At the present time, we have read so much concerning picturesque beauty, that many readers may wish to be informed in what it consists: I am, therefore, under obligation to Sir Gilpin, for his elegant "Essays on picturesque beauty," which he has just published, and of which he has so kindly consented to give me a specimen. Gilpin, in his 18th "Essays on picturesque beauty," says:

"On this subject. He tells us, that, by objects of picturesque beauty, he means such beautiful objects as are suited to the pencil."

"This is clear, and, as we shall see, accurately defined; and we hope that the definition will receive attention from those travellers, who, journeying with their pencils in their hands, have scarlet the ground, and, however unskilful, have obtained their works on the public under the name of 'picturesque tours.' We hope, also, as the meaning of this newly-manufactured word, this "picturesque" is more accurately defined, and limited in its application, that future writers who may adopt it will be exact in their use of it; and we trust that Mr. Gilpin himself will not call us cavaliers if we ask him, who should have such a large field of experience, whether by calling himself and his son, 'picturesque painters,' he intends us to imagine that they are objects proper to be represented on the canvas?—If so, we certainly have no authority to deny that the gentlemen, to whom we mean no offence, are picturesque, for we have not the happiness of knowing the extent of either.

On this subject of the species of beauty, Mr. Gilpin thus delivers his sentiments, in an address to William Lock*.

* 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 intentions. I have several times been permitted to find us represented, as flapping all beauty to confide 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, the uninteresting thing in a picturesque light, as having a blissful light in it. The beauty in nature is the beauty of the imagination—often a stronger, when than when they are properly disposed for the pencil. We everywhere where make a distinction between scenes that are beautiful and amusing; and scenes that are picturesque. We examine, admire, and admire both. Even artificial objects we admire, whether in a grand, or in a humble style, though unconnected with picturesque beauty—the palace and the cottage—the improved garden scene, and the neat house. Works of tillage also afford us equal delight—the plough, the mow, the hayfield, and the harvest. In a word, we reverence, and admire the works of God; and look with benevolence, and pleasure, on the works of men."

"In what then do we offend? At the expense of no other species, we merely endeavour to illustrate, and recommend some species more; which, though among the most interesting, hitherto, 318. newly yet, so far as I know, have been the neglected object of investigation. From scenes indeed of the picturesque kind, we exclude the appendages of tillage, and in general the works of men; which too often introduce preciosity and formality. But excluding artificial objects from one species of beauty, it is not degrading them from all."

"Having premised this, the author proceeds in his first essay to mark the distinguishing characteristics of picturesque beauty. In the second, he points out the mode of amusement, that may arise from viewing the scenes of nature in a picturesque light. From this elysium, we shall feel such a part of us as may enable our readers, who are not initiated into the mysteries of the picturesque, to judge of the employment of its admirers:

"From the objects of picturesque travel, we consider its sources of amusement or in what way the mind is gratified by these objects."

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

"If so, we do not require more from picturesque travel, than a rational, and agreeable amusement. Yet even in his present state, the scene is so charming, that may in this light at least be considered as having a moral tendency."

"The first source of amusement to the picturesque traveller, is the perfection of his object. The expectation of new scenes continually opens, and ariseth to his view. We suppose the country to have been unexplored. Under this circumstance the mind is kept contented in an agreeable suspense. The source 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 she everywhere 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 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 fish puts him in some airy shape to trace her through."

Of Norbury Park, Surrey.
Gilpin's Essays on Picturesque Beauty, &c.

through the maze of the covert 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, 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 less frequent opportunities of being thus gratified, we are more commonly employed in analysing the parts of scenes which may be exquisitely beautiful, though 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, though perhaps of incorrect composition, riling before the eye, strikes us beyond the power of thought—when the eyes cannot bear the every mental operation is suspended. In this pause of intellect, this deliquium of the soul, an enthusiastic elevation of pleasure overpowers it, previous to any examination by the rules of art. The general idea of the scenes makes an impression, before any appeal is made to the judgment. We rather feel, than judge it.

This delight is generally 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 matter. This has sometimes an abominable 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 criticise at leisure.

Having gained by a minute examination of incidents a complete idea of an object, our next amusement arises from enlarging, and correcting our general sketch 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 complete 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 obtained a full and complete 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 sketches, like a short-hand scrawl of our own, legible at least to ourselves, will serve to give in our mind 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 graver reflection. 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, thought 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 allied 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 amusements of others also, the pleasure is far more 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 itself, which is still more a work of creation, than copying from nature. The imagination becomes a camera obscura, only with this difference, that the camera represents objects as they really are; while the imagination, impressed with the most beautiful scenes, and charmed by rules of art, forms its pictures, not only from the most admirable parts of nature; but in the best taste.

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

After having thus pointed out the sources from which the picturesque traveller, as he is called, derives his amusements, Mr. Gilpin, in his third essay, investigates the art of sketching landscape after nature. We here meet with many judicious and useful rules, which deserve the attention of those who wish to attain this elegant and pleasing art.

Concerning the Didactic poem annexed to these essays, Mr. Gilpin thus good-humouredly writes;—

* 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

* Edward Forster, Esq. of Walthamlow.
Mr. Mafon: those readers, who peruse it for the rules which it contains, will possibly with that it had been written in prose; while others, who view it as a piece of poetry, will lament that the rude sometimes moves rather ungracefully amid the roughnesses of technical terms and didactic rambling blocks.

The washed prints, or acque tinte, with which this work is embellished, are well adapted to illustrate its rules and principles.

Mr. Adams very justly observes, that those who have had much occasion to use the mathematical instruments, contrived to facilitate the arts of drawing, surveying, &c.; have long complained that a treatise was wanting to explain their use, describe their adjustments, and give such an idea of their construction, as might enable them to select those which are best adapted to their respective purposes.* M. Bion's treatise, which was translated into English by the late Mr. Stone, and published in 1725, is the only one that has been written on the subject; and the numerous improvements which have been made in instruments, since that time, have rendered that publication of little use at present. The object of Mr. Adams, in the work before us, is to obviate this complaint, and we think that he has done it with considerable effect.

Mr. Adams begins, very properly, by defining the terms which he must necessarily use. He then states a few of the primary principles on which his work depends; and afterward proceeds to describe the mathematical instruments which are used in drawing. Among these, we find an account of an improved pair of triangular compasses, a small pair of beam compasses with a micrometer, four new parallel-rulers, and several other instruments which had not been hitherto de-

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* Rev. Mr. Mafon.
† As a short specimen of Mr. G.'s poetical talent, we shall here extract his justly merited compliment, in the introductory address of his poem, to Mr. Lock:

That art, which gives the prafid's pencil pow'r
To rival nature's graces, to combine
In one harmonious whole her fatter'd charms,
And o'er them fling appropriate force of light,
I sing, until'd in numbers; yet a muse,
Led by the hand of friendship, deigns to lend
Her aid, and give that free colloquial flow,
Which best behoves the plain poetick song.

To thee, thus aided, let me dare to sing,
Judicious Lock: who from great nature's realms
Hast cul'd her loveliest features, and arrang'd
In thy rich memory's forecast: Thou, whose glance,
Pradid't in truth and symmetry, can trace
In every latent touch each master's hand,
Whether the marble by his art sub'd
Be leaft'd into life, or canvast smooth
The fmall'st to animation: thou, to whom
Each mode of landscape, beauxcous or sublime,
With every various colour, tint, and light,
Its nicer gradations, and its bold effects,
Are all familiar, patient hear my song.