers wondering from whence he had drawn his ideas; nor of the compliment, which it gave him an opportunity of paying to Homer.
model from a figure in strong, momentary action, which must, as it were, be shot flying; than from one, sitting, or standing, which the artist may copy at leisure. Amidst the variety of statues transmitted from their hands, we have only three, or four, in very spirited action.* Yet when we see an effect of this kind well executed, our admiration is greatly increased. Who does not admire the Laocoon more than the Antinous?

Animal life, as well as human, is, in general, beautiful both in nature, and on canvas. We admire the horse, as a real object; the elegance of his form; the flatteneis of his
tread; the spirit of all his motions; and the glossiness of his coat. We admire him also in representation. But as an object of picturesque beauty, we admire more the worn-out cart-horse, the cow, the goat, or the ass; whose harder lines, and rougher coats, exhibit more the graces of the pencil. For the truth of this we may examine Berghem's pictures: we may examine the smart touch of Rosa of Tivoli. The lion with his rough mane; the bristly boar; and the ruffled plumage of the eagle*, are all objects of this kind. Smooth-coated

* The idea of the ruffled plumage of the eagle is taken from the celebrated eagle of Pindar, in his first Pythian ode; which has exercised the pens of several poets; and is equally poetical, and picturesque. He is introduced as an instance of the power of music. In Gray's ode on the progress of poetry we have the following picture of him.

Perciblimg on the foetered hand
Of Jove, thy magic lays the feathered king
With ruffled plumes, and flagging wing:
Quenched in dark clouds of sernber lie
The terror of his beak, and lightening of his eye.

Akenfide's picture of him, in his hymn to the Naiads, is rather a little stiffly painted.

With shaken wings,
While now the solemn concert breathes around,

*
coated animals could not produce so picturesque an effect.

But when the painter thus prefers the cart-horse, the cow, or the ass to other objects more beautiful in themselves, he does not certainly recommend his art to those, whose love of beauty makes them anxiously seek, by what means it's fleeting forms may be fixed.

Suggestions of this kind are ungrateful. The art of painting allows you all you wish. You desire to have a beautiful object painted—your horse, for instance, led out of the stable.

Incumbent on the sceptre of his lord
Sleeps the arm eagle; by the numbered notes
Polleled; andates with the melting tone;
Sovereign of birds.

Well's picture, especially the two last lines, is a very good one.

The bird's fierce monarch drops his vegeful ire,
Perched on the sceptre of th' Olympian king,
The thrilling power of harmony he feels
And indolently hangs his flagging wing;
While gentle sleep his cloven eyelid seals,
And o'er his heaving limbs, inhooks array,
To every balmy gale the rustling feathers play.

in all his pampered beauty. The art of painting is ready to accommodate you. You have the beautiful form you admired in nature exactly transferred to canvas. Be then satisfied. The art of painting has given you what you wanted. It is no injury to the beauty of your Arabian, if the painter think he could have given the graces of his art more forcibly to your cart-horse.

But does it not depreciate his art, if he give up a beautiful form, for one less beautiful, merely because he could have given it the graces of his art more forcibly—because it's sharp lines afford him a greater facility of execution? Is the smart touch of a pencil the grand desideratum of painting? Does he discover nothing in picturesque objects, but qualities, which admit of being rendered with spirit?

I should not vindicate him, if he did. At the same time, a free execution is so very fascinating a part of painting, that we need not wonder, if the artist lay a great stress upon it.—It is not however entirely owing, as some imagine, to the difficulty of mastering an elegant line, that he prefers a rough one. In part indeed this may be the case;
for if an elegant line be not delicately hit off, it is the most insipid of all lines: whereas in the description of a rough object, an error in delineation is not easily seen. However this is not the whole of the matter. A free, bold touch is in itself pleasing. In elegant figures indeed there must be a delicate outline—at least a line true to nature: yet the surfaces even of such figures may be touched with freedom; and in the appendages of the composition there must be a mixture of rougher objects, or there will be a want of contrast. In landscape universally the rougher objects are admired; which give the freest scope to execution. If the pencil be timid, or hesitating, little beauty results. The execution then only is pleasing, when the hand firm, and yet decisive, freely touches the characteristic parts of each object.

* A stroke may be called free, when there is no appearance of restraint. It is bold, when a part is given for the whole, which it cannot fail of suggesting. This is the laconism of genius. But sometimes it may be free, and yet suggest only how easily a line, which means nothing, may be executed. Such a stroke is not bold, but impudent.

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If indeed, either in literary, or in picturesque composition you endeavour to draw the reader, or the spectator from the subject to the mode of executing it, your affectation disquiets. At the same time, if some care, and pains be not bestowed on the execution, your lineaments disquiets, as much. Tho perhaps the artist has more to say, than the man of letters, for paying attention to his execution. A truth is a truth, whether delivered in the language of a philosopher, or a peasant: and the intellect receives it as such. But the artist, who deals in lines, surfaces, and colours, which are an immediate address to the eye, conceives the very truth itself concerned in his mode of representing it. Guido's angel, and

* Language, like light, is a medium; and the true philosophic artist, like light from a north-window, exhibits objects clearly, and distinctly, without soliciting attention to itself. In painting subjects of amusement indeed, language may gild somewhat more, and colour with the dyes of fancy: but where information is of more importance, than entertainment, tho you cannot throw too strong a light, you should carefully avoid a coloured one. The line of some writers resembles a bright light placed between the eye, and the thing to be looked at. The light throws itself, and hides the object; and, if much be allowed, the execution of some painters is as impertinent, as the line of such writers.
the angel on a sign-post, are very different
beings; but the whole of the difference con-
sists in an artful application of lines, surfaces,
and colours.
It is not however merely for the sake of
his execution, that the artist values a rough
object. He finds it in many other respects
accommodated to his art. In the first place,
his composition requires it. If the history-
painter threw all his draperies smooth over
his figures, his groups, and combinations
would be very awkward. And in landscape-
painting smooth objects would produce no
composition at all. In a mountain-scene what
composition could arise from the corner of
a smooth knoll coming forward on one side,
interfered by a smooth knoll on the other;
with a smooth plain perhaps in the middle,
and a smooth mountain in the distance. The
very idea is disgusting. Picturesque composi-
tion consists in uniting in one whole a variety
of parts; and these parts can only be obtained
from rough objects. If the smooth moun-
tains, and plains were broken by different
objects, the composition might be good, on
a supposition the great lines of it were so
before.

Variety too is equally necessary in his com-
position: so is contrast. Both these he finds
in rough objects; and neither of them in
smooth. Variety indeed, in some degree, he
may find in the outline of a smooth object:
but by no means enough to satisfy the eye,
without including the surface also.
From rough objects also he seeks the effect
of light and shades, which they are as well
designed to produce, as they are the beauty
of composition. One uniform light, or one
uniform shade produces no effect. It is the
various surfaces of objects, sometimes turn-
ing to the light in one way, and sometimes
in another, that give the painter his choice
of opportunities in mufing, and graduating
both his lights, and shades.—The richnes
also of the light depends on the breaks, and
little recesses, which it finds on the surfaces
of bodies. What the painter calls richnes
on a surface, is only a variety of little parts;
on which the light shining, shews all its
small inequalities, and roughness; and in
the painter's language, enriches it.—The
beauty also of catching lights arises from the
roughness of objects. What the painter calls
a catching light is a strong touch of light
on
on some prominent part of a surface, while the rest is in shadow. A smooth surface has no such prominences.

In colouring also, rough objects give the painter another advantage. Smooth bodies are commonly as uniform in their colour, as they are in their surface. In glossy objects, the smooth, the colouring may sometimes vary. In general however it is otherwise in the objects of landscape, particularly. The smooth side of a hill is generally of one uniform colour, while the fractured rock presents its grey surface, adorned with patches of greenward running down it's guttered sides; and the broken ground is everywhere varied with an oksery tint, a grey gravel, or a leaden-coloured clay: so that in fact the rich colours of the ground arise generally from its broken surface.

From such reasoning then we infer, that it is not merely for the sake of his execution, that the painter prefers rough objects to smooth. The very essence of his art requires it.

As picturesque beauty therefore so greatly depends on rough objects, are we to exclude every idea of smoothness from mixing with it? Are we struck with no pleasing image, when the lake is spread upon the canvas; the marmoreum aquarum, pure, limpid, smooth, as the polished mirror?

We acknowledge it to be picturesque: but we must at the same time recollect, that, in fact, the smoothness of the lake is more in reality, than in appearance. Were it spread upon the canvas in one simple hue, it would certainly be a dull, fatiguing object. But to the eye it appears broken by shades of various kinds; by the undulations of the water; or by reflections from all the rough objects in its neighbourhood.

It is thus too in other glossy bodies. Tho' the horse, in a rough state, as we have just observed, or worn down with labour, is more adapted to the pencil, than when his sides shine with brushing, and high-feeding; yet in this latter state also he is certainly a picturesque object. But it is not his smooth, and shining coat, that makes him so. It is the apparent interruption of that smoothness by a variety of shades, and colours, which produces the
the effect. Such a play of muscles appears, every where, through the fineness of his skin, gently swelling, and sinking into each other— he is all over so lubricus affici, the reflections of light are so continually shifting upon him, and playing into each other, that the eye never considers the smoothness of the surface; but is amused with gliding up, and down, among these endless transitions, which in some degree, supply the room of roughness.

It is thus too in the plumage of birds. Nothing can be softer, nothing smoother to the touch; and yet it is certainly picturesque. But it is not the smoothness of the surface, which produces the effect—it is not this we admire: it is the breaking of the colours; it is the bright green, or purple, changing perhaps into a rich azure, or velvet black; from thence taking a semitint; and so on through all the varieties of colour. Or if the colour be not changeable, it is the harmony we admire in these elegant little touches of nature’s pencil. The smoothness of the surface is only the ground of the colours. In itself we admire it no more, than we do the smoothness of the canvas, which receives the colours of the picture. Even the plumage of the swan, which

which to the inaccurate observer appears only of one simple hue, is in fact varied with a thousand soft shades, and brilliant touches, at once discoverable to the picturesque eye.

Thus too a piece of polished marble may be picturesque; but it is only, when the polish brings out beautiful veins, which in appearance break the surface by a variety of lines, and colours. Let the marble be perfectly white, and the effect vanishes. Thus also a mirror may have picturesque beauty; but it is only from its reflections. In an unreflecting plate, it is insipid.

In flatus we sometimes see an inferior artist give his marble a gloss, thinking to atone for his bad workmanship by his excellent polish. The effect shews in how small a degree smoothness enters into the idea of the picturesque. When the light plays on the shining coat of a pampered horse, it plays among the lines, and muscles of nature; and is therefore founded in truth. But the polish of marble flesh is unnatural*. The lights therefore

* On all human flesh held between the eye and the light, there is a degree of polish. I speak not here of such a polish as
therefore are false; and smoothness being here one of the chief qualities to admire, we are disgusted; and say, it makes bad, worse.

After all, we mean not to assert, that even a simple smooth surface is in no situation picturesque. In contrast, it certainly may be: nay in contrast it is often necessary. The beauty of an old head is greatly improved by the smoothness of the bald pate; and the rougher parts of the rock must necessarily be set off with the smoother. But the point lies here: to make an object in a peculiar manner picturesque, there must be a proportion of roughness; so much at least, as to make an opposition; which in an object simply beautiful, is unnecessary.

Some quibbling opponent may throw out, that wherever there is smoothness, there must also be roughness. The smoothest plain consists of many rougher parts; and the roughest rock of many smoother; and there is such a variety of degrees in both, that it is hard to

as this, which wrought marble always, in a degree, roughness; as well as human flesh; but of the highest polish, which can be given to marble; and which has always a very bad effect. If I wanted an example, the butt of archbishop Boulder in Westminister-abbey would afford a very glaring one.

saying, where you have the precise ideas of rough, and smooth.

To this it is enough, that the province of the picturesque eye is to survey nature; not to analyze matter. It throws its glances around in the broad-cast file. It comprehends an extensive tract at each sweep. It examines parts, but never descends to particles.

Having thus from a variety of examples endeavoured to shew, that roughness either real, or apparent, forms an essential difference between the beautiful, and the picturesque; it may be expected, that we should point out the reason of this difference. It is obvious enough, why the painter prefers rough objects to smooth: but it is not so obvious, why the quality of roughness should make an essential difference between the objects of nature, and the objects of artificial representation.

To this question, we might answer, that the picturesque eye abhors art; and delights solely in nature; and that as art abounds with regularity, which is only another name

* See page 12, &c.
and the images of nature with irregularity, which is only another name for roughness, we have here a solution of our question.

But is this solution satisfactory? I fear not. The art often abounds with regularity, it does not follow, that all art must necessarily do so. The picturesque eye, it is true, finds its chief objects in nature; but it delights also in the images of art, if they are marked with the characteristics, which it requires. A painter's nature is whatever he imitates; whether the object be what is commonly called natural, or artificial. Is there a greater ornament of landscape, than the ruins of a castle? What painter rejects it, because it is artificial?—What beautiful effects does Vandervelt produce from chipping? In the hands of such a master it furnishes almost as beautiful forms, as any in the whole circle of picturesque objects?—And what could the history-painter do, without his draperies to combine, contrast, and harmonize his figures? Unclothed, they could never be grouped. How could he tell his story, without arms; religious utensils; and the rich furniture of banquets? Many of these contribute greatly to embellish his pictures with pleasing shapes.

Shall we then seek the solution of our question in the great foundation of picturesque beauty? in the happy union of simplicity and variety; to which the rough ideas essentially contribute. An extended plain is a simple object. It is the continuation only of one uniform idea. But the mere simplicity of a plain produces no beauty. Break the surface of it, as you did your pleasure-ground; add trees, rocks, and declivities; that is, give it roughness, and you give it also variety. Thus by enriching the parts of a united whole with roughness, you obtain the combined idea of simplicity, and variety; from whence result the picturesque. Is this a satisfactory answer to our question?

By no means. Simplicity and variety are sources of the beautiful, as well as of the picturesque. Why does the architect break the front of his pile with ornaments? Is it not to add variety to simplicity? Even the very black-smith acknowledges this principle by forming ringlets, and bulbous circles on his tongs, and polters. In nature it is the same; and your plain will just as much be
be improved in reality by breaking it, as upon canvas. ——In a garden-scene the idea is different. There every object is of the neat, and elegant kind. What is otherwise, is inharmonious, and roughness would be disorder.

Shall we then change our ground; and seek an answer to our question in the nature of the art of painting? As it is an art *friably imitative*, those objects will of course appear most advantageously to the picturesque eye, which are the most easily imitated. The stronger the features are, the stronger will be the effect of imitation; and as rough objects have the strongest features, they will consequently, when represented, appear to most advantage. ——Is this answer more satisfactory?

Very little, in truth. Every painter, knows that a smooth object may be as easily, and as well imitated, as a rough one.

Shall we then take an opposite ground, and say just the reverse (as men pressed with difficulties will say any thing) that painting is not an art *friably imitative*, but rather *deceptive* ——that by an assemblage of colours, and a peculiar art in spreading them, the painter gives a semblance of nature at a proper distance; which at hand, is quite another thing

—-that those objects, which we call picturesque, are only such as are more adapted to this art ——and that as this art is most concealed in rough touches, rough objects are of course the most picturesque. ——Have we now attained a satisfactory account of the matter?

Just as much so, as before. Many painters of note did not use the rough style of painting; and yet their pictures are as admirable, as the pictures of those, who did: nor are rough objects less picturesque on their canvas, than on the canvas of others; that is, they paint rough objects smoothly.

Thus foiled, shall we in the true spirit of inquiry, perforce; or honestly give up the cause, and own we cannot search out the source of this difference? I am afraid this is the truth, whatever airs of dogmatizing we may assume. Inquiries into *principles* rarely end in satisfaction. Could we even gain satisfaction in our present question, new doubts would arise. The very first principles of our art would be questioned. Difficulties would start up, *visibulum ante ipsum. We should be asked, What is beauty? What is taste? ——Let us step aside a moment, and listen to the debates of the learned on these heads. They will at least

new.
threw us, that however we may wish to fix principles, our inquiries are seldom satisfactory.

One philosopher will tell us, that taste is only the improvement of our own ideas. Every man has naturally his proportion of taste. The seeds of it are innate. All depends on cultivation.

Another philosopher following the analogy of nature, observes, that as all men's faces are different, we may well suppose their minds to be so likewise. He rejects the idea therefore of innate taste; and in the room of this makes utility the standard both of taste, and beauty.

Another philosopher thinks the idea of utility as absurd, as the last did that of innate taste. What, cries he, can I not admire the beauty of a repulsive face, till I have investigated the utility of that peculiar radiance in the atmosphere? He then wishes we had a little less philosophy amongst us, and a little more common sense. Common sense is despised like other common things: but, in his opinion, if we made common sense the criterion in matters of art, as well as science, we should be nearer the truth.

A fourth philosopher apprehends common sense to be our standard only in the ordinary affairs of life. The bounty of nature has furnished us with various other senses suited to the objects among which we converse: and with regard to matters of taste, it has supplied us with what he doubts not, we all feel within ourselves, a sense of beauty.

Pooh! says another learned inquirer, what is a sense of beauty? Sense is a vague idea, and so is beauty; and it is impossible that any thing determined can result from terms so inaccurate. But if we lay aside a sense of beauty, and adopt proportion, we shall all be right. Proportion is the great principle of taste, and beauty. We admit it both in lines, and colours; and indeed refer all our ideas of the elegant kind to it's standard.

True, says an admirer of the antique; but this proportion must have a rule, or we gain nothing: and a rule of proportion there certainly is: but we may inquire after it in vain. The secret is lost. The ancients had it. They well knew the principles of beauty; and had that unerring rule, which in all things adjusted their taste. We see it even in their slightest vases. In their works, proportion, tho varied through
through a thousand lines, is still the same; and if we could only discover their principles of proportion, we should have the arcanum of this science; and might settle all our disputes about taste with great ease.

Thus, in our inquiries into first principles, we go on, without end, and without satisfaction. The human understanding is unequal to the search. In philosophy we inquire for them in vain—in physics—in metaphysics—in morals. Even in the polite arts, where the subject, one should imagine, is less recondite, the inquiry, we find, is equally vague. We are puzzled, and bewildered; but not informed. All is uncertainty; a strife of words; the old contest.

Empedocles, as Stereins delire acuans?

In a word, if a cause be sufficiently understood, it may suggest useful discoveries. But if it be not so (and where is our certainty in these disquisitions) it will unquestionably mislead.

END OF THE FIRST ESSAY.
The works of Michael Angelo, Raphael, &c., appear to me to have nothing of it; whereas Reubens, and the Venetian painters may almost be said to have nothing else.

Perhaps pictureque is somewhat synonymous to the word tale; which we should think improperly applied to Homer, or Milton, but very well to Pope, or Prior. I suspect that the application of these words are to excellences of an inferior order; and which are incompatible with the grand style.

You are certainly right in saying, that variety of tints and forms is pictureque; but it must be remembered, on the other hand, that the reverse of this—(uniformity of colour, and a long continuation of lines,) produces grandeur.

I had an intention of pointing out the passages, that particularly struck me; but I was afraid to use my eyes too much.

The essay has lain upon my table; and I think no day has passed without my looking at it, reading a little at a time. Whatever objections presented themselves at first view,* were done away on a closer inspection: and I am not quite sure, but that is the case in regard to the observation, which I have ventured to make on the word pictureque.

I am, &c.

JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

To the rev'd Mr. Gilpin,
Vicar's-hill.

THE ANSWER.

May 24, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

I am much obliged to you for looking over my essay at a time, when the complaint in your eye must have made an intrusion of this kind troublesome. But as the subject was rather novel, I wished much for your sanction: and you have given it me in as flattering a manner, as I could wish.

With regard to the term pictureque, I have always myself used it merely to denote such objects, as are proper subjects for painting:

some objections to it; particularly thought, that the term pictureque, should be applied only to the works of nature. His conception here is an instance of that candour, which is a very remarkable part of his character; and which is generally one of the distinguishing marks of true genius.
so that, according to my definition, one of the
cartoons, and a flower-piece are equally pic-
turesque.

I think however I understand your idea of
extending the term to what may be called
taste in painting—or the art of fascinating the
eye by splendid colouring, and artificial com-
bination; which the inferior schools valued;
and the dignity of the higher perhaps despised.
But I have seen so little of the higher schools,
that I should be very ill able to carry the sub-
ject farther by illustrating a disquisition of this
kind. Except the cartoons, I never saw a
picture of Raphael's, that answered my idea;
and of the original works of Michael Angelo
I have little conception.

But tho I am unable, through ignorance,
to appreciate fully the grandeur of the Roman
school, I have at least the pleasure to find
I have always held as a principle your idea
of the production of greatness by uniformity
of colour, and a long continuation of line; and
when I speak of variety, I certainly do not
mean to confound it's effects with those of
grandeur.

I am, &c.

WILLIAM GILPIN.

To Sir Joshua Reynolds,
Leicesther-square.

D 3
ESSAY II.

ON

PICTURESQUE TRAVEL.
ESSAY II.

ENOUGH has been said to shew the difficulty of assigning causes; let us then take another course, and amuse ourselves with searching after effects. This is the general intention of picturesque travel. We mean not to bring it into competition with any of the more useful ends of travelling: but as many travel without any end at all, amusing themselves without being able to give a reason why they are amused, we offer an end, which may possibly engage some vacant minds; and may indeed afford a rational amusement to such as travel for more important purposes.

In treating of picturesque travel, we may consider first it's object; and secondly it's sources of amusement.

It's object is beauty of every kind, which either art, or nature can produce: but it is chiefly that species of picturesque beauty, which we have endeavoured to characterize in the preceding essay. This great object we pursue through the scenery of nature; and examine it by the rules of painting. We seek it among all the ingredients of landscape—trees—rocks—broken-grounds—woods—rivers—lakes—plains—valleys—mountains—and distances. These objects in themselves produce infinite variety. No two rocks, or trees are exactly the same. They are varied, a second time, by combination; and almost as much, a third time, by different lights, and shades, and other aerial effects. Sometimes we find among them the exhibition of a whole; but oftener we find only beautiful parts.*

That we may examine picturesque objects with more ease, it may be useful to class them into the sublime, and the beautiful; tho', in fact, this distinction is rather inaccurate.

* As some of these topics have been occasionally mentioned in other picturesque works, which the author has given to the public, they are here touched very slightly: only the subject required they should be brought together.

Sublimity
Sublimity alone cannot make an object picturesque. However grand the mountain, or the rock may be, it has no claim to this epithet, unless its form, its colour, or its accompaniments have some degree of beauty. Nothing can be more sublime, than the ocean; but wholly unaccompanied, it has little of the picturesque. When we talk therefore of a sublime object, we always understand, that it is also beautiful: and we call it sublime, or beautiful, only as the ideas of sublimity, or of simple beauty prevail.

The curious, and fantastic forms of nature are by no means the favourite objects of the lovers of landscape. There may be beauty in a curious object; and so far it may be picturesque: but we cannot admire it merely for the sake of its curiosity. The inferior nature is the naturalist's province, not the painter's. The spiky pinnacles of the mountain, and the castle-like arrangement of the rock, give no peculiar pleasure to the picturesque eye. It is fond of the simplicity of nature; and sees most beauty in her most simple forms. The Giant's Conway in Ireland may strike it as a novelty; but the lake of Killarney attracts its attention. It would range with supreme delight among the sweet vales of Switzerland; but would view only with a transient glance, the Glaciers of Savoy. Scenes of this kind, as unusual, may please once; but the great works of nature, in her simplest and purest state, open inexhausted springs of amusement.

But it is not only the form, and the composition of the objects of landscape, which the picturesque eye examines; it connects them with the atmosphere, and seeks for all those various effects, which are produced from that vast, and wonderful floreouched of nature. Nor is there in travelling a greater pleasure, than when a scene of grandeur bursts unexpectedly upon the eye, accompanied with some accidental circumstance of the atmosphere, which harmonizes with it, and gives it double value.

Besides the inanimate face of nature, it's living forms fall under the picturesque eye, in the course of travel; and are often objects of great attention. The anatomical study of figures is not attended to: we regard them merely as the ornament of scenes. In the human figure we contemplate neither expression of form; nor expression, any farther than it is shewn in action; we merely consider general shapes, dresses, groups, and occupations: which
we often find variously in greater variety, and beauty, than any selection can procure.

In the same manner animals are the objects of our attention, whether we find them in the park, the forest, or the field. Here too we consider little more, than their general forms, actions, and combinations. Nor is the picturesque eye so fainthearted as to despise even lesser considerable objects. A flight of birds has often a pleasing effect. In short, every form of life, and being has its use as a picturesque object, till it becomes too small for attention.

But the picturesque eye is not merely restricted to nature. It ranges through the limits of art. The picture, the statue, and the garden are all the objects of its attention. In the embellished pleasure-ground particularly, the all is neat, and elegant—far too neat and elegant for the use of the pencil; yet, if it be well laid out, it exhibits the lines, and principles of landscape; and is well worth the study of the picturesque traveller. Nothing is wanting, but what his imagination can supply—a change from smooth to rough.*

* See page 8.

But among all the objects of art, the picturesque eye is perhaps most inquisitive after the elegant relics of ancient architecture; the ruined tower, the Gothic arch, the remains of castles, and abbeys. These are the richest legacies of art. They are consecrated by time; and almost deserve the veneration we pay to the works of nature itself.

Thus universal are the objects of picturesque travel. We pursue beauty in every shape; through nature, through art; and all its various arrangements in form, and colour; admiring it in the grandest objects, and not rejecting it in the humblest.

From the objects of picturesque travel, we consider it as one of amusement—or in what way the mind is gratified by these objects.

We might begin in moral style; and consider the objects of nature in a higher light, than merely as amusement. We might observe, that a search after beauty should naturally lead the mind to the great origin of all beauty; to the

* Art good, art perfect, and art fair.
But tho' in theory this seems a natural climax, we insist the less upon it, as in fact we have scarce ground to hope, that every admirer of picturesque beauty, is an admirer also of the beauty of virtue; and that every lover of nature reflects, that

Natura in huma non est propter aeternam Geam

If however the admirer of nature can turn his amusements to a higher purpose; if it's great scenes can inspire him with religious awe; or it's tranquil scenes with that complacency of mind, which is so nearly allied to benevolence, it is certainly the better. Appo-

nata lucra. It is so much into the bargain; for we dare not promise him more from picturesque travel, than a rational, and agreeable amusement. Yet even this may be of some use in an age teeming with licentious pleasure; and may in this light at least be considered as having a moral tendency.

The first source of amusement to the picturesque traveller, is the pursuit of his object—the expectation of new scenes continually opening, and arising to his view. We suppose the country to have been unexplored. Under this circumstance the mind is kept constantly in an agreeable suspense. The love of novelty is the foundation of this pleasure. Every distant horizon promises something new; and with this pleasing expectation we follow nature through all her walks. We pursue her from hill to dale; and hunt after those various beauties, with which the every where abounds.

The pleasures of the chase are universal. A hare started before dogs is enough to set a whole country in an uproar. The plough, and the spade are deserted. Care is left behind; and every human faculty is dilated with joy.

And shall we suppose it a greater pleasure to the sportsman to pursue a trivial animal, than it is to the man of taste to pursue the beauties of nature? to follow her through all her recesses? to obtain a sudden glance, as the fowl past him in some airy shape? to trace her through the mazes of the cover? to wind after her along the vale? or along the reaches of the river?

After the pursuit we are gratified with the attainment of the object. Our amusement, on this head, arises from the employment of the mind in examining the beautiful scenes we have found. Sometimes we examine them under the idea of a whole: we admire the composition,
position, the colouring, and the light, in one comprehensive view. When we are fortunate enough to fall in with scenes of this kind, we are highly delighted. But as we have left frequent opportunities of being thus gratified, we are more commonly employed in analyzing the parts of scenes; which may be exquisitely beautiful, tho unable to produce a whole. We examine what would amend the composition; how little is wanting to reduce it to the rules of our art; what a trifling circumstance sometimes forms the limit between beauty, and deformity. Or we compare the objects before us with other objects of the same kind,—or perhaps we compare them with the imitations of art. From all these operations of the mind results great amusement.

But it is not from this scientific employment, that we derive our chief pleasure. We are most delighted, when some grand scene, tho perhaps of incorrect composition, rising before the eye, strikes us beyond the power of thought,—when the vox sordida barat; and every mental operation is suspended. In this pause of intellect; this delirium of the soul, an enthusiastic sensation of pleasure overpowers it, previous to any examination by the rules of art. The general idea of the scene makes an impression, before any appeal is made to the judgment. We rather feel, than survey it.

This high delight is generally indeed produced by the scenes of nature; yet sometimes by artificial objects. Here and there a capital picture will raise these emotions; but oftener the rough sketch of a capital master. This has sometimes an astonishing effect on the mind; giving the imagination an opening into all those glowing ideas, which inspired the artist; and which the imagination only can translate. In general however the works of art affect us coolly; and allow the eye to criticize at leisure.

Having gained by a minute examination of incidents a compleat idea of an object, our next amusement arises from enlarging, and correcting our general stock of ideas. The variety of nature is such, that new objects, and new combinations of them, are continually adding something to our fund, and enlarging our collection: while the same kind of object occurring frequently, is seen under various shapes; and makes us, if I may so speak, more learned in nature. We get it more by heart.
He who has seen only one oak-tree, has no compleat idea of an oak in general: but he who has examined thousands of oak-trees, must have seen that beautiful plant in all its varieties; and obtains a full, and compleat idea of it.

From this correct knowledge of objects arises another amusement; that of representing, by a few strokes in a sketch, those ideas, which have made the most impression upon us. A few scratches, like a short-hand scrawl of our own, legible at least to ourselves, will serve to raise in our minds the remembrance of the beauties they humbly represent; and recall to our memory even the splendid colouring, and force of light, which existed in the real scene. Some naturalists suppose, the act of ruminating, in animals, to be attended with more pleasure, than the act of grotter mastication. It may be so in travelling also. There may be more pleasure in recollecting, and recording, from a few transient lines, the scenes we have admired, than in the present enjoyment of them. If the scenes indeed have peculiar greatness, this secondary pleasure cannot be attended with those enthusiastic feelings, which accompanied the real exhibition. But, in general, tho it may be a calmer species of pleasure, it is more uniform, and uninterrupted. It flatters us too with the idea of a sort of creation of our own; and it is unqualified with that fatigue, which is often a considerable abatement to the pleasures of traversing the wild, and savage parts of nature.—After we have amused ourselves with our sketches, if we can, in any degree, contribute to the amusement of others also, the pleasure is surely so much enhanced.

There is still another amusement arising from the correct knowledge of objects; and that is the power of creating, and representing scenes of fancy, which is still more a work of creation, than copying from nature. The imagination becomes a camera obliqua, only with this difference, that the camera represents objects as they really are; while the imagination, impressed with the most beautiful scenes, and chastened by rules of art, forms its pictures, not only from the most admirable parts of nature; but in the best taste.

Some artists, when they give their imagination play, let it loofe among uncommon scenes—such as perhaps never existed: whereas the nearer they approach the simple standard of
of nature, in its most beautiful forms, the more admirable their fictions will appear. It is thus in writing romances. The correct taste cannot bear those unnatural situations, in which heroes, and heroines are often placed: whereas a story, naturally, and of course affably told, either with a pen, or a pencil, the known to be a fiction, is considered as a transcript from nature; and takes possession of the heart. The marvellous disgusts the sober imagination; which is gratified only with the pure characters of nature.

Beauty beli is taught
By those, the favoured few, whom heaven has lent
The power to seize, select, and reunite
Her loveliest features; and of these to form
One archetype complete, of sovereign grace.
Here nature fees her fairest forms more fair;
Owes them as hers, yet owns herself excelled
By what herself produced.

But if we are unable to embody our ideas even in a humble sketch, yet still a strong impression of nature will enable us to judge of the works of art. Nature is the archetype. The stronger therefore the impression, the better the judgment.

We are, in some degree, also amused by the very visions of fancy itself. Often, when slumber has half-closed the eye, and shut out all the objects of sense, especially after the enjoyment of some splendid scene; the imagination, active, and alert, collects its scattered ideas, transposes, combines, and shifts them into a thousand forms, producing such exquisite scenes, such sublime arrangements, such glow, and harmony of colouring, such brilliant lights, such depth, and clearness of shadow, as equally foil description, and every attempt of artificial colouring.

It may perhaps be objected to the pleasurable circumstances, which are thus said to attend picturesque travel, that we meet as many disgusting, as pleasing objects; and the man of taste therefore will be as often offended, as amused.

But this is not the case. There are few parts of nature, which do not yield a picturesque eye some amusement.

she does not know that unsuspicious spot,
Where beauty is thus adored of her store.  Believe
Believe the same, through this terrestrial walk
The seeds of grace are sown, profusely sown,
Even where we least may hope.

It is true, when some large tract of barren
country interrupts our expectation, wound up
in quest of any particular scene of grandeur,
or beauty, we are apt to be a little peeved;
and to express our discontent in hasty ex-
aggerated phrase. But when there is no
disappointment in the case, even scenes the
most barren of beauty, will furnish amuse-
ment.

Perhaps no part of England comes more
under this description, than that tract of bar-
ren country, through which the great military
road passes from Newcastle to Carlisle. It is
a waste, with little interruption, through a
space of forty miles. But even here, we
have always something to amuse the eye.
The interchangeable patches of heath, and
green-shawd make an agreeable variety. Often
too on these vast tracts of intersecting grounds
we see beautiful lights, softening off along
the sides of hills; and often we see them
adorned with cattle, flocks of sheep, heath-
cocks, grouse, plover, and flights of other
wild-fowl. A group of cattle, standing in

the shade on the edge of a dark hill, and
relieved by a lighter distance beyond them,
will often make a compleat picture without
any other accompaniment. In many other
situations also we find them wonderfully
pleasing; and capable of making pictures
amidst all the deficiencies of landscape. Even
a winding road itself is an object of beauty;
while the richness of the heath on each side,
with the little hillocks, and crumbling earth
give many an excellent lesson for a fore-
ground. When we have no opportunity of
examining the grand scenery of nature, we
have every where at least the means of ob-
serving with what a multiplicity of parts, and
yet with what general simplicity, the covers
every surface.

But if we let the imagination loose, even
scenes like these, administer great amusement.
The imagination can plant hills; can form
rivers, and lakes in vallies; can build castles,
and abbeys; and if it find no other amuse-
ment, can dilate itself in vast ideas of space.

But altho the picturesque traveller is seldom
disappointed with pure nature, however rude,
yet we cannot deny, but he is often offended with the productions of art. He is disgusted with the formal separations of property—with houses, and towns, the haunts of men, which have much oftener a bad effect in landscape, than a good one. He is frequently disgusted also, when art aims more at beauty, than the ought. How flat, and insipid is often the garden-scene! how puerile, and absurd! the banks of the river how smooth, and parallel! the lawn, and its boundaries, how unlike nature! Even in the capital collection of pictures, how seldom does he find design, composition, expression, character, or harmony either in light, or colouring! and how often does he drag through saloons, and rooms of state, only to hear a catalogue of the names of masters!

The more refined our taste grows from the study of nature, the more insipid are the works of art. Few of it's efforts please. The idea of the great original is so strong, that the copy must be very pure, if it do not disgust. But the varieties of nature's charts are such, that, study them as we can, new varieties will always arise: and let our taste be ever so refined, her works, on which it is formed

formed (at least when we consider them as objects,) must always go beyond it; and furnish fresh sources both of pleasure and amusement.

END OF THE SECOND ESSAY.
ESSAY III.

ON

THE ART OF SKETCHING
LANDSCAPE.
ESSAY III.

The art of sketching is to the picturesque traveller, what the art of writing is to the scholar. Each is equally necessary to fix, and communicate its respective ideas.

Sketches are either taken from the imagination, or from nature. When the imaginary sketch proceeds from the hands of a master, it is very valuable. It is his first conception; which is commonly the strongest, and the most brilliant. The imagination of a painter, really great in his profession, is a magazine abounding with all the elegant forms, and striking effects, which are to be found in nature. These, like a magician, he calls up at pleasure with a wave of his hand; bringing before the eye, sometimes a scene from history, or romance; and sometimes from the inanimate parts of nature. And in these happy moments, when the enthusiasm of his art is upon him, he often produces from the glow of his imagination, with a few bold strokes, such wonderful effusions of genius, as the more sober, and correct productions of his pencil cannot equal.

It will always however be understood, that such sketches must be examined also by an eye learned in the art, and accustomed to picturesque ideas—an eye, that can take up the half-formed images, as the master leaves them; give them a new creation; and make up all that is not expressed from it's own store-house.

I shall however dwell no longer on imaginary sketching, as it hath but little relation to my present subject. Let me only add, that altho this essay is meant chiefly to affright the picturesque traveller in taking views from nature, the method recommended, as far as it relates to execution, may equally be applied to imaginary sketches.

Your intention in taking views from nature, may either be to fix them in your own memory.
—or to convey, in some degree, your ideas to others.

With regard to the former, when you meet a scene you wish to sketch, your first consideration is to get it in the best point of view. A few paces to the right, or left, make a great difference. The ground, which folds awkwardly here, appears to fold more easily there; and that long blank curtain of the castle, which is so unpleasing a circumstance, as you stand on one side, is agreeably broken by a buttress on another.

Having thus fixed your point of view, your next consideration, is, how to reduce it properly within the compass of your paper: for the scale of nature being so very different from your scale, it is a matter of difficulty, without some experience, to make them coincide. If the landscape before you is extensive, take care you do not include too much: it may perhaps be divided more commodiously into two sketches.—When you have fixed the portion of it, you mean to take, fix next on two or three principal points, which you may just mark on your paper. This will enable you the more easily to ascertain the relative situation of the several objects.

In sketching, black-lead is the first instrument commonly used. Nothing glides so readily over paper, and executes an idea so quickly.—It has besides, another advantage; it's grey tint corresponds better with a wash, than black, or red chalk, or any other pencil. —It admits also of easy correction.

The virtue of these hasty, black-lead sketches consists in catching readily the characteristic features of a scene. Light and shade are not attended to. It is enough if you express general flavour; and the relations, which the several interferences of a country bear to each other. A few lines drawn on the spot, will do this. "Half a word, says Mr. Gray, fixed on, or near the spot, is worth all our recollected ideas. When we trust to the picture, that objects draw themselves on the mind, we deceive ourselves. Without accurate, and particular observation, it is but ill-drawn at first: the outlines are soon blurred: the colours, every day grow fainter; and at last, when we would produce it to any body, we are obliged to supply it's defects with
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with a few strokes of our own imagination.**—What Mr. Gray says, relates chiefly to verbal description: but in literal description it is equally true. The leading ideas must be fixed on the spot: if left to the memory, they soon evaporate.

The lines of black-lead, and indeed of any one instrument, are subject to the great inconvenience of confounding distances. If there are two, or three distances in the landscape, as each of them is expressed by the same kind of line, the eye forgets the distinction, even in half a day’s travelling; and all is confusion. To remedy this, a few written references, made on the spot, are necessary, if the landscape be at all complicated. The traveller should be accurate in this point, as the spirit of his view depends much on the proper observation of distances.—At his first leisure however he will review his sketch; add a few strokes with a pen, to mark the near grounds; and by a slight wash of Indian ink, throw in a few general lights, and shades, to keep all fixed, and in its place.—A sketch

need not be carried farther, when it is intended merely to affix our own memory.

But when a sketch is intended to convey, in some degree, our ideas to others, it is necessary, that it should be somewhat more adorned. To us the scene, familiar to our recollection, may be suggested by a few rough strokes: but if you wish to raise the idea, where none existed before, and to do it agreeably, there should be some composition in your sketch—a degree of correctness, and expression in the outline—and some effect of light. A little ornament also from figures, and other circumstances may be introduced. In short, it should be so far dressed, as to give some idea of a picture. I call this an adorned sketch; and should sketch nothing, that was not capable of being thus dressed. An unpicturesque assemblage of objects; and, in general, all untractable subjects, if it be necessary to represent them, may be given as plans, rather than as pictures.

In the first place, I should advise the traveller by no means to work his adorned sketch upon

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* Letter to Mr. Palgrave, p. 572, 410.
upon his original one. His first sketch is the standard, to which, in the absence of nature, he must at least recur for his general ideas. By going over it again, the original ideas may be lost, and the whole thrown into confusion. Great matters therefore always set a high value on their sketches from nature. On the same principle the picturesque traveller preserves his original sketch, tho in itself of little value, to keep him within proper bounds.

This matter being settled, and the **aborned sketch** begun anew, the first point is to fix the composition.

But the composition, you say, is already fixed by the **original sketch**.

It is true: but still it may admit many little alterations, by which the forms of objects may be aslifted; and yet the resemblance not disfigured: as the same piece of music, performed by different masters, and graced variously by each, may yet continue still the same. We must ever recollect that nature is most defective in composition; and must be a little aslifted. Her ideas are too vast for picturesque use, without the restraint of rules. Liberties however with

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truth must be taken with caution: tho at the same time a distinction may be made between an **objet** and a **scene**. If I give the striking features of the **castle** or **abbey**, which is my **objet**, I may be allowed some little liberty in bringing appendages (which are not essential features) within the rules of my art. But in a **scene**, the whole view becomes the portrait; and if I flatter here, I must flatter with delicacy.

But whether I represent an **objet**, or a **scene**, I hold myself at perfect liberty, in the first place, to dispose the **foreground** as I please; restrained only by the analogy of the country. I take up a tree here, and plant it there. I pare a knoll, or make an addition to it. I remove a piece of paling—a cottage—a wall—or any removable **objet**, which I dislike. In short, I do not so much mean to exact a liberty of introducing what does not exist; as of making a few of those simple variations, of which all ground is easily susceptible, and which time itself indeed is continually making. All this my art exacts:

She rules the foreground; she can swell, or sink,
It's surface; here her leafy screen oppose,
And there withdraw; here part the varying green,
And
And crowd them there in one promiscuous gloom,
As belts before the genius of the scene.

The foreground indeed is a mere spot, compared with the extension of the distance: in itself it is of trivial consequence; and cannot well be called a feature of the scene. And yet, tho’ so little essential in giving a likeness, it is more so than any other part in forming a composition. It resembles those deep tones in music, which give a value to all the lighter parts; and harmonize the whole.

As the foreground therefore is of so much consequence, begin your adorned sketch with fixing this very material part. It is easier to ascertain the situation of your foreground, as it lies so near the bottom of your paper, than any other part; and this will tend to regulate every thing else. In your rough sketch it has probably been inaccurately thrown in. You could not so easily ascertain it, till you had gotten all your landscape together. You might have carried it too high on your paper; or have brought it too low. As you have now the general scheme of your landscape before you, you may adjust it properly; and give it its due proportion.

—I shall add only, on the subject of foregrounds,
you proceed to give a stronger outline to the foreground, and nearer parts. Some indeed use no outline, but what they freely work with a brush on their black-lead sketch. This comes nearest the idea of painting; and as it is the most free, it is perhaps also the most excellent method: but as a black-lead outline is but a feebler termination, it requires a greater force in the wash to produce an effect; and of course more the hand of a master. The hand of a master indeed produces an effect with the rudest materials: but these precepts aim only at giving a few instructions to the tyroes of the art; and such will perhaps make their out-line the most effectually with a pen. As the pen is more determined than black-lead, it leaves less to the brush, which I think the more difficult instrument.—Indian ink, (which may be heightened, or lowered to any degree of strength, or weakness, so as to touch both the nearer, and more distant grounds,) is the best ink you can use. You may give a stroke with it so light as to confine even a remote distance; tho' such a distance is perhaps best left in black-lead.

But when we speak of an out-line, we do not mean a simple contour; which, (however necessary in a correct figure,) would in landscape be formal. It is enough to mark with a few free touches of the pen, here and there, some of the breaks, and roughnesses, in which the richness of an object consists. But you must first determine the situation of your lights, that you may mark these touches on the shadowy side.

Of these free touches with a pen the chief characteristic is expression; or the art of giving each object, that peculiar touch, whether smooth, or rough, which best expresses its form. The art of painting, in its highest perfection, cannot give the richness of nature. When we examine any natural form, we find the multiplicity of its parts beyond the highest finishing; and indeed generally an attempt at the highest finishing would end in stiffness. The painter is obliged therefore to deceive the eye by some natural tint, or expressive touch, from which the imagination takes its cue. How often do we see in the landscapes of Claude the full effect of distance; which, when examined closely, consists of a simple dash, tinged with the hue of nature, intermixed
intermixed with a few expressive touches? — If then these expressive touches are necessary, where the master carries on the deception both in form, and colour; how necessary must they be in mere sketches, in which colour, the great vehicle of deception, is removed? — The art however of giving those expressive marks with a pen, which impress ideas, is no common one. The inferior artist may give them by chance; but the master only gives them with precision. — Yet a sketch may have its use, and even its merit, without these strokes of genius.

As the difficulty of using the pen is such, it may perhaps be objected, that it is an improper instrument for a tyro. It loses its grace, if it have not a ready, and off-hand execution.

It is true: but what other instrument shall we put into his hands, that will do better? His black-lead, his brush, whatever he touches, will be unmannerly. But my chief reason for putting a pen into his hands, is, that without a pen it will be difficult for him to preserve his outline, and distances. His touches with a pen may be unmannerly, we allow: but still they will preserve keeping in his landscape, without which the whole will be a blot of confusion. — Nor is it perhaps so difficult to obtain some little freedom with a pen. I have seen fidelity, attended with but little genius, make a considerable progress in the use of this instrument; and produce an effect by no means displeasing. — If the drawing be large, I should recommend a reed-pen, which runs more freely over paper.

When the out-line is thus drawn, it remains to add light, and shade. In this operation the effect of a wash is much better, than of lines hatched with a pen. A wash will do more in one stroke, and generally more effectually, than a pen can do in twenty. — For this purpose, we need only

* I have seldom seen any drawings etched with a pen, that pleased me. The most masterly sketches in this way I ever saw, were taken in the early part of the life of a gentleman, now very high in his profession, Mr. Mixford of Lincoln’s Inn. They were taken in several parts of Italy, and England; and tho they are mere memorandum-sketches, the subjects are so happily chosen — they are so characteristic of the countries they represent — and executed with so free, and expressive a touch, that I examined them with pleasure, not only as faithful portraits, (which I believe they all are) but as master-pieces, as far as they go, both in composition, and execution.

Indian
Indian ink; and perhaps a little burnt, or burnt sienna. With the former we give the greyish tinge, which belongs to the sky, and distant objects; and with the latter (mixed more, or less, with Indian ink) these warm touches, which belong to the foreground. Indian ink however alone makes a good wash both for the foreground, and distance.

But mere light and shade are not sufficient; something of effect also should be aimed at in the adorned sketch. Mere light and shade produce only the simple illumination of objects. Effect, by balancing large masses of color, gives the whole a greater force. Now this in the exhibitions of nature, we commonly find only the simple illumination of objects; yet as we often do meet with good effects also, we have sometimes necessity to ask them; for under these circumstances we see nature in her best state, in which it is our business to describe her.

As to giving value for the production of effect, the subject admits only the most general. There must be a strong opposition of light and shade; in which you say, as well as the landscape, must combine. But in what way
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But mere light and shade are not sufficient: something of effect also should be aimed at in the admired sketch. Mere light and shade propose only the simple illumination of objects. Effect, by balancing large muffs of each, gives the whole a greater force.—Now tho' in the exhibitions of nature, we commonly find only the simple illumination of objects; yet as we often do meet with grand effects also, we have sufficient authority to use them: for under these circumstances we see nature in her best attire, in which it is our business to describe her.

As to giving rules for the production of effect, the subject admits only the most general. There must be a strong opposition of light and shade; in which the sky, as well as the landscape, must combine. But in what way this opposition must be varied—where the full tone of shade must prevail—where the full effusion of light—or where the various degrees of each—depends entirely on the circumstance of the composition. All you can do, is to examine your drawing (yet in it's naked out-line) with care; and endeavour to find out where the force of the light will have the best effect. But this depends more on taste, than on rule.

One thing both in light and shade should be observed, especially in the former—and that is gradation; which gives a force beyond what a glaring display of light can give. The effect of light, which falls on the stone, produced as an illustration of this idea, would not be so great, unless it graduated into shade.

In the following stanza Mr. Gray has with great beauty, and propriety, illustrated the vicissitudes of life by the principles of picturesque effect.

Still where reft pleasure leads,
See a kindred grief pursue;
Behind the steps, which misery treats,
Approaching comfort view.
The host of bards more brightly glow,
Chastified by softer tints of woe;
And, blended, form with artful drize,
The strength, and harmony of life.

I may
I may further add, that the production of an effect is particularly necessary in drawing.

In painting, colour in some degree makes up the deficiency; but in simple chiaroscuro there is no resort. It's force depends on effect; the virtue of which is such, that it will give a value even to a barren subject. Like striking the chords of a musical instrument, it will produce harmony, without any richness of composition.

It is further to be observed, that when objects are in shadow, the light (as it is then reflected one) falls on the opposite side to that, on which it falls, when they are in light.

In adorning your sketch, a figure or two may be introduced with propriety. By figures I mean moving objects, as waggons, and boats, as well as cattle, and men. But they should be introduced sparingly. In position they are affected. Their chief use is, to mark a road—o bring a piece of foreground—to point out the horizon in a sea-piece—or to carry off the distance of refring water by the contrast of a dark hill, not quite so distant, placed before it. But in figures thus delineated for the ornament of a sketch, I few slight touches.
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It is farther to be observed, that when objects are in shadow, the light, (as it is then a reflected one,) falls on the opposite side to that, on which it falls, when they are enlightened.

In adorning your sketch, a figure, or two may be introduced with propriety. By figures I mean moving objects, as wagons, and boats, as well as cattle, and men. But they should be introduced sparingly. In profusion they are affected. Their chief use is, to mark a road—to break a piece of foreground—to point out the horizon in a sea-view—or to carry off the distance of retiring water by the contrast of a dark hill, not quite so distant, placed before it. But in figures thus designed for the ornament of a sketch, a few light touches are sufficient. Attempts at finishing offend.*

Among trees, little distinctness need be made, unless you introduce the pine, or the cypress, or some other singular form. The oak, the ash, and the elm, which bear a distant resemblance to each other, may all be characterized alike. In a sketch, it is enough to mark a tree. One distinction indeed is often necessary even in sketches; and that is, between full-leaved trees, and those of straggling ramification. In composition we have often occasion for both, and therefore the hand should be used readily to execute either. If we have a general idea of the oak, for instance, as a light tree; and of the beech as a heavy one, it is sufficient.

It adds, I think, to the beauty of a sketch to stain the paper slightly with a reddish, or yellowish tinge; the use of which is to give a more pleasing tint to the ground of the drawing by taking away the glare of the paper. It adds also, if it be not too strong, a degree of harmony to the rawness of black, and white.

* See the preceding essay. This
This tinge may be laid on, either before, or after the drawing is made. In general, I should prefer the latter method; because, while the drawing is yet on white paper, you may correct it with a sponge, dip in water; which will, in a good degree, efface Indian ink. But if you rub out any part, after the drawing is stained, you cannot easily lay the stain again upon the rubbed part without the appearance of a patch.

Some chuse rather to add a little colour to their sketches. My instructions attempt not the art of mixing a variety of tints; and finishing a drawing from nature; which is generally executed in colours from the beginning, without any use of Indian ink; except as a grey tint, uniting with other colours. This indeed, when chastly executed, (which is not often the case) exceeds in beauty every other species of drawing. It is however beyond my skill to give any instruction for this mode of drawing. All I mean, is only to offer a modest way of tinting a sketch already finished in Indian ink. By the addition of a little colour I mean only to give some distinction to objects; and introduce rather a gayer tinkle into a landscape.

When you have finished your sketch therefore with Indian ink, as far as you propose, tinge the whole over with some light horizon hue. It may be the rosy tint of morning; or the more ruddy one of evening; or it may incline more to yellowish, or a greyish cast. As a specimen an evening hue is given. The first tint you spread over your drawing, is composed of light red, and ocher, which make an orange. It may incline to one, or the other, as you chuse. In this example it inclines rather to the former. By washing this tint over your whole drawing, you lay a foundation for harmony. When this wash is nearly dry, repeat it in the horizon; softening it off into the sky, as you ascend. — Take next a purple tint, composed of lake, and blue, inclined rather to the former; and with this, when your first wash is dry, form your clouds; and then spread it, as you did the first tint, over your whole drawing, except where you leave the horizon-tint. This still strengthens the idea of harmony. Your sky, and distance are now finished.
You proceed next to your middle, and foregrounds; in both which you distinguish between the soil, and the vegetation. Wash the middle grounds with a little umber. This will be sufficient for the soil. The soil of the foreground you may go over with a little light red. The vegetation of each may be washed with a green, composed of blue, and oker; adding a little more oker as you proceed nearer the eye; and on the nearest grounds a little burnt terra Sienna. This is sufficient for the middle grounds. The foreground may farther want a little heightening both in the soil, and vegetation. In the soil it may be given in the lights with burnt terra Sienna; mixing in the shadows a little lake: and in the vegetation with gullstone; touched in places, and occasionally varied, with a little burnt terra Sienna.

Trees on the foreground are considered as a part of it; and their foliage may be coloured like the vegetation in their neighbourhood. Their items may be touched with burnt terra Sienna.——Trees, in middle distances are darker than the lawns, on which they stand. They must therefore be touched twice over with the tint, which is given only once to the lawn.

If you represent clouds with bright edges, the edges must be left in the first orange; while the tint over the other part of the horizon is repeated, as was mentioned before.

A lowering, cloudy sky is represented by, what is called, a grey tint, composed of lake, blue, and oker. As the shadow deepens, the tint should incline more to blue.

The several tints mentioned in the above process, may perhaps the most easily be mixed before you begin; especially if your drawing be large. Rub the raw colours in little saucers: keep them clean, and distinct; and from them, mix your tints in other little vessels.

I shall only add, that the strength of the colouring you give your sketch, must depend on the height, to which you have carried the Indian ink finishing. If it be only a slight sketch, it will bear only a light wash of colour.

This mode however of tinting a drawing, even when you tint it as high as these instructions reach, is by no means calculated to produce any great effect of colouring: but it is at least sufficient to preserve harmony. This you may prefer; an effect of colouring you cannot easily attain. It is something however
ever to avoid a disagreeable excess; and there is nothing surely so disagreeable to a correct eye as a tinted drawing (such as we often see) in which greens, and blues, and reds, and yellows are daubed without any attention to harmony. It is to the picturesque eye, what a discord of harsh notes is to a musical ear.

But the advocate for these glaring tints may perhaps say, he does not make his sky more blue than nature; nor his grass, and trees more green.

Perhaps so: but unless he could work up his drawing with the finishing of nature, he will find the effect very unequal. Nature mixes a variety of semitints with her brightest colours: and tho' the eye cannot readily separate them, they have a general chastising effect; and keep the several tints of landscape within proper bounds, which a glare of deep colours cannot do. Besides, this chastising hue is produced in nature by numberless little shadows, beyond the attention of art, which she throws on leaves, and piles of grass, and every other minute object; all which, tho' not easily distinguished in particular, tells in the whole, and is continually chastening the hues of nature.

Before I conclude these remarks on sketching, it may be useful to add a few words, and but a few, on perspective. The nicer parts of it contain many difficulties; and are of little use in common landscape: but as a building, now and then, occurs, which requires some little knowledge of perspective, the subject should not be left wholly untouched.

If a building stand exactly in front, none of its lines can go off in perspective: but if it stand with a corner to the eye, as picturesque buildings commonly do, its lines will appear to recede. In what manner they recede, the following mechanical method may explain.

Hold horizontally between your eye, and the building you draw, a flat ruler, till you see only the edge of it. Where it cuts the nearest perpendicular of the building, which you have already just traced on your paper, make a mark; and draw a slight line through that part, parallel with the bottom of your paper. This is called the horizontal line, and regulates the whole perspective. Observe next the angle, which the uppermost of these receding
ing lines makes with the nearest perpendicular of the building; and continue that receding line till it meet the horizontal line. From the point, where it intersects, draw another line to the bottom of the nearest perpendicular. This gives you the perspective of the base. In the same manner all the lines, which recede, on both sides, of the building; as well above, as below the horizontal line—windows, doors, and projections of every kind, (on the same plane)—are regulated. The points on the horizontal line, in which these receding lines unite, are called points of sight.

After all, however, from the mode of sketching here recommended (which is as far as I should wish to recommend drawing landscape to those, who draw only for amusement) no great degree of accuracy can be expected. General ideas only must be looked for; not the peculiarities of portrait. It admits: the winding river—the shooting promontory—the castle—the abbey—the flat distance—and the mountain melting into the horizon. It admits too the relation, which all these parts bear to each other. But it

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defends not to the minutiae of objects. The fringed bank of the river—the Gothic ornaments of the abbey—the chains, and fractures of the rock, and castle—and every little object along the vale, it pretends not to delineate with exactness. All this is the province of the finished drawing, and the picture; in which the artist conveys an idea of each minute feature of the country he delineates, or imagines. But high finishing, as I have before observed, belongs only to a master, who can give expressive touches. The disciple, whom I am instructing, and whom I instruct only from my own experience, must have humbler views; and can hardly expect to please, if he go farther than a sketch, adorned as hath been here described.

Many gentlemen, who draw for amusement, employ their leisure on human figures, animal life, portrait, perhaps history. Here and there a man of genius makes some proficiency in these difficult branches of the art: but I have rarely seen any, who do. Distorted faces, and dislocated limbs, I have seen in abundance: and no wonder; for the science of anatomy, even as it regards painting, is with difficulty attained; and few who have studied
studied it their whole lives, have acquired perfection.

Others again, who draw for amusement, go so far as to handle the pallet. But in this the success of the ill-judging artist seldom answers his hopes; unless utterly void of taste, he happen to be such an artist as may be addressed in the sarcasm of the critic,

Sine rivali teneae, et tue folis amare.

Painting is both a science, and an art; and if so very few attain perfection, who spend a life-time on it, what can be expected from those, who spend only their leisure? The very few gentlemen-artists, who excel in painting, scarce afford encouragement for common practice.

But the art of sketching landscape is attainable by a man of business; and it is certainly more useful; and, I should imagine, more amusing, to attain some degree of excellence in an inferior branch, than to be a mere bungler in a superior. Even if you should not excel in execution (which indeed you can hardly expect) you may at least by bringing home the delineation of a fine country, dignify an in-

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90 This process will also be a kind of test. No one can make any progress, whose imagination is not fired with the scenes of nature.

107 On a supposition, that the artist is enamoured with his subject; and is well versed in copying the parts of nature, he begins to combine, and form those parts into the subjects of landscape. He pays his first attention to disposition, or to the bringing together of such objects, as are suited to his subject; not mixing trivial objects with grand scenes; but preferring the character of his subject, whatever it may be.

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ON

LANDSCAPE PAINTING,

A POEM.
ON LANDSCAPE PAINTING.

A POEM.

THAT Art, which gives the præcis'd pencil pow'r
To rival Nature's graces; to combine
In one harmonious whole her scatter'd charms,
And o'er them fling appropriate force of light,
I sing, unskill'd in numbers; yet a Muse,
Led by the hand of Friendship, deigns to lend
Her aid, and give that free colloquial flow,
Which beit befits the plain preceptive song.

To thee, thus aided, let me dare to sing,
Judicious Locke, who from great Nature's realms to
Hail all'd her loveliest features, and arrang'd
In thy rich mem'ry's storehouse: Thou, whose glance,
Præcis'd in truth and symmetry, can trace
In every latent touch, each Mäster's hand,
Whether the marble by his art fabdued
Be rotten'd into life, or canvas smooth

A

Be

Be swell'd to animation: Thou, to whom
Each mode of landscape, beauteous or sublime,
With every various colour, tint, and light,
Its nice gradations, and its bold effects,
Are all familiar, patient hear my song,
That to thy tale and science nothing new
Prefents, yet humbly hopes from thee to gain
The plaudit, which, if Nature first approve,
Then, and then only, thou wilt deign to yield.

First to the youthful artiff I address
This leading precept: Let not inborn pride,
Preaming on thy own inventive powers,
Mislead thine eye from Nature. She must reign
Great archetype in all: Trace then with care
Her varied walks; observe how the upheaves
The mountain's tow'ring brow; on its rough sides
How broad the shadow falls, what different hues
Invert its glimm'ring surface. Next survey
The distant lake; to see, a shining spot:
But when approaching nearer, how it flings
Its sweeping curves around the succulent cliff;
Mark every shade its Proteus shape affumes
From motion and from rest; and how the forms
Of tufted woods, and beetleling rocks, and tow'rs
Of ruin'd castles, from the smooth expanse,
Shade answ'ring shade, inverted meet the eye.
From mountains hee theo to the forest-scene.
Remark the form, the foliage of each tree,
And what its leading feature: View the oak;
Its maffy limbs, its majesty of shade;
The pendent birch; the beech of many a stem;
The lighter ash; and all their changeful hues
In spring or autumn, rufes; green, or grey.
Next wander by the river's maze bank:
See where it dimpling glides; or briskly where
Its whirling eddies sparkle round the rock;
Or where, with headlong rage, it darts down
Some fruct'd chasm, till all its fury spent,
It sinks to sleep, a silent flagrant pool,
Dark, tho' transfused, from the mantle shade.
Now give thy view more ample range: explore
The vast expanse of ocean; see, when calm,
What iris-hues of purple, green, and gold,
Play on its glassy surface; and when vex
With storms, what depth of billowy shade, with light
Of curling foam contrived. View the cliffs;
The lonely beacon, and the distant coast,
In mists array'd, just heaving into sight
Above the dim horizon; where the fail
Appears conspicuous in the lengthen'd gleam.
With studious eye examine next the arch
Etherial; mark each floating cloud; its form,
Its varied colour; and what mass of shade
It gives the scene below, pregnant with change
Perpetual, from the morning's purple dawn,
Till the last glistening ray of rufet eve.
Mark how the sun-beam, steep'd in morning-dew,
Beneath each jutting promontory flings
A darker shade; while brighten'd with the ray
Of sultry noon, not yet entirely quench'd,
The evening-shade itself opaque falls.

Thus flor'd with fair ideas, call them forth
By practice, till thy ready pencil trace
Each form familiar: but attempt not thou
A whole, till every part be well conceived.
The tongue that swes a senate with its force,
Once lip'd in syllables, or e'er it pour'd
Its glowing periods, warm with patriot-fire.
At length matur'd, fland forth for hon'd Fame
A candidate. Some noble theme select
From Nature's choicest scenes; and sketch that theme
With firm, but easy line; then if my song
Affix thy pow'r, it asks no nobler meed.

Yet if, when Nature's fav're reign glories meet
Thy sudden glance, no corresponding spark
Of viv'i flame be kindled in thy breast;
If calmly thou canst view them; know for thee
My numbers flow not: seek some fitter guide
To lead thee, where the low mechanic toils
With patient labour for his daily hire.
But if true Genius fire thee, if thy heart
Glow, palpitate with transport, at the sight;
If emulation seize thee, to transmute
These splendid visions on thy vivid chart;
If the big thought seem more than Art can paint,
Hot, snatch thy pencil, bounteous Nature yields
To thee her choicest stores; and the glad Muse
Sits by assilant, aiming but to fan
The Promethean flame, conscious her rules
Can only guide, not give, the warmth divine.
First learn with objects suited to each scene
Thy landscape to adorn. If some rude view
Thy pencil calls, of lake, or mountain range,
Where Nature walks with proud majestic pace,
Give not her robe the formal folds of art,
But bid it flow with ample dignity.
Mix not the mean and trivial: Is the whole
Sublime, let each accordant part be grand.
Yet if thro' dire necessity for that,
Alone should force the deed) some polish'd scene
Employ thy pallet, drefs'd by human art,
The lawn so level, and the bank so trim,
Yet still prefer thy subject. Let the oak
Be elegant of form, that mantles o' er
Thy heaven fore-ground: The rough forest
Whose peel'd and wither'd boughs, and knarled trunk,
Have stood the rage of many a winter's blast,
Might ill such cultur'd scenes adorn. Not less
Would an old Briton, rough with martial scars,
And bearing stern defiance on his brow,
Seem fitted atonement at a Gallic feast.

'This choice of objects suited to the scene,
We name Design: A choice not more requir'd
From Raphael, than from thee; whether his hand
Give all but motion to some group divine,
Or thine inglorious picture woods and streams.

With equal rigour Disposition claims
Thy close attention. Wouldst thou learn its laws,
Examine Nature, when combin'd with art,
Or simple; mark how various are her forms,
Mountains enormous, rugged rocks, clear lakes,
Castsles, and bridges, aqueducts and fanes.
Of these observe, how some, united please;
While others, ill-combin'd, disquit the eye.
That principle, which rules these various parts,
And harmonizing all, produces one,
Is Disposition. By its plafic pow'r
Thole rough materials, which Design select,
Are nicely balance'd. Thus with friendly aid
These principles unite: Design prevails
The general subject: Disposition calls,
And recombin's, the various forms anew.

Yet here true Taste to three distinguih'd parts
Confines her aim: Brought nearest to the eye
She forms her foregrounds; then the midway space;
E'er the blue distance melt in liquid air.

But tho' full oft these parts with blending tints
Are soften'd so, as wakes a frequent doubt
Where each begins, where ends; yet still the keeps
A general balance. So when Europe's sons
Sound the alarm of war; some potent hand
(Now thine again my Albion) poises true
The scale of empire; curbs each rival pow'r;
And checks each lawless tyrant's wild career.

Not but there are of fewer parts who plan
A pleasing picture. Thee a forest-glide
Suffices oft; behind which, just remov'd,
One tuft of foliage, Waterlo, like thine,
Gives all we wish of dear variety.
For ev'n variety itself may pall,
If to the eye, when pausing with delight
On one fair object, it presents a mask
Of many, which disturb that eye's repose.
All hail Simplicity! To thy chaste shrine,
Beyond all other, let the artist bow.

Oft have I seen arr'd, by hands that well
Could pencil Nature's parts, landscapes, that knew
No leading subject: Here a forest roe;
A river there ran dimpling; and beyond,
The portion of a lake: while rocks, and tow'r's,
And castles intermix'd, spread o'er the whole
In multiform confusion. Ancient dames
Thus oft compose of various silken shreds,
Some gaudy, patch'd, unmeaning, tawdry thing;
Where bucks and cherries, ships and flow'rs, unite
In one rich compound of absurdity.
Chief then some principal commanding theme,
Be it lake, valley, winding stream, cascade,
Cattle, or sea-port, and on that exhaust
Thy pow'r's, and make to that all else conform.
Who paints a landscape, is confin'd by rules,
As fix'd and rigid as the tragic bard,
To unity of subject. Is the scene
A forest, nothing there, save woods and lawns
Must rise conspicuous. Epilodes of hills
And lakes be far remov'd; all that obstructs
On the chief theme, how beautiful soe'er
Scen as a part, disput's us in the whole.
Thus in the realms of landscape, to preserve
Proportion just is Disposition's task.

And

-- And tho' a glance of distance it allows,
Ev'n when the foreground swells upon the sight:
Yet if the distant scen'ry wide extend,
The foreground must be ample: Take free scope: 200
Art must have space to stand on, like the Sage,
Who boasted pow'r to thake the solid globe.
This thou must claim; and, if thy distance spread
Profound, must claim it amply: Uncombin'd
With foreground, distance loses pow'r to please. 205

Where rising from the solid rock, appear
Those ancient battlements, there liv'd a knight,
That oft surveying from his castle wall
The wide expanses before him; distance vast;
Interminable wilds; savannahs deep; 210
Dark woods; and village spires, and glittering streams,
Just twinkling in the sun-beam, with'd the view
Transfer'd to canvases, and for that sage end,
Led some obedient son of Art to where
His own unerring taste had previous fix'd 215
The point of amplest prospect. "Take thy stand
"Just here," he cry'd, "and paint me all thou seest,
"Omit no single object." It was done;
And soon the live-long landscape cloaths his hall,
And spreads from base to ceiling. All was there; 220
As to his guests, while dinner cool'd, the knight
Fall oft would prove; and with uplifted cane
Point to the distant spire, where slept entomb'd
His ancestor; beyond, where lay the town,
Skirted with wood, that gave him place and voice 225
In Britain's senate; nor untract'd the stream
That fed the goodly trout they soon should take;

And
Nor ev'ry scatter'd feat of friend, or foe,
He calls his neighbours. Needle in he, meanwhile,
That what he deems the triumph of his tale,
Is but a painted survey, a mere map;
Which light and shade and perspective misplace'd
But serve to spoil.

Yet why (methinks I hear
Some Critic say) do ample scenes like this
In picture fail to please; when ev'ry eye
Confesses they transport on Nature's chart?

Why, but because, where she dispays the scene,
The roving light can pause, and swift felicit,
From all the offers, parts, whereon to fix,
And form distinct perceptions; each of these
Producing stipulate pictures; and as bees
Condense within their hives the varying sweets;
So does the eye a lovely whole collect
From parts disjunct; nay, perhaps, deform'd,
Then deem not Art defective, which divides,
Rejects, or recombines: but rather say,
'Tis her chief excellence. There is, we know,
A charm unspeakable in converse free
Of lover, or of friend, when soul with soul
Mixes in social intercourse; when choice
Of phrase, and rules of rhetoric are disdain'd;
Yet say, adopted by the tragic bard,
If Jaffier thus with Belvidera talk'd,
So vague, so rudely, would not want of skill,
Selection, and arrangement, damn the scene?

Thy forms, tho' balance'd, still perchance may want

The charm of Contrad: Sing we then its pow'r.
'Tis Beauty's fairest source; it regulates
Shape, colour, light, and shade; forms ev'ry line
By opposition joint; what'oe'er is rough
With skill delusive counteracts by smooth;
Sinuous, or concave, by its opposite;
Yet ever covertly: should Art appear,
That art were Affection. Then alone
We own the power of Contrad, when the lines
Unite with Nature's freedom: then alone,
When from its careless touch each part receives
A pleasing form. The lake's contracted bounds
By contrast varied, elegantly flow;
Th' unwieldy mountain sinks; here, to remove
Offensive parallels, the hill deprest
Is lifted; there the heavy beech expond'd
Gives place to airy pines; if two bare knolls
Rife to the right and left, a cleft here,
And there a wood, diversify their form.

Thrice happy he, who always can indulge
This pleasing feast of fancy; who, replete
With rich ideas, can arrange their charms
As his own genius prompts, and plan and paint
A novel whole. But tattle's wealth oft claims
The faithful portrait, and will fix the scene
Where Nature's lines run faultily, or refuse
To harmonize. Artful, if thus employ'd,
I pity thy mishance. Yet there are means
Ev'n here to hide defects: The human form,
Pourtray'd
Pourtray'd by Reynolds, oft abounds with grace
He saw not in his model; which nor hurts
Resemblance, nor fictitious skill betrays.
Why then, if o'er the limb uncouth he flings
The flowing veil, may not thy honest art
Veil with the foliage of some spreading tree,
Unpleasing objects, or remote, or near?
An ample licence for such needful change,
The foreground gives thee: There both mend and make.
Whoe'er opposes, tell them, 'tis the spot
Where fancy needs must sport; where, if refrain'd
To close resemblance, thy best art expires.
What if they plead, that from thy general rule,
That rules on Nature as the only source
Of beauty, thou revolt'st; tell them that rule
Thou hold'st still sacred: Nature is its source;
Yet Nature's parts fail to receive alike
The fair impression. View her varied range:
Each form that charms is there; yet her best forms
Must be selected: As the sculptur'd charms
Of the fam'd Venus grew, so must thou cull
From various scenes such parts as best create
One perfect whole. If Nature ne'er array'd
Her most accomplish'd work with grace compleat,
Think, will the wafte on desart rocks, and dells,
What she denies to Woman's charming form?
And now, if on review thy chalk'd design,
Brought into form by Disposition's aid,
Displeaże not, trace thy lines with pencil free;
Add lightly too that general mass of shade,
Which

Which suits the form and fashion of its parts.
There are who, studious of the best effects,
First sketch a flight cartoon: Such previous care
Is needful, where the Artist's fancy fails
Precisely to foresee the future whole.
This done, prepare thy pallet, mix thy tints,
And call on chaste Simplicity again
To save her votary from whatever of hue,
Discordant or abrupt, may flaunt or glare.

Yet here to bring materials from the mine,
From animal, or vegetable dies,
And sing their various properties and powers,
The Mule descends not. To mechanic rules,
To prove, and practice, which can only teach
The use of pigments, she resigns the toil.

One truth the gives, that Nature's simple loom
Weaves but with three distinct, or mingled, hues,
The veil that cloaths Creation: There are red,
Azure, and yellow. Pure and unfail'd white
(If colour deem'd) rejects her general law,
And is by her rejected. Dost thou deem
The glisty surface of ton hoifer's coat
A perfect white? Or you vaunt heaving cloud
That climbs the diftant hill? With ceruse bright
Attempt to catch its tint, and thou wilt fail.
Some tinge of purple, or some yellowish brown,
Muft firft be blended, o'er thy toil success.
Pure white, great Nature withes to expunge

From
From all her works; and only then admits,
When with her mantle broad of fleecy snow,
She wraps them, to secure from chilling frost;
Confident, mean while, that what she gives to guard,
 Conceals their ev'ry charm; the flood of night
Not more eclipses: yet that fable fite
May, by the skilful mixture of these hues,
Be shadow'd ev'n to dark Cimmerian gloom.

Drawn then from these, as from three plenteous springs,
Thy brown, thy purple, crimson, orange, green,
Nor load thy pallet with a useless tribe
Of pigments, when commix'd with needful white,
As suits thy end, these native three suffice.
But if thou dost, still cautious keep in view
That harmony which these alone can give.

Yet still there are, who scorning all the rules
Of dull mechanic art, with random hand,
Fling their unblended colours, and produce
Bolder effects by opposition's aid.

The Sky, what'eer its hue, to landscape gives
A correspondent tinge. The morning ray
Spreads it with purple light, in dew-drops steep'd; the evening fire it with a crimson glow.
Blows the bleak North? It sends a cold, blue tint
On all it touches. Do light mists prevail?
A soft grey hue o'er-speads the general scene,
And makes that scene, like beauty view'd thro' gauze,
More delicately lovely. Cheer thy sky;
But let that sky, what'eer the tint it takes,

O'er-rule thy pallet. Frequent have I seen,
In landscapes well compos'd, aerial hues
So ill-prefer'd, that whether cold or heat,
Tempest or calm, prevail'd, was dubious all.
Not so thy pencil, Claudius, the faction marks:
Thou mak'st us pant beneath thy summer noon;
And shiver in thy cool autumnal eve.

Such are the pow'rs of sky; and therefore Art
Selects what best is suited to the scenes
It means to form: to this adapts a morn,
To that an evening ray. Light mists full oft
Give mountain-views an added dignity,
While tame impoverish'd scenery claims the force
Of splendid lights and shades; nor claims in vain.

Thy sky adjusted, all that is remote
First colour faintly: leaving to the last
Thy foreground. Easier 'tis, thou know'st, to spread
Thy floating foliage o'er the sky: than mix
That sky amid the branches. Venture still
On warmer tints, as distances approach.
Nearer the eye: nor fear the richest hues,
If to those hues thou give'st the meet support
Of strong opposing shade. A canvas once
I saw, on which the Artist da'd to paint
A scene in India; where gold, and pearl,
Barbaric, flam'd on many a broder'd veil.
Profusely splendid: yet chaste Art was there,
Opposing hue to hue; each shadow deep
So spread, that all with sweet accord produc'd
A bright, yet modell'd whole. Thus blend thy tints,
Be they of scarlet, orange, green, or gold,
Harmonious, till one gen’ral glow prevail
Unbroken by abrupt and hostile glare.

— Let shade predominate, it makes each light
More lucid, yet destroys offensive glare.
Mark when in fleecy show’rs of snow, the clouds
Seem to descend, and whiten o’er the land,
What unsubstantial unity of tinge
Involves each prospect: Vision is absorbed;
Or, wand’ring thro’ the void, finds not a point
To rest on: All is mockery to the eye.
Thus light diffus’d, debases that effect
Which shade improves. Behold what glorious scenes
Artic thro’ Nature’s works from shade. Yon lake
With all its circumambient woods, far left
Would charm the eye, did not the dusky mist
Creeping along its eastern shores, ascend
Those tow’ring cliffs, mix with the ruddy beam
Of opening day, just damp its fires, and spread
O’er all the scene a sweet obscurity.
But would’st thou see the full effect of shade
Well naught, at eve mark that upheaving cloud,
Which charg’d with all th’ artillery of love,
In awful darkness, marching from the east,
Ascends; see how it passes, and spreads,
Dark, and darker till, its dusky veil,
Till from the east to west, the cope of heav’n
It curtains closely round. Haply thou stand’st
Expectant of the loud convulsive burst,

When lo! the sun, just sinking in the west,
Pours from th’ horizon’s verge a splendid ray,
Which tenfold grandeur to the darkness adds.
Far to the east the radiance floats, just tips
Those tufted groves; but all its splendour pours
On yonder called cliff, which chiefly owes
Its glory, and supreme effect, to shade.
Thus light, in fore’d by shadow, spreads a ray
Still brighter. Yet forbid that light to shine
A glittering speck; for this were to illumine
Thy picture, as the convex glass collects,
All to one dazzling point, the solar rays.

— Whate’er the force of opposition, still
In soft gradation equal beauty lies.
When the mild liture glides from light to dark,
The eye well pleas’d pursues it. ’Mid the herds
Of variagated hue, that graze our lawns,
Oft may the Artifit trace examples just.
Of this sedate effect, and oft remark
Its opposite. Behold yon lordly Bull,
His fable head, his lighter shoulders ting’d
With flakes of brown; at length fill lighter tints
Prevailing, graduate o’er his flank and loins.
In twain orange. What, if on his front
A stain of white appear? The general man
Of colour spreads unbroken; and the mark
Gives his stern front peculiar character.
Aha! how degenerate from her well-cloath’d fire
That heifer. See her sides with white and black.
So flustered, so distrait, each jostling each,
The groundwork-colour hardly can be known.

Of lights, if more than two thy landscape boast,
It boast too much: But if two lights be there,
Give one pre-eminence: with that be sure
Illume thy foreground, or thy middle space;
But rarely spread it on the distant scene.
Yet there, if level plains, or fens appear,
And meet the sky, a lengthen'd gleam of light
Dissipately thrown, will vary the flat scene.

But if that distance be abruptly clos'd
By mountains, cast them into total shade:
Ill fair gay robes their hoary majesty.
Sober be all their hues; except, perchance,
Approaching nearer in the midway space,
One of the giant-brethren tow'r sublime.
To him thy art may aptly give a gleam
Of radiance: 'twill befit his awful head,
Alike, when rising thro' the morning-dews
In mirthy dignity, the pale, wan ray,
Invets him; or when, beamsing from the well,
A fiercer splendour opens to our view
All his terrific features, rugged cliffs,
And yawning chasms, which vapours thro' the day
Had swell'd; dens where the Lyre or Pard might dwell
In noon-tide safety, meditating there
His next nocturnal ravage thro' the land.

Are now thy lights and shades adjusted all?
Yet pause: perhaps the perspective is just;

Perhaps each local hue is duly plac'd;
Perhaps the light offends not; harmony
May still be wanting, that which forms a whole
From colour, shade, gradation, is not yet
Obtain'd. Avails it ought, in civil life,
If here and there a family unite
In bonds of peace, while discord rends the land,
And pale-ey'd Faction, with her garment dipp'd
In blood, excites her guilty ions to war?

To aid thine eye, distressful if this end
Be fully gain'd, wait for the twilight hour:
When the grey owl, failing on lazy wing,
Her circuit takes; when length'ning shades dissolve;
Then in some corner place thy smith'sd piece,
Free from each garish ray: Thine eye will there
Be undisturb'd by parts; there will the whole
Be view'd collectively; the distance there
Will from its foreground pleasingly retire,
As distance ought, with true decreasig tone.
If not, if shade or light be out of place,
Thou seest the error, and may'st yet amend.

Here science ceases, thou' to close the theme,
One labour fill'd, and of Herculean cast,
Remains unfung'd, the art to execute,
And what its happiest mode. In this, alas!
What numbers fail; tho' paths, as various, lead
To that fair end, as to thy ample walls
Imperial London. Every Artiff takes
His own peculiar manner; save the hand
Coward, and cold, that dare not leave the track
Its master taught. Thou who wouldst boldly seize 520
Superior excellence, observe, with care,
The stile of ev'ry Artift; yet disdain
To mimic ev'n the best: Enough for thee
To gain a knowledge from what various modes
The same effect results. Artists there are,
Who, with exactness painful to behold,
Labour each leaf, and each minutest moss,
Till with enamelled surface all appears
Compleatly smooth. Others with bolder hand,
By Genius guided, mark the general form, 530
The leading features, which the eye of Taste,
Practis'd in Nature, readily translates.
Here lies the point of excellence. A piece,
Thus finish'd, tho' perhaps the playful toil
Of three short mornings, more enchant the eye, 535
Than what was labour'd thro' as many moons.
Why then such toil milperf? We do not mean,
With close and microscopic eye, to pore
On ev'ry studied part: The practis'd judge
Looks chiefly on the whole; and if thy hand
Be guided by true Science, it is fair
To guide thy pencil freely. Scorn thou then
On part: minus to dwell: The character
Of objects aim at, not the nice detail.

Now is the scene compleat: with Nature's ease, 545
Thy woods, and lawns, and rocks, and splendid lakes,

...(Continued on the next page...)
Wild as those scenes themselves, bandits fierce,
And gipsy-tribes, not merely to adorn,
But to impress that sentiment more strong,
Awake'd already by the savage-scene.

Oft winding slowly up the forest glade,
The ox-team lab'ring, drags the future keel
Of some high admiral: no ornament
Afflicts the woodland scene like this; while far
Remov'd, seen but a gleam among the trees,

The forest-herd in various groups repose.

Yet, if thy skill should fail to people well
Thy landscape, leave it desert. Think how Claude
Oft crowded scenes, which Nature's self might own,
With forms ill-drawn, ill-chosen, ill-arrang'd,
Of man and beast, o'er loading with false taste
His sylvan glories. Seize them, Petilence,
And sweep them far from our disfigured fight.

If, o'er thy canvas Ocean pours his tide,
The full sail'd vessel, with its swelling sail,
Be cautious to admit; unless thy art
Can give it cordage, pennants, masts, and form
Appropriate; rather with a careless touch
Of light, or shade, just mark the distant skiff:

Nor thou refuse that ornamental aid,
The feather'd race afford. When fluttering near
The eye, we own absurdity refutes,
They seem both fix'd and moving: but beheld
At proper distance, they will fill thy sky
With animation: Give them there free scope
Their pinions in the blue serence to ply.

Far up yon river, opening to the sea,
Just where the distant coast extends a curve,
A lengthen'd train of sea-fowl urge their flight.
Observe their files! In what exact array
The dark battalion floats, dizzily seen
Before thy silver cliff! Now, now, they reach
That lonely beacon; now are lost again.

In yon dark cloud. How pleasing is the sight!
The forest-glade from its wild, tim'rous herd,
Receives not richer ornament, than here
From birds this lonely sea-view. Ruins too
Are grac'd by such additions: not the force
Of strong and catching lights adorn them more,
Than do the dusky tribes of rooks, and daws,
Fluttering their broken battlements among.

Place but these feather'd groups at distance due,
The eye, by fancy aided, sees them move;
Flit past the cliff, or circle round the tow'r.

Thy landscape finish'd, thou'lt meet thy own
Approving judgment, skill requires a test,
More general, more declined. Thine's an eye
Too partial to be trusted. Let it hang
On the rich wall, which emulation fills:

Where rival masters court the world's applause.

There travel'd virtuosi, talking round,
With first important, peering thro' the hand,
Hollow'd in telescopic form, survey
Each lucklesse piece, and uniformly damn;
Assuming for their own the taste they steal.

\text{This}
This has not Guido's air; "This poorly apes Titian's rich colouring;" "Rembrandt's forms are here, but not his light and shadow." Skilful they
In ev'ry hand, live Nature's. What if these
With Gains or with Claude thy work compare, and therefore scorn it; let the pedants prate
Unheeded. But if taste, correct and pure,
Grounded on practice; or, what more avails
Than practice, observation judicious form'd
On Nature's best examples and effects,
Approve thy landscape; if judicious Locke
See not an error he would with remov'd,
Then boldly deem thyself the heir of Fame.
SOME perhaps may object to the word *glimmering*; but whoever has observed the playing lights, and colours, which often invest the summits of mountains, will not think the epithet improper.

45 **What it's leading feature:** that is, the particular character of the tree. The different shape of the leaves, and the different mode of spreading it's branches, give every tree, a distinct form, or character. At a little distance you easily distinguish the oak from the ash; and the ash from the beech. It is this general form, not any particular detail, which the artist is instructed to get by heart. The same remark holds with regard to other parts of nature. These general forms may be called the painter's alphabet. By these he learns to read her works; and also to make them intelligible to others.

61 **With light of curling foam contrasted.** The progress of each wave is this. Beneath the frothy curl, when it rises between the eye, and the light, the colour is pale green, which brightens from the base towards the summit. When a wave subsides, the summit falling into the base, extends, and raises it; and the sides running off from the centre, that part of the water which meets the succeeding wave, springs upward from the shock; the top forms into foam, and rolling over falls down the side, which has been shocked; presenting if the water be much agitated, the idea of a cascade.

77 **The evening-shadow left opaquely falls.** It is not often observed by landscape-painters, tho' it certainly deserves observation, that the morning-shadows are darker than those of the evening.

101 **If the big thought seem more than art can paint.**

It is always a sign of genius to be dissatisfied with our own efforts; and to conceive more than we can express.

146 **Design**
146 Design presents the general subject, disposition, &c. Some writers on the art of painting have varied this division. But it seems most proper, I think, to give the selection of the elements of landscape—the assembling of rocks, mountains, cataracts, and other objects to design; while disposition is properly employed in the local arrangement of them.

149 The general composition of a landscape consists of three parts—the foreground—the second ground—and the distance. No rule can be given for proportioning these parts to each other. There are ten thousand beautiful proportions; from which the eye of taste must select a good one. The foreground must always be considerable—in some cases ample. It is the very basis, and foundation of the whole.—Nor is it a bad rule, I think, that some part of the foreground should be the highest part of the picture. In rocky, and mountainous views this is easy, and has generally a good effect. And sometimes even when a country is more level, a tree on the foreground, carried higher than the rest of the landscape, answers the end. At the same time in many species of landscape this rule cannot easily be adapted; nor is it by any means essential.

164 Wateris, like thine. The subject of this matter seldom went beyond some little forest-view. He has etched a great number of prints in this style of landscape; which for the beauty of the trees in particular, are much admired.

173 Landscapes, that know no leading subject. There is not a rule in landscape-painting more neglected; or that ought more to be observed, than what relates to a leading subject. By the leading subject, we mean, what characterizes the scene. We often see a landscape, which comes under no denomination. Is it the scenery about a ruin? Is it a lake-scene? Is it a river-scene? No: but it is a jumble of all together. Some leading subject therefore is required in every landscape, which forms its character; and to which the painter

...is confused by rules, As fixed, and rigid as the tragic bard.

when the landscape takes its character from a ruin, or other object on the foreground, the distance introduced, is merely an appendage; and must plainly appear to be an under-part; not interfering with the subject...
subject of the piece. But most commonly the scene, or leading-subject of the picture, occupies the middle distance. In this case, the foreground becomes the appendage; and without any striking object to attract the eye, must plainly flow, that it is intended only to introduce the leading-subject with more advantage.

190 Thus, in a forest-scene, the woods and lawns are the leading-subject. If the piece will admit it, a hill, or a lake, may be admitted in remote distance; but they must be introduced, only as the episodes in a poem, to set off the main subject. They must not interfere with it; but be far removed.

197 And one glance. It is certain, in fact, that a considerable foreground, with a glance of distance, will make a better picture, than a wide distance, set off only with a meagre foreground: and yet I doubt whether an adequate reason can be given; unless it be founded on what hath already been advanced, that we consider the foreground as the basis, and foundation of the whole picture. So that if it is not considerable in all circumstances, and extensive in some, there seems a defect.

D 3  280 A

280 A novel whole. The imaginary-view, formed on a judicious selection, and arrangement of the parts of nature, has a better chance of making a good picture, than a view taken in the whole from any natural scene. Not only the lines, and objects of the natural scene rarely admit a happy composition; but the character of it is seldom throughout preferred. Whether it be sublime, or beautiful, there is generally something mixed with it of a nature unsuitable to it. All this the exhibition of fancy rectifies, when in the hands of a master. Nor does he claim any thing, but what the poet, and he are equally allowed. Where is the flory in real life, on which the poet can form either an epic, or a drama, unless heightened by his imagination? At the same time he must take care, that all his imaginary additions are founded in nature, or his work will disgust. Such also must be the painter’s care. But under this restriction, he certainly may bring together a more cognizant whole, culled from the various parts of nature, than nature herself exhibits in any one scene.

314 Trace thy lines with pencil free. The master is discovered even in his chalk, or black-lead lines—so free, firm, and intelligent. We
We often admire these first, rude touches. The story of the two old masters will be remembered, who left cards of compliments to each other, on which only the simplest outline of a figure was drawn by one, and corrected by the other; but with such a superior elegance in each, that the signature of names could not have marked them more decisively.

318 First sketch a flight cartoon. It is the practice indeed of the generality of painters, when they have any great design to execute, to make a flight sketch, sometimes on paper, and sometimes on canvas. And these sketches are often greatly inferior to the principal picture, which has been laboured, and finished with the exactest care. King William on horse-back at Hampton court, by Sir Godfrey Kneller, is a striking example of this remark. The picture is highly finished; but is a tame, and unmasterly performance. At Houghton-hall I have seen the original sketch of this picture; which I should have valued, not only greatly beyond the picture itself, but beyond any thing I ever saw from the pencil of Sir Godfrey.

331 One truth the giver, &c. From these three virgin colours, red, blue, and yellow, all the tints of nature are compounded. Greens of various hues, are compounded of blue, and yellow: orange, of red, and yellow: purple and violet, of red, and blue. The tints of the rainbow seem to be compounded also of these colours. They lie in order thus: violet—red—orange—yellow—green—blue—violet—red: in which assortment we observe that orange comes between red, and yellow; that is, it is compounded of those colours melting into each other. Green is in the same way compounded of yellow and blue; and violet, or purple of blue, and red.——Nay even browns of all kinds may, in a degree, be effected by a mixture of these original colours: so may grey; and even a kind of black, tho not a perfect one.——As all pigments however are deficient, and cannot approach the rainbow colours, which are the purest we know, the painter must often, even in his splendid tints, call in different reds, blues, and yellows. Thus as vermilion, tho in excellent red, on many occasions, cannot give the rosy, crimson hue, he must often call in lake. Nor will he find any yellow, or blue, that will answer every purpose. In the tribe of browns he will be still more at a loss; and must have recourse to different earths.——In oil-painting one of the finest is known, at
at the colour-shops, by the name of castle-earth, or Van Dyke's-brown; as it is supposed to have been used by that master.

336 And is by her rejected. Scarcely any natural object, but snow, is purely white. The chalk-cliff is generally in a degree discoloured. The petals of the snowdrop indeed, and of some other flowers, are purely white; but seldom any of the larger parts of nature.

358 Keep in view that harmony, &c. Tho' it will be necessary to use other colours, besides yellow, red, and blue, this union should however still be kept in view, as the leading principle of harmony. A mixture indeed of these three will produce nearly the colour you want; but the more colours are mixed, the muddier they grow. It will give more cleanliness therefore, and brightness to your colouring, to use simple pigments, of which there are great abundance in the painter's dispensatory.

361 This mode of colouring is the most difficult to attain, as it is the most scientific. It includes a perfect knowledge of the effects of colours in all their various agreements, and oppositions. When attained, it is the most easy in practice. The artist, who blends his colours on his pallet, depends more on his eye, than on his knowledge.

380 Nobody was better acquainted with the effects of sky, nor studied them with more attention, than the younger Vandervelt. Not many years ago, an old Thames-waterman was alive, who remembered him well; and had often carried him out in his boat, both up and down the river, to study the appearances of the sky. The old man used to say, they went out in all kinds of weather, fair, and foul; and Mr. Vandervelt took with him large sheets of blue paper, which he would mark all over with black, and white. The artist easily sees the intention of this process. These expeditions Vandervelt called, in his Dutch manner of speaking, gang a playing.

401 The most remarkable instance of ingenious colouring I ever heard of, is in Guido's St. Michael. The whole picture is composed of blue, red, and black; by means of which colours the ideas of heaven and hell are blended together in a very extraordinary manner; and the effect exceedingly sublime; while both harmony, and chasteness are preferred in the highest degree.

436 Let
406 Let shade predominate. As a general rule, the half-tints should have more extent than the lights; and the shadows should equal both put together. — Yet why a predominancy of shade should please the eye more than a predominancy of light, would perhaps be difficult to explain. I can easily conceive, that a balance of light and shade may be found in some kind of reason; but am at a loss to give a reason for a predominancy of either. The fact however is undoubted; and we must screen our ignorance of the principle, as well as we can.

440 This rule respects an affected display of light. If it be introduced as a focus, so as not to fall naturally on the several objects it touches, it disfigurs. Rembrandt, I doubt, is sometimes chargeable with this fault. He is commonly supposed to be a master of this part of painting; and we often see very beautiful lights in his pictures, and prints: but as in many of them we see the reverse, he appears to have had no fixed principle. Indeed, few parts of painting are so much neglected, so easily transgressed, and so little understood, as the distribution of light.

444 Opposition, and gradation are the two grand means of producing effect by light. In the picture just given (l. 424. &c.) of the evening-ray, the effect is produced by opposition. Beautiful effects too of the same kind arise often from catching lights. — The power of producing effect by gradation, is not less forcible. Indeed, without a degree of gradation, opposition itself would be mule. In the picture just given of the evening-ray, the grand part of the effect, no doubt, arises from the opposition between the gloom, and the light: but in part it arises also from the gradation of the light, till it reach it’s point. It just tips

The tufted groves; but all ’tis splendor pours
On yonder called cliff.

447 The colours of animals often strongly illustrate the idea of gradation. When they soften into each other, from light to dark, or from one colour into another, the mixture is very picturesque. It is as much the reverse, when white and black, or white, and red, are patched over the animal in blotches, without any intermediate tints. Domestic cattle, cows, dogs, swine, goats, and cats, are often disagreeably patched: tho we sometimes see them pleasingly coloured with a graduating tint. Wild animals, in general, are more unanimously coloured,
coloured, than tame. Except the zebra, and two or three of the spotted race, I recollect none which are not, more or less, tinted in this graduating manner. The tiger, the panther, and other variegated animals have their beauty; but the zebra, I think, is rather a curious, than a picturesque animal. Its streaked sides injure it both in point of colour, and in the delineation of its form.

But rarely spread it on the distant scene. In general perhaps a landscape is best illuminated, when the light falls on the middle parts of the picture; and the foreground is in shade. This throws a kind of natural retiring hue throughout the landscape; and tho' the distance be in shadow, yet that shade is so faint, that the retiring hue is still preferred. This however is only a general rule. In history-painting the light is properly thrown upon the figures on the foreground; which are the capital part of the picture. In landscape the middle grounds commonly form the scene, or the capital part; and the foreground is little more, than an appendage. Sometimes however it happens, that a ruin, or some other capital object on the foreground, makes the principal part of the scene. When that is the case, it should be distinguished by light, unless it be so situated as to receive more distinction from shade.

A finer splendor opens to our view all his terrific features. It is very amusing, in mountainous countries, to observe the appearance, which the same mountain often makes under different circumstances. When it is invested with light mists; or even when it is not illumined, we see it's whole summit perhaps under one grey tint. But as it receives the sun, especially an evening sun, we see a variety of shades, and chains gradually opening; of which we discovered not the least appearance before.

Tho' the objects may lessen in due proportion, which is called keeping; tho' the graduating hue of retiring objects, or the aerial perspective, may be just; and tho' the light may be distributed according to the rules of art; yet still there may not be that general result of harmony, which denotes the picture one object; and as the eye may be misled, when it has the several parts before it, the best way of examining it as a perfect whole, is to examine it in such a light, as will not admit the investigation of parts.
529 Others, &c. Some painters copy exactly what they see. In this there is more mechanical precision, than genius. Others take a general, comprehensive view of their object; and marking just the characteristic points, lead the spectator, if he be a man of taste, and genius likewise, into a truer knowledge of it, than the copier can do, with all his painful exactness.

563 Why then degrade, &c. If by bringing the figures forward on the foreground, you give room for character, and expression, you put them out of place as appendages, for which they were intended.

581 Of slowly winding, &c. The machine itself here described is picturesque: and when it is seen in winding motion, or (in other words) when half of it is seen in perspective, it receives additional beauty from contrast. In the same manner a cavalcade, or an army on its march, may be considered as one object; and derive beauty from the same source. Mr. Gray has given us a very picturesque view of this kind, in describing the march of Edward I.

As down the steep of Snowden's flaggy side
He wound with toilsome march his long array.
Stout Gloucester stood aghast in speechless trance:
To arms! cried Marmion; and couched his quivering lance.

Through a passage in the mountain we see the troops winding round at a great distance. Among those nearer the eye, we distinguish the horse and foot; and on the foreground, the action, and expression of the principal commanders. The ancients seem to have known very little of that source of the picturesque, which arises from perspective: every thing is introduced in front before the eye: and among the early painters we see very little more attention paid to it. Raphael is far from making a full use of the knowledge of it; and I believe Julio Romano makes still less.

I do not remember meeting any where with a more picturesque description of a line of march, than in Vaillant's travels into the interior parts of Africa. He was passing with a numerous caravan, along the borders of Caffaria. I first, says he, made the people of the herd, which accompanied me, set out with their cattle: and a little after my cattle followed; cows, sheep, and goats; with all the women of the herd, mounted on oxen with their children. My waggon, with the rest of my people, closed the rear. I myself, mounted on horseback, rode backwards, and forwards. This caravan on
on its march, exhibited often a singular, and amusing spectacle. The turns it was obliged to make in following the windings of the woods, and rocks, continually gave it new forms. Sometimes it entirely disappeared: then suddenly, at a distance, from the summit of a hill, I again discovered my vanguard slowly advancing perhaps towards a distant mountain: while the main body, following the track, were just below me.

This rule indeed applies to all other objects: but as the ship is so large a machine, and at the same time so complicated a one, its character is less obvious, than that of most other objects. It is much better therefore, where a vessel is necessary, to put in a few touches for a skiff; than to infest some disagreeable form for a ship, to which it has no resemblance. At the same time, it is not at all necessary to make your ship so accurate, that a seaman could find no fault with it. It is the same in figures: as appendages of landscape there is no necessity to have them exactly accurate; but if they have not the general form, and character of what they represent, the landscape is better without them.

603 They

603 They form, &c. Rapid motion alone, and that near the eye, is here cenured. We should be careful not to narrow too much the circumscribed sphere of art. There is an art of seeing, as well as of painting. The eye must in part enter into the deception. The art of painting must, in some degree, be considered as an act of convention. General forms only are imitated, and much is to be supplied by the imagination of the spectator.——It is thus in drama. How absurdly would the spectator act, if instead of afflicting the illusion of the stage, he should insist on being deceived, without being a party in the deception!——If he refused to believe, that the light he saw, was the sun; or the scene before him, the Roman capital, because he knew the one was a candle-light, and the other, a painted cloth? The painter therefore must in many things suppose deception; and only avoid it, where it is too palpably gross for the eye to suffer.

636 Guido's air, no doubt, is often very pleasing. He is thought to have excelled in imagining the angelic character: and, as if aware of this superiority, was fond of painting angels. After all, however, they, whose taste is formed on the simplicity of
of the antique, think Gaude's air, in general somewhat theatrical.

638 Skilful they, &c. The greatest obstruction to the progress of art arises from the prejudices of conceited judges; who, in fact, know less about the matter, than they, who know nothing: inasmuch as truth is less obvious to error, than it is to ignorance. Till they can be prevailed on to return upon their steps, and look for that criterion in nature, which they seek in the half-perished works of great names; the painter will be discouraged from pursuing knowledge in those paths, where Raphael, and Titian found it.

639 What if these compare, &c. Bruyere observes, that the inferior critic judges only by comparison. In one sense all judgment must be formed on comparison. But Bruyere, who is speaking of poetry, means, that the inferior critic has no scale of judging of a work of art, but by comparing it with some other work of the same kind. He judges of Virgil by a comparison with Homer; and of Spencer by comparing him with Tasso. By such criticism he may indeed arrive at certain truths; but he will never form that masterly judgment, which he might do by comparing the work before him with

with the great archetypes of nature, and the solid rules of his art.—What Bruyere says of the critic in poetry, is very applicable to the critic in painting. The inferior critic, who has travelled, and seen the works of many great masters, supposes he has trespassed up from them the ideas of perfection; and instead of judging of a picture by the rules of painting, and its agreement with nature, he judges of it by the arbitrary ideas he has conceived; and these too very probably much injured in the conception. From this comparative mode of criticizing, the art receives no advancement. All we gain, is, that one artist paints better than another.

END OF THE NOTES.
EXPLANATION

OF THE

PRINTS.

TWO facing page 19. It is the intention of these
two prints to illustrate how very adverse the
idea of smoothness is to the composition of
landscape. In the second of them the great
lines of the landscape are exactly the same
as in the first; only they are more broken.

Two facing p. 75. The first of these prints is
meant to illustrate the idea of simple illumi-
nation. The light falls strongly on certain
parts; as indeed it often does in nature.
But as it is the painter's business to take
nature in her most beautiful form, he chuses
to throw his light more into a dark, as re-
presented in the second print, which exhi-
bits the same landscape, only better inlight-
ened. When we merely take the lines of
a landscape from nature; and inlighten it
(as we must often do) from our own taste,
and judgment, the masing of the light
must be well attended to, as one of the
great sources of beauty. It must not be
scattered in spots; but must be brought
more together, as on the rocky side of the
hill in the second print; and yet it must
graduate also in different parts; so as not
to appear affected.

One print facing p. 77. The idea of gradation is
here farther illustrated; according to the
explanation in p. 76.——The inscriptions
is that admired one of Cæcilia Metella,
the daughter of Metellus, and the wife of
Craflus; in which, with so much elegant,
and tender simplicity, her name is divided
between her father, and her husband.

One facing p. 79. This print exemplifies a simple
mode of tinting a drawing, as explained in
the text. The colouring of this print
(which is done by hand) has added a little
to the expense of the book: but it was
thought necessary to complete the scheme.
——It was coloured by a relation of mine;
Mr. Gilpin, drawing-master at Paddington-
green; who in all the copies I have seen,
has illustrated my ideas very satisfactorily;
and who, as far as the recommendation of a
partial kinsman may go, deserves mine.
One facing p. 85. This print is an explanation of a few rules in perspective; just sufficient for the use of common landscape.

ERRATA.

For, because he could not have given it, read, because it receiv.
page 16.

For, if the colour be not changeable, it is the harmony we admire, read, if the colours do not changeable, it is the harmony of them, which we admire. p. 23.

For, circumstance of the composition, read, circumstances of the composition. p. 76.

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