Most of the sketches here offered to the public, are imaginary views. But as many people take offence at imaginary views; and will admit such landscape only as is immediately taken from nature, I must explain what we mean by an imaginary view.

We acknowledge nature to be the grand storehouse of all picturesque beauty. The nearer we copy her, the nearer we approach perfection. But this does not affect the imaginary view. When we speak of copying nature, we speak only of particular objects, and particular passages—not of putting the whole together in a picturesque manner; which we seldom seek in nature, because it is seldom found. Nature gives us the materials of landscape; woods, rivers, lakes, trees, ground, and mountains: but leaves us to work them up into pictures, as our fancy leads. It is thus she sheds her bounty on other occasions. She gives us grass; but leaves us to make hay. She gives us corn; but leaves us to make bread.

Yet
Yet still in copying the several objects, and passages of nature, we should not copy with that painful exactness, with which Quintin Matsis, for instance, painted a face. This is a sort of plagiarism below the dignity of painting. Nature should be copied, as an author should be translated. If, like Horace's translator, you give word for word, your work will necessarily be insipid. But if you catch the meaning of your author, and give it freely, in the idiom of the language into which you translate, your translation may have both the spirit, and truth of the original. Translate nature in the same way. Nature has its idiom, as well as language; and so has painting.

Every part of nature exhibits itself in what may be called prominent features. At the first glance, without a minute examination, the difference is apparent between the bole of a beech, for instance, and that of an oak; between the foliage of an ash, and the foliage of a fir. These, discriminating features the painter seizes; and the more faithfully he transmutes them into his work, the more excellent it will be in representation. And when these prominent features are naturally expressed, and judiciously combined in a fictitious view, that view may not only be a natural one, but a more beautiful exhibition of nature, than can easily be found in real landscape. It may even be called more natural, than nature itself: inasmuch as it seizes, and makes use, not only of nature's own materials, but of the best of each kind.

The painter of fictitious views goes still farther. There are few forms, either in animate, or inanimate nature, which are completely perfect. We seldom see a man, or a horse, without some personal blemish: or as seldom a mountain, or tree, in its most beautiful form. The painter of fictitious scenes therefore not only takes his forms from the most compleat individuals, but from the most beautiful parts of each individual; as the sculptor gave a purer figure by selecting beautiful parts, than he could have done by taking his model from the most beautiful single form.

Besides, pleasing circumstances in nature will not always please in painting. We often see effects of light, and deceptions in composition, which delight us, when we can examine.
amine, and develope them in nature. But when they are represented, like a text without its context, they may mislead; and the painter had better reject such scenery, though strictly natural. Obscurity in painting should be as much avoided, as in writing; unless in distances, or in some particular incidents, where obscurity is intended.

The painter of a fictitious view claims no greater liberty, than is willingly allowed to the history-painter; who in all subjects, taken from remote times, is necessarily obliged to form, as it ought to be, upon nature. If he give such a character to the hero he exhibits, as does not belye the truth of history; and make such a representation of the story, as agrees with the times he represents, and with the rules of his art, his history-piece is admired, though widely different, in many circumstances, from the real fact. Le Brun's picture of Alexander entering the tent of Darius, is undoubtedly very different from anything that really happened; but it conveys so much the appearance of nature, and of truth, that it gives us full satisfacion.

The painter of imaginary landscape desires no other indulgence. If from an accurate observation of the most beautiful objects of nature, he can by the force of his imagination characterize, and dispose them naturally, he thinks he may be said to paint from nature.

"The poet's art," says the abbé Du Bos, "consists in making a good representation of things, that might have happened, and in embellishing it with proper images."

Du Bos speaks after Aristotle, whose principle it is, that the poet is not required to relate what has really happened, but what probably might happen; which Horace translates, when he tells us, the poet,

--- ita mentitur, sic veris falla remisset,
Primo ut medium, medio ne discrepet imum.

All this as exactly regulates the art of managing fiction in landscape, as it does in poetry. And indeed the general rules of the best critics for the direction of the drama, direct us with great propriety in picturesque composition.--- It is true indeed we may, for the sake of curiosity, wish to have a particular scene, exactly represented; but the indulgence of curiosity does not make the picture better.

Besides
Besides the advantage in point of composition, the imaginary scene prefers more the character of landscape, than the real one. A landscape may be rural, or sublime—incumbent, or desolate—cultivated, or wild: its character, of whatever kind, should be observed throughout. Circumstances which suit one species, contradict another. Now in nature we rarely see attention. Seldom does the produce a scene perfect in character. In her belf works the often throws in some feature at variance with the rest—some trivial circumstance mixed often with sublime scenery; and injudicious painters have been fond of affecting such inconveniences. I have seen a view of the Colosseum, for instance, adorned with a woman hanging linen to dry under its walls. Contrasts of this kind may suit the moralist, the historian, or the poet, who may take occasion to descant on the instability of human affairs. But the eye, which has nothing to do with moral sentiments, and is conversant only with visible forms, is disgusted by such unnatural union.

There is still a higher character in landscape, than what arises from the uniformity of objects—and that is the power of furnishing images: analogous to the various feelings, and sensations of the mind. If the landscape painter can call up such representations, (which seems not beyond his art,) where would be the harm of saying, that landscape, like history-paintings hath its ethics?

Such thy pencil, Celsus! It makes us pant beneath thy summer sun, and shiver in thy cool autumnal eye.

To convey however ideas of this kind is the perfection of the art: it requires the splendour, and variety of colours; and is not to be attempted in such trivial sketches as these. In the mean time, the painter of imaginary scenes pursues the best mode of forming these ethical compositions, as all nature lies before him, and he has her whole storehouse at command.

To what hath been said in favour of imaginary views, nothing more pertinent, can be added than a few remarks from a gentleman well known for his superior taste in painting.

"You ask me, whether I have ever seen a correct view of any natural scene, which quite satisfied me? and you confess you rarely have. I am perfectly of your opinion. There is a fervid individuality in the mere portrait of

Sir George Beaumont, Bart. "a view
able; business; of; repeating himself. "If he would avoid this, he must frequently refresh his memory with nature; which, however loveliness in her composition, is the only school where he must study forms; or, if he cannot always have recourse to nature for the object he wants, he must turn over his common-place-books. This, it may be hoped, abounds with forms and passages, which may furnish a sufficient variety for his choice, and

The hints from which most of these sketches offered to the public are taken, were collected from mountainous, and lake scenery, where the author chiefly sought his picturesque ideas. Such scenery affords two great sources of picturesque composition—sublimity, or simple grandeur, and grandeur united with beauty. The former arises from a uniformity of large parts, without ornament, without contrast, and without variety. The latter arises from the introduction of these appendages, which forms scenery of a mixed kind.

Some of these sketches are attempts at sublimity or simple grandeur. But as this is an idea, which is neither easily caught, nor generally
generally admired, most of them aim at mixing grandeur and beauty together: indeed, however rugged, or even ruder manners, a sight. But whether the artist paint from nature or from his imagination, certain general rules, which belong to his art, should never be transgressed. A mountain, for instance, b not a hill, as in the first place, he should always remember, that the excellence of landscape painting consists in bringing before the spectator's eye, or rather in raising to his imagination such scenes as are most pleasing, or most striking. Every painter therefore should have this idea always in view, and should paint such scenes only. In the choice of these interesting subjects he chiefly discovers his taste. The full effect, indeed, of such scenes can only be given by the painter, yet it should be aimed at, as far as possible, even in the sketch. Again, a landscape, as well as a history piece, should have some master-subject. We often indeed see landscape composed without much idea of this kind. One piece of ground is tacked to another, with little meaning or connection. We should attend more to the simplicity of a whole. Some uniform, different aspects, tints, plan should always be presented; and the several parts should have relation to each other. The scenery about a castle, a ruin, a bridge, a lake, a winding river, or some remarkable disposition of ground, may make the leading part of a landscape; and if it be set off with a suitable distance, if necessary, and a proper fore-ground, we have subject enough for a picture. In short, there should be some idea of unity in the design, as well as in the composition; and every part should concur in shewing it to advantage. The parts being thus few and simple, the eye at once conceives the general idea. If the landscape be a finished piece, all these parts should be enriched with a variety of detail, which, at the same time, must unite in embellishing the general effect.

Still farther, the probability of every part should appear. A castle should never be placed where a castle cannot be supposed to stand. A lake should generally have the appendage of a mountainous country; and the course of a winding river should be made intelligible by the folding of the hills. In some of the drawings now offered to the public, it is endeavoured to explain this idea by a few remarks on the back of each. These explanatory
The general effect of a picture is produced by a unity of light, as well as of composition. When we have gotten the several parts of a landscape together—that is, when we are satisfied with the composition, till we cannot judge of the effect; nor appreciate the picture, till we have introduced the light, which makes a complete change in a landscape, either for the better or the worse. It is thus in nature. The appearance of the same country, under different effects of light, is totally different. These effects therefore cannot be too much studied; and should be studied, when the artist finishes a picture, by making different sketches of the same subject, so as to ascertain the best. This is not always enough attended to, in painting. Indeed, a bad distribution of light is less discernable. The variety of coloring

...
Though they cannot well claim the title of landscapes, they may furnish a few general hints, and some of them might be made pictures, perhaps in the hands of a good master, who could furnish the detail. At the same time, thus much may be said, that we always conceive the detail to be the inferior part of a picture. We look with more pleasure at a landscape, well designed, composed, and enlightened, though the parts are inaccurately or roughly executed, than at one in which the parts are well made; but, the whole ill-conceived. These ideas were once paradoxically, but well explained, by a gentleman, who thought himself a better artist, after his hand began to shake, and his eyes to fail. By the shaking of my hand, he would say, my stroke, which was before formal, becomes more free, and when my eyes were good, I entered more into the detail of objects; now I am more impressed with the whole.

In teaching to draw, the stress is laid at first, as it ought to be, on the parts. If a scholar can touch a tree, or a building with accuracy, he has so far attained perfection, but it is the perfection only of a scholar. The great principles of his art are still behind. Often, however, our riper judgment is swayed by the excellence of the parts, in preference to a whole. The merit of a picture is fixed perhaps by the master's touch; or by the beauty of his colouring; or some other inferior excellence. But a great critic in arts, formed a different opinion; and Heinsius, ludi ludum faberibus, & ungues, &c. &c. Exprimet, & molles imitabitur ere capillos, Infelix operis summa, qui ponere tosum Nefect.

A few of the drawings here exhibited, may be called studies; that is, the same subject hath been attempted in different ways, both with regard to composition, and effect.

In a few of them, the more redundant designs of Claude are simplified. A very numerous collection of prints were taken from the drawings of that master. Claude's originals are in the hands of the Duke of Devonshire. They exhibit many beautiful parts, but rarely a simple whole; though the collection, for what reason is not obvious, is styled the book of truth.

A few of the drawings here offered to sale, are slightly tinted: not as finished drawings, but
but just enough to give a distinction among objects. Yet even in these slight sketches, unless there is some appearance of harmony, a very little degree of colouring glares. When therefore, you have put in your light and shade, with Indian ink, spread over the whole a slight wash of red and yellow mixed, which make an orange. It may incline either to one, or the other, as may best suit your composition. A cold bluish tint may sometimes have effect. This general wash will produce a degree of harmony. While the sky is yet moist, tint the upper part of it, if it be orange, with blue, blending them together. Or, if a little part only of the sky appear, it may be all blue, or all orange, as may have the best effect. When the sky is dry, throw a little blue, or what Reeves calls a neutral tint *, into the distances; and over any water, that may be in the landscape. Then introduce your browns, which are of various kinds, into the foreground; but let them be introduced slightly; and when all is dry, you may touch some of the brightest parts with dead green, or a little gall-stone. Burnt terra-de-Sienna, mixed with a little gall-stone, make a good tint for foliage.

* See his box of colours.

Some apology may perhaps be necessary for the uniformity of one principle, which runs through most of the designs here exhibited; and that is the practice of throwing the foreground into shade. Many artists throw their lights on the foreground; and often, no doubt, with good effect. But, in general, we are perhaps better pleased with a dark foreground. It makes a kind of graduating shade, from the eye through the removed parts of the picture; and carries off the distance better than any other contrivance. By throwing the light on the foreground, this gradation is inverted. In many of these sketches the lights were at first left on the foreground; but on examining them with a fresh eye, they glaring so disagreeably, that they were afterwards put out. Besides, the foreground is commonly but an appendage. The middle distance generally makes the scene, and requires the most distinction. In history-painting, it is the reverse. The principal part of the subject occupies the foreground; and the removed parts of the picture form the appendage. In a landscape too, when a building, or other object of consequence, appears on the foreground, and the distance is of little value, the light on the same principle,
called enlivening) with ill-drawn figures, of men, horses, cows, sheep, wagons, and other objects, which have not even the air of the things they represent. Or perhaps, the figures of landscapes are too generally touched, too great a number of them are introduced; or they are ill put together; or perhaps ill suited to the scene. Some of these circumstances are too often found in the best landscapes—as often in those of Claude, as of any other master. And yet I have heard, that Claude had a higher opinion of his own excellence in figures, than in any other part of his profession. Sir Peter Lely, we are told, wished for one of Claude's best landscapes; but delicately hinted to him, that he should rather choose it without figures; Claude felt himself hurt at Sir Peter's deprecatory, and yet he filled this landscape therefore with more figures, than he commonly introduced; and desired Sir Peter, if he did not like it, to leave it for those who understood the composition of landscapes better. This picture, as at present, I am told, is in the hands of Mr. Agar in London; and the history of its affords good instruction to such conceited artists, as value
themselves on what no body else values. Many landscape painters, however, might be named, who knew how to touch a small figure, and could people their landscapes with great beauty. Among these the late Mr. Wilson, one of the best landscape painters, that hath appeared in our days, might be mentioned. Other painters, who could not paint figures themselves, have borrowed assistance from those who could. The late ingenius Mr. Barrett, who painted every part of inanimate nature with singular beauty, had, the discretion to get his landscapes generally peopled by a better hand than his own. If, as it cannot be supposed, the figures in these sketches are set up as models, so far from it, that they do not even pretend to the name of figures. They are meant only as substitutes to shew, where two or three figures might be placed to advantage. And yet even such figures are better than those, in which finishing is attempted, and legs and arms set on without either life, air, or proportion. Indeed the figures here introduced, are commonly dressed in cloaks, which conceal their deformities. If legs and arms be not well set on, they are certainly better concealed.

"As I can say nothing myself therefore on the subject of figures, I have gotten a few hints, and examples from my brother Mr. Sawrey Gilpin; who, if my prejudices do not mislead me, is well skilled in this part of his art.

These hints respect the size, the relative proportion of the parts, the balance of figures at rest, or in motion; and what appears to him the easiest mode of sketching figures, to which are added a few of such groups as may be introduced in landscape.

In the first place, with regard to the size of figures, as the known dimensions of the human body give a scale to the objects around, exactness in this point is a matter of no little consequence. If the figure be too large, it diminishes the landscape; if too small, it makes it enormous; and yet it seems no very
It may be useful to have a general idea of it, in order to apply it to others.

The balance, however, of a figure, even in landscape, is a matter of great consequence. If every thing else were right, but this, the effect of the figure would be destroyed. A figure intended to be in motion, from an unsteady or unsightly poise of its limbs, would appear to stand still. And from the same cause, a standing figure would appear to be a falling one.

The balance of standing figures may be regulated by a supposed perpendicular dividing the body, from the crown of the head, into two parts; if the legs bear equal weight, this line will fall exactly between them. If the weight is borne unequally, the line will fall nearer the leg which bears the greatest proportion; and if the whole burden be thrown on one leg, the line will pass through the centre of its heel. When the weight is thus unequally distributed, the shoulder on one side forms a counterpoise to the hip on the other; and when the shoulder is not a sufficient counterpoise, as in the case of bearing a weight in one hand, the contrary arm is thrown out to restore the balance.

Sloping figures come under the same rule;
only the perpendicular will arise from the centre of gravity, at the feet of the figure, and divide it into equal parts. "The progressive motion of figures may also be adjusted by a perpendicular, drawn from the foot, that bears the weight; the figure being projected beyond it in proportion to the velocity, with which it is represented to move.*

A few words may be added with regard to the easiest manner of sketching flight figures in landscape. To attempt finishing the limbs at first, would lead to stiffness. If the figures are placed near the eye, a little attention to drawing is requisite; and the simplest, and perhaps the best method will be, to sketch them in lines nearly straight, under the regulations above given. A little swelling of the muscles, and a few touches to mark the extremities, the articulation of the joints, and the sharp folds of the drapery, may afterwards be given, and will be sufficient†.

After gaining a knowledge in the form of figures, the next point is to group them. The form depends on rule; the group more on

* To illustrate these remarks, see plate i.
† To illustrate these remarks, see plate 2.
A few landscape-groups are here specified, which may assist the young artist in combining his figures.

With regard to his own drawings, the author hath only to observe farther, that they will appear to most advantage, if they are examined by candle-light; or, if in day-light, by intercepting a strong light. This mode of viewing them will best shew the effect, in which chiefly consists the little merit they have; and will likewise conceal the faultiness of the execution in the several details. Such of these drawings however as are tinted, cannot be examined by candle-light.

* See plate 3.

THE END.