

## The Picturesque



THE WORD *Picturesque*, as applied to the antiquities of English cities," declared the noted antiquary John Britton early in the nineteenth century, ". . . will be clearly recognised and understood by readers who are familiar with the works of Gilpin, Alison, Price, and Knight. It has become not only popular in English literature, but as definite and descriptive as the terms grand, beautiful, sublime, romantic, and other similar adjectives. . . . [In] speaking, or writing, about scenery and buildings, it is a term of essential and paramount import."<sup>1</sup>

This word "picturesque" had been naturalized in England for half a century before it was used as a term in theoretical aesthetic discussion. As early as 1685, William Aglionby had said of free and natural execution in painting, "This the Italians call working *A la pittoresk*, that is boldly"<sup>2</sup>—a usage strikingly like that of the picturesque school a century later. By 1705, Steele could employ the word in dramatic dialogue in the sense "after the manner of painters," though the manner in question was allegorical and academic, hardly that of which writers of the picturesque school think. Pope praised two lines of Phillips for being "what the French call very *picturesque*"; and notes to his *Iliad* pronounce two Homeric descriptions picturesque.<sup>3</sup> By mid-century the word was becoming a stock epithet in description and criticism. And although "picturesque" was never included in Johnson's dictionary, Johnson did employ it, in three instances at least, to define other words.<sup>4</sup>

Details of the etymology are mooted, and the etymologies contended for are usually employed to bolster theories of the picturesque; but there is of course no doubt of the Romance origin. Nonetheless, there is reason to suppose that the Dutch "schilderachtig" antedated development of the Italian and French synonym. Such a

Dutch art critic of the early seventeenth century as Carel van Mander employed "schilderachtig";<sup>5</sup> and the word was taken into German half a century later by Joachim von Sandrart. Sandrart applies it, much in the fashion of Uvedale Price, to the painting of Rembrandt:

Er hat aber wenig antiche Poetische Gedichte, alludien oder seltsame Historien, sondern meistens einfältige und nicht in sonderbares Nachsinnen lauffende, ihme wohlgefällige und schilderachtige (wie sie die Niderländer nennen) Sachen gemahlet, die doch voller aus der Natur herausgesuchter Artigkeiten waren.<sup>6</sup>

It is possible that the concept has its origin in the Netherlands; but such speculation is at present too conjectural to pursue.

The spelling of "picturesque" is as variable as its meaning. Beside the usual form one finds "pittoresk," "pittoresque," "pictoresque," "picteresque," "picturesk," and "peinturesque." "Pittoresque," like Aglionby's "pittoresk," is early, reflects the Italian original—and is, as we shall see, productive of much speculation. "Pictoresque" and the exceptional "picteresque" display equally clearly in their etymology a reference to the painter. "Picturesk" is a late effort at Anglicizing "picturesque"; "peinturesque," also a rather late form, reflects (perhaps was invented to accord with) a different view of the etymology—a reference to the art rather than the artist.<sup>7</sup>

In the early decades of the eighteenth century, "picturesque" usually bore one of two meanings: when applied to literary style, it meant "vivid" or "graphic," by an obvious metaphor; when applied to scenes in nature, and sometimes when applied to imitations of these on canvas or in words, it meant "eminently suitable for pictorial representation," as affording a well-composed picture, with suitably varied and harmonized form, colors, and lights. The first of these meanings became (and in some measure still is) a commonplace in the discussion of rhetoric and poetry; Blair (for instance) repeatedly praises epithets, figures, and descriptions as "picturesque," as conjuring up distinct and forcible images. But in Blair the two meanings I have discriminated are rarely separate; he speaks of "poetical painting," and declares that "a good Poet ought to give us such a landscape, as a painter could copy after."<sup>8</sup> Writers less concerned with literature stress the pictorial sense of "picturesque," and it was this sense which was destined to become predominant and fashionable.

After the publication of "Estimate" Brown's letter on Keswick (1767) and Young's tours (1768-71), the picturesque insinuated itself more widely into popular literature, and to illustrate its use in

this period, just before Gilpin's picturesque travels set a standard for picturesque taste, I shall discuss briefly the picturesque in Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*, first published in 1771. The literary use of "picturesque"—"vivid"—appears as Matthew Bramble claims for Commissary Smollett's "Ode to Leven Water" the merit of being "at least picturesque and accurately descriptive." And the plastic sense—"pictorial"—appears frequently. Jerry Melford finds the scene of Clinker admonishing the felons in their chains, the grouping and expression, picturesque—fit for a Raphael. And Lismahago proves to be a highly picturesque appendage. His horror is "divertingly picturesque" when, acting Pierrot, he is chased by the skelton. And when he escapes from the fire at Sir Thomas Bulford's in his nightshirt, Jerry Melford reports the scene as a subject for painting: "The rueful aspect of the lieutenant in his shirt, with a quilted night-cap fastened under his chin, and his long lank limbs and posteriors exposed to the wind, made a very picturesque appearance, when illuminated by the links and torches which the servants held up to light him in his descent." Sir Thomas cries out, "*O che roba!*—O, what a subject!—O, what *caricatura!*—O, for a Rosa, a Rembrandt, a Schalken!—Zooks, I'll give a hundred guineas to have it painted—what a fine descent from the cross, or ascent to the gallows! what lights and shadows!—what a group below! what expression above!—what an aspect!"<sup>9</sup> Sir Thomas is eccentric in his humor but not in his sense of the picturesque, for serious writers too apply the term to comic scenes: Malone remarks of an early *caricatura* of Reynolds that "it was a kind of picturesque travesty of Raffaele's SCHOOL OF ATHENS."<sup>10</sup>

These examples have all referred to history or to genre painting, or to their comic equivalents; but this is not the peculiar locus of the picturesque, for although the picturesque point of view had on its first introduction into England a strong tie with history painting, landscape soon became the field for picturesque vision. And *Humphry Clinker* abounds with appreciations of (especially Scottish) scenery. Matthew Bramble often finds sublimity; Jerry is not impressed so deeply, yet he thinks that the Orkneys and Hebrides make a "picturesque and romantic" view. Here picturesque vision has less direct connection with painting; and there is one passage which prefigures satirically the later and more sophisticated sense of "picturesque": Lydia Melford thinks the meretricious and miscellaneous objects at Vauxhall "picturesque and striking." Even to an ingenue, Vauxhall would not, I think, have seemed "like a picture"—but strik-

ing it certainly was, and "striking" is a fair synonym for some of the applications of "picturesque" after that term was in some measure divorced from especial connection with painting.

But the popular uses of the word which I have illustrated were soon supplemented. Once "picturesque" became a part of technical aesthetic vocabulary, it was inevitable that, while ascertained from the vagueness of popular use, it would acquire the systematic ambiguity of other philosophical terms. As the picturesque was fitted into a variety of systems of aesthetics, the term "picturesque" acquired a corresponding variety of meanings.

It is this variety which makes a history of the picturesque—the term or the character—difficult of accomplishment. There are, as my introductory chapter has indicated, three ways in which such an account can be managed. It can be handled as a philological inquiry, with the influence of philosophical and methodological principles minimized; it can be composed dialectically, previous theories of the picturesque being examined in the light of a schematism, a superior theory, provided by the historian; finally, a closely literal survey of the arguments of conflicting theoreticians can be written, with attention directed upon philosophical issues where these are important, but without the superimposition of a more comprehensive theory of the analyst upon the theories which are his subject. The first of these modes tends to ignore the intellectual causes determining the propositions enunciated by theorists; the second implicitly impugns the integrity and adequacy of the theories; and the third (which is here attempted) has its defect too—for, since discussion of the picturesque, like that of other philosophical issues, is never brought to a close, the problems never settled, the differences never reconciled, it is difficult to give either an order or a termination to the account of the discussion. This study terminates at 1810, just at the time when picturesque attitudes had become generally adopted and when practical applications of the picturesque were being most fully developed; the theory and practice of the nineteenth century and modern times, as the picturesque gradually declined in public and critical favor, are wholly omitted, and so is the renaissance of the picturesque in very recent years.

But before entering upon my account, it may be useful to describe briefly instances of philological and dialectical histories of the picturesque. The most ambitious attempt to settle this philosophic problem by examination of language is that of Robert Bridges in one of his Society for Pure English tracts entitled "Pictorial. Picturesque. Ro-

matic. Grotesque. Classical." Bridges does not admit intrusion of philosophic principles into the eighteenth-century usage of "picturesque"; he argues, in fact, that since the word "pictorial" did not come into general use before 1800,<sup>11</sup> the word "picturesque" *must* have been appropriated to the meaning which "pictorial" has for us. How this can be true of writers like Uvedale Price, who aim to divorce the term from its reference to pictorial representation, Bridges does not explain. The exclusion of all concern with ideas in the discussion of terms is made still more emphatic by the declaration that "What it was the fashion in his [Gilpin's] day to deem essentially pictorial is a minor question."<sup>12</sup> Now, however, with both "pictorial" and "picturesque" ready to hand, Bridges considers that we *must* differentiate their meanings (even, I suppose, if we subscribe to a theory which calls for their identification). To accomplish this differentiation, Bridges imports Hegel's classification of art as Symbolic, Classical, or Romantic, each of which genera contains three analogous species. From this classification, and from Ruskin's account of the picturesque school in England, "the right use of the words *pictorial* and *picturesque* may be deduced." All painting is Romantic; but "the term *picturesque* has lost its generic meaning, and has its proper definition in denoting an ultra-romantic school which has its own proprieties and excesses [i.e., "picturesque" = romantic-Romantic]. The word *pictorial* should therefore come to its own, to designate Hegel's mid-species, which he styles classical-Romantic, denoting such 'forms' as have been commonly recognized by all painters as suitable and effective in their art."<sup>13</sup>

Now despite the use of two philosophical aestheticians in arriving at these definitions, this is clearly a linguistic argument. For nothing of the philosophical principles or method of analysis of either Hegel or Ruskin is taken over, only a schematism of categories, stripped of all but the most general connotations. It is apparent that the definition of Bridges is of no use precisely in all those cases where accurate definition should be of most use—in systematic and technical discussions. Even if these pseudo-Hegelian meanings be taken over for popular conversational use, how can conversational use be set up as a norm for philosophy or science to follow? And is it true that even in everyday parlance we always use "picturesque," or should always use it, in this one sense alone?

In sharp contrast to this verbal treatment of the problem is the discussion of Christopher Hussey in *The Picturesque: Studies in a Point of View*, the very title of which implies an examination of ideas

rather than of words. This book is universally acknowledged—and I acquiesce in the judgment—to be the most valuable study of the topic. It displays taste, scholarship, and wit; but Hussey has his own “point of view” which sometimes throws the picturesque theorists into a false perspective. Hussey sees the picturesque as “a long phase in the aesthetic relation of man to nature,” a phase in which, through the pictorial appreciation of nature, “poetry, painting, gardening, architecture, and the art of travel may be said to have been fused into the single ‘art of landscape.’ The combination might be called ‘the Picturesque.’” The picturesque phase was in the case of each art a transition from classicism to romanticism, and “occurred at the point when an art shifted its appeal from the reason to the imagination.” Classic art addresses the reason, romantic art the imagination, and “the picturesque interregnum between classic and romantic art was necessary in order to enable the imagination to form the habit of feeling through the eyes. Pictures were in each case taken as the guide for how to see, because painting is the art of seeing . . . [but] as soon as the imagination had absorbed what painting had to teach it, it could feel for itself, and the intermediate process . . . could be dropped.” Picturesque art thus “accentuated visual qualities at the expense of rational ones on the one hand, and of associated ideas on the other. . . . Picturesque art is imperfect art, but not necessarily bad art.”<sup>14</sup> Imperfect as it is, picturesque art is the first step towards abstract aesthetic values; and it was natural that the first step should be the appreciation of visual qualities in nature through education of the eye to recognize qualities which painters had previously isolated. “Each art passed through a phase of imitating painting before developing into the romantic phase that came after, when the eye and the imagination had learnt to work for themselves. The period of imitation is the picturesque period.”<sup>15</sup> This is history arranged in accordance with a scheme of dialectical contraries: classic—romantic, rational—imaginative, objective—subjective, and so forth. The analysis is neat, the progression smooth; but it appears to me to involve distortion of many of the data, and to prejudge the merits of the picturesque point of view, to underrate its artists and belittle its theoreticians.

Wylie Sypher has set the picturesque in a different dialectical framework. Drawing from all the arts, but basing his distinctions primarily upon painting, Sypher finds that the “suavity and gaiety” of Burkeian beauty identify it with the rococo, and that “sublimity is a tremor, felt at a distance, from the monstrous baroque agitation of

Michelangelo or Milton.” Temperamentally, “the XVIII Century found it embarrassing to surrender so recklessly, and thus sought in the picturesque, a sentimentalized sublimity, the excitement of the sublime without its abandon. The picturesque was a characteristic XVIII Century appropriation of the baroque.”<sup>16</sup> In Sypher’s analysis, however, both sublime and picturesque are more shallow than the baroque from which they derive, for they do not reflect “internal or otherwise inherent tensions. In consequence, no drama is available to either picturesque or sublime (which are lyric) . . . both are akin to pathos rather than to tragedy. . . .”<sup>17</sup> Sypher’s account is highly abstract, and finds little enough support in the concrete data, for not only do none of the theorists of the picturesque seem conscious of the motives ascribed to them, but the picturesque has, in its origins, a more evident connection with beauty than with sublimity. Sypher’s analysis, even more than Hussey’s, makes the entire picturesque movement trivial and inferior. One purpose of this study will be to view the picturesque, and the writers on the picturesque, without pejorative implication and without refraction through an alien theory, to restore the theories of the picturesque to some measure of philosophic respectability.

## William Gilpin



PICTURESQUE" was rescued from the indeterminacy of fashion by William Gilpin, who made it the key term of the new aesthetic attitude of which he was himself the earliest exponent. The "venerable founder and master of the picturesque school," Gilpin exerted a profound and lasting influence upon the taste not only of England but of Europe, though his analysis of the picturesque was soon superseded by the more subtle and philosophical studies of Uvedale Price and Payne Knight.<sup>1</sup>

In the youthful and anonymous *Dialogue at Stow* (1748),<sup>2</sup> Gilpin uses the term "picturesque" conventionally: the picturesque is that which is suited to pictorial representation. There is already apparent, however, the tendency to consider rough and irregular scenes of nature especially picturesque, to find in landscape the peculiar locus of the picturesque. In the later and more widely influential *Essay on Prints*,<sup>3</sup> to be sure, the subject itself demanded that Gilpin avoid the appropriation of the picturesque to wild and intricate scenes exclusively, and the term is employed, accordingly, in its more general acceptation. The definition given in the preliminary "Explanation of Terms" is simply this: "a term expressive of that peculiar kind of beauty, which is agreeable in a picture."<sup>4</sup> The entire *Essay on Prints* is implicitly a discussion of picturesque beauty in this traditional sense, in its various aspects of composition, lighting, drawing, expression, execution, and so forth. The word "picturesque," however, is very sparingly employed. The landscapes of Ridinger are praised for being "picturesque and romantic," a phrase applied also to the landscapes of Sadler; and this is the use of the word which Gilpin was to make conventional. But when Ridinger's scenes of hunting are said to be didactic and "least picturesque of any of his works," the application is the older and broader—suitable for a picture.

It was in Gilpin's picturesque travels, which began to appear in 1782, that the picturesque of roughness and intricacy was defined and popularized; the extension of the term was pretty well fixed by Gilpin, though philosophical dispute over its intension was later to engross aestheticians, gardeners, painters, and amateurs. The most theoretical of these works of Gilpin is his *Three Essays: On Picturesque Beauty; On Picturesque Travel; and On Sketching Landscape: to Which is Added a Poem, On Landscape Painting*.<sup>5</sup> The general principles developed in these essays are reduced to principles of landscape in the *Remarks on Forest Scenery, and Other Woodland Views, Relative Chiefly to Picturesque Beauty Illustrated by the Scenes of New Forest in Hampshire. In Three Books*.<sup>6</sup> This work, then, is of an intermediate degree of abstraction, and the middle principles devised in it are applied in the six volumes of tours—all which bear titles of the form, *Observations [upon some part of Great Britain] Relative Chiefly to Picturesque Beauty*.<sup>7</sup> All of these volumes, illustrated by Gilpin's fine aquatints, were immensely popular and greatly affected British taste in natural and artificial scenery.

In this study, however, attention must be confined to the theoretical essays, in which, unhappily, Gilpin is least impressive. The first of the *Three Essays*, "On Picturesque Beauty," attempts to dispel the confusion (which all philosophers lament, and which each claims the honor of terminating) about the nature of beauty: "Disputes about beauty," Gilpin declares, "might perhaps be involved in less confusion, if a distinction were established, which certainly exists, between such objects as are *beautiful* [merely], 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 by painting*."<sup>8</sup> Gilpin is careful to emphasize that the picturesque is a species of beauty, not a distinct character, and in his dedicatory letter defends himself against the charge of "supposing, *all beauty* to consist in *picturesque beauty*—and the face of nature to be examined *only by the rules of painting*."<sup>9</sup> The pleasures of imagination are various, and the picturesque is only one additional mode. The problem of Gilpin's essay is to define the causes of that mode: "*What is that quality in objects, which particularly marks them as picturesque?*"<sup>10</sup>

When Gilpin remarks that "in examining the *real object*, we shall find, one source of beauty arises from that species of elegance, which we call *smoothness*, or *neatness*,"<sup>11</sup> the phrase, "the *real object*," suggests that his theory deals not with art itself but with nature considered as a subject for art; and this is, indeed, an obvious conse-

quence of the general sense Gilpin assigns to the "picturesque." But in picturesque representation, neatness and smoothness, "instead of being picturesque, in reality strip the object, in which they reside, of all pretensions to *picturesque beauty*." <sup>12</sup> In fact, Gilpin continues, "*roughness* forms the most essential point of difference between the *beautiful*, and the *picturesque*; as it seems to be that particular quality, which makes objects chiefly pleasing in painting.—I use the general term *roughness*; but properly speaking roughness relates only to 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. . . ." <sup>13</sup> A quick induction supports this principle: the painter prefers ruins to perfect architecture, an overgrown cart track to a finished garden, an aged face with dishevelled locks to the smoother beauty of youth, a human figure in action to one in repose, a cart horse or an ass to a polished Arabian. (Sydney Smith summed up the difference between beautiful and picturesque in remarking that "the Vicar's horse is *beautiful*, the Curate's *picturesque*." <sup>14</sup> ) Price and others urge that the induction is imperfect; but Gilpin casts about anxiously to discover reasons for what he conceives to be this general preference.

The painter's love of the shaggy stems partly from the encouragement a rough subject gives to a sketchy facility of execution. It is not only that a rougher touch is easier to master than a smoother and more elegant style—Gilpin does not stress this point, which is not likely to appeal to the spectator expecting skill in the artist; rather, "a free, bold touch is in itself pleasing." <sup>15</sup> Gilpin gives no reason for this effect, though it is pretty clear that associations with ideas of unconstrained ease underlie it. But "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." <sup>16</sup> Picturesque composition, in the first place, "consists in uniting in one whole a variety of parts; and these parts can only be obtained from rough objects." <sup>17</sup> Rough objects, again, alone yield what Gilpin terms "effect of light and shade"—massed and graduated lights and shades, with richness of minute variations, and "catching lights" on prominences. In coloring, too, roughness affords greater variation. In sum, roughness is more various; the taste for the picturesque is a taste for a greater measure of complexity and intricacy than either beautiful or sublime affords. Gilpin supports his reasons with an experiment. One of his aquatints exhibits "a smooth knoll coming forward on one side, intersected by

a smooth knoll on the other; with a smooth plain perhaps in the middle, and a smooth mountain in the distance," <sup>18</sup> while a companion aquatint shows the same general scene broken into irregular and jutting forms, marked by rugged rocks, clothed with shaggy boskage, and enlivened by two figures and a ruined castle. This experiment can not, however, quite pretend to be an instance of the Method of Difference: the second print is not merely rougher; it brings with it all the interest of complicated imitation and all the charms of manifold associations. Gilpin passes over the crucial question, how much of the effect is to be attributed to these causes?

He does, however, pause to explain away apparent exceptions to the principle that roughness is the ideal subject for art. Those really smooth objects which may have a good effect in a picture, he argues, are apparently rough or highly varied: the lake seems rough from the broken light on its surface undulations, or from the reflection of rough objects; the horse's smooth coat displays the play of muscle beneath; the smoothness of plumage is only the ground for its breaking coloration; the polish of the column only displays the irregularity of the veining. Or (if the preceding does not convince) smoothness may be picturesque by contrast, adding piquancy to roughness. These explanations are specious, but it is clear that there is a difficulty, and that it has not been met so adequately as to remove all doubt; Price was subsequently to direct a part of his criticism of Gilpin to this vulnerable point.

This difficulty set aside, however, Gilpin seems to have solved his problem. But instead, he resumes the analysis: "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 objects of *beauty*, and objects suited to *artificial representation*." <sup>19</sup> This is a subtle distinction. The question is, why do we come to approve *in nature* of things which would look well *in pictures*? Implicit in the very question is the recognition that our liking for the real objects is not merely from an association with painting, but has an independent basis (although, perhaps, a basis so concealed and obscured that a knowledge of painting is usually requisite to cultivate the natural aptitude). If this *is* Gilpin's point, he should be led here into the kind of inquiry in which Price later engaged; if it is *not*, his

inquiry should have terminated with the determination of the reasons why the rough and rugged pleases in painting.

In any event, Gilpin fails to discover the natural basis of the "essential difference" between objects of natural beauty and those suited to artificial representation. Four hypotheses are tested and rejected: (1) That "the picturesque eye abhors art; and delights solely in nature: and that as art abounds with *regularity*, which is only another name for *smoothness*; and the images of nature with *irregularity*, which is only another name for *roughness*, we have here a solution of our question."<sup>20</sup> But art is not invariably regular; and many art objects—drapery, shipping, ruined castles, et cetera—are excellent subjects in painting. (2) That the picturesque is based upon the "happy union of *simplicity and variety*, to which the *rough* ideas essentially contribute."<sup>21</sup> But the beautiful in general equally with that species of its denominated picturesque is characterized by this happy union. (3) That the imitative art of painting can more readily imitate rough objects. This, however, is false in fact. (Gilpin had, to be sure, asserted something like this in treating facility of execution; the present point, however, concerns *fidelity*, not mechanical facility, of imitation.) (4) That painting is not strictly imitative, but *deceptive*; that the rough touches of the painter permit concealment of the deception; and that rough objects permit rough touches. But rough objects may be executed by smooth touches and these last are then picturesque.

It is interesting to observe that, the second excepted, these conjectures are drawn from considerations involving art. Now, the question to which they are addressed has meaning only if we suppose that the reason of the essential difference of picturesque and beautiful is found in nature and *not* in art; for, if the delight in the picturesque is based only on some kind of association with art, the reasons already given for the painter's preference of it are sufficient, and no problem exists. Gilpin's conjectures, then, are an *ignoratio elenchi*; the answer to the question must be found elsewhere, perhaps in the directions taken by Price, or Knight, or Alison, or Stewart. Thwarted by his methodological error, Gilpin throws up his hands in despair: "Thus foiled, should we in the true spirit of inquiry, persist; 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 prin-

ciples of our art would be questioned. . . . We should be asked, What is beauty? What is taste?"<sup>22</sup> To clinch his argument, Gilpin pretends to examine the debates of the learned on taste; he hears authors contend for the cultivation of innate talents, for utility, common sense, a special sense of beauty, proportion generally, and particular canons of proportion. "Thus," he concludes, "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. . . ." <sup>23</sup>

Such a disclaimer can not be expected to satisfy the pride of philosophers; Gilpin leaves an opening here for re-examination of the entire question. Before advancing to such re-examinations, however, I shall describe briefly the other essays of the present volume. Baffled in his search for causes, Gilpin turns, in the second essay, "On Picturesque Travel," to closer examination of the effects. Picturesque travel has for its object natural and artificial beauty of every kind, but especially, of course, the picturesque.<sup>24</sup> The distinction between beauty and sublimity might be expected to afford a corresponding division of the picturesque; but since Gilpin has defined "picturesque" to denote "*such objects, as are proper subjects for painting*,"<sup>25</sup> it must be granted that "*sublimity alone* cannot make an object *picturesque*."<sup>26</sup> Mere vastness, the merely terrific, does not lend itself to depiction; only an admixture of the beautiful can render sublimity picturesque. Granted this proviso, Gilpin is ready to admit the sublime, too, as an object of picturesque travel, and even descants on scenes of "*picturesque horror*."<sup>27</sup> The third member of Addison's triad, the novel, is rarely picturesque; the picturesque eye is not attracted to the curious and fantastic, but "is fond of the simplicity of nature; and sees most beauty in her *most usual* forms."<sup>28</sup> These usual forms are not, however, insipid; the strongly marked, the "characteristic," is most picturesque. So essential, indeed, is the characteristic to the picturesque that Gilpin even remarks of a scene beautiful as a whole but with no strongly characteristic parts, that "it exhibits such a specimen of the picturesque (if I may speak in terms seemingly contradictory) as is not well calculated to make a picture."<sup>29</sup>

"After the *objects* of picturesque travel," says Gilpin (with a little flourish of organizational skill), "we consider its *sources* of

amusement. . . ."<sup>30</sup> These consist in the pursuit itself and the attainment. In the attainment we are sometimes so happy as to come upon an agreeable whole, but are usually reduced to admiring parts. Our pleasure may be "scientific," conjecturing amendments and forming comparisons with scenes of nature or works of art; but the great pleasure from natural scenes is enthusiastic: "We are most delighted, when some grand scene, tho perhaps of incorrect composition, rising before the eye, strikes us beyond the power of thought. . . . In this pause of intellect; this *deliquium* of the soul, an enthusiastic sensation of pleasure overspreads 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."<sup>31</sup> But beyond contemplation of the object itself, new vistas of delight open before us: our general ideas are formed,<sup>32</sup> and from these we learn to sketch, first by way of remembrance, then as a free exercise of fancy, an exercise which can be indulged even without the pencil. "There may be more pleasure," Gilpin declares,

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. . . .<sup>33</sup>

It is noteworthy that Gilpin finds objects of art less capable of arousing enthusiasm than the works of nature. The picturesque traveler, in fact, is apt to acquire some contempt for the haunts of men, which have so often a poor effect on landscape. The unnaturalness of the garden, the limitations of painting become more obvious to the enthusiast of the picturesque. "The more refined our taste grows from the *study of nature*," Gilpin generalizes, "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 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 (at least when we consider them as *objects*,) must always go beyond it; and furnish fresh sources both of pleasure and amusement."<sup>34</sup> There is a paradox here: a system which isolates a certain property of nature for admiration, a property defined by its excellence as a subject for art, comes at last to reject

the art for the nature which was at first only its subject. I have observed above that Gilpin is led to the point of redefining the picturesque as a universal complex of properties pervading both nature and art, and acting upon our physical organism or our mental associations to produce an effect peculiar to itself. Here again a picturesque with a basis independent of art is needed to resolve the paradox of setting out to find the qualities of pictures in nature and returning with a preference of nature to pictures.

Gilpin's third essay deals with one of the "sources of amusement" afforded by picturesque travel: sketching landscape. His precepts have a practical bent, yet they rest upon the aesthetic ideas of the first essay. The subject is handled in a natural order: composition (both *design* in the selection of subject and its parts, and *disposition* in arrangement of them), chiaroscuro, coloring—the order of execution. Sketching is based upon general ideas picked up in picturesque travel; even more than in finished drawings and pictures, in sketches "general ideas only must be looked for; not the peculiarities of portrait."<sup>35</sup>

Before turning to the criticism of Gilpin's work by Uvedale Price, which leads directly into the burst of picturesque theory and practice in the last decade of the century, I should mention the observations of Reynolds on the picturesque. Using Mason as an intermediary, Gilpin submitted a draft of his three essays to Reynolds as early as 1776. The latter replied with a letter on the picturesque, addressed to Mason, a letter which Mason forwarded to Gilpin.<sup>36</sup> Gilpin's distinction of picturesque from ordinary beauty is neatly reduced by Reynolds, whose dialectical method and generalizing tendency hardly allow for according the picturesque either co-ordinate status with the beautiful or even that of a distinct species of the beautiful. With characteristic politeness, Reynolds seems to put Gilpin's argument on a firmer basis as he brings it into his own system:

An object is said to be picturesque in proportion as it would have a good effect in a picture.

If the word is applied with propriety, it is applied solely to the works of nature. Deformity has less of nature in proportion as it is deformed or out of the common course of nature. Deformity cannot [be]; beauty only is picturesque. Beauty and picturesque [Reynolds regularly omits the article] are therefore synonymous. This is my creed, which does not contradict any part of the Essay; but I think is the great leading principle which includes it.<sup>37</sup>



Reynolds grants that "roughness, or irregularity is certainly more picturesque than smoothness or regularity, because this carries with it the appearance of art, nature being more various and irregular than art generally is. . . . Where art has been, picturesque is destroyed,—unless we make this exception, which proves the rule, that nature itself, by accident, may be so formal or unnatural as to have the effect of art . . . you may then make nature more picturesque by art, by making her more like herself, that is, more like what she generally is."<sup>38</sup> In fact, Gilpin's first rejected hypothesis about the essential nature of the picturesque satisfies Reynolds well; "my opinion is perfectly expressed" by it, he declares, and he is puzzled that Gilpin thinks it unsatisfactory. Reynolds explains away the contrary instances which Gilpin had adduced—those draperies, ships, and ruined castles which appear to advantage in painting—and with them Gilpin's principle that "*a painter's nature* is whatever he *imitates*, whether the object be what is commonly called natural, or artificial."<sup>39</sup> The castle (for instance) is found to please from "an association of ideas by sending the mind backwards into antiquity and producing some new sentiment—or by being marked by time, and made a sort of natural object. . . ."<sup>40</sup>

For Reynolds, irregularity is nature, nature is beauty, and beauty is picturesque. But this picturesque is not the shaggy picturesque of Gilpin, the rough textures, fragmented outlines, and broken colors of which would be, to Reynolds, all in some measure defects. Accordingly, fifteen years later, when Gilpin was at last ready to publish his essays and sent them again for the *imprimatur* of Reynolds, Reynolds took a different tack, suggesting that "picturesque" as Gilpin describes it is "applicable to the excellences of the inferior schools, rather than to the higher. 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."<sup>41</sup> This comment applies not to the *definition* of picturesqueness, the statement of its denotation as comprising objects suitable for painting, for higher and lower schools alike depict objects suited for painting; it applies rather to the *description* of qualities which Gilpin's induction had indicated were peculiarly fitted for pictorial representation—to the connotation, that is, which does not (so Reynolds is arguing) correspond to the denotation.

Reynolds appears to retract, in the last paragraph of his letter of 1791, his opinion of fifteen years earlier: "Whatever objections presented themselves at first view," he confesses, "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 *picturesque*."<sup>42</sup> But it does not seem to me that Reynolds has really changed his mind. His earlier remarks, which appear to be directed at the definition, reject this new aesthetic character as anything different from beauty; his later remarks, which appear to discuss the *description* rather than the definition, accord the picturesque an inferior status, that already granted it in the tenth discourse, which was written almost at the time of the first letter.<sup>43</sup> If there be any change, it might be that Reynolds is no longer so insistent on excluding art works as subjects for painting; but this is no fundamental part of his doctrine, and, stated as flatly as he puts it in 1776, seems false.

Gilpin sees the distinction of definition from description and in his brief answer reaffirms the definition while confessing his ignorance of the grand style and conceding that his roughness is probably characteristic of the lower styles. This is implicitly an admission that his analysis of the picturesque was imperfect, as being based on a partial survey of painting, and that his description does not tally with his definition—although it may describe something genuinely distinct. Picturesque theory developed by keeping the description and seeking for new definitions and for new causal analyses.

Vague as are the indications which Gilpin gives of a causal analysis of the picturesque, it is possible to conjecture that he would have been more sympathetic to an associational than a physiological account. He is decisive in proclaiming that the picturesque eye sees through the imagination—that "the picturesque eye has nothing to do with tunics, irises, and retinas."<sup>44</sup> At times, Gilpin's picturesque appears to depend upon association with concrete wholes, as in his repeated resentment at the intrusion of art into natural scenes. But this kind of association is not prominent in Gilpin; his picturesque depends chiefly upon associations with abstract qualities—with roughness of texture, with irregularity of outline, with contrasting lights and shades, with variegated and graduated colors. These associations he does not attempt to trace, and this omission invites further exploration of the picturesque.

*Sir Uvedale Price*

UVEDALE PRICE, a gentleman of landed property in the west of England, was a Whig parliamentarian—he was created Sir Uvedale, Bart., for party services; a gentleman farmer—he contributed occasionally to Arthur Young's *Annals of Agriculture*; something of a classical scholar—as a young man he translated from Pausanias, and late in life prepared a study of Greek and Latin pronunciation which is said to anticipate modern views. But it is as a man of taste, as champion and theorist of the picturesque, that Price became, and in some measure still remains, an important figure. Like his neighbor in adjoining Shropshire, Richard Payne Knight, Price was no mere theorist; he laid out Foxley, his Herefordshire estate, on picturesque principles, and combined the speculations of the philosopher with the practical taste of the artist. His works on the picturesque remain the principal monument of picturesque doctrine.<sup>1</sup>

Gilpin had left picturesque theory involved in paradox: though understanding the picturesque to be merely that which appears to advantage in pictorial representation, Gilpin gave an account of picturesque qualities which unrealistically delimited the real scope of the painter's art. Still more important, he sought, inconsistently with his definition of the picturesque, some essential difference in nature between the picturesque and the merely beautiful, a difference independent of the special requirements of the painter's art. Since Gilpin had pointed out an assemblage of qualities bearing *some* special relation to the art of painting, and yet had failed to discover the essential nature and efficiency of those properties, the way was open for a reformulation of the problem which would avoid these embarrassments.

Price undertakes just such a reformulation. "There are few words," he observes, "whose meaning has been less accurately determined than that of the word picturesque."<sup>2</sup> Noting that the popular sense

*Aquatints from WILLIAM GILPIN'S Three Essays (1792) mentioned on pages 194-95. The first portrays a scene without picturesque adornment; the second presents the same general scene enhanced by picturesque composition.*

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("depictable") is not properly distinguished from "beautiful" and "sublime," to which terms Burke had given precision, Price insists that such distinction must exist, for no one supposes the terms synonymous. Gilpin erred in adopting this common acceptance as exact and determinate; but Gilpin's definition, Price declares, is "at once too vague, and too confined": too vague, because it does not isolate the qualities which Price and Gilpin agree in deeming picturesque from other qualities which please equally in painting; too confined, because of the exclusive reference to a particular art. Price intends to show "that the picturesque has a character not less separate and distinct than either the sublime or the beautiful, nor less independent of the art of painting."<sup>3</sup>

But Price's aim is more comprehensive than this. His works on the picturesque are intended, theoretically, to determine the general causes and effects of the picturesque in all the works of nature and art, and (more narrowly) to point out "the use of studying pictures, for the purpose of improving real landscape"; practically, his books are to open new sources of aesthetic enjoyment and (more narrowly) to demolish the system of modern gardening introduced by Kent and aggravated by Brown. Price aims, in short, to solve the problem which Gilpin was constantly on the verge of stating, but never succeeded in isolating: What is it in the *nature* of picturesque objects which renders them different from beautiful objects independently of reference to pictures? Having determined, in his first essay, the general character of the picturesque, Price declares,

The next step was to shew, that not only the effect of picturesque objects, but of all visible objects whatever, are to be judged of by the great leading principles of Painting; which principles, though they are really founded in nature, and totally independent of art, are, however, most easily and usefully studied in the pictures of eminent painters. On these two points . . . rests the whole force of my argument. If I have succeeded in establishing them, the system of modern Gardening, which, besides banishing all picturesque effects, has violated every principle of painting, is of course demolished.<sup>4</sup>

The inquiry, as Price puts it,

is not in what sense certain words are used . . . but whether there be certain qualities, which uniformly produce the same effects in all visible objects, and, according to the same analogy, in objects of hearing and of all the other senses. . . .

If it can be shewn that a character composed of these qualities, and

distinct from all others, does universally prevail . . . it surely deserves a distinct title; but with respect to the real ground of inquiry, it matters little whether such a character . . . be called beautiful, sublime, or picturesque, or by any other name, or by no name at all.<sup>5</sup>

The analytical apparatus which Price brought to this problem was in part borrowed from Burke. Price professes throughout to be a disciple of that eminent man, but (as is usual) the master's doctrine undergoes considerable transformation in the hands of the disciple. Burke distinguishes sublime from beautiful by means of a psychology of pleasure and pain and of the passions; he then isolates the material properties which are fitted to arouse these feelings; and finally he conjectures at a nervous physiology to account for the production of such effects by such causes. Price makes a shift at following the same method; but the physiological theory is considerably attenuated, and even less plausible than Burke's. Burke holds (as Price indicates in a brief but accurate précis) that the natural sublime produces astonishment by stretching the nervous fibers beyond their normal tone, so that the motions of the soul are suspended as if in horror; the beautiful produces love and complacency by relaxing the fibers below their natural tone, which is accompanied by melting or languor. "In pursuing the same train of ideas," Price continues, "I may add, that the effect of the picturesque is curiosity; an effect, which, though less splendid and powerful, has a more general influence. . . . [Curiosity] by its active agency keeps the fibres to their full [i.e., their natural] tone; and thus picturesqueness when mixed with either of the other characters, corrects the languor of beauty, or the tension of sublimity."<sup>6</sup> Now, this notion is attended with a difficulty. How does the stimulus of the picturesque, which keeps the fibers to their natural tone, midway betwixt languor and tension—how does this differ from no stimulus at all? It might be allowed that the assemblage of qualities which Price treats somehow produces an effect peculiar to itself; but the apparatus of elastic nerves does not seem elastic enough to embrace these new phenomena. A fiber endowed with a certain original tension may be tensed further or it may be relaxed; but it is not easy to conceive of any third possibility. It may be that a physiological theory of greater elaborateness might be devised, with a variety of kinds of fibers, so that combinations could be struck out—a nerve organ, so to speak. But in this case, it would be a question why only these few harmonies are possible; why not a host of similar aesthetic characters? It seems prudent to avoid such fanciful con-

jectures, and to trace the mental associations and reactions as far as possible to their origins, but to leave unbridged the chasm between mind and body.

That Price subscribed to the general method of Burke is unquestionable: "I certainly am convinced," he states, "of the general truth and accuracy of Mr. Burke's system, for it is the foundation of my own. . . ." <sup>7</sup> Yet he rarely appeals to this materialist physiology to account for details of the phenomena he investigates; his works are confined pretty largely to careful discrimination of the effects and painstaking analysis of the material properties which stimulate them. It is in the particular material causes rather than in the general effects, moreover, that the distinction of the character is best seen, and "it is from having pursued the opposite method of reasoning," Price suggests, "that the distinction between the beautiful and the picturesque has been denied."<sup>8</sup>

Price exhibits an eclectic tendency, and owes fealty not only to Burke but to Sir Joshua Reynolds; he contrives to employ both of these radically different systems to support his own, which is different from either. "An Introductory Essay on Beauty," prefixed to Price's *Dialogue on the Distinct Characters of the Picturesque and the Beautiful*, undertakes to reconcile Burke and Reynolds and to subsume both under Price. As he presents a rather full précis of Burke's views, Price begins to slip a new foundation beneath them; the foundation is this, that "if there be any one position on this subject [beauty] likely to be generally admitted, it is, *that each production of nature is most beautiful in that particular state, before which her work would have appeared incomplete and unfinished, and after which it would seem to be tending, however gradually, towards decay.* . . ." <sup>9</sup> No qualities are so accordant with our ideas of beauty (as Price had put it in the *Essay* of 1794) "as those which are in a high degree expressive of youth, health and vigour, whether in animal or vegetable life; the chief of which qualities are smoothness and softness in the surface; fulness and undulation in the outline; symmetry in the parts, and clearness and freshness in the colour."<sup>10</sup>

Burke had included Hogarth's doctrine of the line of beauty in his own theory; but the last of Reynolds' *Idler* papers, as Price very reasonably interprets it, includes a sharp criticism of Hogarth's theory, and thus by implication of Burke's.<sup>11</sup> Price nonetheless sees no real contradiction in the methods of Burke and of Reynolds, urging that

although the method of considering beauty as the central form, and as being produced by attending only to the great general ideas inherent in universal nature, be a grander way of treating the subject; and though the discriminations of Mr. Burke may, in comparison, appear minute; yet, after all, each object . . . must be composed of qualities, the knowledge of which is necessary to a knowledge of its distinct characters. Such a method is more easily apprehended, than the more general and abstract one which Sir Joshua proposes; and when allied with it, is more likely to produce a just estimate of the character altogether, than any other method singly.<sup>12</sup>

But Price can not ignore the obvious contradiction in doctrine, and sets himself to undermining that part of Sir Joshua's position which denies the possibility of comparing species in point of beauty; he even questions the notion that *custom* determines us to prefer the "central form." Price concedes that the beauty of form does consist in a central type, a type isolated for the human figure by the Greek sculptors—an "invariable general form," but not that which nature most frequently produces; rather, that which she may be supposed to intend in her productions. Since both Burke and Reynolds appeal to the same model of beauty—antique statues of young and graceful persons—Price concludes that their notions coincide, "and the only difference between them is, that the one treats of the great general abstract principles of beauty; the other of its distinct visible qualities."<sup>13</sup> Finally, Price concludes with triumph, "if it appear, that those qualities which are supposed to constitute the beautiful, are in all objects chiefly found to exist at that period, when nature has attained, but not passed, a state of perfect completion, we surely have as clear, and as certain principles on this, as on many other subjects, where little doubt is entertained."<sup>14</sup>

To establish beauty in this fashion—to make it a response to signs of freshness and youth—is to establish it on the association of ideas. Commentators on Price have not recognized the importance of association in his aesthetics; Hussey, indeed, denies that Price admitted any role to association. Yet despite Price's effort to champion the theory of Burke, association assumes a place of very great though undefined importance in his own analysis. "All external objects," he declares, "affect us in two different ways; by the impression they make on the senses, and by the reflections they suggest to the mind. These two modes, though very distinct in their operations, often unite in producing one effect; the reflections of the mind, either strengthening, weakening, or giving a new direction to the impression received

by the eye."<sup>15</sup> In this passage from "On Architecture and Buildings," Price attributes to the "eye" the pleasures arising from form, light and shadow, and color; and to the "mind" the pleasures stemming from utility, historical connections, and so forth. Elsewhere, however, much even of the effect of the physical properties is traced to association. Throughout, in fact, Price appeals both to inherent efficiency and to association, and rarely troubles to make clear what aspect and proportion of the total effect is to be attributed to each severally. The weakness of his theory is not that he denies "subjective" factors,<sup>16</sup> but that he constantly employs association as an analytic device without anywhere presenting a theory of association or an outline of its implications for aesthetics.

This problem of association can be clarified by employing the matrix of distinctions developed in my introduction. Associations among the perceptions of the different senses, so that, e.g., tangible properties come to be "seen," are of crucial importance; for it is thus that smoothness becomes beautiful to the eye. Still more pervasive in Price are associations of the sensible qualities of things with human traits and feelings. It might be argued, indeed, that these associations are the essential feature of the picturesque as Price understands it; for the picturesque depends less on the nature of the concrete whole than on the visual and tactile properties comprised therein. Of this kind is that crucial connection between the beautiful and ideas of freshness and youth, and the association of the picturesque with age and decay. Price notes, for instance, that ruins, though vegetation overgrowing them may have produced an air of softness and insensible transition, are still not "beautiful"; for the mind, "from the powerful and extensive influence of that principle, called *association of ideas*, is unwilling to give them a title, which, as I conceive, implies the freshness of youth; or, at least, a state of high and perfect preservation."<sup>17</sup> The connection of the picturesque with curiosity, again, may be dependent upon association of ideas as well as upon association of impressions through resemblance of the sense impressions with the passion.

There are, moreover, associations of objects, of concrete wholes, with human traits and feelings. Concretes as such may exhibit utility, design, fitness, naturalness, congruity, propriety, and so forth—all which relations enter into the aesthetic response, and all which are repeatedly stressed by Price. Or the concrete wholes may, as signs, suggest historical, social, poetical, or other affecting circumstances. Blenheim, its brilliant ornaments gilded by the setting sun,

seems an enchanted palace, and the viewer perhaps thinks of Alcina and Armida; or the village washing scene becomes an image of peace and security, and suggests the appropriate passage from Homer.<sup>18</sup> Gothic architecture, rich with associations to the romance, the violence, the faith of the middle ages, suggests further to the cultivated mind paintings in which it has figured, and to which it had itself originally lent a charm.

When Price speaks of the "poetry" of painting, he refers to associations with the subjects of the art; and when he speaks of "the art itself," he refers, not to technique, but to the aesthetic characters and the principles of their admixture. The associations constituting the poetry of painting may suggest to us modes of life, historical epochs, remote or fascinating places. The aesthetic characters which constitute the "art" itself are also, at least in part, associational, but the associations are of a different order—they are associations of the abstracted qualities of line and shadow and color with one another and with the basic feelings of human nature. It is perhaps the predominance in Price of such abstract association over poetical association that has misled scholars into considering him an "objectivist." It is true that Price often posits a direct nervous action of formal properties on the mind; but still more frequently he supposes an associational mechanism. It is because the use of associational psychology is not accompanied with metaphysical fanfares that it has been minimized or overlooked.

Price, in short, despite reiterated allegiance to the principles of Burke, is in fact eclectic both in the method and the substance of his theory. It is only his modification of Burke's principles which enables him to introduce the picturesque as a middle character coordinate with the beautiful and the sublime.<sup>19</sup>

It is now possible to turn from discussion of Price's method to the content of his doctrine. The gist of it is set forth in the *Essay on the Picturesque* of 1794. The organization of this book is rhetorical; it is designed to lead the reader by gradual induction to "believe in" the picturesque, the abstract theory of which is presented only at the end of the first part of the treatise. The opening chapter treats the study of pictures for the purpose of improving grounds, concluding, with embittered irony, in a description of an improver at work adjusting a Claude to his notions. The second chapter moves from art to nature, and shows how the attractively picturesque qualities of a hollow lane would be destroyed by "improvement." These instances suggest the reality of the picturesque character, and the third chap-

ter, accordingly, takes up the question at large, comparing this new quality with the beautiful in various works of art and nature; the fourth chapter performs the same function for picturesque and sublime. The fifth treats of the mixture of beautiful and picturesque, with an eye to improvement. Price turns then to detailed examination of picturesque material qualities, dwelling especially on the nervous effects of smoothness and roughness; he treats of form and light and shadow (in the sixth chapter), with especial attention to breadth of light and shadow (in the seventh), and finally of color (in the eighth). The final chapter of this first part introduces the negative characters of ugliness and deformity, and works out the analogies and contrasts among all five characters. The second part of the *Essay* turns to examination of the system of gardening with which Kent and Brown had altered the face of England; the first chapter treats the general characteristics and defects of this system; the second discusses trees; the third, water; and a final chapter is a peroration, divided between denunciation of the current mode of gardening and appeal for the principles of painting to prevail.

This organization is appropriate both to Price's aims and to his method. The general purpose of establishing the picturesque is accomplished in the first part; the narrow aim of investigating the utility of painting as a guide for gardening is handled chiefly in the second part, the prolegomena of the first having prepared the ground. Put differently, it might be said that the first division develops an aesthetic science, the second an art dependent on that science, and that both science and art have consequences in practice, one in aesthetic appreciation generally, the other in gardening especially.

Price's effort to establish picturesqueness parallel with beauty and sublimity is temporarily arrested by the circumstance of the obvious etymology of the name, tying the picturesque to painting. But this circumstance Price ingeniously and plausibly turns to his advantage. "*Pittoreesco*"—and the Italian word is the original of the French and English—"is derived, not like picturesque, from the thing painted, but from the painter; and this difference is not wholly immaterial."<sup>20</sup> For painters are struck with numberless circumstances to which an unpracticed eye pays little attention: "*Quam multa vident pictores in umbris et in eminentia, quae nos non videmus!*" is the motto from Cicero which Price prefixes to his book. The qualities of picturesqueness are of this nature—not immediately appealing, and hence unnoticed and unnamed by the run of mankind, yet nevertheless seen, admired, and isolated by the genius of painters; and hence the name.

Again, in the preface to his second volume, Price suggests another and more ingenious origin of the term: the word "picturesque," he writes, "may possibly have been invented by painters to express a quality not merely essential to their art, but in a manner peculiar to it: the treasures of the sublime and the beautiful, it shares in common with Sculpture; but the Picturesque is almost exclusively its own. . . ." By "picturesque" is "meant, not all that can be expressed with effect in painting, but that which painting can, and sculpture cannot express . . . and the etymology of the word . . . sanctions the use I have made of it, and the distinction I have given to its character."<sup>21</sup>

But the phrase, "picturesque beauty," is a misnomer, Price holds, for "in reality, the picturesque not only differs from the beautiful in those qualities which Mr. Burke has so justly ascribed to it, but arises from qualities the most diametrically opposite."<sup>22</sup> Beauty is characterized by smoothness and gradual variation, qualities which necessarily limit the variety and intricacy essential to the picturesque.<sup>23</sup> Roughness and sudden variation, joined to irregularity, are the most efficient causes of the picturesque. This proposition is illustrated by a rich and various catalog of picturesque objects—Gothic cathedrals and old mills, gnarled oaks and shaggy goats, decayed cart horses and wandering gypsies, the paintings of Mola and Salvator.<sup>24</sup> Beautiful and picturesque are further differentiated in that symmetry, which accords with beauty well enough, is adverse to the picturesque. And the distinction of the two characters is brought under the aesthetic principles peculiar to Price, finally, by the observation that "one [depends] on ideas of youth and freshness, the other on those of age, and even of decay."<sup>25</sup> Striking descriptions are given of the gradual alteration of beauty into picturesqueness as time operates upon a temple, a tree, or a man.<sup>26</sup>

It may seem remarkable that symmetry should be pitched upon as a principal point of distinction, since Burke had explicitly ruled out symmetry as a trait of beauty. He admitted symmetry, to be sure, so far as was necessary to avoid deformity, but even in such instances it contributed to beauty only as a precondition.<sup>27</sup> Price's remarks on symmetry show that he had it in mind as a character chiefly of the forms of animals, or sometimes of plants and their parts, and of the non-imitative arts of architecture, furniture, and the like. The difference between Burke and Price on this point is partly one of nomenclature: Price includes the symmetrical "elegant" within the beautiful, since the difference in the sentiments excited is comparatively slight.

The picturesque is equally distinct from the sublime, both in its characteristics and its causes. The sublime is great, often infinite or apparently so, often uniform, and is founded on awe and terror. The picturesque may be great or small, but, since it so depends on the character of boundaries, can never be infinite; it is various and intricate rather than uniform, and is indifferently gay or grave.

Although the sublime and beautiful are incompatible—admixture of grandeur taking off from loveliness—picturesqueness renders beauty the more captivating. Price's doctrine is, that exclusive attention to beauty, to the total exclusion of the picturesque, produces an insipid monotony; even in painting this may be the case, and Guido's works show "how unavoidably an attention to mere beauty and flow of outline, will lead towards sameness and insipidity."<sup>28</sup> In nature, picturesqueness and beauty are blended; the rose, with its thorny bush and jagged leaves, is emblematic of this mixture. The happy effect of such a union has its basis in psychology: smoothness, literal or metaphorical, conveys the idea of repose; roughness that of irritation, of animation, spirit, and variety. Roughness serves as the ornament of beauty, that which gives it life and spirit, and preserves it from flatness and insipidity. Nothing "but the poverty of language makes us call two sensations so distinct from each other [as the relaxation of beauty and the lively irritation of the picturesque] by the common name of pleasure."<sup>29</sup> Great part of the irritation produced by roughness of whatever kind is attributable to association with the sensations of touch; it is in touch, indeed, that the difference between beautiful and picturesque is most sensibly felt. Such automatic and necessary association plays a considerable role in the theory of Price; and like Burke, Price is fond of tracing the aesthetic characters through the analogies of the various senses. He has an interest in music, and finds a picturesque of sound; there is even picturesque conversation; but in the strict sense, however, Price's picturesque is a character of visible objects.

Discussion of smoothness and roughness and the qualities associated with them is illustrated by lengthy and sometimes subtle disquisitions on the schools of painting. Form, light and shadow, that breadth of treatment which unites a scene into one whole, and color are the topics. Price dwells most at length upon breadth of lighting, for even the intricacy and variety of the picturesque require a ground to set them off, to make of them a harmony rather than a discord; this breadth produces a delight even from objects otherwise indifferent or ugly. Color, too, is brought within Price's frame of reference;



the freshness and delicacy of the colors of spring are beautiful, the warmth, various richness, and harmony of autumnal hues are more suited to painting, and are justly termed picturesque, according in variety and intricacy with the other traits of that character. Price concedes that the beauty of color is positive and independent; but the picturesque and sublime of color are relative, dependent upon accompanying circumstances and associations. What Price has to say about the picturesque in color, and in form, is consistent with the observations of Reynolds on that character. It is the Venetians who exhibit picturesque coloring; Guido and Claude pursue the beautiful; <sup>30</sup> the Roman school and the Mannerists employ the unbroken and distinct colors appropriate to the sublime (to the sublime of history, at least; it appears to me that the sublime of landscape requires a greater admixture of picturesque breaking of color and shadow). What strikes one as different in Reynolds and Price is that Reynolds, because of his insistent reference to generality as criterion, arranges these schools in a hierarchy of excellence: the sublime takes precedence of what Price calls the beautiful, and this in turn is higher than the picturesque. Price, instead, lays out these qualities "horizontally" rather than hierarchically. The influence of Reynolds, and the taste of his age, occasionally lead him to make evaluative judgments similar to those of Reynolds, but these are in Price expressions of personal taste rather than consequences of a philosophic system—and Price's taste is much more favorably inclined to the picturesque than that of Reynolds.

The system of the picturesque is completed by consideration of ugliness and deformity. Having used up Burke's ugly to make the picturesque, Price is obliged to find a new ugliness; this "does not arise from any sudden variation [as Burke had urged <sup>31</sup>]; but rather from that *want* of form, that unshapen lumpish appearance, which, perhaps, no one word exactly expresses; a quality (if what is negative may be so called) which never can be mistaken for beauty, never can adorn it, and which is equally unconnected with the sublime, and the picturesque."<sup>32</sup> Deformity, in contrast, consists in an unnaturally exaggerated rather than a featureless character; it depends not upon the physiological effect of the shape as ugliness does, but upon association, or lack of association, with the norm of the species or with regularity. "Deformity is to ugliness, what picturesqueness is to beauty; though distinct from it, and in many cases arising from opposite causes, it is often mistaken for it, often accompanies it, and greatly heightens its effect. Ugliness alone, is merely disagreeable; by the addition of deformity, it becomes hideous; by that of terror

it may become sublime."<sup>33</sup> The interrelations among the five aesthetic characters are difficult to reduce to diagram. Ugliness appears to be the undistinguished potentiality from which the others may all be formed; yet at the same time it is peculiarly the negation of beauty, as deformity is of the picturesque. This, however, is consistent with Price's view of beauty, for the monotony of that quality when unenlivened by any admixture of the picturesque has more than once been emphasized, and this monotony allies it to ugliness, whereas the piquancy of the picturesque, a little exaggerated, leads towards deformity. It is nonetheless curious that ugliness is both the excess and the defect of beauty, but the defect only of the other characters.

Picturesqueness enjoys greatest facility of union with the other aesthetic characters. It holds a middle station between beautiful and sublime. It mixes with ugliness, and picturesque ugliness is agreeable in painting, thence, by association at first, in nature: "Those who have been used to admire such picturesque ugliness in painting, will look with pleasure . . . at the original in nature. . . ." <sup>34</sup> Beauty, sublimity, and deformity, too, all tend to become picturesque with time. This ability of the picturesque to combine agreeably with the ugly, and in some measure with the deformed, tells against any theory which reduces the picturesque to a mode of beauty.<sup>35</sup> There is, of course, a broad sense of the term "beauty" which signifies any kind of pleasing aesthetic effect, and in this sense both sublime and picturesque are comprised within beauty; but in the same sense, Price remarks, envy and revenge are both modes of ill will—though distinct from one another. The aesthetic characters generally exhibit obvious analogies with ethical characters, just as this mode of aesthetic thought appears to be established by analogy with ethical philosophy. It may be asked, why are the analogous ethical distinctions so much more firmly established and widely recognized? Their superior influence in practical life has made all men involuntarily moralists, whereas the aesthetic distinctions have been little attended to in the earlier stages of civilization. Price looks forward, in fact, to the development of new aesthetic distinctions, and the development of new terms for the union of the picturesque with beauty, with sublimity, or with ugliness.

Such is the general theory of the picturesque. Its application to improvement, although subordinate logically, occupies the greater part of Price's writings, and was the provocation for most of the attacks leveled against his system by gardeners and aestheticians. Yet Price's

application of the principles of painting to improvement is attended with such qualifications as should have safeguarded him from some at least of these assaults. For it was not his desire to reproduce in real scenes the compositions found in paintings; gardening is not to imitate particular pictures, or even to reproduce the same kinds of scenes as are found in pictures; rather, the original compositions formed by improvers from the elements of scenery are to be guided by the general *principles* of painting.<sup>36</sup> "But, however highly I may think of the art of painting, compared with that of improving [protests Price], nothing can be farther from my intention . . . than to recommend the study of pictures in preference to that of nature, much less to the exclusion of it. Whoever studies art alone, will have a narrow pedantic manner of considering all objects, and of referring them solely to the minute and practical purposes of that art . . . to which his attention has been particularly directed. . . ." <sup>37</sup> Looking at nature merely with a view to forming pictures contracts the taste; looking at pictures with a view to improvement of our ideas of nature enlarges it. It remains true, however, that the capacity to judge of forms, colors, and combinations of visible objects "can never be perfectly acquired, unless to the study of natural scenery, and of the various styles of gardening at different periods, the improver adds the theory at least of that art, the very essence of which is connection. . . ." <sup>38</sup> The principles of painting—composition, grouping, harmony, unity, breadth and effect of light and shadow—are so called "because that art has pointed them out more clearly . . . but they are in reality the general principles on which the effect of all visible objects must depend, and to which it must be referred." <sup>39</sup> These principles are so little affected by the peculiar limitations of painting as a medium, that they may properly be taken, as Price does take them, as principles for all the co-temporary or spatial arts. Since in the spatial arts the combinations are taken in at one view, union and harmony, insensible transition of parts, is the most essential requirement. The "circumstance of insensible transition," Price declares, "is the most comprehensive principle of visible beauty in its strictest acceptance: as not being confined to lines or curves of any kind, and as extending, not only to form, but to colour, to light and shadow, and to every combination of them; that is, to all visible nature." <sup>40</sup>

If it be objected, why should one art dictate to another? Price is ready with his reply: the art of improving is new, it has not been distinguished by artists of transcendent genius, nor have any of its works so withstood the test of time as to become classics—indeed, the

inevitable processes of growth and decay may always prevent the products of this art from attaining the venerable authority of the statues of Greece and the paintings of Italy.

Just as the picturesque improver should not seek to imitate the particular effects of paintings, so he should not attempt to imitate the particular details of uncultivated nature; here, as in the imitation of paintings, he observes the principles by which uncultivated scenes please, and endeavors by original selection and arrangement of materials to achieve analogous effects on the same principles: "I am convinced," says Price, "that many of the circumstances which give variety and spirit to a wild spot, might be successfully imitated in a dressed place; but it must be done by attending to the principles, not by copying the particulars. It is not necessary to model a gravel walk, or drive, after a sheep track or cart rut, though very useful hints may be taken from them both; and without having water-docks or thistles before one's door, their effect in a painter's foreground may be produced by plants that are considered as ornamental." <sup>41</sup> Price's demands for shagginess apply chiefly to the grounds, or park; the garden in the narrow sense, immediately adjacent to the house, he desires to be formal—but the ornate formality of the ancient style rather than the insipid and monotonous formality of level greens and serpentine walks. This moderate position goes pretty far, I think, in abating the force of Reynolds' objections to picturesque gardening. Reynolds, anticipating a part of the argument of Repton, Marshall, and other "practical" opponents of the picturesque school, had expressed to Gilpin his disapproval "of reforming the art of gardening by the picturesque of landscape painting." The picturesque, according to Reynolds, has nature alone for its object; a picturesque garden must therefore be totally devoid of art, and therefore not a garden. The picturesque attitude towards improvement, Reynolds writes, "appears to me undervaluing the art of gardening, which I hold to be an art that stands on its own bottom, and is governed by different principles. It ought to have apparently, if not ostentatiously, the marks of art upon it: as it is a work of art upon nature, it is a part of its beauty and perfection that it should appear at first sight a cultivated spot—that it is inhabited, that every thing is in order, convenient, and comfortable; which a state of nature will not produce." <sup>42</sup> These arguments, valid or not, are addressed to a position which Price at least does not hold.

Price describes the change from the Italian and Dutch styles of gardening to that of Kent and Brown by a succinct half-line from

Horace: *Mutat quadrata rotundis*. The new improvers, though they meant to banish formality and restore nature, had in fact only installed a new formality of regular curves in place of the more grand and simple straight-lined formality of the old gardens, creating a style both monotonous and affected.<sup>43</sup> The great defect of the new system, a defect to which it was more subject than the old had been, and in which it was most opposite to the principles of painting, was "want of connection—a passion for making every thing distinct and separate. All the particular defects which I shall have occasion to notice, in some degree arise from, and tend towards this original sin."<sup>44</sup> The most characteristic features of "modern gardening"—its serpentine drives and walks and canals, its clumps and belts—are dispatched in the opening chapter of the *Essay's* second part; trees and water, the chief materials of the improver, are treated in the succeeding chapters, and the practical suggestions which Price advances are carefully adapted to his general aesthetics. The objections raised against these suggestions by Repton, George Mason, Marshall, and others, objections that they are theorizing dreams which cannot be reduced to practice, seem to me to rest partly on misapprehension of Price's plans, partly on mere habitual attachment to established modes of practice. These practical objections melted away in following years, and Price may almost be said to have formed the taste of the early nineteenth century in gardening and architecture.

In 1798, the *Essay on the Picturesque* was supplemented on the practical side by a new volume of three essays, designed to meet Humphry Repton's challenge to set forth a method of practical improvement which could be acted upon. The "Essay on Artificial Water, and on the Method in Which Picturesque Banks May be Practically Formed" really handles the whole problem of natural foregrounds, a problem of especial importance to improvers, who have less control than painters over the distant parts of their scenes; the "Essay on the Decorations near the House"—the garden in the narrow sense—treats avowedly artificial foregrounds, which only are in character with architecture. The final essay completes the progression from the extremities of the estate towards its center; it is "An Essay on Architecture and Buildings, as Connected with Scenery," as, that is, subject to the landscapist rather than the builder.

An aspect of Price's system of "natural" gardening which was much ridiculed, an aspect of peculiar importance in these practical essays, was the reliance upon time and accident—gardening by neglect.<sup>45</sup> But Price does not suggest leaving natural processes un-

controlled. Nature must give the finishing roughness to the gardener's work, but the art of the gardener directs nature's operations; nature must crumble the banks of the lagoon, but the improver can undermine and support them in such wise as to determine where and to what extent nature can operate. "As art is unable by an immediate operation to create those effects, she must have recourse to nature, that is, to accident; whose operation, though she cannot imitate, she can, in a great measure, direct."<sup>46</sup>

Improvers have been self-defeated in their attempts at beauty, so Price says, by their insistent repetition of smoothness and flowing lines. For the most essential trait of beauty is insensible transition, and in landscape these transitions are effected best by a certain degree of irregularity and roughness. Only this much is granted to the serpentine—that the same bareness and formality cut into angles would be less beautiful yet. It could be argued that this conception of natural beauty dissolves the distinction between picturesque and beautiful; Price grants that

the two characters are rarely unmixed in nature, and should not be unmixed in art. In the wooded river, I have supposed roughness and abruptness to be so blended with the ingredients of beauty . . . as to produce altogether those insensible transitions, in which . . . consists the justest, and most comprehensive principle of the beautiful in landscape. The whole, then, assumes the soft and mild character of beauty. But should any of these rough, abrupt parts be more strongly marked . . . then the picturesque would begin to prevail: and in proportion as that distinct and marked roughness and abruptness increased, so far the character of the beautiful would decrease. . . . [But] it would be no less absurd to make picturesque scenes without any mixture of the beautiful, (and the caution at some future period may not be unnecessary,) than to attempt what has so long, and so idly been attempted—to make beautiful scenes, without any mixture of the picturesque.<sup>47</sup>

The characters remain analytically distinct, but when manifested in concrete objects do not produce a good effect unless in some degree mingled. I might urge an analogy with external taste: sweet and sour are not the less distinct for their being more pleasing when mingled. The analogy is the closer in that tartness (like picturesqueness) is usually not pleasing until we are made accustomed to it by artificial productions, and in that sweetness, which is alone pleasing at first, subsequently becomes insipid unless varied with some sharper flavor.

The excellence of Italian gardens, even in their perfect state, rests upon the combination of beautiful and picturesque elements:

All persons . . . are universally pleased with smoothness and flowing lines; and thence the great and general popularity of the present style of gardening; but on the other hand those who have paid any attention to scenery, are more *struck* with sudden projections and abruptnesses . . . for in all such rugged abrupt forms, though they may be only picturesque, there is still a tendency towards the sublime; that is, towards the most powerful emotion of the human mind. The great point, not merely in improvements, but in all things that are designed to affect the imagination, is to mix according to circumstances, what is striking, with what is simply pleasing. . . . The same principle seems to have been studied in many of the old Italian gardens.<sup>48</sup>

The beauty of such a garden, of course, consists in symmetry and regularity rather than in serpentine; even the less grand and beautiful Dutch style, with its hedges, labyrinths, and straight canals might be indulged, although Price condemns the extravagancies of topiary work.

Yet there is a use for the system of modern gardening, too, though in the hands of most practitioners it banishes equally all present decoration and all future picturesqueness. With some of its absurdities corrected, it serves as a transition from the formal architectural garden near the house to the wilder park. The ideal estate, then, would have a grand Italianate garden near the mansion, with parterres, hanging and balustraded terraces, statues and fountains; beyond the last terrace there would be a smooth pleasure-ground, with gravel walks sweeping easily among its ornamental shrubberies and trees; and at a distance the wooded park, in which the gravel walk gives place to the grassy lane, the smooth lawn to the forest glade, and the plantations of ornamentals to the intricate variety of wild nature.

The final essay of Price's second volume treats of "Architecture and Buildings as Connected with Scenery." The country house is necessarily connected with scenery primarily rather than with other buildings, and there is a consequent necessity of giving it a picturesque appearance from a large number of viewpoints. Ruins, especially the ruins of once-beautiful structures, are the most picturesque of buildings. Structures designed for use and habitation can hardly be made ruinous, however; what does give such structures picturesqueness is the turning of their windows to views suitably framed by trees, which, *pari passu*, gives the building an intricate irregularity as

viewed from without.<sup>49</sup> Connection with the scenery is effected also by disposing the offices subordinate to the central mass (instead of burying them underground or concealing them in evergreen plantations), and by planting trees close to the house to break and vary its regularity (instead of setting the house down in a meadow). Building is thus brought under the principles of painting, and the *architettore-pittore* is the prophet of the new revelation. Only the artist well acquainted with the beautiful, grand, and picturesque will know when to keep these characters separate, when and in what degree to mix them, according to the effect intended.

It is significant and characteristic that Price should remark, in treating of the sublime in buildings, that "the effects of art are never so well illustrated, as by similar effects in nature: and, therefore, the best illustration of buildings, is by what has most analogy to them—the forms and characters of rocks. . . ." <sup>50</sup> For Price is always ultimately concerned with the isolation of qualities which pervade both art and nature, a concern which minimizes the distinctive artificiality of art. The difference of art from nature is more marked, however, in architecture than in painting; for architecture is not in the same sense an imitative art. Since architecture is functional and creative rather than representative, the waving line, which is a principal cause of beauty in natural objects, appears only to the limited extent that associations with function permit. The beautiful in building, then, involves straight lines, angles, and symmetry. Symmetry had of course been excluded from the beautiful by Burke, on the grounds that it reduced variety and freedom; only in non-imitative arts is this argument overbalanced by other considerations. But Price is not yet free of difficulty; for it might be argued, on the basis of insensible transition, that the ruin is often more beautiful (as well as more picturesque) than the entire building, the lines of which are more distinct and hard. This paradox is avoided partly by observing that the beauty of ruins is attributable rather to the vegetation than to the fragmentary architecture, partly by noting that "the mind, from the powerful and extensive influence of that principle, called *association of ideas*, is unwilling to give them a title, which, as I conceive, implies the freshness of youth; or, at least, a state of high and perfect preservation."<sup>51</sup> Price's substitution of a new substructure under Burke's aesthetics has permitted him to modify Burke's conclusions without outright rejection of the master's authority.

Price reinforces his analysis by considering "the use, which both in history and landscape, some of the principal painters of different

schools and countries have made of buildings, from the highest style of architecture, to the simplest cottage—from those which are in their freshest and most perfect state, to those which time has most defaced and mutilated.”<sup>52</sup> The judgments on history paintings are so clear, once one has the knack of using Price’s distinctions, that they need not be dwelt upon. The comparisons and contrasts of styles become rather subtle, and the entire passage, some fifty pages, bears a clear relation to Reynolds’ classification of styles and manners. When we discover that of two pictures by Poussin and Veronese, “one is addressed to the understanding through the sight; the other to the sight only: and who can doubt which has attained the noblest end?”<sup>53</sup> we can conceive ourselves to be reading the academic discourses. The discussion of architecture in history painting serves rather to clarify the definitions of the aesthetic characters in architecture than to provide practical precepts; but the employment of architecture in landscape painting drives close to Price’s own concern with the combination of buildings and landscape gardens. The practice of the great landscape painters, therefore, provides directly applicable principles, and even hints for practice. Especially useful are the ideas of village scenery to be gleaned from the Dutch and Flemish masters. Though Price’s discussion of such village scenes turns chiefly on his enthusiasm for the picturesqueness of village life, his humanitarian sympathies concur with his aesthetic inclinations in the improvement of villages, and he dilates upon the expansion of benevolence which must accompany extension of pleasure in picturesque objects. Unhappily, moral and aesthetic criteria do not *invariably* coincide, and the socially conscious gentleman must forego half-ruining the houses of his villagers to make them more picturesque. Where there is conflict, the moral principle must prevail; and eventually it assumes an aesthetic guise, since associations of utility enter into the aesthetic as well as into the moral judgment.<sup>54</sup>

Before advancing into the tangled controversies among Price and Knight and Repton, it is necessary for me to return briefly to the first theorist of the picturesque, William Gilpin. The 1794 volume of Price’s *Essay on the Picturesque* included, at appropriate points in the discussion, a number of lengthy footnotes in which Price set forth his differences with Gilpin. In the 1810 edition of Price’s works on the picturesque, these notes were collected into an Appendix to the first volume of the *Essay*; the Appendix contains no new material, and its somewhat disjointed effect is an obvious consequence of its mode of formation. Price declares that Gilpin’s *Three Essays* did not

come to his hand until he had written a great part of his own work. This assertion, which I see no reason to doubt, in no way derogates from Gilpin’s historical importance, for Price acknowledges having been influenced by Gilpin’s earlier writings. When he first read into the “*Essay on Picturesque Beauty*,” Price says, he thought that his own work had been anticipated. “But as I advanced,” he continues, “that distinction between the two characters, that line of separation which I thought would have been accurately marked out, became less and less visible; till at length the beautiful and the picturesque were more than ever mixed and incorporated together, the whole subject involved in doubt and obscurity, and a sort of anathema denounced against any one who should try to clear it up.”<sup>55</sup>

Gilpin, as Price sees it, has followed a will o’ the wisp in trying to find a definition of the picturesque which refers to the art of painting only, a concern which has made him lose sight of the universal distinction between picturesque and beautiful. Seeing that roughness is the essential point of difference between the two characters, Gilpin was thus led to exclude smoothness from painting—except where he could show by a kind of sophistry that what is really smooth is in appearance rough, “so that,” Price observes ironically, “when we fancy ourselves admiring the smoothness which we think we perceive, as in a calm lake, we are in fact admiring the roughness which we have not observed.”<sup>56</sup> Price himself, in fact, distinguishes between Gilpin’s definition of the picturesque as “adapted to painting” and “his more strict and pointed method of defining it by making roughness the most essential point of difference between it and the beautiful.”<sup>57</sup>

Price does not, however, remark the other methodological errors into which Gilpin is led by this initial misstep. Instead, he descends to details (naturally enough, since his critique originated as footnotes to particular points in his own *Essay*). He has little difficulty in overturning Gilpin’s notion that only rough, or apparently rough, objects please in painting. Gilpin (as we have seen above) concedes this point in his letter to Reynolds, but without recognizing that the concession requires a restatement of his theory. Price insists that the painter may represent objects exhibiting any of the aesthetic characters; and for him, difficulties like those into which Gilpin is led by his exclusive fondness for painting “must always be the consequence, when instead of endeavouring to shew the agreement between art and nature, even when they appear most at variance, a mysterious barrier is placed between them, to surprize and keep at a distance the uninitiated.”<sup>58</sup> No comment could display more clearly

the bent of Price's aesthetics—which is in this particular typical of the British systems—towards isolation of characters which pervade both nature and art, rather than towards the discrimination of the problems and traits of art from those of nature. Aestheticians of the Hegelian tradition also isolate universals found both in nature and in art; but they analogize nature to art instead of (like the British) subsuming art under nature. Bosanquet, for instance, declares roundly: "I have assumed . . . that Fine Art may be accepted, for theoretical purposes, as the chief, if not the sole representative of the world of beauty."<sup>59</sup> The British writers, in contrast, begin with nature, and by allowing for the effects of imitation and design adapt their doctrines to art. Ultimately, I suppose, this difference is a remote consequence of metaphysical differences: the British empiricists begin with a history of the perceptions of the mind, the Germans with an analysis of forms or categories inherent in the mind; in one case, then, it is simpler to treat aesthetics in terms of the more primitive phenomena (nature), in the other in terms of the more intellectual (art).

Templeman, swept away, perhaps, by the enthusiasm of the specialist, is unable to discover anything in the three volumes of Price which is not in Gilpin's little essay; he doubts that Price "has much to offer in addition to Gilpin, or in defensible disagreement with Gilpin." Despite his pompous verbosity, Price "does *not* give a definition of the picturesque" in his *Essay*; the definition he finally ventures in his letter to Repton, "what is rough and abrupt, with sudden deviations," is inadequate; and Price can no longer insist that the words "picturesque" and "beauty" never be combined.<sup>60</sup> To ignore, as Templeman does, the differences in analytical method between Gilpin and Price; to avow that because Price foregoes a one-sentence definition for a history of the term and a complex discrimination of the picturesque from related characters he does not define it; to imply that Price ever denied the practical combination of picturesque and beautiful or ever abandoned the analytical distinction between them—this is totally to fail to grasp Price's argument. But Templeman is at any rate refreshingly literal in his reading of the texts; most commentators on these subjects have a Theory, and in every point to make it fit, will force all writers to submit. Mayoux sees the picturesque as a stage on the road to romanticism; Price's "création du Pittoresque, à côté et audessus du beau avili, marque un progrès certain de l'esthétique romantique qui a commencé avec Burke." Mayoux notes especially that Gilpin observes picturesque

scenes from fixed points of view, whereas in Price, "le pittoresque est l'objet de sensations successives. C'est une différence primordiale au point de vue esthétique, une des grandes séparations du beau classique et du romantique. On remarquera que Price au lieu de s'attacher au point de vue fixé . . . se plaît à s'y mouvoir; ainsi le besoin romantique de changement, de sensations renouvelées, fait sentir son progrès."<sup>61</sup> I do not think that Price, or indeed any writer on the picturesque, ranks picturesqueness *above* beauty. Nor do I see in Price a "besoin romantique de changement"; with Miss Manwaring, I believe that the new knowledge of painting in eighteenth-century England, knowledge especially of the great landscape painters of the previous century, led to a habit of looking at landscape as if it were a series of paintings, a habit not at all absurd if not pursued to the exclusion of other ways of viewing landscape, and from the stimulus of which other and more natural ways of regarding scenery were sure to follow. Price, in fact, taking up the rather confused hints thrown out by Gilpin towards a general theory of picturesque aesthetics, shows their inadequacy, and develops a theory of the picturesque as a mode of beauty (in the extended sense) co-ordinate with the special beauty of Burke and with the sublime. It retains little of the connection with painting from which it sprang, and Mayoux does not allow this fact its due weight when he remarks that "c'est par là que la théorie de Price est curieuse; par tout ça romantisme visuel, dissimulé sous le détachement artistique. . . ."<sup>62</sup> What is true in this observation is that which I have remarked before, that poetic sensibility is less prominent in Price than the feelings excited by the more abstract qualities and their composition. In reading Price, however, this emphasis seems a consistent and integral part of his system; it should not be made the mark of a conflict, of one system of thought insinuating itself under the guise of another.

## Humphry Repton



URGED, perhaps, by the fond ambition of converting to his views the leading landscape gardener of the age, Uvedale Price dispatched a presentation copy of his *Essay on the Picturesque* to Humphry Repton.<sup>1</sup> The personality of Humphry Repton was something of a paradox, pleasing enough in most ways, but rather like Jane Austen's Mr. Collins in its mixture of pompous solemnity with servile humility in all that related to his profession. Deferential almost in the extreme in his "humble endeavours to gratify the royal commands" or those of his noble patrons, he yet assumes a magisterial attitude when instructing his detractors and the world generally in the dignity of his profession, and confides that he feels it "a kind of duty to watch, with a jealous eye, every innovation on the principles of taste in Landscape Gardening; since I have been honoured with the care of so many of the finest places in the kingdom."<sup>2</sup>

Repton was not much pleased by Price's attention. He felt that the memory of "that great self-taught master,"<sup>3</sup> his predecessor the immortal Lancelot Brown, had been traduced; that "a direct and undisguised attack on the art [of landscape gardening]"<sup>4</sup> itself had virtually denied the right of the profession, and of its professors, to exist; and, which perhaps piqued him more personally, he felt that some of his own ideas had been stolen and brought out in print while his own work was still at the printer's. If he had had the most distant idea that Price was writing such a book, he complains, he "should certainly have been more guarded in my conversations with its author, who has frequently adopted my ideas; and has, in some instances, robbed me of originality. . . ."<sup>5</sup> While his resentment was still keen, Repton dashed off *A Letter to Uvedale Price, Esq.*, of which he caused some copies to be struck off for private distribution—Price, of course, being one of the recipients. Price, doubtless surprised

by the quickness and tartness as well as by the public character of the retort, as hastily wrote off *A Letter to H. Repton, Esq. on the Application of the Practice As Well As the Principles of Landscape-Painting to Landscape-Gardening . . .*; this was a major publication, about eight times the length of Repton's brief letter.

But the great landscape gardener had been already affronted some months before the unexpected blow from Price. For Payne Knight's *The Landscape* had excoriated the improvers, and had provoked Repton especially by, as Repton puts it, "the attempt to make me an object of ridicule, by misquoting my unpublished MSS. [the Red Book of Tatton Park, partly incorporated in *Sketches and Hints*]."<sup>6</sup> While these attacks on modern improvement were issuing from the presses, Repton's own *Sketches and Hints on Landscape Gardening* was languishing at the printer's, waiting for dilatory artists to complete the colored aquatints which make that book today a collector's item of great rarity. The delay permitted him, however, to append replies and apologia: a seventh chapter was added to repel Knight's attack, and an Appendix to treat Price's opinions in the *Essay on the Picturesque*. Price's *Letter to Repton*, too, came out early in 1795, with *Sketches and Hints* still hanging fire; but Repton decided against further enlargement of what he puffs as "my great work," so that it finally appeared without allusion to Price's *Letter*. There has always been an uncertainty about the date of publication of *Sketches and Hints*. The title-page bears no date, and standard reference works give, some 1794, some 1795. The 1794 date has the sanction of Repton himself, for in two passages of later works he refers to *Sketches and Hints* as published in 1794.<sup>7</sup> This testimony, inexpugnable as it seems, is nonetheless erroneous. The Newberry Library of Chicago possesses, bound together, copies of Price's *Essay* and *Letter to Repton* each of which was presented to Repton by the author; bound in with these two works are four manuscript letters among Price, Repton, and the publisher Robson, and these letters make clear that *Sketches and Hints* was still awaiting publication on February 5, 1795.<sup>8</sup>

So much for the chronology of the early phase of the controversy. My intention is to discuss the publications of Repton in such fashion as to give a proper view of his conduct of the controversy and of the later development of his practice and thought. But to throw this discussion into a proper perspective, I must first give a view of Repton's system as a whole. Repton was a professor of landscaping and architecture rather than a theoretical aesthete. This judgment is un-

affected by Repton's reiterated statements that he wished posterity to judge him by his published works rather than by the actual estates he created or altered ("It is rather upon my opinions in writing, than on the partial and imperfect manner in which my plans have sometimes been executed, that I wish my fame to be established," he declares in the preface to *Theory and Practice*<sup>9</sup>). For these published writings are an applied rather than a theoretical aesthetics. They contain, to be sure, frequent enunciations of general principles (no two lists quite the same), but these principles constitute rather *axiomata media* of a high order than first principles. Repton assumes almost all of his psychology; he never investigates metaphysics, but takes propositions implying metaphysical analyses for his starting points. These psychological principles serve only as the basis for deductions of particular precepts which determine the manner in which the architect or gardener manipulates his materials to fulfil the requirements of his profession. One of the most frequent phenomena in Repton's books, consequently, is the list of "rules" for managing this or that part of the art of landscapist or architect—rules for arranging the parts of an estate, rules for arched gateways, &c.; and equally frequent is the list of "principles" of some style of art, propositions which are implicitly guides for practice in that style—principles of ancient or of modern gardening, of the town house or the country house, of the Gothic, and so forth.

Now all this forms a decided contrast between Repton and Price or Knight. The two amateurs—Knight most notably—really worked out aesthetic systems; Knight carried analysis as deep as aesthetics requires, and Price, though less analytical, still gives much more of a psychology and a theoretical aesthetics than does Repton. Neither Knight nor Price, moreover, was given to making out lists of rules; they preferred to bridge the gap from theory to actual making by a cultivated taste, a taste formed (so far as things visual are concerned) on the higher painters. But Repton, without any propensity for philosophizing, and with a great concern for directing the creative work of others, can not leave so much to the variability of taste—especially since he wished to weaken the influence of painting on landscape gardening, and thus removed one of the important controls on idiosyncrasy. He therefore prescribes taste in directions more concrete than those to which Price and Knight care to bind themselves.

Since Repton is essentially an unsystematic writer, it is difficult to reduce to order the many principles which he enunciates. In general, he is concerned with discovering or providing sources of pleasure,

without tracing out the causes of these pleasures in more than a common-sense way and without much effort to isolate those which are peculiarly aesthetic in quality. In the Appendix against Price added to *Sketches and Hints*, Repton gives a list of the "Sources of Pleasure in Landscape Gardening." These sources are: (1) *congruity*, of parts with the whole, and of the whole with the circumstances of the place and its possessor; (2) *utility*, by which Repton means not profitableness, but convenience, comfort, and "everything that conduces to the purposes of habitation with elegance"; (3) *order*, as in a walk parallel with a straight wall; (4) *symmetry*; (5) *picturesque effect*, "which has been so fully and ably considered by Mr. Price"; (6) *intricacy*; (7) *simplicity*; (8) *variety*; (9) *novelty*, which Repton deems a perilous goal to aim at; (10) *contrast*, a safer substitute; (11) *continuity*, as in an avenue; (12) *association*, historical or personal; (13) *grandeur*; (14) *appropriation*, the appearance and display of extent of property; (15) *animation*, whether of water, vegetation, or animals; (16) *seasons and times of day*.<sup>10</sup> The first four of these sources are "generally adverse to picturesque beauty," Repton tells us, "yet they are not, therefore, to be discarded." So far from discarding them is Repton, that he erects congruity and utility into the primary principles of his analyses: "The leading feature in the good taste of modern times, is the just sense of GENERAL UTILITY."<sup>11</sup> This observation pertains to taste in general; with reference to landscape gardening in particular, Repton suggests that "if any general principles could be established in this art, I think that they might be deduced from the joint consideration of *relative fitness* or UTILITY, and *comparative proportion* or SCALE; the former may be referred to the mind, the latter to the eye, yet these two must be inseparable."<sup>12</sup> And the observations in *Theory and Practice* are often referred to this dual head. Yet Repton can not mean that all the principles of gardening can be derived from congruity and utility, for he constantly introduces judgments based on other principles—as in the sources of pleasure enumerated above. Nor is it strictly true that scale is referable to the "eye"—only that scale is ordinarily perceived without reflection, whereas the recognition of fitness often involves some degree of conscious ratiocination. A more proper distinction would distinguish pleasures referable to some physiological or nervous mechanism (the "eye," if you will) from those attributable to the operation of ideas in association or judgment. Even this more accurate distinction, however, would not of itself carry us, or Repton, very far.



Repton's "utility" has no connection with profitableness; indeed, Repton regularly opposes ornament to profit, and regarded with disfavor the *ferme ornée* of Shenstone: "I have never walked through these grounds [Shenstone's Leasowes]," he writes, "without lamenting, not only the misapplication of good taste, but that constant disappointment which the benevolent Shenstone must have experienced in attempting to unite two objects so incompatible as ornament and profit."<sup>13</sup> Farm and park, in short, are incongruous. The utility Repton has in mind is, instead, a matter of convenience and comfort—gravel walks to keep our shoes dry, a southeast aspect for favorable weather, &c. Insofar as this utility is an aesthetic excellence, it must be because association has connected such circumstances with our more disinterested and apparently spontaneous responses to the general appearance of things. An exposed situation for the house, that is, might "hurt the eye" by calling up half-conscious notions of rain and cold, yet without exciting conscious reflection. Perhaps a set of Repton's rules will serve to make this point more definite. The site for a house, says Repton, is to be decided by four considerations (in order of decreasing importance): (1) the aspect; (2) the levels of the surrounding ground; (3) objects of convenience, such as water supply, space for the offices, accessibility to roads and towns; and (4) the view from the house.<sup>14</sup> Now only the last of these is altogether an aesthetic consideration; the first and second may perhaps come by association to be tinged with aesthetic feeling; but the third requires so conscious an exertion of the understanding that it can hardly, I think, be reckoned aesthetic at all. The first three topics together, of course, are branches of Repton's utility.

Often the semblance alone of utility is sufficient to justify ornaments: a pilaster deceptively seems to provide support. Deception is, in fact, a central concept in Repton's view of art; "the highest perfection of landscape gardening," he declares, "is, to imitate nature so judiciously, that the interference of art shall never be detected,"<sup>15</sup> whereas formal gardening is an open display of art. More at length,

The perfection of *Landscape Gardening* consists in the four following requisites: First, it must display the natural beauties, and hide the natural defects of every situation. Secondly, it should give the appearance of extent and freedom, by carefully disguising or hiding the boundary. Thirdly, it must studiously conceal every interference of art . . . making the whole appear the production of nature only; and, fourthly, all objects of mere convenience or comfort, if incapable of

being made ornamental, or of becoming proper parts of the general scenery, must be removed or concealed. . . .

Each of the four objects here enumerated, are directly opposite to the principles of ancient gardening, which may thus be stated. First, the natural beauties or defects of a situation had no influence, when it was the fashion to exclude, by lofty walls, every surrounding object. Secondly, these walls were never considered as defects; but, on the contrary, were ornamented with vases, expensive iron gates, and palisades, to render them more conspicuous. Thirdly, so far from making gardens appear natural, every expedient was used to display the expensive efforts of art, by which nature had been subdued. . . . And, lastly, with respect to objects of convenience, they were placed as near the house as possible. . . .<sup>16</sup>

Modern gardening, it is clear, involves a constant and pervasive deception; Nikolaus Pevsner has spoken of "the landscape garden that tries seriously to look like Nature Unadorned, the landscape garden that has deceived us all at some stage into believing it to be England's natural scenery."<sup>17</sup> It is amusing to see Repton occasionally entrapped by deceptive associations of his own creating. Brown and he had built so many artificial rivers with terminations deceptively concealed by "bridges," that at last Repton could not throw a bridge across a *real* river for fear of making it seem artificial!<sup>18</sup> Repton himself objects to art deceptively imitating art: "Deception may be allowable in imitating the works of NATURE; thus artificial rivers, lakes, and rock scenery, can only be great by deception, and the mind acquiesces in the fraud, after it is detected; but in works of ART every trick ought to be avoided. Sham churches, sham ruins, sham bridges, and everything which appears what it is not, disgusts when the trick is discovered."<sup>19</sup>

But "art" is not a pejorative term in Repton's writings. Repton thinks of himself as an eclectic, inheriting the best of the modern style from Brown, and leading a renaissance of the best in the old style: "I do not profess to follow either Le Nôtre or Brown, but, selecting beauties from the style of each, to adopt so much of the grandeur of the former as may accord with a palace, and so much of the grace of the latter as may call forth the charms of natural landscape."<sup>20</sup> Repton's formalism has occasioned a good bit of discussion, and I shall dwell upon it briefly. The Red Books of Hasells and Cobham were written, Repton states, "in the year 1790, before Mr. Price published his *Essays*"; and on both estates Repton recommended the

retention or extension of formal terraces.<sup>21</sup> If Repton's memory is accurate, he did without question participate in the formal revival; but it is not necessary to give him credit for leading it. Price and Knight had developed their views before going into print; they are independent of Repton; they are more systematic and thoroughgoing in their formalism; and they rest their preferences on different theoretic bases. Even their taste in formal gardens does not accord with Repton's; the taste of Knight and especially that of Price is for a definitely Italianate style near the house, with ivied stone balustrades, open stairways, statuary enriched in hedges, all on a magnificent scale and style. Repton, however, leaned more and more towards the creation of a multiplicity of small and largely disconnected gardens—curiously enough, the very sort of thing which Lord Kames had recommended. This tendency became more pronounced in Repton's late work, until in such a report as that on Ashridge he designed "no less than fifteen kinds of gardens."<sup>22</sup> Five of these were in the modern pleasure-ground manner, a couple in a consciously antique style, and several in Repton's own manner—an arboretum, an American garden, a winter garden,<sup>23</sup> and two with raised beds of flowers. Repton became, in fact, the originator of what John Claudius Loudon dubbed the "gardenesque" style, with its separate compartments and its attention to the peculiarities of type-plants of various, especially exotic, species.<sup>24</sup>

Repton suggested numerous innovations in the landscape garden of his day: to reduce the size of the pleasure ground "within such limits that it may be kept with the utmost artificial neatness," to mark the separation of artificial from natural scene, to let the dressed grounds "rather appear to be the rich frame of the landscape than a part of the picture" from the windows, to connect the garden with the house by a sheltered way, and to provide a winter garden.<sup>25</sup> The tendency of the first three of these suggestions is to separate garden and park, and this is a distinction often emphasized by Repton, and connected by him with the distinctions between nature and art and between utility and the picturesque. "And while I have acceded to the combination of two words, landscape and gardening," Repton cautions, "yet they are as distinct objects as the picture and its frame. The scenery of nature, called landscape, and that of a garden, are as different as their uses; one is to please the eye, the other is for the comfort and occupation of man: one is wild . . . while the other is appropriated to man in the highest state of civilization and refinement."<sup>26</sup> (When Repton speaks of "acceding" to the term "land-

scape garden," he forgets that twenty years earlier, in the Introduction to *Sketches and Hints*, he had claimed the term as his own.) The garden proper is defined to be "every part of the grounds in which art, rather than nature, is to please the eye, the smell, and the taste," or again as "*a work of ART, making proper use of the materials of NATURE.*"<sup>27</sup> All this implies a preference for the garden rather than the park. Price remarks that whereas he had spoken largely of the park, Repton answered by speaking of the garden; and this bias increased pronouncedly in later years. In 1811 Repton suffered an injury to his spine in a carriage accident, and this fortuitous circumstance had a curious influence on the development of the art, for it turned Repton's attention more exclusively to the improvement of houses and gardens rather than of parks or forests; he speaks of the design for Ashridge as "the child of my age and declining powers: when no longer able to undertake the more extensive plans of *landscape*, I was glad to contract my views within the narrow circle of the *garden*, independent of its accompaniment of distant scenery."<sup>28</sup> The influence of years and of infirmity is manifested in numerous details of Repton's theory and practice: after being a life-long advocate of the gravel path (as opposed to the picturesque grass walk), he suddenly advocates grass glades—for the accommodation of wheel chairs; and, unable to stoop to pick a flower from the ground, he creates the raised flower bed, which went far to modify the character of the English garden in the nineteenth century.

When Repton presented his ideas more fully, he usually distinguished three "distances": the garden, the park, and the forest or open country. Now in outline this is also Price's view of a large estate; it seems still more like Price when Repton tells us that "in forest scenery we trace the sketches of SALVATOR and of RIDINGER; in park scenery, we may realize the landscapes of CLAUDE and POUSSIN: but, in garden scenery, we delight in the rich embellishments, the blended graces of WATTEAU, where nature is dressed, but not disfigured, by art; and where the artificial decorations of architecture and sculpture are softened down by natural accompaniments of vegetation."<sup>29</sup> Price had used Salvator, Claude, and Watteau in the same analogy in his *Letter to Repton*.<sup>30</sup>

Repton rarely shows any independent knowledge of painting, and he is vigorously opposed to Price's notion of bringing gardening under the principles of painting. Sometimes, granted, he speaks in the conventionalized language of picturesque vision—often repeating that the landscape and garden are as the picture and its frame. But despite

these locutions, Repton consistently argues against the predominance of painting. "The art I profess," he cries, "is of a higher nature than that of painting, and is thus very aptly described by a French author. '*—il est, à la poésie et à la peinture, ce que la réalité est à la description, et l'original à la copie.*'"<sup>31</sup> Led by conversations with Price and Knight into inquiring the differences of the two arts, Repton enumerates these:

1. The point of view of the painter is fixed, whereas the gardener surveys his scenery while in motion, and from many sites.
2. The field of vision is greater in nature than in a picture.
3. The view down a hill is not representable in painting.
4. The light on a real scene shifts, and (unlike painting, where composition and keeping can be secured only by setting off light with shade) all parts of a scene may bear illumination.
5. The foreground, so essential to the picture, is usually lacking in the real landscape.<sup>32</sup>

And although conceding that the delight of the imagination in intricacy makes desirable distinct breaks between the reaches of a landscape, Repton denies that the three distances of a landscape painting can be created in real landscape (except in the figurative sense mentioned above), for of the three distances of the improver, "the first includes that part of the scene which it is in his power to improve; the second, that which it is not in his power to prevent being injured; and the third, that which it is not in the power of himself, or any other, either to injure or improve. . . ." <sup>33</sup> The idea that painting should supply models for landscaping affords opportunity for the satirical excursions in which this controversy abounds: "This idea of deriving all our instruction from the works of great painters, is so ingenious and useful, that it ought not to be confined to gardening and building. In our markets, for instance, instead of that formal trim custom of displaying poultry, fish, and fruit, for sale on different stalls, why should we not rather copy the picturesque jumble of Schnyders and Rubens? Our kitchens may be furnished after the designs of Teniers and Ostade, our stables after Woovermans, and we may learn to dance from Watteau or Zuccarelli. . . ." <sup>34</sup> All this despite the derivation of the term "landscape-gardening," which Repton chooses because the art can only be perfected "by the united powers of the *landscape painter* and the *practical gardener*. The former must conceive a plan, which the latter may be able to execute. . . ." The mere gardener, "without some skill in painting, will

seldom be able to *form a just idea of effects before they are carried into execution.*" <sup>35</sup> Subsequently, however, Repton seems disposed to transfer from painter to gardener this faculty of foreseeing effects; the painter, he remarks, "sees things as *they are*," the landscape gardener "*as they will be.*" <sup>36</sup>

Discussion of the relation of painting to gardening leads to Repton's view of the picturesque, for Repton usually uses the term "picturesque" to mean "pictorial." "In the park and forest," he cries, "let the painter be indulged with the most picturesque objects for his pencil to imitate . . . let the active mind be soothed with all the beauty of landscape, and the contemplative roused by all the sublimity of prospect that nature can produce; but we must also provide artificial scenes, less wild, though not less interesting . . ." for the pleasure grounds of the leisured.<sup>37</sup> This remark suggests that Repton thought pictorial chiefly what is wild, rugged, and shaggy; this is Gilpinism, and with this clew we can follow Repton's conception of the picturesque throughout his writings.

The admiration which Repton expressed for the aesthetic theory of Burke was no doubt fostered by the reflection that Burke's theory left no room for a character alongside the beautiful and the sublime, though this polemical interest in no way obstructed Repton's theoretical grasp of Burke's theory and his skill in employing it in the analysis and construction of actual scenes. In the *Letter to Price*, it is true, Repton does seem to accept Price's conception of the co-ordinance of the picturesque with beautiful and sublime (although denying that it is a prime object of gardening); yet there is nothing in the other writings, or in the principles underlying the *Letter*, to indicate such a conviction. Repton speaks as often as not of "picturesque beauty," which is a solecism in Price's system, though consistent enough with Gilpin's usage. Gilpin and Price agree in this, that the picturesque is in some sense rough; Repton is in accord, but he sees roughness only in what is wild and unkempt. For Price, in contrast, highly dressed scenes, if intricate, various, and full of abrupt modifications of form and light, are perfectly picturesque. Repton appears to take both definition and description from Gilpin.

In architecture, Repton's taste is more like that of Price, and in his discussions of buildings "picturesque" is a term of praise rather than opprobrium. The reason is, I think, that the picturesque appears in (non-ruinous) architecture in the form of irregularity of plan and elevation and of intricacy of ornamentation. Irregularity is eminently pictorial, and at the same time is often the handiest manner

of building, as accommodating a variety of sizes, shapes, and exposures for rooms and as permitting additions with greatest grace. Utility and picturesqueness thus in great measure coincide in architecture, whereas in gardening (as Repton saw it) they were largely opposed. Gothic is clearly the picturesque style in architecture, and from his first work to his last Repton preferred Gothic to Grecian. His interest in irregular architecture was, in fact, a powerful force operating on the taste of the following generation in which the Gothic Revival swept over all England. The "great principle on which the picturesque effect of all Gothic edifices must depend," says Repton, is ". . . irregularity of outline; first, at the top by towers and pinnacles, or chimneys; secondly, in the outline of the faces, or elevations, by projections and recesses; thirdly, in the outline of the apertures, by breaking the horizontal lines with windows of different forms and heights; and, lastly, in the outline of the base, by the building being placed on ground of different levels."<sup>38</sup> It was "Queen Elizabeth's Gothic" that Repton recommended most often rather than castle or abbey Gothic, and he laments the "mutilation of the old *halls* and *manor houses*, where the large bay windows, the lofty open chimneys, and picturesque gables of Queen Elizabeth's time, give place to the modern sashes and flat roofs, with all the garish frippery of trellis, and canvas, and sharp-pointed pea-green Gothic porches, or porticos of Grecian columns reduced to the size of bed-posts."<sup>39</sup>

Although Repton's notion of the picturesque in architecture came in application very close to Price's (however different the underlying theories), in scenery Repton thought of the picturesque as wild and uncouth, fitter for gypsies than for English gentlemen, unless the gentlemen amused themselves with rifles or canvases. This image of picturesqueness is probably derived not only from Gilpin's nature-appreciation but from the style of landscape painting of the contemporary English school, which specialized in subjects that were wild without being great, and that of their Dutch and Italian models. In the report on Endsleigh (which I think was written early though published late), Repton discourses on the picturesque:

This word has, of late, excited considerable interest and controversy; but the word, like many others in common use, is more easy to be understood than defined; if it means all subjects capable of being represented in a picture, it will include the pig-sties of Moreland, as well as the filthy hostels of Teniers and Ostade. . . [but it is absurd to represent all that is visible without selecting what is most beautiful]. The

subjects represented by Salvator Rosa, and our English Mortimer, are deemed picturesque; but, are they fit objects to copy for the residence of man, in a polished and civilized state? Certainly not.<sup>40</sup>

The picturesque is consistently connected in this way with painting; and sometimes the connection becomes very particular, as in the observation that Grecian buildings have a beautiful effect amidst pointed or conical trees not only from contrast but because Italian painting has so often blended Grecian architecture with firs and cypresses. Such association by resemblance with the subjects or modes of representation of paintings is of peculiar importance in Knight's account of the picturesque, though this is a superficial instance, since the association involves the concrete wholes represented rather than the abstract qualities themselves.

It is important to notice the importance of association in Repton's thought. Like those of Price and Knight, Repton's aesthetic rules and judgments depend heavily upon association—there is almost no trace of Burke's physiology—but the classes of association stressed are not the same. What Repton calls by the name "association" is not of the first order of importance in construction of his theory, though in actual appreciation it "is one of the most impressive sources of delight; whether excited by local accident, as the spot on which some public character performed his part; by the remains of antiquity, as the ruin of a cloister or a castle; but more particularly by that personal attachment to long known objects . . . as the favourite seat, the tree, the walk, or the spot endeared by the remembrance of past events: . . . such partialities should be respected and indulged, since true taste, which is generally attended by great sensibility, ought to be the guardian of it in others."<sup>41</sup> Such personal or historical circumstances involve associations with concretes rather than with abstract qualities, and they are adventitious rather than inherent; this kind of association only is so termed by Repton.

But Repton appeals also to associations with qualities taken abstractly. He claims as his discovery the observation that Grecian architecture consists essentially of horizontal lines and Gothic of vertical,<sup>42</sup> and the problem of purity or mixture of styles depends partly on the composition of these lines. But it depends partly also upon our habits of vision as determined by historical accident; Repton denounces the incongruous mixture of Gothic and Grecian on antiquarian grounds, though he is inclined to permit some mixture of the three Gothic styles, for "whilst every casual observer may be struck with the incongruity of mixing the Grecian with the Gothic styles,

yet the nice antiquarian alone discovers, by the contour of a moulding, or the shape of a battlement, that mixture of the castle and abbey Gothic, which is equally incorrect with respect to their different dates and purposes."<sup>43</sup> It is interesting to note that Knight and Price, whose habits of vision were formed proportionately more on paintings, were inclined to justify the mixture of Grecian and Gothic which is so frequent in the Italian landscapes of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Repton at one time became so particular that he began to complain of the "mixed style" of Queen Elizabeth's Gothic, for "a mixed style is generally imperfect: the mind is not easily reconciled to the combination of forms which it has been used to consider distinct . . . it feels an incongruity of character . . . it is like uniting, in one object, infancy with old age, life with death, or things present with things past."<sup>44</sup> But this archaeological sensitivity is found only in the book explaining Repton's design for the pavilion at Brighton—which was to be in the Hindu style. He desired to introduce a new and safe source of novelty into British architecture which would not be susceptible of corrupting mixture with the two accepted systems; and it was his interest to show that the accepted systems were not themselves wholly adequate in utility and style. The *Fragments* subsequently betray no dissatisfaction with the "mixed Gothic."

Habitual association resulting from historical circumstances does not account wholly for our reactions to the materials of building, for this depends also on the properties of the materials, their costliness and durability. Such considerations lead us to that branch of associations with concretes which involves properties essential to the objects. Utility, fitness, and design all include such associations as these, and it is only insofar as they are associational that utility and fitness are aesthetic. So long as we approve the utility of an object with a practical aim in view, our feeling is perhaps pleasurable, but does not have the detachment and freedom of aesthetic pleasure; it is only when perceived sympathetically, without direct practical concernment or conscious reflection, that utility assumes an aesthetic guise. The practical view of a farm gives non-aesthetic satisfaction; the distant view of an active farm scene may give a truly aesthetic pleasure from the ideas of animation, prosperity, and happiness which it suggests. The utility of which Repton most often speaks lends itself especially well to aesthetic feeling; it is not that of a farm but of a retirement for leisure, and the detachment and freedom of leisure are associated to its conveniences. The merits Repton saw in formality

were of this kind, though he was not insensible to its picturesque qualities. But on occasion Repton becomes too practical for his judgments to be considered aesthetic; his analysis of the differences of town house and country house, and his rules for the layout of an estate, are so largely in terms of immediate function that they must be considered non-aesthetic;<sup>45</sup> Price discusses these same points, but in terms of creating visual effects.

Repton's utility has a range of moral overtones which determine his taste in beauties. Throughout his long career, Repton preferred neat and open scenes with light and animation; "cheerful" and "gloomy" are among his favorite epithets of praise and reproach, and he never tires of altering "the melancholy appendages of solitary grandeur observable in the pleasure-grounds of the last century."<sup>46</sup> His "favorite propensity for humanizing, as well as animating, beautiful scenery"<sup>47</sup> is a matter of taste and character, but is at the same time a facet of his preference of utility to picturesque beauty when the two conflict. His own tiny garden in the village of Romford was a frame to the landscape he preferred, a frame "composed of flowering shrubs and evergreens; beyond which are seen, the cheerful village, the high road, and that constant moving scene, which I would not exchange for any of the lonely parks that I have improved for others."<sup>48</sup>

## The Price-Repton Controversy



REPTON'S *Letter to Price* betrays, in its lack of system and order, the haste with which it was composed; and this is the more unfortunate since Price unimaginatively organized his much longer *Letter to Repton* to answer point by point. Neither of these works of controversy impresses as a powerful or profound piece of aesthetic speculation. Repton introduces his assault with the conciliatory judgment that "in the general principles and theory of the art, which you have considered with so much attention, I flatter myself that we agree; and that our difference of opinion relates only to the propriety, or, perhaps, possibility, of reducing them to practice."<sup>1</sup> Repton's principles are really, however, very different from those of Price; and since Repton proceeds to show that Price's (as he understands them) are not practicable, it is a question how they could be accepted even in theory if inherently insusceptible of reduction to practice? Price perceives this paradox and is quick to point out the "very singular contrast" between Repton's opening professions of agreement upon principles and the ensuing attack upon those very principles.<sup>2</sup>

The principles which undergo Repton's examination are, that the painter's landscape is the model for the gardener, and that the picturesque consists in the wild and uncouth. Neither of these propositions, of course, was asserted by Price. He proposed not to copy pictures in gardens, but to apply in landscape the principles of composition governing all visual phenomena, principles isolated most readily, to be sure, in the works of the great painters. "The question, therefore, is not," Price declares, "whether the Caracci, Francesco Bolognese, or S. Rosa, would study landscapes in a flower-garden, but which of two scenes of the same character (whatever it were, from the Alps to a parterre,) had most of those qualities that accord with the general principles of their art."<sup>3</sup> And secondly, the picturesque

is nowise incompatible with high ornamentation and the conveniences of civilized life; Price avows that he might even prefer the nation to be wholly finished by Brown rather than become one "huge picturesque forest"—the fate Repton foresaw if the "new system of improving 'by neglect and accident'" should prevail.<sup>4</sup> These two principles are in Repton's thought really only one; "it seems to me," Price observes in noting this coincidence, "that your principal aim through the whole of this Letter, is to shew, that by an attention to pictures, and to the method of study pursued by painters, only wild and unpolished ideas are acquired."<sup>5</sup> Not so, of course; the elegance of Claude, the formal grandeur of Poussin (to look no farther) refute this notion. Nor, moreover, did Price propose that the improver should abandon design to chance, but only that he should gain hints for design from observing the effects produced by neglect and accident. This use of accident is a consequence of the nature of the art, for, unlike architecture, gardening deals with the materials of nature.<sup>6</sup>

Repton's letter falls, after introductory compliment and blow, into three sections: the first, an examination of the relation of painting and gardening; the second, an apology for Brown's clump and belt; the third, a return to the offensive with a renewed attack on painting and the picturesque. However amateurs might be misled into supposing a great affinity amongst the several arts they cultivate, Repton remarks in taking up the first of these heads, mature consideration and practical experience have led him to realize that "*in whatever relates to man, propriety and convenience are not less objects of good taste, than picturesque effect. . . .*"<sup>7</sup> Price's reply to the argument from utility is revealing. After describing how a landscape painter might improve a scene, he observes that "in all this, *convenience* and *propriety* are not the objects of consideration: not that either of them is to be neglected, but that they are objects of another kind; objects of good sense, and good judgment, rather than of that more refined and delicate sense and judgment, called taste. Any glaring offense against either of them is disgusting, but the strictest observance of them will give a man but little reputation for taste, unless the general effect of the *picture* be good."<sup>8</sup> The argument is, that circumstances of utility are not truly aesthetic in quality—a point which I have hitherto considered at sufficient length. Price is chiefly interested in associations with abstract visual qualities, or in the direct nervous action of such qualities, and it is doubtful that he would judge aesthetic any assemblage of concretes not enriched by associations with

line, color, and shade. The question to be decided is in a sense one of terminology; but the terminology hinges upon a discrimination of subtle sensations. Disinterested appreciation of utility is assuredly pleasurable, though assuredly different in feeling from pictorial values; ought the two feelings to be ranked together? Here the habits of feeling and the philosophic inheritances of the two disputants come into play. Price is by temperament highly sensitive to compositional and to romantic values, and (though a Whig humanitarian) loves seclusion and reverie. Repton is by native temperament and by the conscious habits of his professional duties concerned more with society than with contemplation; and (his visual sensitivity notwithstanding) concerned more with use than with composition or poetic feeling. Price is temperamentally disinclined from accepting convenience as an aesthetic consideration, while Repton is prompted to consider it a part, and the chief part, of taste. Add to this, that Repton had really no philosophical inheritance except those eulogies of Brownian gardening which were couched often in terms of utility, whereas Price built upon the system of Burke, the whole influence of which was against admission of the useful as a cause of beauty.<sup>9</sup>

In examining picturesqueness (I revert to Repton's *Letter*), Repton takes advantage of Price's distinction between beautiful and picturesque: "There is no exercise so pleasing to the inquisitive mind," he avers, "as that of deducing theories and systems from favourite opinions: I was therefore peculiarly interested and gratified by your ingenious distinction betwixt the beautiful and the picturesque; but I cannot admit the propriety of its application to landscape gardening; because beauty, and not 'picturesqueness,' is the chief object of modern improvement. . . ." <sup>10</sup> In reply, Price makes three observations which restate the issue cleared of the obfuscations which Repton's misreading or rhetoric had thrown over it. The picturesque, firstly, is not a reference to painting but a separate aesthetic character; it is in many cases not applicable to gardening, but the general principles of painting are always so. The landscape gardener, secondly, does more than make a garden near the house, where the picturesque must often be sacrificed; he makes a park. And thirdly, in nature the picturesque is usually mixed with the beautiful, whereas improvers have exhibited "the dangerous tendency of recommending a narrow exclusive attention to beauty as a separate quality . . . instead of a liberal and enlarged attention to beauty in its more general sense [which would include the picturesque], to character, and to the *genius loci*." <sup>11</sup> Price suggests, and I think plausibly, that Repton is

influenced by a *jalousie de métier*, which leads him to misstate the issue on one side by taking gardening in the narrower sense rather than landscape gardening, and on the other side by taking painters' studies of *wild* nature exclusively. Those insensible transitions in which Burkeian beauty consists are, after all, best effected in gardening by a natural style of loose arrangements; Brown's effort at this beauty consisted in making the separate parts smooth or undulating, but in leaving each part—clump, belt, walk, river—perfectly distinct and sharply separated. Brown and his followers, says Price, "have been universally and professedly, smoothers, shavers, clearers, levellers, and dealers in distinct serpentine lines and edges. . . ." <sup>12</sup>

Repton introduces one argument on this general head which requires especial attention, the political analogy which is appealed to in one form or another both by the disputants of the eighteenth century and the scholars of the twentieth. Repton

cannot help seeing great affinity betwixt deducing gardening from the painter's studies of wild nature, and deducing government from the uncontroled opinions of man in a savage state. The neatness, simplicity, and elegance of English gardening, have acquired the approbation of the present century, as the happy medium betwixt the wildness of nature and the stiffness of art; in the same manner as the English constitution is the happy medium betwixt the liberty of savages, and the restraint of despotic government; and so long as we enjoy the benefit of these middle degrees betwixt extremes of each [he concludes], let experiments of untried theoretical improvement be made in some other country. <sup>13</sup>

Price rejoins in like vein that his pride and exultation in the British constitution "would sink into shame and despondency, should the parallel you have made, ever become just: should the freedom, energy, and variety of our minds, give place to tameness and monotony; should our opinions be prescribed to us, and, like our places, be moulded into one form," and so forth; modern improvement is "a species of thralldom unfit for a free country," he had declared in his first book. <sup>14</sup> This kind of political analogy had been even from the beginning of the century a feature of discussion of gardening—so much so that Nikolaus Pevsner declares that "Whig is the first source of the landscape garden," and tells us that the landscape garden was "conceived in England, because it is the garden of liberalism." <sup>15</sup> I. de Wolfe goes further, and makes an effort to relate picturesque theory to the political background in such a way as to be able to use the terminology of politics for discussion of landscape. <sup>16</sup> But really, the

appeal to the British constitution is a mere rhetorical trick, whether it appears in Knight, in Price, or in Repton. All of these men are literal-minded; none makes dialectical assimilations of politics to aesthetics or vice versa. Such arguments have no real conviction for them and are mere polemical brickbats; they are rationalizations, not intellectual causes, and they are never the principal arguments relied upon, but are makeweights thrown in to overwhelm already staggering opponents. To stress them is to equivocate with terms and to distort picturesque theory.

The second of the principal divisions of Repton's *Letter* defends clump and belt, the most conspicuous features of Brown's style. The question of the clump is merely one of means, as Repton states it: the clump is the simplest way of producing a group in future. Price, however, denies that Brown ever "made a clump like a natural group, though he did make many natural groups like clumps";<sup>17</sup> the inference is that he preferred distinctness to connection, and "it is by means of this *system* of making every thing distinct and separate, that Mr. Brown has been enabled to do such rapid and extensive mischief; and thence it is that he is so much more an object of the painter's indignation than his strait-lined predecessors."<sup>18</sup> Repton's defense of the belt, too, rests upon expediency. Man loves seclusion and safety: the park must be enclosed. He loves liberty: the pale must not show. The belt gives the reality of enclosure with the deceptive appearance of freedom. Price, instead, is inclined to suppose the belt adopted from vanity in the owners (to conceal the size of a small estate, or display that of a large) and laziness in the improvers (since it is a formula applied without regard to particular circumstances of composition). It is of interest that on clumps and belts at least, Price and Repton drew together as Repton's interest in the garden and his appreciation of picturesque effect increased. Repton even comes to sneer at the "trim imitators of Brown's defects," and to refer contemptuously to "the spruce modern seat of sudden affluence, *be-belted* and *be-clumped* in the newest style of the modern taste of landscape gardening. . . ."<sup>19</sup> This coincidence of opinion is not an identity, however, for Repton was contracting the pleasure grounds into a garden while Price (though formalizing them near the house) was transforming them into a forest park.

Having written this much, Repton determined on having his letter printed, and accordingly returned to the attack on the painter-gardener. He warns against amateurs "quacking" themselves; he contradistinguishes the prospect, in which everybody delights, from

the landscape, or painter's subject, and proclaims the love of prospect to be "an inherent passion of the human mind";<sup>20</sup> he decides that painting and gardening are not sister arts but congenial natures brought together like man and wife (the controversy reaches its most banal); he suggests that (as a man may from habit prefer tobacco to sugar) Knight and Price "are in the habits of admiring fine pictures, and both live amidst bold and picturesque scenery," which may, he tells them, "have rendered you insensible to the beauty of those milder scenes that have charms for common observers . . . your palate certainly requires a degree of 'irritation' rarely to be expected in garden scenery; and, I trust, the good sense and good taste of this country will never be led to despise the comfort of a gravel walk, the delicious fragrance of a shrubbery, the soul expanding delight of a wide extended prospect, or a view down a steep hill, because they are all subjects incapable of being painted."<sup>21</sup> Price humorlessly takes up each of Repton's points, in which it will not be necessary to follow him. His discussion of prospects, however, is ingenious. A prospect is distinguished from a landscape, from a composition suitable for a picture, in that the foreground and second distance are absent or minimal. The question arises, why prospects are enchanting in nature, though unsuited for painting? The reason Price alleges is that painted prospects "are not *real*, and therefore do not excite the curiosity which reality does, both as to the particular spots, and the circumstances attending them . . .";<sup>22</sup> Price might well have granted also the sublimity of prospect. One of the circumstances the curious eye remarks in a prospect is, of course, the composition of those parts which make separate pictures. Gilpin, too, found this fascination in the prospect; after describing a various and extensive scene, spoiled by transfer to canvas, Gilpin sings,

*Yet why (methinks I hear  
Some Critic say) do ample scenes, like this,  
In picture fail to please; when every eye  
Confesses they transport on Nature's chart?  
Why, but because, where She displays the scene,  
The roving sight can pause, and swift select,  
From all she offers, parts, whereon to fix,  
And form distinct perceptions; each of which  
Presents a separate picture. Thus as bees  
Condense within their hives the varying sweets;  
So does the eye a lovely whole collect  
From parts disjointed; nay, perhaps, deformed.<sup>23</sup>*



Since the painted panorama is seen at one *coup d'oeil*, the picturesque eye can not from it select such separate compositions.

To the refutation of Repton's objections Price appends a review of the whole question of the difference and mixture of the picturesque and the beautiful. For he feels about Repton's criticisms as most philosophical writers feel about the arguments of their opponents, that confusion has enveloped the subject from the uncertain and licentious use of words. The central term, "beauty," may signify comprehensively "all that allures, attracts, or pleases the eye in every style,"<sup>24</sup> through the grand principle of union, harmony, connection, breadth, congruity; or it may have the narrower Burkeian sense as opposed to sublimity and the picturesque. The analogy of aesthetical and ethical language is again stressed; like "beauty," "virtue" has both a broad, inclusive sense, and a narrow sense referring to the most valued qualities in men (courage) and women (chastity). The analytical separation and practical blending of beautiful and picturesque are illustrated by some of Price's most luscious description. Even the topic of gravel walks and mown lawns is given a luminosity and order when drawn under Price's apparatus of terms and distinctions.

In a letter to the publisher Robson, granting permission for his *Letter to Price* to be reprinted in Price's answer, Repton speaks of adding an Appendix to "the first volume of my great work" in which "I shall more fully enter into the question between Mr. Knight, Mr. Price, Mr. Brown & myself. . . ."<sup>25</sup> As late as December 24, 1794, then (Repton misdates his copy of the letter 1795), Repton had not added the seventh chapter (against Knight) or the Appendix (against Price). But these additions, once made, add little to this exposition, for they have been canvassed in the treatment of Repton's scheme as a whole. He complains of Price's alleged idea-thieving; mentions the controversy over painting; proclaims his agreement with Price on artificial water (though eight years later he was to declare that "Mr. Price has written an Essay to describe the *practical* manner of finishing the banks of artificial water: but I confess, after reading it with much attention, I despair of making any practitioner comprehend his meaning . . ."<sup>26</sup>); defends Brown against misrepresentation; enters into the sources of pleasure in landscape gardening, neglect of some of which had misled Price and Knight; and, finally, prints a letter on gardening by William Windham. This piece of Windham's says in little almost all that Repton had said at length; the key proposition is that "places are not to be laid out with

a view to their appearance in a picture, but to their uses, and the enjoyment of them in real life; and their conformity to those purposes is that which constitutes their beauty. . . ."<sup>27</sup> So far as the controversy stems from principle rather than personality, this is that principle which lies at its root.

The *Observations on Theory and Practice* contain a few sections devoted to the controversy; Repton has softened little, and still tilts at windmills in reading "picturesque" as "pictorial." Behind the scenes of this logomachy, however, the combatants speak well of one another, and the differences over which they cut and slash in print they gloss over in correspondence. Repton declares to Robson that he "received so much pleasure in perusing Mr. Price's work & am so charmed with the animation of his Stile and manner, that I shall not be sorry to have provoked this kind of *sparring*, so long as we both keep our muffles on our hand & our buttons on the points of our foils."<sup>28</sup> When Price concludes his published *Letter* in a spirit of accommodation, excusing "occasional asperity" on the grounds that "he who writes a formal challenge, must not expect a billet-doux in return," and avouching that "whatever sharpness there may be in my style, there is no rancour in my heart,"<sup>29</sup> Repton replied with generosity, candidly acknowledging that "the difference in our opinions is by no means so great, as we either of us pretend in our publick controversy. . . ."<sup>30</sup>

There was little personal animosity between Price and Repton, notwithstanding the harsh sarcasms they leveled at one another in print, but towards Knight, I think, Repton did at first feel real resentment for the affront offered in *The Landscape* (of which more hereafter). When it became clear, after publication of the *Analytical Inquiry* in 1805, that there was an intellectual rift between neighbors Price and Knight, Repton naturally sided with Price. From the first he had felt that there was "a shade of difference betwixt the opinions of Mr. Price and Mr. Knight, which seems to have arisen from the different characters of their respective places; *Foxley* is less romantic than *Downton*, and therefore Mr. Price is less extravagant in his ideas, and more willing to allow some little sacrifice of picturesque beauty to neatness, near the house. . . ."<sup>31</sup> But the *Analytical Inquiry*'s critique of Price allows Repton to regard him as a fellow victim to the severity of Knight's criticism. In the *Fragments on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*, Repton's last book, the references to Price are mostly favorable; Repton makes incidental appeal to Price as to an authority whose concurrence lends weight

to his own opinion,<sup>32</sup> and even quotes Price's Ciceronian motto, "Quàm multa vident pictores in umbris et in eminentiis, quae nos non videmus."<sup>33</sup> Most curiously, in writing on Stanage Park, Rep-ton remarks that "the opposite opinions of two gentlemen in its vicinity [a footnote identifies Price and Knight] have produced that controversy in which I have endeavoured to become a moderator."<sup>34</sup> This is not quite the role in which we recall him!

## Richard Payne Knight



**T**HE LANDSCAPE, a Didactic Poem in Three Books. Addressed to Uvedale Price, Esq., appeared early in 1794, the first manifesto of the picturesque controversy. Richard Payne Knight, its author, was a scholar and connoisseur with an enthusiasm for the picturesque and a knack for didactic poetry in the manner of Pope.<sup>1</sup> Knight was prominent in the Society of Dilettanti and one of the principals in the Elgin marbles controversy; his collection of antique coins and bronzes is today the basis of the British Museum's holdings; and he had the most valuable collection of Claudes in Europe. Downton Castle, which he himself designed, and his park along the picturesque Teme in Shropshire are among the showplaces of England. And Knight has as well some claim to the title of philosopher, partly for his system-building,<sup>2</sup> but surely for the keenness of his insight into human motives. The tangential dissertations on happiness, love, morals, government—dissertations scattered through both *The Landscape* and the *Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste*—interrupt continuity and shatter organization, but the works would be less rich without them. Knight conjoins the urbane cynicism of Gibbon with a sympathy genuine though not mawkish; and his thoughts on political society, religion, marriage—skeptical, tolerant, just—exhibit a mind distinguished in its balance of polished intellect with unforced feeling.

*The Landscape* was a highly entertaining work and enjoyed a favorable reception—a reception which roused a host of defenders of the old order. *The Landscape* is, of course, primarily concerned with inculcation of a certain taste in gardening rather than with exposition of a system of aesthetics; but that taste involves implications and assumptions of immense importance. Empirical aesthetics are perhaps always best grasped in their application to visible objects, and espe-

cially to natural objects which involve few complicating factors. The theory of landscape gardening, an art which heightens and simplifies the effects of natural scenery without introducing artistic materials of its own, is thus an excellent introduction to the problems of aesthetics.

But I need not justify further the inclusion of *The Landscape* in this study. The opening argument and invocation have the faintly ironical flavor which pervades much of the poem:

*How best to bid the verdant Landscape rise,  
To please the fancy, and delight the eyes;  
Its various parts in harmony to join  
With art clandestine, and conceal'd design;  
T'adorn, arrange;—to sep'rate, and select* 5  
*With secret skill, and counterfeit neglect;  
I sing.—Do thou, O Price, the song attend;  
Instruct the poet, and assist the friend:  
Teach him plain truth in numbers to express,  
And shew its charms through fiction's flow'ry dress.* 10

The opposition of fancy and sensation (in the second verse) is of fundamental importance for Knight, whose aesthetics connects a theory of the direct nervous action of color and light with an elaborate associational psychology. It reappears in the statement of the first principle of taste:

*'Tis still one principle through all extends,* 35  
*And leads through diff'rent ways to diff'rent ends*  
.  
.  
.  
*'Tis just congruity of parts combin'd*  
*To please the sense, and satisfy the mind.* 40

This congruity is not to be delimited by arbitrary rules, whether in painting or in landscape gardening:

*Nature in all rejects the pedant's chain;* 140  
*Which binding beauty in its waving line,  
Destroys the charm it vainly would define;  
For nature still irregular and free,  
Acts not by lines, but gen'ral sympathy.*

The true rules for gardening are illustrated by a pronouncement on approaches:

*First fix the points to which you wish to go;  
Then let your easy path spontaneous flow;*

*With no affected turn or artful bend,* 155  
*To lead you round still farther from the end:  
For, as the principle of taste is sense,  
Whate'er is void of meaning gives offence.*

It was to this passage that Knight appended a note on Repton's Red Book for Tatton; having read Repton as urging that the family arms might be placed on neighboring milestones, Knight subjects this gratification of "purse-proud vanity" to excoriating satire. Repton, naturally enough, was embittered, and added a chapter of defense and rebuttal, "Concerning Approaches; with Some Remarks on the Affinity Betwixt Painting and Gardening," to his *Sketches and Hints*. Quoting at length from the Red Book of Tatton, and from others of his reports, he defends himself pretty successfully against the charge of catering to the pride of conspicuous magnificence. It was perhaps a little pompous to suggest erecting distance markers with the family arms (not, as Knight read it, using the turnpike milestones for the purpose); but Repton is free of the desire to establish vast estates for solitary splendor. More and more, as we have seen, he urged limiting the size of parks, and advised that the public be admitted to enliven them. He is, it is true, desirous of perpetuating a hierarchy of ranks and classes; but Knight and Price, Whigs though they be, share this preference.

True taste, as Knight declares, reveals its stores cautiously:

*Its greatest art is aptly to conceal;*  
*To lead, with secret guile, the prying sight  
To where component parts may best unite,  
And form one beauteous, nicely blended whole,* 195  
*To charm the eye and captivate the soul.*

Two plates illustrate application of this principle to landscaping; one exhibits a severely Palladian house set in a shaven lawn with an affected Chinese bridge carrying a serpentine approach—every part hard and distinct; the other shows an intricate Tudor Gothic house half-buried in a wilderness, with shaggy foreground and rough-hewn rustic bridge—the "beauteous whole" of harmonious and picturesque connection. Repton (with some justice) thinks the two scenes "serve rather to exemplify bad taste in the two extremes of artificial neatness and wild neglect," and the rustic bridge (copied, in fact, from one on Knight's estate) "looks like the miserable expedient of poverty, or a ridiculous affectation of rural simplicity."<sup>3</sup>

Knight (we return to *The Landscape*) thinks to develop prin-

principles for gardening by analyzing the three distances of painting. Hence, he cries,

*Hence let us learn, in real scenes, to trace  
The true ingredients of the painter's grace;* 258

*But ah! in vain:—see yon fantastic band,  
With charts, pedometers, and rules in hand,  
Advance triumphant, and alike lay waste  
The forms of nature, and the works of taste!  
T' improve, adorn, and polish, they profess;* 265  
*But shave the goddess, whom they come to dress;*

*Hence, hence! thou haggard fiend, however call'd,  
Thin, meagre genius of the bare and bald;  
Thy spade and mattock here at length lay down,* 285  
*And follow to the tomb thy fav'rite Brown. . . .*

This attack on Brown called forth Repton in defense; "the whole," he says, "of that false and mistaken theory, which Mr. Knight endeavours to introduce, by confounding the two ideas [of park and forest], proceeds from not duly considering the degree of affinity betwixt painting and gardening. . . ." <sup>4</sup> We need not examine again the opinions of Repton on this vexed question; but Repton did not spring alone to the defense of the art of Capability Brown. William Marshall and George Mason, practical gardeners both, wrote elaborate replies to *The Landscape* and to Price's *Essay on the Picturesque*. And John Matthews struck off a parody, *A Sketch from the Landscape*, matching verse for verse. Knight's adjuration to improvers to follow their master Brown to the tomb suggested Matthews' title-page vignette, which exhibits a fashionably dressed gentleman discharging the contents of a chamber pot at a tomb inscribed CAPABILITY. Around the tomb a half-dozen improvers, equipped with spade, scythe, and roller, are spattered with the discharge and fall away holding their noses, &c. Matthews' ironical comment:

*Death has mown thee [Brown]—his heavy paw  
Has swept thee down his deep ha-ha,  
Thou great defacer of the nation!  
Well did he use his scythe and broom!  
And now, with glee, upon thy tomb  
I'll pour a suitable libation.* <sup>5</sup>

Another vignette at end illustrates the closing apostrophe:

*Triumphant KNIGHT! to give thy name  
A passport to immortal fame,  
What shall the grateful world agree on?*

*Thy statue of Colossal size,  
In ductile yew, shall nobly rise—  
(Think not thy modesty shall 'scape us)  
The God of Gardens thou shalt stand,  
To fright improvers from the land,  
A huge and terrible Priapus.* <sup>6</sup>

The vignette is a caricature of a formal garden, with knotted parterre, topiary work, and a cypress avenue; facing the avenue and back to us is the yew statue of Knight; two ladies are turning away in confusion (a statue of Priapus, recall). This allusion is a clever but rather cruel stroke; it refers, of course, to Knight's *Account of the Remains of the Worship of Priapus*, a book generations ahead of its age in understanding of sexual symbolism, which brought on Knight's head a storm of abuse for alleged obscenity and infidelity.

Knight's mockery of improvers for "shaving Nature" is in its turn mocked:

*How cropt and shorn poor Nature looks!  
How could these blockheads at her toilet  
Shave such a charming head, and spoil it!  
Shave, then, no more, good friends, but friz  
The lovely locks round Nature's phiz. . . .* <sup>7</sup>

Again, with the misunderstanding which Hearne's engraving was likely to suggest and entrenched interest to adopt, Matthews cries,

*That man should walk, can Nature mean,  
On prim-roll'd gravel fring'd with green?  
No—if I rightly understand her!  
'Midst brambles thick I'd rather chuse  
To trudge in dirt above my shoes,  
Than in such serpentine meander!* <sup>8</sup>

Book II of *The Landscape* is introduced by celebration of the ancient system of formal gardening—

Oft when P've seen some lonely mansion stand,  
 Fresh from th' improver's desolating hand,  
 'Midst shaven lawns, that far around it creep  
 In one eternal undulating sweep;  
 And scatter'd clumps, that nod at one another, 5  
 Each stiffly waving to its formal brother;  
 Tir'd with th' extensive scene, so dull and bare,  
 To Heav'n devoutly P've address'd my pray'r,—  
 Again the moss-grown terraces to raise,  
 And spread the labyrinth's perplexing maze; 10  
 Replace in even lines the ductile yew,  
 And plant again the ancient avenue.  
 Some feature then, at least, we should obtain,  
 To mark this flat, insipid, waving plain;  
 Some vary'd tints and forms would intervene, 15  
 To break this uniform, eternal green.<sup>9</sup>

This exordium is followed by development of principles of composition for the new picturesque park and by oft-quoted lines on picturesque buildings—

Bless'd is the man, in whose sequester'd glade,  
 Some ancient abbey's walls diffuse their shade; 255  
 With mould'ring windows pierc'd, and turrets crown'd,  
 And pinnacles with clinging ivy bound.

Bless'd too is he, who, 'midst his tufted trees,  
 Some ruin'd castle's lofty towers sees;  
 Imbosom'd high upon the mountains brow, 260  
 Or nodding o'er the stream that glides below.

Nor yet unenvy'd, to whose humbler lot  
 Falls the retir'd and antiquated cot;—  
 Its roof with weeds and mosses cover'd o'er,

Still happier he (if conscious of his prize)  
 Who sees some temple's broken columns rise,  
 'Midst sculptur'd fragments, shiver'd by their fall, 270  
 And tott'ring remnants of its marble wall;—  
 Where ev'ry beauty of correct design,  
 And vary'd elegance of art, combine  
 With nature's softest tints, matur'd by time,  
 And the warm influence of a genial clime. 275

This second book concludes with an account of the purity of taste among the Greeks,<sup>10</sup> its destruction by Roman tyranny and Christian bigotry, and the revival in the Renaissance:

Reviv'd again, in Charles' and Leo's days,  
 Art dawn'd unsteady, with reflected rays;  
 Lost all the gen'ral principle of grace, 410  
 And wav'ring fancy left to take its place;  
 But yet, in these degen'rate days, it shone  
 With one perfection, e'en to Greece unknown:  
 Nature's aerial tints and fleeting dyes,  
 Old Titian first imbody'd to the eyes; 415  
 And taught the tree to spread its light array  
 In mimic colours, and on canvas play.  
 Next Rubens came, and catch'd in colours bright  
 The flick'ring flashes of celestial light;

But both their merits, polish'd and refin'd  
 By toil and care, in patient Claude were join'd:  
 Nature's own pupil, fav'rite child of taste!  
 Whose pencil, like Lysippus' chisel, trac'd 425  
 Vision's nice errors, and, with feign'd neglect,  
 Sunk partial form in general effect.

This peculiar merit of modern painting is the picturesque, the harmonious blending of tints and lights which constitutes the direct pleasure of the sense of sight. *The Landscape*, while not a treatise on aesthetics, was yet deliberately calculated to cultivate the tastes which Knight's theory, already formed, justified and demanded. Even in the Sicilian diary of 1777 are passages containing the germ of Knight's theory. On April 13 of that year, Knight writes of the ruins at Paestum, "The colour is a whitish yellow, which merges here and there into shades of greyish blue. The weather has attacked the stone, which is overgrown with moss and weeds, and neither blackened by smoke, nor rendered hideous by recent additions, as is the wont of ruins at Rome. Thus it is that the tints affect the eye in a fashion at once harmonious, pleasing, and picturesque."<sup>11</sup> "Affect the eye," "harmonious," and "picturesque" are all susceptible here of the technical analysis given in the *Analytical Inquiry*.

The final book of *The Landscape*, on trees, is logically only a pendant to the second and need not detain us. Gilpin, who had given an analysis of trees and shrubs, their groupings and accompaniments, in his *Remarks on Forest Scenery*, dwelt chiefly on line and form; Knight, consistently with his theory of the picturesque, operates more in terms of light and color. His prescriptions, like those of Price, are

free of academic mannerism; he celebrates the beauties of native scenery—

Nor [he warns], plac'd beneath our cool and wat'ry sky,  
 Attempt the glowing tints of Italy: 310  
 For thus compell'd in mem'ry to confide,  
 Or blindly follow some preceding guide,  
 One common track it [art] still pursues,  
 And crudely copies what it never views. . . .

It is not imitation of Italian landscape, real or painted, that is required, but independent composition on picturesque principles.

When a second edition of *The Landscape* was called for in 1795, Knight added a note which, after dealing an incidental blow to Repton for his *Letter to Price*, undertook the subversion of Price's radical distinction of beautiful and picturesque. Repton, "taking advantage of a supposed distinction between the picturesque and the beautiful," maintains that "his art was never intended to produce landscapes, but some kind of *neat, simple, and elegant effects*, or non-descript beauties, which have not yet been named or classed. . . . I cannot, however [Knight declares], but think that the distinction of which this ingenious professor has thus taken advantage, is an imaginary one, and that the picturesque is merely that kind of beauty which belongs exclusively to the sense of vision; or to the imagination, guided by that sense."<sup>12</sup> This is the thesis of the note to *The Landscape*, and this is the thesis of the *Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste* a decade later, so far as that work relates to the picturesque.

In the Introduction to the *Analytical Inquiry*, "Containing a Sceptical View of the Subject," Knight develops with some subtlety the uncertainty and instability of every standard. Since taste is a question of feeling rather than of reason, the only standard is the generality of feeling; yet no values are really general, and every age rejects the values of the preceding. "The word Beauty," Knight observes, "is a general term of approbation, of the most vague and extensive meaning, applied indiscriminately to almost every thing that is pleasing, either to the sense, the imagination, or the understanding; whatever the nature of it be, whether a material substance, a moral excellence, or an intellectual theorem."<sup>13</sup> All these applications of the term, moreover, are literal, notwithstanding that "all epithets, employed to distinguish qualities perceivable only by intellect, were originally applied to objects of sense . . . and are therefore applied

*transitively*, though not always *figuratively*, to objects of intellect or imagination."<sup>14</sup> Whether applied to virtue or the human form, "beauty" signifies the result of balance and proportion. But these "proportions" are not truly the same; "I admit," Knight continues, ". . . that the word Beauty entirely changes its meaning . . . accordingly as it is applied to objects of the senses, the imagination, or the understanding; for, though these faculties are so mixed and compounded in their operations, in the complicated mind of civilized man, that it is extremely difficult to discriminate them accurately; yet the pleasures of each, though mixed in their effects, are utterly distinct in their causes."<sup>15</sup>

It is this analysis of the faculties which permits Knight to get beyond the expression of personal preferences. The three parts of the *Analytical Inquiry* are devoted to sensation, the association of ideas (comprehending "Knowledge or Improved Perception," "Imagination," and "Judgment"), and the passions. The appropriateness of this particular psychology will be examined later; what is to be noted here is the advance such an approach represents over that of Price. One of the difficulties in Price's analysis, and one which has left Price exposed to much misunderstanding, is the confusion in which the psychological mechanisms underlying the aesthetic characters are left. In Knight, the analysis is conducted entirely in terms of the faculties involved in aesthetic experience, so that (whatever errors may be made in the conduct of the analysis) the argument always differentiates clearly the various causes involved.

Analysis naturally proceeds from the simple to the complex, and Knight begins, accordingly, with the senses, and with those least compounded with the higher faculties—taste, then smell and touch. Having ascertained the principles of sensation generally, Knight can then move to the senses of sight and hearing, "whose objects are the proper objects of taste in the more general sense of the word, as used to signify a general discriminative faculty arising from just feeling and correct judgment implanted in the mind of man by his Creator, and improved by exercise, study, and meditation."<sup>16</sup>

Knight was pretty well read in British philosophy as far as Reid. He follows Berkeley and Hume in rejecting the special status of primary qualities, but not in what he supposed to be Berkeley's denial of the material world and Hume's denial of the intellectual universe as well. To escape these supposed conclusions of skepticism, Knight emphasizes a set of distinctions familiar enough to readers in the Scottish philosophy. "All its [skepticism's] wandering clouds of

confusion and perplexity," he says, "seem to have arisen from employing the Greek word *idea*, sometimes in its proper sense to signify a mental image or vision, and sometimes in others the most adverse and remote, to signify *perception, remembrance, notion, knowledge*, and almost every other operation, or result of operation, of which the mind is capable."<sup>17</sup> Thus, we have a *perception* of an object moving when we see or feel it (and even this is more than the sensation), and a *remembrance* afterwards; of the motion of the earth we have a *notion* "acquired by comparative deductions from other perceptions"; of motion in general we have only *general knowledge* abstracted from all the above. Objects and their qualities exist really, and by experience we learn that they are the causes of sensations—though the sensations do not resemble them. But mere sensation—a modification of the sense-organ—is different from the perception in the mind, and this difference is crucial for aesthetics.

Much of the later doctrine is a consequence of the remarks on taste and smell, remarks which are carefully selected, however scattered in appearance. The doctrine is, that the sense-organs, like other animal parts, are irritable, a certain degree of irritation being always kept up by ordinary vital processes. This normal irritation may be increased or decreased by external impressions, or its modes may be changed; "but how these changes take place . . . is beyond the reach of human faculties to discover. All that we know is, that certain modes of irritation produce sensations, which are pleasant, and others, sensations which are unpleasant; that there must be a certain degree of it to produce either; and that, beyond a certain degree, all are painful."<sup>18</sup> The influence of custom and that of novelty are readily allowed for; with an acuteness and a cynicism altogether characteristic, Knight remarks that "the case is, that all those tastes, which are natural, lose, and all those which are unnatural, acquire strength by indulgence: for no strained or unnatural action of the nerves can ever be so assimilated to their constitutional modes of existence, as not to produce, on every re-application of its cause, a change sufficient to excite a pleasing irritation. . . ." <sup>19</sup> In this theory, essentially the same pleasure results from an increase in deficient irritation and from a diminution of excessive irritation, whereas in Burke's nervous physiology there are two distinct modes of agreeable sensation, according as the nerves are relaxed below their normal tension ("pleasure") or allowed to approach normality from painful distention ("delight"). Knight's theory does not readily accommodate two modes of pleasure in this way, and the result is disso-

lution of Burke's dichotomy of sublime and beautiful. "Among the pleasures of sense, more particularly among those belonging to touch," Knight postulates, "there is a certain class, which, though arising from negative causes, are nevertheless real and positive pleasures: as when we gradually sink from any violent or excessive degree of action or irritation into a state of tranquillity and repose . . . but why the sensation caused by the ascent of the scale [of intensity] should be called pleasure, and that caused by its descent, delight, as distinguished by an eminent writer, I cannot discover."<sup>20</sup>

Burke's beauty, of which the leading trait is smoothness, is also rejected by Knight, and found to depend upon "mistake of a particular sexual sympathy for a general principle," through association of ideas. Abstracted from such sympathies, the pleasures of touch arise from gentle irritation. One of Knight's crotchets is the tracing out of the influence of sexual associations on art—and rejecting what comes from this origin as aesthetic only in inferior degree.

It is in the treatment of sight that Knight is most strikingly original. The sensual pleasure of the organs of sight depends, Knight finds, on the same principle which governs the pleasure of the other senses—"that is, upon a moderate and varied irritation of the organic nerves."<sup>21</sup> Knight insists that this irritation of the eye is a function of light and color only. The connection of color and light with distance and magnitude is of course learned by experience with touch; and by the same token, smoothness is no source of pleasure to the eye as such:

Smoothness being properly a quality perceivable only by the touch, and applied metaphorically to the objects of the other senses, we often apply it very improperly to those of vision; assigning smoothness, as a cause of visible beauty, to things, which, though smooth to the touch, cast the most sharp, harsh, and angular reflections of light upon the eye; and these reflections are all that the eye feels or naturally perceives. . . . Such are all objects of cut glass or polished metal; as may be seen by the manner in which painters imitate them; for, as the imitations of painting extend only to the visible qualities of bodies, they show those visible qualities fairly and impartially—distinct from all others, which the habitual concurrence of other senses has joined with them in the mind, in our perceptions of them in nature.<sup>22</sup>

Visible beauty, that which gives organic pleasure to the eye, consists in "harmonious, but yet brilliant and contrasted combinations of light, shade, and colour; blended, but not confused; and broken, but

not cut, into masses: and it is not peculiarly in straight or curve, taper or spiral, long or short, little or great objects, that we are to seek for these; but in such as display to the eye intricacy of parts and variety of tint and surface."<sup>23</sup> Such are shaggy animals, irregular trees, moldering ruins—in short, all that Price had described as picturesque. Picturesque because "painting, as it imitates only the visible qualities of bodies, separates those qualities from all others; which the habitual concurrence and co-operation of the other senses have mixt and blended with them, in our ordinary perceptions. . . . The imitative deceptions of this art unmask the habitual deceptions of sight . . . by showing that mere modifications upon one flat surface can exhibit to the eye the semblance of various projecting bodies at different degrees of distance from each other. . . ." <sup>24</sup>

This, then, is Knight's conception of the simple picturesque (there is also a picturesque dependent on association of ideas, of which hereafter): (1) the pleasure of the eye is wholly in broken and gradated light and color, and (2) the art of painting separates this aspect of visible things from all others associated with it in practical experience. Painting can effect such dissociation because it is devoted to pleasure only, so that utility, propriety, splendor, and such do not influence us to accept those harsh oppositions of color which may please in actuality or in practical arts. Intellect and imagination are immensely predominant even in painting; "in the higher class of landscapes, whether in nature or in art, the mere sensual gratification of the eye is comparatively so small, as scarcely to be attended to: but yet, if there occur a single spot . . . offensively harsh and glaring . . . all the magic instantly vanishes, and the imagination avenges the injury offered to the sense."<sup>25</sup>

This conception of the picturesque affords a neat solution to the perennial problem, why pictured imitations of the ugly or offensive may please, and are therefore (in Knight's language) beautiful. Painting separates qualities pleasing to the eye, dissociating from those qualities displeasing to the other senses, or perhaps the understanding or imagination as well. It is clear also how Burke's erroneous notion of making beauty consist in the smooth and undulating should lead a man of taste like Price to discover such beauty to be insipid. Price proposed to remedy this insipidity by mixing "picturesqueness" with the "beauty." But though the taste thus displayed is correct, there is a confusion of terms from "attaching to the word beauty those ideas, which the rest of mankind attach to the word insipidity; and those, which the rest of mankind attach to the word beauty, to

this nameless amalgamation, which he conceives to be an improvement of it. The difference is merely a difference of words. . . ." <sup>26</sup> Not quite; there is a difference in the psychology supposed by the words.

Thus far, Knight has been operating in the mode of Burke, however different his doctrine is from that of Burke; he has developed a theory essentially physical rather than mental, a theory of impressions unassociated rather than a theory of ideas associated. In this view, Knight's work is reactionary, for writing after Alison, he attempts to restore the senses as avenues of direct aesthetic feeling. But this is only a part, and not the principal part, of Knight's aesthetics. Part II of the *Analytical Inquiry* is devoted to the association of ideas. The most elementary mode of association is "improved perception"—that, for instance, by which modifications of light and color inform us of distances. But improved perception extends beyond such universally acquired and automatic habits; the ability to separate the elements of a complex impression and compare them with ideas already fixed in the mind produces the skill of a winetaster, and also enjoyment of the arts as imitation, as expression, as virtuosity. In all these instances the perception is in appearance the mere result of the sensations, but in reality is the consequence of knowledge applied automatically to the sensations as signs of non-sensory qualities, or as signs of qualities belonging properly to the other senses.

The arts can be classified according as they afford immediate sensory pleasure or please only through improved perception. "Sculpture and poetry require order and regularity: painting and music delight in wild and irregular variety; sculpture and poetry, too, are addressed entirely to the imagination and the passions; while painting and music are, in a degree, addressed to the organs of sight and hearing, and calculated to produce pleasures merely sensual."<sup>27</sup> The point is clear as regards sculpture, for sculpture is imitation of form, and visual pleasure results from color and light; the lights and shadows of sculpture are regular, and either too much or too little broken to suit painting or to please the eye. The case of prosody is rather different, for poetry is expressive rather than imitative. "Poetry," Knight declares, "is the language of inspiration, and consequently of enthusiasm; and it appears to me that a methodical arrangement of the sound into certain equal or corresponding portions, called verses . . . is absolutely necessary to sustain that steady rapidity of utterance and exaltation above the ordinary tone of common speech;



which alone can give a continued character of enthusiastic expression to any extensive composition."<sup>28</sup> This view of prosody leads Knight to criticize sharply the English blank verse, which often requires so much inversion to distinguish it from prose that rapidity of flow is lost, and especially the use of that verse by Milton.<sup>29</sup> Knight's observations on the musical quality of poetry are keen, and he shows by a neat application of the Method of Agreement that the melody of verse does not depend upon the sound, for modern Europeans, each mispronouncing Latin according to the fashion of his own nation, agree fully on the correctness or incorrectness of Latin verses; these points must be recognized not by the ear, then, since that hears a different pattern in each language, but by accurate memory and ready discernment, which operate so automatically that they "dupe the ear through the medium of the imagination."<sup>30</sup> This is improved perception, not a determination of the sense itself but an effect of knowledge unconsciously employing the sensations as signs.

Thus far Knight has dealt with those associations which so fuse with the sensations exciting them that only by philosophy can we learn to dissociate the elements of the resulting perceptions. The next step is examination of associations which do not so fuse with the organic sensations; accordingly, "Of Imagination" is the second chapter of this part on association, a chapter forming perhaps a quarter of the entire treatise. This kind of association may attach to either natural or artificial objects, or to the former through the medium of the latter. To a mind enriched with trains of ideas drawn from the productions of the arts, not only art works but all the objects of nature and society may afford gratifications through association with such ideas and imagery. "Of this description are the objects and circumstances called *picturesque*: for, except in the instances, before explained, of pleasing effects of colour, light, and shadow, they afford no pleasure, but to persons conversant with the art of painting, and sufficiently skilled in it to distinguish, and be really delighted with its real excellences."<sup>31</sup>

Like Price, Knight labors the etymology of "picturesque" and draws this etymology into conformity with *his* system, as Price had with his. The progress of painting, according to Knight, was from exact and distinct imitation of details (which was soon found to be rather "copying what the mind knew to be, from the concurrent testimony of another sense, than what the eye saw"<sup>32</sup>), to a more truly visual imitation, with massed lights and shadows blended and

broken together. Still later, the Venetians and the painters of the Low Countries

carried this principle of *massing* to a degree beyond what appears in ordinary nature; and departed from the system of strict imitation in a contrary extreme to that of their predecessors. Instead of making their lines more distinct, and keeping their tints more separate, than the visible appearance of the objects of imitation warranted, they blended and melted them together with a playful and airy kind of lightness, and a sort of loose and sketchy indistinctness not observable in the reality, unless under peculiar circumstances and modifications of the atmosphere; and then only in those objects and combinations of objects, which exhibit blended and broken tints, or irregular masses of light and shadow harmoniously melted into each other.

Such are the objects, and compositions of objects, which we properly call *picturesque*; and we find that the style of painting which distinguished them as such, was invented by Giorgione about the beginning, and perfected by Titian about the middle of the sixteenth century; soon after which the word made its first appearance in the Italian, and, I believe, in any language.<sup>33</sup>

In this remarkable passage Knight distinguishes linear and painterly, clear and unclear, in the very manner of Wölfflin. And see the consequences: Knight's treatment of sensation had shown clearly that beauty in the strictest sense, as applied to that which is pleasing to the sense of sight, consists in broken and blended tints and irregular masses of light and shadow harmoniously melted together; *the picturesque is therefore beautiful* in the strictest sense so far as it affects the sense, and this beauty is independent of connection with painting, although that art drew our attention to it and cultivated our sensibility. (In that more comprehensive sense of "beauty" which includes all that affects intellect and imagination, many picturesque objects are, of course, decidedly not beautiful.) But this very relation to painting, expressed by the word "picturesque," affords that special pleasure from association; picturesque objects "recall to mind the imitations, which skill, taste, and genius have produced; and these again recall to the mind the objects themselves, and show them through an improved medium—that of the feeling and discernment of a great artist."<sup>34</sup> In this comparison of nature and art, both eye and intellect acquire a higher relish for the productions of each. This picturesque of association with painting always involves sensual beauty, though it may reside in objects distasteful to imagination or

intellect—a flayed carcass, a decaying hovel, &c. Since everything capable of representation to advantage in painting is to that extent picturesque, no catalog of picturesque objects is possible; very opposite styles are, in Knight's sense, picturesque—Salvator, Poussin, Claude, Rubens, Rembrandt, sometimes even Raphael, are picturesque. Claude, though, is indeed the "fav'rite child of taste"; combining sensual beauty—picturesqueness—with powerful imaginative appeal, he is for Knight the ideal painter. Knight's theory, it has been observed, is a landmark on the road to impressionism, and its remote consequence might be the "Interior at Petworth." But Turner's last phase would not, I think, be approved by Knight, for while the sensual beauty is complete, objects have so dissolved that there is less appeal to imagination and intellect; Turner's imitations of Claude would be, in this system, superior works of art.

The moldering ruin in a Claude landscape is picturesque, and so (albeit in less degree) is the magnificent architecture of a Claude seaport. The seaport less so, because its tints are more uniform and its angles sharper, so that it affords less sensual pleasure; and its regularity, neatness, and congruity are qualities which we associate with the term "beauty"—not in the strict acceptance (which refers to the sense of sight), but in that looser meaning that includes pleasures of the imagination and understanding. This tendency to think of the "beautiful" as regular and fresh very naturally appropriates the term "picturesque" to objects which, while strictly speaking more beautiful to the sense, do not have these qualities. Knight is, we see, very close to Price on the beauty of architecture, for to Price, too, the beauty of architecture consisted in regularity and neatness. But Price was actually defining the beauty of the regular arts in this way; Knight, however, does not define beauty unqualifiedly, but distinguishes the beauties of the different faculties—here he speaks of an associational beauty quite different from sensual beauty.

Led into a general discussion of gardening and architecture, as far as these arts involve association, Knight lays it down that "the mind requires propriety in every thing; that is, it requires that those properties, the ideas of which it has been invariably habituated to associate, should be associated in reality; otherwise the combinations will appear to be unnatural, incoherent, or absurd."<sup>35</sup> In gardening, therefore, we require all to be dressed and cultivated immediately adjoining the dwellings of opulence and luxury, "although, if the same buildings were abandoned, and in ruins, we should, on the same principle of consistency and propriety, require neglected paths,

rugged lanes, and wild uncultivated thickets; which are, in themselves, more pleasing, both to the eye and the imagination, but, unfit accompaniments for objects, not only originally produced by art, but, in which, art is constantly employed and exhibited."<sup>36</sup> Such neatness must be confined to the environs of the house, where it appears best in the form of Italianate gardening; park and forest are not to be shaved and trimmed. Repton had taken umbrage at *The Landscape*, and in the added chapter to his *Sketches and Hints* he protested Knight's "bitterness of prejudice against all that is neat and cleanly"—which he traced to a fanatical insistence on pictorial effect. But it is apparent in the *Analytical Inquiry* that Knight did not desire wild forest to the very portals of the house, but (like Price) thought of a formal garden near the house, picturesque in its varied and intricate textures, of a wilder forest-park at some remove, and of an open park between; even in *The Landscape* the preference for formality near the house was evident. Repton never directly met Knight's actual position. From the first, however, Repton was partly in accord with Knight, thought *The Landscape* good poetry (though this made it the more insidious), and genuinely admired Knight's castle and picturesque estate of Downton.<sup>37</sup> He returns frequently to these themes in later books, and the area of agreement appears ultimately to increase; Repton takes to "enriching" his Red Books with quotations from *The Landscape*, even on the topic of approaches!<sup>38</sup>

This happy accord was prevented for a time, however, by publication of the *Analytical Inquiry*. "The elegant and gentlemanlike manner in which Mr. Price has examined my opinions, and explained his own," wrote Repton, "left no room for further controversy"; but Knight's book again called upon Repton to defend the art of landscape gardening, though (as he complains) his own books were given no notice by Knight. "In perusing these works," Repton continues with some irony, "the candid reader will perhaps discover that there is no real difference between us; but, in contending with an adversary of such nice discernment, such deep investigation, and such ingenious powers of expression, it is difficult to say how far we are actually of the same opinion."<sup>39</sup> Repton's perplexity is increased by the controversy now developed between the two amateurs, whom he had considered pretty nearly of a piece in their opinions, if not in their manners. But he consoles himself with the reflection that many of his opinions have been confirmed by being "disguised in other words"—stolen, that is—in the *Analytical Inquiry*. He cites three ideas in evidence, reprinting the parallel passages from his own writ-

ings and from Knight; the similarity is unquestionable, but Knight's comment (in the third edition of the *Inquiry*) seems just: that when the observations are obvious, an author ought not "to pronounce every such coincidence a plagiarism, nor triumph in the concession of what was never disputed."<sup>40</sup>

The truth is, that Repton did not wholly grasp the subtle and complicated theory of his amateur opponent, so that the controversy hinged, personalities aside, on points of practice, and even on these the controversialists understood one another imperfectly. The issues, then, are either the same as, or less well defined than, those in Repton's quarrel with Price; and it is unnecessary to enter into a more methodical analysis of them.

In architecture, Knight justifies that mixture of Greek and Gothic which Repton had condemned. Knight argues for the superior picturesqueness of a heterogeneous style, and this (I judge) Repton would have granted; but he makes light of that antiquarian demand for purity of style which for Repton forbade the mixture. Knight examines the history of castle and ecclesiastical Gothic, and discourses on the civil and military architecture of the ancients—all with the view of dissolving the notion of stereotyped styles, pure and unvarying. The only truly general rule is, congruity with the situation and the purpose of buildings. The moderns, however, have inflexibly copied the sacred (rather than the domestic) architecture of the Greeks, and in its least varied forms; hence the regularity of Palladian buildings, and hence the Grecian temple in the English park. Such a temple is in one sense, to be sure, as beautiful in the lawns and woods of England as on the barren hills of Agrigentum; but all the local, temporary, and accidental circumstances upon which its congruity depended are changed; in such an imitation, either of a Grecian temple or a Gothic abbey, "the scale of its exactitude becomes that of its incongruity."<sup>41</sup> The fundamental error of imitators, Knight protests, "is, that they servilely copy the effects, which they see produced, instead of studying and adopting the principles, which guided the original artist in producing them; wherefore they disregard all those local, temporary, or accidental circumstances, upon which their propriety or impropriety—their congruity or incongruity wholly depend: for principles in art are no other than the trains of ideas, which arise in the mind of the artist out of a just and adequate consideration of all such circumstances. . . ." <sup>42</sup> The real authority of style in building is the trained vision of the great landscape painters, and the best style for picturesque houses is, accordingly, "that

mixed style, which characterizes the buildings of Claude and the Poussins," since it has no one manner of execution or class of ornaments, but can admit of contrast "to heighten the relish of beauty" without appearance of deceit or imposture.<sup>43</sup>

Another variety of association in painting is that between handling and subject. Brilliant, free, and sketchy execution is peculiarly adapted to forms which are loose and flowing; the lightness of such work is peculiarly picturesque, and Rubens is in this particular the most picturesque of painters. Such picturesque form consists precisely in "those flowing and undulating lines, which have been called the lines of grace and beauty; how truly, the compositions of Rubens, in which they always predominate, and those of Raphael, in which they are never employed, but incidentally, may decide."<sup>44</sup> Hogarth's famous line is, then, really the line of picturesqueness rather than of beauty unqualified. This apparent contradiction is more than a difference of taste. Hogarth's psychology dwelt on the notion of the eye tracing outlines, so that form was fundamental in his conception of beauty, and the beauty of color was treated secondarily and by analogy with that of form. Knight's theory, in contrast, rests on the idea that the eye is affected immediately only by light and color, the beauty of form entering his system only by associations of various kinds—here by an indirect association, through the handling, with facility of coloring and composing chiaroscuro.

The subtlety of Knight's system is shown nicely in the parallel discussion of form in sculpture, an art more fairly representing beauty of form than painting since it has neither tricks of light and shade nor can it leave anything to the imagination by sketchy brilliance of execution. "The forms, therefore, both of the human figure and countenance, which are peculiarly appropriate to sculpture, are directly the reverse of the picturesque forms above mentioned; this art requiring exact symmetry in limb and body, muscles and joints strongly indicated, regular and distinct features. . . ." <sup>45</sup> This is an associational beauty, for symmetry (in which Knight comprehends proportion) depends wholly on association, not at all on abstract reason or organic sensation; nor is it far different from that ideal beauty which Reynolds deemed requisite not in sculpture only but in the higher styles of painting as well. And since this style of beauty is especially appealing to those conversant with the masterpieces of classic sculpture, it really constitutes a *sculpturesque* analogous to the picturesque. But Price need not add this new character to his scale of taste, as Knight ironically suggests. Knight may think of the pictur-

esque as sensual beauty together with complex associations to the art of painting, but this is not Price's conception; for Price, the picturesque is a certain composition of line, color, and light the peculiar effect of which is attributable not to association with painting nor to the pleasure of the eye in broken tints, but to association with a variety of passions and to a reaction of the nerves. Knight pursues his point with a whole train of new aesthetic characters. The grottesque, he writes, must "bear somewhat of the same relation to the *picturesque*, as he [Price] supposes the *picturesque* to bear to the *beautiful*: for the *grottesque* is certainly, a degree or two at least, further removed from the insipid smoothness and regularity of beauty, than he supposes the picturesque to be."<sup>46</sup> And in this same strain of unfeeling sarcasm, Price is advised "to season the insipidity of beauty" with the classical, the romantic, the pastoral, the mercantile, &c. "All these extra pleasures are from the minds of the spectators; whose pre-existing trains of ideas are revived, refreshed, and reassociated by new, but correspondent impressions on the organs of sense; and the great fundamental error, which prevails throughout the otherwise able and elegant *Essays on the Picturesque*, is seeking for distinctions in external objects, which only exist in the modes and habits of viewing and considering them."<sup>47</sup> And Knight pretends to find the key to Price's philosophy in a remark made by the character Seymour in Price's *Dialogue*: "'All these ideas,' says an interlocutor, who, on this occasion, sustains his own part in his dialogue, 'are originally acquired by the touch; but from use they are become as much objects of sight as colours.' When there is so little discrimination between the operations of mind and the objects of sense, that ideas become objects of sight, all the rest follows of course; and the distinct classes of beauty may be divided into as many distinct characters, as there are distinct ideas. . . ."<sup>48</sup> Seymour was really intended by Price to stand for naïveté and common sense; and the remark Knight ridicules was, Price apologizes, only a careless expression—but Price's defense will be taken up later.

According to Knight's exposition of the influence of association, dignity, elevation, grace, and elegance depend wholly upon mental sympathies and association of ideas, differing only in "that while our ideas of dignity of attitude and gesture have always continued nearly the same, those of grace and elegance have been in a perpetual state of change and fluctuation: for our notions of what is *mean*, and what is *elevated*, depend upon the natural and permanent sentiments of the soul; but those of what is refined or polished; and pleasant, or

Engravings by Thomas Hearne in RICHARD PAYNE KNIGHT'S *The Landscape* (1749) mentioned on page 249. The one depicts a Palladian house unembellished by a picturesque gardener; the other delineates a Gothic house landscaped in the picturesque manner.

From the collection of The Newberry Library



the contrary, depend much on artificial manners, which are incessantly varying."<sup>49</sup> Dignity and grace alike express the character of the soul mediately, through association in experience; and in this they alike differ from expression in the features and the voice, both which are immediately cognized by internal senses. It is curious that Knight, who makes so much of associational psychology, retains these additional faculties in his system, vestiges of an aesthetic method already antiquated.

Knight returns repeatedly to the denunciation of rigid system and general rules in the arts; "indeed," he says, "in all matters of taste and criticism, general rules appear to me to be, like general theories in government and politics, never safe but where they are useless; that is, in cases previously proved by experience."<sup>50</sup> Critics, like casuists, attempt to direct by rules matters depending on sentiment and which elude all the subtleties of logic. This is not total skepticism, however, for although there remains no test of aesthetic excellence but feeling, the discrimination of modes and causes of feeling which Knight is conducting permits a general judgment to emerge from the welter of conflicting tastes, even though such principles will rarely be universal and permanent, depending as they do on the state of the human mind in the different stages of its culture and upon variations induced by custom. Disparagement of rules carries with it a vigorous hostility towards academies. The great objection to institutionalized art is that the members quite naturally come to imitate one another, to adopt a common style which deprives them of their individual sentiments. This objection applies equally to modern European academies of painting and Roman schools of rhetoric, from the institution of which the decline of Latin eloquence may be dated. In truth, Knight declares, "the whole history of literature obliges us to acknowledge that, in proportion as criticism has become systematic, and critics numerous, the powers of composition and purity of taste have, in all ages and countries gradually decayed."<sup>51</sup>

Association of ideas accounts not only for improved perception and imaginative connection, but for judgment as well; and this second part of the *Analytical Inquiry* concludes with a chapter on judgment. "Judgment," Knight states, "is more properly the result of a faculty than a faculty itself; it being the decision, which reason draws from comparison: whence the word is commonly used to signify the talent of deciding justly and accurately in matters, that do not admit of mathematical demonstration; in which sense, judgment may be properly considered as a mode of action of reason."<sup>52</sup> This is the familiar

distinction of demonstrative reasoning on relations of number and quantity from that reasoning on questions of cause and effect and resemblance which depends on association. It is of course true that Knight's analysis of this associative reason is much too simple to serve as a logic; he does not distinguish proof from probability, or develop any canons for checking less certain against more certain inferences. But for his immediate purposes, the differentiation of demonstrative from habitual reason is enough; unimportant in most matters of practical life, "it is of the utmost importance in fixing the just bounds of poetical fiction; and that is the subject, to which the nature of my present inquiry leads me to apply it."<sup>53</sup> Artistic probability or "truth" is the central concern throughout the discussion of judgment.

Knight illustrates the problem by the implausible Homeric account of Ulysses' three-day swim: this circumstance, however improbable, does not destroy the interest of the story; but it would be demonstratively impossible for Ulysses to appear in two places at once, "for difference and identity of substance, space and time, are matters of demonstration by number and quantity,"<sup>54</sup> and such an invention would have destroyed our interest in the subsequent events. When demonstratively false circumstances do not obstruct the train of our ideas and feelings, we do not quarrel with fictions, for poetical probability

does not arise so much from the resemblance of the fictions to real events, as from the consistence of the language with the sentiments, of the sentiments and actions with the characters, and of the different parts of the fable, with each other: for, if the mind be deeply interested, as it always will be by glowing sentiments and fervid passions happily expressed, and naturally arising out of the circumstances and incidents of a consistent fable, it will never turn aside to any extraneous matter for rules of comparison; but judge of the probability of the events merely by their connection with, and dependence upon each other.<sup>55</sup>

This principle has important application to dramatic poetry, where *real* actors are present to our senses as a part of the poem; poetic license is restricted within narrower bounds of probability, and incident and sentiment confined to what we can really believe possible to such men as we see. Unities of time and place find no justification on Knight's principles and go by the board.<sup>56</sup> And unity of action becomes only unity of subject, "for, where the events described or represented, spring, in their natural order of succession, from one source, the sen-

timents of sympathy, which they excite, will all verge to one centre, and be connected by one chain."<sup>57</sup>

It is interesting to contrast the argument of Knight on this whole subject of poetical belief and probability with that of Aristotle. Aristotle's chief concern is formal and artistic, a concern with the conditions which render the work of art a unity, a pseudo-substance with a principle of organization analogous to those of natural substances; and the reactions of the audience enter subordinately to this formal interest, only broad and casual assumptions being made about audience psychology. Knight's concern, in contrast, is pre-eminently psychological, with the principles of the mind which determine audience reaction being fundamental; the formal properties of the work are deduced as appropriate causes for such responses. Thus for Aristotle, the primary element in a poem is the plot, with character, thought, and diction following in descending sequence, each being, relative to the preceding, as matter is to form. For Knight the sentiments are primary, for the sentiments, clothed in appropriate diction, carry that enthusiasm which is the essence of poetry. But with all this opposition, it is remarkable how close the resulting analyses of particular works can be; when Knight describes the "subject" of *Macbeth* as the ambition of Lady Macbeth, which, "instigated by the prophecies of the witches . . . rouses the aspiring temper of her husband, and urges him to the commission of a crime, the consciousness of which embitters the remainder of his life, and makes him suspicious, ferocious, and cruel; whence new crimes excite new enemies, and his destruction naturally follows,"<sup>58</sup> his statement would serve for Aristotle as statement of the "plot." The two critics, operating with very different ideas, work from contrary directions towards a common goal: statements about works which will be at once definitions of their forms and descriptions of their effects.

Knight's remarks on the realism of petty details, on the use of allegorical agents and of symbolical figures, on refined conventionalization and idealization in the different arts—all are pointed and some ingenious, but they need not be spelled out. Unusual is his distaste for Michael Angelo, who departed from nature not in the direction of a superior and ideal perfection but in that of extravagant violence: "the evil which he did, in making extravagance and distortion pass for grandeur and vigour of character and expression, still spreads with increasing virulence of contagion. . . ." <sup>59</sup> This dislike is really consistent with (though I would hesitate to assert that it is a strict deductive consequence of) Knight's system. Michael Angelo's art rests

on form rather than on color and light; all the effect of form results from expression, and since "expression, that is not true, ceases to be expression," truth is the foundation of the power of forms; Michael Angelo's forms are assuredly not, to a severely classical taste, true.

Knight's account of association in aesthetics has now been surveyed in its entirety, and it is apparent how great, how predominating a role association plays in this system. Yet Knight is not quite a disciple of Alison; association does not for him, as for Alison, exclude other causes of aesthetic feeling. Knight complains, in fact, that by endeavoring to reduce everything to the one principle of association, Alison "seems to forget, though he abundantly exemplifies, the influence, which the association of a favorite system may acquire in every thing."<sup>60</sup> Knight's thought is very closely related to that of Hume, though he can not be quoted to this effect, for he mentions Hume only to oppose what he takes to be Hume's skepticism. But the outlines of the systems bear an unmistakable resemblance: Hume distinguishes ideas from impressions, and these last into sensations (which precede corresponding ideas) and passions (which usually follow them); and this is the organization of Knight's treatise—sensations, ideas, passions. The refusal to construct a system as ideal as Alison's or as sensational and pathetic as Hogarth's or Burke's is the consequence of filling out a matrix derived from Locke and Hume.

First step in the study of the passions (Part III of the *Analytical Inquiry*) is to distinguish the aesthetic from the practical role of the passions. "The passions, considered either physically as belonging to the constitution of the individual, or morally, as operating upon that of society, do not come within the scope of my present inquiry; it being only by sympathy, that they are connected with subjects of taste; or that they produce, in the mind, any of those tender feelings, which are called pathetic, or those exalted or enthusiastic sentiments, which are called sublime."<sup>61</sup> Knight plunges directly into the problem of delight in represented suffering—or even in real suffering, as in a gladiatorial contest—which delight he traces to sympathy, sympathy not with the suffering but "with the exhibitions of courage, dexterity, vigour, and address, which shone forth, in these combats of life and death, more conspicuously and energetically than they would have done, had the object of contention been less important."<sup>62</sup> Men "are not so perversely constituted by nature, as ever to feel delight in beholding the sufferings of those who never injured them,"<sup>63</sup>

but all delight in exhibitions either of the passive virtues of fortitude and patience or of the more interesting active merits of courage and dexterity. In the case of drama, the suffering is known to be fiction, but the sentiments are really expressed; "the sympathies, therefore, which they excite, are real and complete; and much more strong and effective, than if they were produced by scenes of real distress: for in that case, the sufferings, which we behold, would excite such a painful degree of sympathy, as would overpower and suppress the pleasant feelings, excited by the noble, tender, or generous sentiments, which we heard uttered."<sup>64</sup>

Knight's conception of poetic belief does away with the pity-and-fear formula for tragedy, for the danger is known to be unreal, the distress fictitious. Longinus had declared—and Knight harks back to the theory of Longinus after discussion of the sublime had long taken another direction—that grief, sorrow, and fear are incapable of any sublime expression. The reason alleged by Knight for this truth is, that these passions display only a selfish weakness, whereas the essence of the sublime is *energy*: "All sympathies, excited by just and appropriate expression of energetic passion; whether they be of the tender or violent kind, are alike sublime; as they all tend to expand and elevate the mind; and fill it with those enthusiastic raptures, which Longinus justly states to be the true feelings of sublimity."<sup>65</sup> Passions like pity, fear, sensuality are neither sublime in themselves nor capable of inspiring sublime expressions; others, while not as passions sublime, can excite "sentiments and expressions of great and enthusiastic force and vigour; with which we sympathize, and not with the passion itself"<sup>66</sup>—such are hatred and malignity; others yet are sublime both in themselves and in their appropriate expression, whether exhibiting active or passive energy.

It follows also from Knight's doctrine of sympathy, that "no character can be interesting or impressive in poetry, that acts strictly according to reason: for reason excites no sympathies, nor awakens any affections; and its effect is always rather to chill than to inflame."<sup>67</sup> On the same principle, tragedy can not exhibit examples of pure morality without becoming dull—and consequently as useless as insipid. There is nonetheless no moral danger in tragedy, for spectators do not attend the theater for examples on which to model their minds, but "to hear a certain series of dialogues, arising out of a certain series of supposed events, recited with appropriate modulations of voice, countenance, and gesture."<sup>68</sup> Knight achieves an appreciation of



tragedy which does not require superimposition of a moral lesson, nor even postulation of an indirect moral effect; it is a view as disinterested as the mimetic analysis of Aristotle.

Tragedy entered Knight's discussion chiefly because good tragedy is sublime; the sublime and pathetic are his subject rather than the analysis of literary forms, though they are best approached through literature because it is here that the nature of sympathy appears most distinctly.<sup>69</sup> It is worth remarking that in real life the sublime and pathetic may be separated and opposed (as the tender to the exalted), whereas "in all the fictions, either of poetry or imitative art, there can be nothing truly pathetic, unless it be, at the same time, in some degree, sublime: for, though, in scenes of real distress, pity may so far overcome scorn, that we may weep for sufferings, that are feebly or pusillanimously borne; yet, in fiction, scorn will always predominate, unless there be a display of vigour, as well as tenderness and sensibility of mind."<sup>70</sup> Even in actuality sublime and pathetic are usually conjoined, and both find their ultimate vent in tears.

All sublime feelings are feelings of exultation and expansion of the mind, whether excited by sympathy with external objects or arising from internal operations of the mind. Knight is willing to accept the catalog of sublime external objects established by earlier writers; in grasping at infinity the mind expands and exalts itself, whence its feelings become sublime; so with vast natural objects, or with those works of man which represent great labor or expense; and similarly with the general privations, darkness, silence, vacuity, and with the convulsions of nature. Some permit direct expansion of the mind, others are signs of power or energy, contemplation of which permits this same expansion. Burke had argued that all of these phenomena are fearful in themselves, or are suggestive of something fearful, or operate on the nervous system in the manner of fearful things.<sup>71</sup> He does not argue—as Knight supposes—that the emotion of fear itself is sublime, but rather that the sublime is a feeling resulting from the remission of fear, from fear felt at a distance or by analogy or sympathy; the sublime is not pleasant but "delightful," in Burke's technical vocabulary. Knight's declaration that "fear is the most humiliating and depressing of passions,"<sup>72</sup> and therefore wholly incompatible with the sublime, does not really contradict Burke, who had said that "when danger or pain press too nearly, they are incapable of giving any delight, and are simply terrible; but at certain distances, and with certain modifications, they may be, and they are delightful. . . ."<sup>73</sup> Knight ridicules this statement for its use of

"distance" to mean "degree" ("a stout instance of confusion even with every allowance that can be made for the ardour of youth in an Hibernian philosopher of five and twenty"<sup>74</sup>); but by "distance" I presume that Burke meant not a lesser degree of the same passion, but such a degree of probability or interest as permits us to see and be awed by the evil without engaging our direct practical concern for our safety, a meaning to which Knight could not strenuously object. Knight, of course, traces the sublime of apparently fearful objects to perception of power: "As far as feeling or sentiment is concerned . . . *that* alone is terrible, which impresses some degree of fear. I may *know* an object to be terrible; that is, I may know it to possess the *power* of hurting or destroying: but this is *knowledge*, and not *feeling* or *sentiment*; and the *object* of that knowledge is *power*, and not *terror*; so that, if any sympathy results from it, it must be a sympathy with power only."<sup>75</sup>

When Knight moves on to ridicule of Burke's physiological hypothesis, he drops argument for pure satire. But quite seriously he charges Burke with fathering Gothic novels, grandiose and horrific painting, preposterous attempts to create the terrific in gardening, the poems of Ossian, and other extravagances; and of the pernicious influence of Michael Angelo, Knight urges that "while it is supported by such brilliant theories as those of the *Inquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful*, there can be but faint hopes of its ceasing or subsiding."<sup>76</sup> The influence of Burke, indeed, "has principally appeared among artists, and other persons not much conversant with philosophical inquiries: for, except . . . [Price], I have never met with any man of learning, by whom the philosophy of the *Inquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful* was not as much despised and ridiculed, as the brilliancy and animation of its style were applauded, and admired."<sup>77</sup>

The art in which the sublime finds its fullest expression is poetry, for here sympathy with mind is most direct, and the poet's power of selection and emphasis is confined by no such laws of strict imitation as in the plastic arts. Suppression of irrelevant or disturbing circumstances in poetic description does not, however, justify the *obscurity* which Burke had found a potent cause of the sublime, for the more distinctly the energies expressed are brought before the imagination, the more effect; description "should be *distinct* without being *determinate*."<sup>78</sup> Quantitative measurements are best omitted, since the imagination, raised to enthusiasm by the style of the poetry, will expand its conceptions to the bounds of probability. Knight's attention, it is clear, is directed to the precision, perspicuity, and energy

of the language of description, whereas Burke's was centered upon the image created. After all, the indeterminateness which Knight finds requisite to sublime imagery is very like Burke's obscurity; what Knight is saying appears to be, that sublime imagery consists in distinct statement of the essential traits but with accidents of magnitude and relative situation left to the imagination.

This whole critique of Burke seems to me to rest partly on a difference of system, partly on a divergence of taste. Knight is unable to treat sublimity under the head of sensation, since he supposes the eye to be directly affected only by light and color, and he is thus at once in inescapable contradiction with Burke's physiology. The sublime cannot fall, moreover, under "association," for it comprises passions rather than mere associations of ideas; Knight must, therefore, treat sublimity among the passions. Burke, too, had connected the sublime with the passions, with those passions concerned with self-preservation. We have seen the extent of Knight's misinterpretations of Burke's thought on this topic, and the extent to which Burke's "terror" can be translated into Knight's system; but the difference between the two accounts is not dissolved away by such translation. When Knight tells us that the fidelity of Ulysses' hound is sublime, we can not avoid recognizing a real difference in taste. Knight speaks, here and everywhere, of a peculiar heightening which may supervene when any but a weak or selfish passion is apprehended intensely; the expression of passions moral and malignant, vigorous and tender, may all be sublime. Burke, in contrast, speaks of a more special feeling which always involves a kind of awe, usually tinged with terror or horror "at a certain distance." If these observations are just, Knight is conducting a genuine argument in the chapter on the sublime and pathetic. The sublime receives the kind of treatment proper to it in this system.<sup>79</sup>

Diametrically opposite to the sublime and pathetic "is the ridiculous: for laughter is an expression of joy and exultation; which arises not from sympathy but triumph; and which seems therefore to have its principle in malignity. Those vices, which are not sufficiently baneful and destructive to excite detestation; and those frailties and errors, which are not sufficiently serious and calamitous to excite pity, are generally such as excite laughter. . . ." <sup>80</sup> Those passions incompatible with the sublime, those belonging to self-preservation or self-gratification (fear, avarice, vanity, gluttony, &c.), are the usual subject of the ridiculous, "for, as they show vice without energy; and make human nature appear base without being atrocious,

and vile without being destructive, they excite the laugh of scorn instead of the frown of indignation. . . ." <sup>81</sup> So much for the proper object of wit and ridicule; the technique of the ridiculous involves always some incongruous juxtaposition. Wit requires novel junctions of contrasting ideas, through which the principal subject is distorted or debased; humor consists in junction of dissimilar manners rather than images and ideas; parody involves degradation of serious compositions by analogous means; mimicry the peculiarities of individuals; and so forth. Knight virtually limits the ridiculous to what Freud has termed "tendency-wit," and indeed to one mode of tendency-wit, that which serves the purposes of aggression; "harmless wit" and the other modes of tendency-wit—the sexual, the skeptical, &c.—are not acknowledged. And despite recognition that the "proper" function of ridicule can be perverted, so that virtuous moderation rather than foolish or vicious excess becomes its object, Knight has no glimpse of any inherently antimoral tendency in ridicule.

Comedy, the literary form of the ridiculous, departs equally with tragedy from common life, one exaggerating the general energies of human nature, the other its particular weaknesses and defects as modified and distorted by artificial society. Since the characters and incidents of comedy are drawn from the ordinary ranks of society, its examples of folly—often, Knight grants, of folly triumphant—are open to all to imitate; but comedy is not therefore pernicious, for it is "a fictitious imitation of the examples of real life, and not an example from which real life is ever copied. No one ever goes to the theatre to learn how he is to act on a particular emergency; or to hear the solution of any general question of casuistical morality," <sup>82</sup> but only to sympathize with the energies or weaknesses of humanity free of the painful sentiments which such contemplation would occasion in real life. Literature is for Knight an object of aesthetic appreciation, not an instrument of moral reform.

The final chapter, "Of Novelty," brings us full circle; we return to the sense of flux which dominated the Introduction of the *Inquiry*. The sensations and sentiments which have been reviewed, like all others, are reduced by habit to insipidity. "Change and variety are, therefore," Knight declares, "necessary to the enjoyment of all pleasure; whether sensual or intellectual: and so powerful is this principle, that all change, not so violent as to produce a degree of irritation in the organs absolutely painful, is pleasing; and preferable to any uniform and unvaried gratification." <sup>83</sup> Perfection of taste and style is no sooner reached, accordingly, than the restless pruriency of in-

novation leads to its abandonment; the pure and perfect continues to be applauded, perhaps, but is not imitated. The desire for novelty is also, of course, a cause of progressive improvement of taste, so long as it is restrained to imitation of genuine nature; "but, when it calls upon invention to usurp the place of imitation; or substitute to genuine, or merely embellished nature, nature sophisticated and corrupted by artificial habits, it immediately produces vice and extravagance of manner."<sup>84</sup> The usual effect of custom is to reduce embellishment and refinement to vulgarity, so that refinement must be twice refined; hence the progress of all highly polished languages, and hence the changes of taste in landscape gardening.

But even here, in the restless principle of change itself, a standard of taste is found. There is the novelty of mere fashion, caprice, and innovation; and there is a permanent novelty. Intricacy and variety are modes of gratifying curiosity, a passion satisfaction of which produces an unmixed pleasure universally felt; a system of gardening, then, which introduces variety and intricacy as its principles—the picturesque gardening which Price and Knight invented and popularized—is novel not only in the sense of being different from the previous fashion, but also as containing a permanent novelty of composition. This self-contained newness is an achievement in which art may for a time at least escape from flux.

Inordinate gratification of the taste for mere novelty is a moral, and not merely an aesthetic, evil, resulting in atrophy of real powers of sensibility and understanding. Debilitation of the mind and the pampering of morbid sensibility are the moral dangers which Knight perceives in the fiction of his age; but in general, the moral influence of belles-lettres is slight.

The end of morality is to restrain and subdue all the irregularities of passion and affection; and to subject the conduct of life to the dominion of abstract reason, and the uniformity of established rule: but the business of poetry . . . is to display, and even exaggerate those irregularities; and to exhibit the events of life diversified by all the wild varieties of ungoverned affections, or chequered by all the fantastic modes of anomalous and vitiated habits. It is, therefore, utterly impossible for the latter to afford models for the former; and, the instant that it attempts it, it necessarily becomes tame and vapid; and, in short, ceases to be poetry. . . .<sup>85</sup>

The moral good of the arts is only in their civilizing and softening mankind by substituting mental to sensual pleasures and turning the mind to mild and peaceful pursuits—the good which critics and phi-

losophers have agreed upon since Plato called for music to soften the temper of his warriors.

The *Analytical Inquiry* concludes, as *The Landscape* had concluded, with an exposition of the general conditions of happiness. Our felicity, Knight insists, depends on novelty; man's happiness

consists in the *means* and not in the *end*:—in *acquisition*, and not in *possession*. The source and principle of it is, therefore, *novelty*: the attainment of new ideas; the formation of new trains of thought; the renewal and extension of affections and attachments . . . and above all, the unlimited power of fancy in multiplying and varying the objects, the results, and the gratifications of our pursuits beyond the bounds of reality, or the probable duration of existence. A state of abstract perfection would, according to our present weak and inadequate notions of things, be a state of perfect misery. . . .<sup>86</sup>

But custom steadily reduces the possibility of novelty; imagination, which prior to possession enhances the value of every object, "immediately afterwards becomes equally busy and active in exposing its defects and heightening its faults; which, of course, acquire influence as their opposites lose it. Thus it happens that in moral as well as physical—in intellectual as well as sensual gratifications, the circles of pleasure are expanded only in a simple ratio, and to a limited degree; while those of pain spread in a compound rate of progression; and are only limited in their degree by the limits of our existence."<sup>87</sup> Though the objects with which we are familiar cease to give pleasure, habitual attachment to them makes the prospect of loss more painful than before, and we are protected from the effects of this irreversible tendency only by dissolution. Elaboration of this theme evokes all of Knight's acuity and his considerable powers of melancholy eloquence; Payne Knight is not only an aesthete but a moralist of stature.

## The Price-Knight Controversy



THE ESSENCE of Knight's position on the picturesque had been presented succinctly in the note appended to the second edition of *The Landscape*: the distinction of sensation and perception, the separation of the modes of beauty proper to the various senses and faculties, the definition of picturesque beauty as that kind of moderate and grateful visual irritation which painting serves to isolate. The "picturesque," Knight declares, "is merely that kind of beauty which belongs exclusively to the sense of vision; or to the imagination, guided by that sense."<sup>1</sup> The second of these alternatives, however—analysis of the associations with painting, the styles of painters, and particular pictures—is omitted from the discussion; the note to *The Landscape* is intended rather to clear the ground than to erect the finished edifice of a complete theory. Price countered this note with *A Dialogue on the Distinct Characters of the Picturesque and the Beautiful, in Answer to the Objections of Mr. Knight* (1801), and the argument of this dialogue is applicable to the more complete form as well of Knight's theory. Knight returned to the charge with comment in the *Analytical Inquiry*, comment expanded by more enthusiastic attack upon Burke's theory in the second edition; and Price, finally, added a brief Appendix to his *Dialogue* for the 1810 edition of his works.

So much for bibliography. The *Dialogue* itself is not a true philosophical dialogue, for the truth does not emerge from the debate; rather, one of the interlocutors is in possession of it from the first and needs only to triumph over the counterarguments and objections of the other speakers. The dialogue form is merely a rhetorical device to convince the simple and intrigue the bored. Airing the views of Price himself is a Mr. Hamilton; Mr. Howard, Knight's partisan, recites in fragments the note to *The Landscape*; and the two con-

noisseurs both seek the allegiance of Mr. Seymour, the naïve arbiter.<sup>2</sup>

The three friends, meeting by accident, determine on viewing a collection of paintings at a manor house nearby; they are delayed, however, some thirty pages by the charms of the real scenes they encounter by the way, a device which permits that double comparison of art and nature which is somehow involved, essentially or accidentally, in every conception of the picturesque. Price devises the incidents so that such comparisons arise quite naturally: the friends pass a real butcher shop in the village, and once in the picture gallery they find a Rembrandt of a flayed ox; they admire a prospect *en route* which is matched in the gallery by a Claude; and so forth. Soon our amateurs stumble on a group of gypsies encamped in a decayed hovel on a gloomy heath, a scene picturesque in every detail and radically removed from what is ordinarily deemed beautiful; the rhapsodies on the picturesque which this view evokes from the connoisseurs piques the curiosity of Mr. Seymour; and Mr. Howard, in the language of Knight, explains that the picturesque is the beauty peculiar to vision or to the imagination guided by vision, adding hastily an explanation of the difference between sensation and perception. Mr. Seymour perceives this difference well enough, but thinks that "perception . . . in the mind, and sensation in the organ, although distinct operations in themselves, are practically inseparable." Sight, continues Mr. Seymour (and if Howard *parle comme un livre*, as Knight protests, Seymour *parle comme un métaphysicien*), distinguishes "not only form in general, but, likewise, its different qualities; such as hardness, softness, roughness, smoothness, &c. and to judge of the distance and gradation of objects: all these ideas, it is true, are originally acquired by the touch; but from use, they are become as invariably connected with objects of sight, as the very perceptions of the colours themselves."<sup>3</sup> Mr. Howard explains patiently that the imitations of painting separate the visual qualities, and that by the study of pictures the eye learns to respond to these qualities in nature abstracted from all others. Seymour is not satisfied. He can not separate the visual from the tactile properties; he can not neglect the beauty of the parts separately for the sake of their harmoniously blended composition ("am I obliged to call a number of colours beautiful, because they match well, though each of them, separately considered, is ugly?"<sup>4</sup> he asks incredulously); he can not see why beautiful objects should not blend and compose as well as the picturesque or ugly Howard has dwelt on.

Mr. Hamilton (Price, that is) is much gratified by the objections

of Seymour, which represent for him the candor of naïveté as against the subtlety of system; and he hastens to say that there is really but one point of difference between Howard and himself, "and that rather on a matter of curious inquiry, than of real moment; our general principles are the same, and I flatter myself we should pass nearly the same judgment on the merits and defects of any work of art, or on any piece of natural, or improved scenery; but our friend there [Howard] has taken a strong antipathy to any distinction or subdivision on this subject."<sup>5</sup> Picturesqueness is for Hamilton the concept which solves all difficulties—by its means, the pleasure which lovers of painting derive from real scenes is accounted for without confounding our natural ideas of beauty as soft, graceful, elegant, and lovely.

Already we have the fundamental answer of Price to Knight's theory of pure visual beauty: Price denies that dissociation ever proceeds so far that the parts of our complex perceptions originally attributable to different senses are discriminated and appreciated separately. It is true that a picture of a flayed ox, if executed by a Rembrandt, may please, though the carcass would in reality be offensive; but then the odor and animal disgust are not present in the imitation, and even so those parts of the picture representing the unattractive subject are pleasing only by virtue of imitation as such and because of the harmonious light and color. All this fits with Howard's—Knight's—explanations too; but here the friends differ, for Hamilton argues that these merits make the picture only a well-done piece—an *excellent*, not strictly speaking a *beautiful* picture. A truly beautiful work is one which, having these properly artistic excellences, is beautiful also in its parts—which has, that is, a beautiful subject. Hamilton elicits from Seymour some further reasons why scenes displeasing in reality may be acceptable in painting: even "without having recourse to the operation of the other senses," Hamilton sums up, "we may account for the difference between the effect of disgusting objects in reality, and in pictures; in which last, not only the size of objects, and their detail, are in general very much lessened, but also the scale both of light and colour, is equally lowered."<sup>6</sup> The diminution of resemblance effected by change in scale, in lighting, in detail, cuts the associative ties with the real scenes far enough to remove the unpleasant associations with the real objects, but not so far as to destroy the pleasure of imitation: here is a theory of dissociation as efficacious as Knight's, yet which does not require abandonment of the distinction between beauty and picturesqueness. For a Teniers scene of a woman cleaning guts in a back

kitchen is excellent but not beautiful; a Magdalen of Guido is both beautiful, and excellent as a picture. And, adds Hamilton, "where great excellence in the art is employed on pleasing objects, the superior interest will be felt by every observer; but especially by those who are less conversant in the mechanical part."<sup>7</sup>

The discussion wanders back and forth between beauty and picturesqueness, with Seymour's native good sense leading him gradually towards Price's point of view. The final conversion is effected by a Pannini view of St. Peter's. When Hamilton assures him that Howard would have to regard this splendid edifice as still more beautiful in ruins, common sense revolts, and Seymour rejects the theory of Knight. Price thinks it fair to allege this consequence of Knight's theory, for we all know that ruins are more picturesque than entire edifices, and Knight (we are told) denies any difference between the picturesque and the beautiful in visible objects. "It seems to me," Seymour is made to object to Howard, ". . . that, according to your system whatever is not absolute monotony, or absolute discord, is positive beauty, or, if you please, *picturesque* beauty: for that epithet, taken in your sense, only confines the term to visible objects, but makes no other discrimination."<sup>8</sup> This, however, is a misrepresentation; Knight does *not* say that picturesqueness is merely the beauty of visible objects; he says that it is the beauty of such objects as *merely* visible—without compounding by perceptions derived from touch, without association of imaginative or poetic ideas, without suffusion by the passions. But the beauty of St. Peter's is not primarily this pure visual beauty. In architecture the transitive meanings of "beauty" outweigh the sense which for Knight is strict; the perfect building is more beautiful than the ruin in the everyday sense of "beauty," though less beautiful in the purely visual sense—less suited, therefore, for painting—less suggestive of our ideas of painting and paintings—less picturesque.

Is there, then, no difference on this point between Price and Knight, once confusions are cleared away?<sup>9</sup> I repeat what I have urged before, that the psychological systems of the two men are quite different, and that this difference permeates all their disputes, underlying the verbal confusions. Knight finds, necessarily, that the picturesque has an essential relation to painting, and that other arts or activities giving us special points of view yield analogous qualities—none of them in the nature of things, all of them produced by special conditions in the mind of the observer, all of them modes of beauty. Price, *per contra*, consistently with his system finds the picturesque related only accidentally to painting, founded in the nature of things

(though itself a feeling in the mind), and analytically distinct from beauty. On the particular point which led the participants of the *Dialogue* into this wrangle—that picture by Pannini—Knight would say that such a painting of splendid and perfect architecture is (however meritorious) not doing the special work of painting, is not the highest rank of picture; Price would say, *per contra*, that the best paintings are those which combine pictorial excellences with beautiful subjects, and that as far as Pannini did this he is secure from criticism. If Knight should object that pictorial excellence is not wholly compatible with such a subject as Pannini's, a subject confessedly beautiful in some sense, then at last we come to a difference in practical taste.

The three friends, sated with pictures, walk out of doors again and directly into a Brownian garden. Hamilton and Howard together make short work of it. Hamilton punctures the sophistical defense of the Reptonians—that beauty-not-picturesqueness is the object of their calling—by showing the limitations this formula really implies, and the insipidity which follows from it in practice. But he and Howard fall by the ears when Howard remarks that the Brownian garden shows just how little smoothness has to do with beauty, and reiterates his theory of beauty as mild visual irritation. It of course follows from Knight's theory, that smooth objects are harsh to the eye, rough objects soft and harmonious—that, in short, the effect of roughness on the touch is like that of smoothness on the eye, that of smoothness to the touch like that of roughness to the eye.<sup>10</sup> Hamilton replies at some length, pointing out (among other objections) that while roughness is always unpleasing to the touch, light is painful to the eye only in excess, and that the point at which it becomes excessive depends on the extent to which the imagination has been interested. Can it still be maintained that Price is an "objectivist" and Knight an associationist?

Seymour lends his weight, too, against the theory of abstract vision, declaring that "some of our earliest ideas are, that smoothness is pleasing, and roughness unpleasing to the eye, as well as to the touch; and these first ideas always prevail, though we afterwards learn to discriminate, and to modify them." And, he goes on, "the whole tenor of your argument [addressing Howard] goes to prove, that, with respect to colours, the mere absence of discord, is the great principle of visible beauty; whereas, if there be a positive beauty in any thing, it must be in colours: the *general* effect, I allow, will not be beautiful without harmony; but neither can the most perfect

accord change the nature of dull or ugly colours, and make them beautiful."<sup>11</sup> Seymour has hardly time to say so much before Hamilton interposes to pronounce once more his creed, bolstered as it is by observation of Seymour's reactions during the excursion:

had I [says Hamilton] not observed so many instances at various times, of the indifference of persons little conversant with pictures to picturesque objects—I must have given up one principal ground of my distinction. Its strongest foundation, however, rests upon the direct and striking opposition that exists between the qualities which prevail in objects which all allow to be beautiful, and those which prevail in others, almost as generally admitted to be picturesque: and till youth and age, freshness and decay, smoothness and ruggedness, symmetry and irregularity, are looked upon in the same light, and the objects in which they are prevalent give the same kind of pleasure to all persons . . . the character of the objects themselves, must, in truth, be as distinct, as the qualities of which they are composed.<sup>12</sup>

In the *Analytical Inquiry*, Knight picked up the quarrel again; but the issue of principle was already joined, and that discussion in the *Inquiry* which is directed explicitly upon Price's *Dialogue* adds little save on some concrete details of the dispute. Complaint is made (and with justice) that Price had distorted Knight's doctrine into the proposition that the picturesque is simply the beautiful of visible objects, so that with respect to objects of sight "beauty" and "picturesqueness" are synonyms.<sup>13</sup> Price returns to this issue in his 1810 Appendix, and exhibits a lamentable inability to grasp Knight's point—even though he had the answer ready to hand in the objections which "Seymour" had raised in the *Dialogue*. Price even detects that in the *Inquiry* his friend "appears somewhat inclined to make the same sort of distinction between the beautiful and the picturesque which I have made, and which in his note he had treated as imaginary."<sup>14</sup> This triumph is imaginary, but not so Price's own cause for complaint—Knight's attack on his alleged "objectivism," an assault founded on misrepresentation. One feels, in reading these last words of the controversy, that the issue had worn itself out. There was from the first, and there still remained, a real difference between the disputants, but the resolution of this difference—even clear and distinct recognition of it—was prevented by misreading and misunderstanding. Neither of the controversialists, so limited, had more to say on the issue of principle, and further discussion would have been mere combative rhetoric.

## Chapter 12

1. John Britton, *Picturesque Antiquities of the English Cities* (London: Dean and Son, ca. 1830), p. [v].

2. [William Aglionby], *Painting Illustrated in Three Dialogues . . . Together with the Lives of the Most Eminent Painters . . .* (London, 1685), p. 24.

3. See Act IV, scene 2 of *The Tender Husband*. It is of interest to note that as late as 1783 William Mason uses "picturesque" to refer to the allegorical manner of the grand style, a usage quite anomalous at that late date. The twenty-third axiom he isolates in DuFresnoy's *De Arte Graphica* ("Of Picturesque Ornament") reads, in his translation,

"Each nobler symbol classic Sages use,  
To mark a virtue, or adorn a Muse,  
Ensigns of war, of peace, or Rites divine,  
These in thy work with dignity may shine."

See Mason's DuFresnoy in *The Literary Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, ed. Malone (5th ed.; London, 1819), III, 51. Applied to allegorical painting, "picturesque" can mean "vivid" as representation of idea, "pictorial" as composition.

For Pope, see the letter to Caryll of December 21, 1712 (*The Works of Alexander Pope*, eds. Croker and Elwin, VI [London: J. Murray, 1871], 178); the sense I judge to be (*OED* to the contrary) "graphic," not "fit for painting." The passages in the *Iliad* too (final note to Book X, first note to Book XVI) use "picturesque" to mean "as distinctly conceived and presented as a picture."

4. Johnson's definitions are:

- (1) *graphically*: "In a picturesque manner; with good description or delineation."  
(2) *Love* [as noun]: "11. Picturesque representation of love."

The lovely babe was born with ev'ry grace:  
Such was his form as painters, when they show  
Their utmost art, on naked *loves* bestow.

Dryden."

- (3) *prospect* [as noun]: "5. View delineated; a picturesque representation of a landscape."

Note that in the second definition, "picturesque" is again used to refer to allegorical painting. The example given from Reynolds to illustrate the third definition does not, unhappily, support it, for Reynolds clearly refers to a real scene, not to an imitation. What is of chief interest in this definition, however, is the literal use of "picturesque" to mean "in a picture," a use which does not often recur.

The first two of these definitions appeared in the first edition of the *Dictionary* (1755), the third in the sixth (1785).

5. See the references to Carel van Mander's *Het Schilder-Boeck . . .* (second

edition of the first part, Amsterdam, 1618) and to Gérard de Lairese's *Het groot Schilderboek* (2d ed.; Haarlem, 1740) in *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal* (14th Deel; 's Gravenhage and Leiden, 1936).

6. Joachim von Sandrart, *L'Academie Todeasca della Architectura Scultura et Pictura: oder Teutsche Academie der edlen Bau- Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste . . .* (Nürnberg and Frankfurt, 1675), sec. 259 of chap. xxii of part one of the third book of the First Part, as reprinted in A. R. Peltzer's *Joachim von Sandrarts Academie . . .* (Munich: G. Hirth, 1925), p. 203. The passage contains another Dutch word, "alludien" (Dutch "aloud"—"very old"), not glossed by Peltzer. "Schilderachtig" is not given in any German dictionary; its place is later taken by "malerisch."

7. Painters, Hogarth assures us in the first MS draft of *The Analysis of Beauty* (before 1753), regard asymmetrical adornments as "Pictoresque" (Egerton MS 3011 f. 60b, quoted from *The Analysis of Beauty*, ed. Burke, p. 174); Richard Polwhele finds the sonnet especially adapted to "the more pictoresque Objects of still Life" ("Advertisement" to his anonymous *Pictures from Nature. In Twelve Sonnets . . .* [London, 1785]); the same form is used regularly by Nathan Drake. I take it that it reflects Price's view of the etymology, of which more hereafter.

"Picteresque" occurs in *An Essay on Harmony, as It Relates Chiefly to Situation, and Buildings* (1739), as cited in Manwaring, *Italian Landscape*, p. 134.

Dr. John Langhorne, in a note to the first of Collins' "Persian Eclogues," uses a form which implies the contrary etymology: "The characteristics of modesty and chastity are extremely happy and *peinturesque* . . ." (*The Poetical Works of William Collins* [London: William Pickering, 1830], p. 107—Langhorne's edition was first published in 1765).

The only writer known to me who uses the form "pictresk" is William Marshall, author of *A Review of The Landscape, A Didactic Poem . . .* (London, 1795) and of *Planting and Rural Ornament* (rev. ed., 2 vols.; London, 1796).

8. Blair, *Lectures*, xxxix, ed. cit., III, 121; the discussion is of pastoral poetry. See also Blair's treatment of Picturesque Description (*Lectures*, xl, ed. cit., III, 159 ff.).

9. *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*, in *The Works of Tobias Smollett* (New York: George D. Sproul, 1902), XII, 188-89.

10. Edmond Malone (ed.), *Literary Works of Reynolds*, I, xxi.

11. Johnson lists "pictorial" in his *Dictionary* (1755), assigning the meaning, "produced by a painter." Citing an instance from Sir Thomas Browne, he remarks, "A word not adopted by other writers, but elegant and useful."

12. Robert S. Bridges, "Pictorial. Picturesque. Romantic. Grotesque. Classical," in *SPE Tract No. XV* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), p. 16.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

14. Hussey, *The Picturesque*, pp. 4-5.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

16. Wylie Sypher, "Baroque Afterpiece: The Picturesque," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, XXVII (January, 1945), p. 46.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 56.

## Chapter 13

1. For biographical, bibliographical, and historical information about Gilpin and his writings, consult William D. Templeman's *The Life and Work of William Gilpin (1724-1804), Master of the Picturesque and Vicar of Boldre* ("Illinois Studies in Language and Literature," Vol. XXIV, Nos. 3 and 4; Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1939).

2. *A Dialogue upon the Gardens of the Right Honourable The Lord Viscount Cobham, at Stow in Buckinghamshire*. Printed for B. Seeley, Buckingham, sold by J. and J. Rivington, London, 1748 (later eds., 1749 and 1751). The evidence for Gilpin's authorship of this small work is in Templeman's *Gilpin*, pp. 33-35 (external) and 117-28 (internal), in which latter place an extensive précis is given.

3. *An Essay upon Prints; Containing Remarks upon the Principles of Picturesque Beauty, the Different Kinds of Prints, and the Characters of the Most Noted Masters . . .* (London, 1768). The first edition and the second (also 1768) are anonymous; the third (1781), fourth (1792), and fifth (1802) carry the author's name.

4. *Ibid.* (1st ed.), p. 2. The succeeding definition is of "Picturesque grace: an agreeable form given, in a picture, to a clownish figure" (*ibid.*, p. 3).

5. London, 1792. There was a second edition in 1794, and a third was included in *Five Essays, on Picturesque Subjects; with a Poem on Landscape Painting* (London, 1808), which includes also the second edition of *Two Essays: One, On the Author's Mode of Executing Rough Sketches; the Other, On the Principles on Which They Are Composed . . .* (London, 1804).

6. Two volumes; London, 1791; further editions appeared in 1794 and 1808, in 1834 (edited by Sir Thomas Dick Lauder), and in 1879 and 1887 (edited by Francis George Heath).

7. Consult Templeman for details of the bibliography.

8. Gilpin, *Three Essays* (2d ed.), i, p. [3]—the opening sentence.

9. *Ibid.*, [Dedication], ed. cit., p. ii.

10. *Ibid.*, i, ed. cit., p. 4. Gilpin declines the inquiry into "the general sources of beauty, either in nature, or in representation," as leading "into a nice, and scientific discussion, in which it is not our purpose to engage" (*ibid.*).

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.*, p. 6. Gilpin doubts Burke's doctrine that smoothness is the most considerable source of beauty, and he argues vigorously against Burke's notion of the diminutiveness of beauty, contending that there is "a beauty, between which and diminutives there is no relation; but which, on the contrary, excludes them: and in the description of figures, possessed of that species of beauty, we seek for terms, which recommend them more to our admiration than our love" (*ibid.*, pp. 5-6n).

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

14. Quoted by Hussey, *The Picturesque*, p. 119.

15. Gilpin, *Three Essays*, i, ed. cit., p. 17.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.*, p. 26. Templeman gives an extensive précis of the earlier parts of Gilpin's essay (*Gilpin*, pp. 134-40); but he wholly ignores this section, which is of the most considerable philosophic importance, and which leads (as I think) to the further evolution of picturesque theory.

20. Gilpin, *Three Essays*, i, ed. cit., pp. 26-27.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 28. Hutcheson's principle is fitted to an analogizing system and (as Gilpin indicates) does not readily admit discrimination of *kinds* of beauty.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

24. The subject of picturesque travel has been handled by Elizabeth Wheeler Manwaring, *Italian Landscape in Eighteenth Century England* (New York: Oxford, 1925), pp. 167-200, and by Hussey, *The Picturesque*, pp. 83-127. Monk treats of "sublime travel" in *The Sublime*, pp. 203-32, and makes many observations pertinent to the present subject.

25. Gilpin, *Three Essays* (letter to Reynolds), p. 36.

26. *Ibid.*, ii, ed. cit., p. 43.

27. Gilpin, *Forest Scenery* (3d ed.; London, 1808), II, 168-69.

28. Gilpin, *Three Essays*, ii, ed. cit., p. 43.

29. Gilpin, *Forest Scenery*, II, 175. "To make an object truly picturesque, it should be marked strongly with some peculiar character," remarks Gilpin in explaining the unpicturesqueness of the mule (*ibid.*, II, 271).

30. Gilpin, *Three Essays*, ii, ed. cit., p. 46.

31. *Ibid.*, pp. 49-50.

32. Templeman (*Gilpin*, p. 142) suggests that this formation of general ideas enables the picturesque traveler to set up his own standards of beauty, and connects it with an alleged striving for individual standards of taste in the later eighteenth century; but surely it would be more natural to see general ideas and typical forms as *opposed* to personal and idiosyncratic taste.

33. Gilpin, *Three Essays*, ii, ed. cit., pp. 51-52.

34. *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58—the concluding sentence of the essay. A rough sketch, "which the imagination *only* can translate," is more apt to raise this enthusiasm than a finished work of art.

35. *Ibid.*, iii, ed. cit., p. 87.

36. For an account of this transaction, see William D. Templeman, "Sir Joshua Reynolds on the Picturesque," *MLN*, XLVII (November, 1932), 446-48. Taylor prints the letter, but terms it a "paper" and appears to think that it was written after the 1791 letter to Gilpin; see Charles Leslie and Tom Taylor, *Life and Times of Sir Joshua Reynolds . . .* (London: J. Murray, 1865), II, 606-8.

37. Leslie and Taylor, *Reynolds*, II, 606.

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 606-7.

39. Gilpin, *Three Essays*, i, ed. cit., p. 27.

40. Leslie and Taylor, *Reynolds*, II, 608.

41. Gilpin, *Three Essays*, pp. 34-35. Gilpin prints Reynolds' reply and his own note of thanks on pp. 34-37.

42. *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

43. In the tenth discourse (1780), Reynolds uses the picturesque to set off



effects inappropriate to sculpture, a medium which can tolerate only the grand style. It is noteworthy that Gilpin recognizes no essential difference between painting and sculpture in the scope of their imitations. He grants that it is more difficult for sculpture to exhibit animated action or the passions, but considers that when this effect is nonetheless achieved such statues will be preferred (*Three Essays*, i, p. 13). This position is in interesting contrast with the remark of Uvedale Price only two years later, that the picturesque may be given definition *in extenso* as that which painting can, and sculpture can not, represent.

44. Gilpin, *Forest Scenery*, II, 234.

### Chapter 14

#### I. The picturesque works are:

*An Essay on the Picturesque, As Compared with the Sublime and the Beautiful, and on the Use of Studying Pictures, for the Purpose of Improving Real Landscape* ([Vol. I]; London, 1794). 2d ed., 1796.

*A Letter to H. Repton, Esq., on the Application of the Practice As Well As the Principles of Landscape-Painting to Landscape-Gardening. Intended As a Supplement to the "Essay on the Picturesque," to Which Is Prefixed Mr. Repton's Letter to Mr. Price* (London, 1795). 2d ed., Hereford, 1798.

*An Essay on the Picturesque . . . Vol. II* (London, 1798). This volume consists of three essays: "An Essay on Artificial Water, &c.," "An Essay on the Decorations near the House," "An Essay on Architecture and Buildings, As Connected with Scenery."

*A Dialogue on the Distinct Characters of the Picturesque and the Beautiful, in Answer to the Objections of Mr. Knight. Prefaced by an Introductory Essay on Beauty; with Remarks on the Ideas of Sir Joshua Reynolds & Mr. Burke upon That Subject* (Hereford, 1801).

All these were gathered together with a few additions and alterations into *Essays on the Picturesque, As Compared with the Sublime and the Beautiful; and, on the Use of Studying Pictures, for the Purpose of Improving Real Landscape* (3 vols.; London, 1810). The works included in this 1810 edition are found again in *Sir Uvedale Price on the Picturesque: with an Essay on the Origin of Taste, and Much Original Matter, by Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, Bart. . . .* (Edinburgh and London, 1842).

I have used the 1810 edition, which I refer to as "Works"; the 1794 volume, as it appears in the *Works*, I refer to simply as "Essay."

2. Uvedale Price, *Essay*, i, 3, in *Works*, I, 37.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
4. Price, *Works*, II, vi-vii.
5. Price, *Essay*, i, 3, in *Works*, I, 46-47.
6. *Ibid.*, i, 4, in *Works*, I, 88-89.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 92-93.
8. *Ibid.*, i, 9, in *Works*, I, 221. The case is analogous in ethics; envy and revenge, for instance, are both modes of ill-will, and are most easily differentiated by pointing to their different causes.
9. Price, *Dialogue* ("Introductory Essay on Beauty"), in *Works*, III, 203.
10. Price, *Essay*, i, 9, in *Works*, I, 212-13.

11. Reynolds declares that if a critic pretends to measure beauty by "a particular gradation of magnitude, undulation of a curve, or direction of a line, or whatever other conceit of his imagination he shall fix on as a criterion of form, he will be continually contradicting himself, and find at last that the great mother of nature will not be subjected to such narrow rules" (*Idler*, No. 82 [November 10, 1759]).

12. Price, *Dialogue* ("Introductory Essay on Beauty"), in *Works*, III, 213-14.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 237-38. Payne Knight also makes the observation that Reynolds and Burke pointed to different aspects of the beautiful, and that their difference was merely verbal: "It will readily appear that these two great critics differ so widely merely from attaching different meanings to the word beauty; which, the one confines to the *sensible*, and the other to the *intellectual* qualities of things; both equally departing from that general use of the term, which is the only just criterion of propriety in speech" (*Analytical Inquiry*, i, 5, 23, p. 75).

14. Price, *Dialogue* ("Introductory Essay on Beauty"), in *Works*, III, 239.

15. Price, "On Architecture and Buildings," in *Works*, II, 247.

16. Jean-Jacques Mayoux urges that Payne Knight's *The Landscape* for the first time considered beauty to be in the perceiver rather than in the object perceived, and he finds Price to be "un esprit peu clair et tout engagé dans les idées reçues," ideas like the notion that beauty exists objectively; see *Richard Payne Knight et le pittoresque: Essai sur une phase esthétique* (Thèse pour le doctorat ès-lettres présentée . . . [à l'] Université de Paris; Paris: Les Presses Modernes, 1932), p. 82. For Hussey, too, Price attempted to establish an objectivism, but the effort was "sophistry, as objectivism must always be" (*The Picturesque*, p. 78).

17. Price, "On Architecture and Buildings," in *Works*, II, 247.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 213-14 and 365-66.

19. Burke mentions one trait of the picturesque in remarking on the cruciform plan of churches, and finds it distasteful: "there is nothing more prejudicial to the grandeur of buildings than to abound in angles: a fault obvious in many; and owing to an inordinate thirst for variety, which, whenever it prevails, is sure to leave very little true taste" (*Sublime and Beautiful*, ii, 9, in *Works*, I, 126).

20. Price, *Essay*, i, 3, in *Works*, I, 44; the etymology and its implications are drawn out at length, *ibid.*, i, 9, *Works*, I, 211 ff. Neither of these passages was present in the 1794 edition.

21. Price, *Works*, II, xiii-xiv and xv-xvi.

22. Price, *Essay*, i, 3, in *Works*, I, 49.

23. Intricacy Price defines as "that disposition of objects, which, by a partial and uncertain concealment, excites and nourishes curiosity" (*ibid.*, i, 2, in *Works*, I, 22). And "variety, of which the true end is to relieve the eye, not to perplex it, does not consist in the diversity of separate objects, but in that of their effects when combined together; in diversity of composition, and of character" (*ibid.*, ii, 2, in *Works*, I, 286).

24. Price's mention of Salvator as picturesque, though accompanied by the remark that his work "has a savage grandeur, often in the highest degree sublime" (*ibid.*, i, 3, in *Works*, I, 67), has misled some commentators into making Salvator a type of the picturesque (see Miss Manwaring, *Italian Landscape*, p.

55). Salvator is here employed to distinguish beautiful from picturesque because he stands on the sublime side of picturesqueness, farthest from beauty. Ordinarily, in landscape, Claude is beautiful, Salvator sublime, and Gaspar "Poussin" (Dughet) picturesque; in history and portrait, the great Romans and Florentines are sublime, Correggio and Guido beautiful, Tintoretto and Veronese picturesque.

25. Price, *Essay*, i. 4, in *Works*, I, 69. This association became a commonplace. Britton, about 1830, writes, "With all due deference to the high authority of Gilpin . . . I cannot approve of his compound term 'Picturesque Beauty.' The words are of dissimilar import, and excite different ideas. Whilst one designates objects that are rough, rugged, broken, ruinous; the other applies to such as are smooth, clean, fresh, regular, perfect. One may be said to designate old; the other young, or new" (*Picturesque Antiquities of the English Cities*, p. [v]).

26. Price, *Essay*, i. 3, in *Works*, I, 51-52 and i. 4, *Works*, I, 78-83.

27. Burke, *Sublime and Beautiful*, iii. 2-5 on proportion, and (especially) iii. 23 on elegance and speciousness.

28. Price, *Essay*, i. 3, in *Works*, I, 65.

29. *Ibid.*, i. 6, in *Works*, I, 127.

30. Rubens is a curious exception: eminently picturesque in other particulars, his paintings employ freshly beautiful colors.

31. Burke, *Sublime and Beautiful*, iii. 15.

32. Price, *Essay*, i. 9, in *Works*, I, 188.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 189.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 203.

35. It tells against any literal identification of beauty and picturesqueness, at any rate. Mayoux, who is given to finding divided souls in writers, says that "comme les préromantiques, Price est une âme partagée. Écoutons le proclamer avec insistance que le laid peut fort souvent être pittoresque. S'il était romantique, peut-être oserait-il proclamer que le beau c'est le laid, et l'harmonie serait rétablie dans son âme, avec l'unité de plaisir esthétique" (*Richard Payne Knight et le pittoresque*, pp. 69-70). Mayoux's beauty is not the specific beauty of the writers of the eighteenth century.

36. Isabel W. Chase gives a plausible account of the development of picturesque landscaping: "First comes the recognition that a garden-scene, as well as a scene in nature, may resemble a picture, or may even perhaps be reminiscent of some particular landscape painting. Second comes the comprehension that a scene in a garden contains many of the characteristics which, in nature, the seeing eye of a painter would notice. Third comes the realization that an original scene may be composed in a garden out of the simple elements of landscape—trees, shrubs, flowers, grass, rocks, and water—as a painter would compose a picture upon a canvas" (*Horace Walpole: Gardener* [Princeton: Princeton University Press for University of Cincinnati, 1943], pp. 127-28).

37. Price, *Essay*, i. 1, in *Works*, p. 3.

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

40. Price, "On Artificial Water," in *Works*, II, 98.

41. Price, *Essay*, i. 2, in *Works*, I, 29-30.

42. Letter to Gilpin, via Mason, of 1776; in Leslie and Taylor's *Reynolds*, II, 607.

43. Here as in other passages of the *Essay* Price leads a reaction towards the old style. Mayoux overlooks this evidence in declaring that "Knight fut le premier qui osât regretter le style, autour de la maison, des vieux jardins italiens," that "Price ne s'en aperçut, qu'après Knight" that the Italianate style was truly picturesque (*Knight*, pp. 76-77). Of course Price and Knight had shared their tastes for years before either published, and it is academic to discuss which was the originator.

44. Price, *Essay*, ii. 1, in *Works*, I, 238.

45. Not only Repton (of whom below), but George Mason in *An Essay on Design in Gardening* (2d ed.; London, 1795) and William Windham, statesman and friend of Payne Knight, in a "Letter to Humphry Repton" (printed, without the author's name, in an Appendix to Repton's *Sketches and Hints on Landscape Gardening* [London, (1795)]), argue with Price on this point. All of them imagine Price to be supporting a more radical position than he really is.

46. Price, "On Artificial Water," in *Works*, II, 18-19.

47. *Ibid.*, pp. 103-4.

48. Price, "On Decorations near the House," in *Works*, II, 131-32.

49. Mr. Hussey and M. Mayoux enter with much subtlety upon the question whether the picturesque improver is to concern himself with the view from the outside in or that from the inside out; Hussey (*The Picturesque*, p. 181) traces a change in Knight's views on this subject, a change which Mayoux shows to be imaginary. Price disposes of the alternative altogether by observing that "whatever constitutes a good fore-ground to the view from the house, will, generally speaking, have equally a good effect from every other point" ("On Architecture and Buildings," *Works*, II, 269-70).

50. Price, "On Architecture and Buildings," in *Works*, II, 206.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 247.

52. *Ibid.*, pp. 287-88. This use of painting is by no means an eccentricity of Price's; the pages of the *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, *The Burlington Magazine*, *The Architectural Review*, and other journals of art and aesthetics offer many studies of architecture as it appears in painting.

53. Price, "On Architecture and Buildings," in *Works*, II, 304.

54. Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, in editing this passage, remarks that "if the roof of a cottage be well formed, and well projected, and so as to throw a deep shadow over the wall beneath it, I do not conceive that it will be necessary to thatch it, in order to add to the picturesque effect, at the risk of diminishing the comfort of the poor inmates" (*Price on the Picturesque*, p. 398). Lauder seems tempted to the opposite view, and ends by suggesting a compromise, a tile roof covered with thatch—a species of fakery with which Price would have had little sympathy. Price, Knight, and Gilpin are all warmly humanitarian; when Hussey insists upon the inhuman objectivity of the picturesque viewpoint, his judgment is simply a consequence of his presuppositions about the route along which aesthetic sensitivity must develop.

55. Price, *Essay*, Appendix, in *Works*, I, 347-48 (note to p. 42 of 1794 ed.).

56. *Ibid.*, pp. 349-50 (note to p. 44 of 1794 ed.). It is remarkable that Gil-

pin's notion is a naïve anticipation of the sophisticated and "metaphysical" theory of R. Payne Knight, of which below.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 356 (note to p. 55 of 1794 ed.).
58. *Ibid.*, p. 360 (note to p. 59 of 1794 ed.).
59. Bosanquet, *A History of Aesthetic*, p. 3.
60. Templeman, *Gilpin*, p. 252.
61. Mayoux, *Knight*, pp. 64 and 66. "Tout d'abord," stresses Mayoux, "remarquons que Price achève l'abaissement du *Beau*, commencé par Burke, de telle sorte que l'emploi du mot par lui devient . . . entièrement viole, et manifeste une espèce de psittacisme" (*ibid.*, p. 70).
62. *Ibid.*, p. 67.

### Chapter 15

1. Humphry Repton (1752-1818) was a prolific writer. His published works consist largely of extracts and illustrations drawn from the reports, "Red Books" as he called them, which he prepared for the estates on which he was consulted. The major works are these:

*A Letter to Uvedale Price, Esq.* (London, 1794). This letter was reprinted as a footnote to the Appendix of *Sketches and Hints*.

*Sketches and Hints on Landscape Gardening. Collected from Designs and Observations Now in the Possession of the Different Noblemen and Gentlemen, for Whose Use They Were Originally Made. The Whole Tending to Establish Fixed Principles in the Art of Laying Out Ground* (London, [1795]).

*Observations on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening. Including Some Remarks on Grecian and Gothic Architecture, Collected from Various Manuscripts, in the Possession of the Different Noblemen and Gentlemen, for Whose Use They Were Originally Written; the Whole Tending to Establish Fixed Principles in the Respective Arts* (London, 1803). 2d ed.; London, 1805.

*An Inquiry into the Changes of Taste in Landscape Gardening. To Which Are Added, Some Observations on Its Theory and Practice, Including a Defence of the Art* (London, 1806).

*Designs for the Pavilion at Brighton: Humbly Inscribed to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.* By H. Repton, Esq. with the Assistance of His Sons, John Adey Repton, F.S.A. and G[eorge] S[tanley] Repton, Architects (London, 1808). This work includes *An Inquiry into the Changes in Architecture, as It Relates to Palaces and Houses in England; Including the Castle and Abbey Gothic, the Mixed Style of Gothic, the Grecian and Modern Styles: with Some Remarks on the Introduction of Indian Architecture.*

*Fragments on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening. Including Some Remarks on Grecian and Gothic Architecture, Collected from Various Manuscripts in Possession of the Different Noblemen and Gentlemen, for Whose Use They Were Originally Written; the Whole Tending to Establish Fixed Principles in the Respective Arts.* By H. Repton, Esq. Assisted by His Son, J[ohn] Adey Repton, F.A.S. (London, 1816).

All of my references are taken from the following edition of Repton's *Works: The Landscape Gardening and Landscape Architecture of the Late Humphry Repton, Esq. Being His Entire Works on These Subjects. A New Edition: with*

*an Historical and Scientific Introduction, a Systematic Analysis, a Biographical Notice, Notes, and a Copious Alphabetical Index.* By J[ohn] C[laudius] Loudon, F.L.S. . . . (London, 1840).

2. Repton, *Designs*, in *Works*, p. 376, and *Sketches and Hints*, vii, in *Works*, p. 90.
3. Repton, *Letter to Price*, in *Works*, p. 105.
4. Repton attributes this phrase to Price; *Sketches and Hints*, Appendix, in *Works*, p. 104.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 105.
6. Repton, *Letter to Price*, in *Works*, p. 106.
7. In the Advertisement to the *Inquiry into the Changes of Taste in Landscape Gardening* (1806), Repton declines to publish a new edition of *Sketches and Hints*, of which, he says, two hundred and fifty copies were "published by Messrs. Boydells in 1794" (*Works*, p. 323). And in the concluding pages of *Fragments*, his last work, Repton reviews his life as an improver and recollects the time "when I first appeared before the public, in 1794, in a work which has long been out of print" (*ibid.*, p. 604)—quoting from *Sketches*. The Advertisement to *Theory and Practice*, on the other hand, speaks of the lapse of "seven years" since the *Sketches*; supposing this to have been written in 1802 (the dedication to the King is dated December 31, 1802), we are just able to get *Sketches* into 1795.
8. In the letter to Price so dated, Repton mentions adding to his "great work, which has long been all printed & only waits the colouring of some plates to be published" one "Appendix on Mr. Knight's attack & another on yours including my printed Letter in which I had softened some passages before I had the pleasure of seeing your last work [the *Letter to Repton*]."
9. Repton, *Works*, p. 127.
10. Repton, *Sketches and Hints*, Appendix, in *Works*, pp. 111-14.
11. Repton, *Theory and Practice*, Preface, in *Works*, p. 125.
12. *Ibid.*, i, in *Works*, p. 133.
13. *Ibid.*, vii, in *Works*, p. 207.
14. Repton, *Fragments*, xxxiii, in *Works*, pp. 572-76.
15. Repton, *Theory and Practice*, iii, in *Works*, p. 162.
16. Repton, *Sketches and Hints*, vi, in *Works*, pp. 84-85.
17. Nikolaus Pevsner, "The Genesis of the Picturesque," *The Architectural Review*, XCVI (November, 1944), 146.
18. See the report on Endsleigh, *Fragments*, xxxiv, in *Works*, p. 589. Price and Knight, incidentally, both attack pseudo-rivers.
19. Repton, *Theory and Practice*, Preface, in *Works*, p. 129.
20. *Ibid.*, x, in *Works*, p. 234.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 234-37.
22. Repton, *Fragments*, xxvii, in *Works*, pp. 525-36. Even some of the early reports manifest a leaning in this direction; the very early work at Bulstrode (*Theory and Practice*, v, in *Works*, pp. 187-92) shows a tendency towards compartmentalization of the gardens.
23. Repton does not attribute the idea of a winter garden to Lord Kames; he does frequently refer to Kames, however, and I think that the influence of Kames's remarks on gardening has not been sufficiently remarked.

24. For an account of the gardenesque, see Loudon's introduction to his *Works of Repton*, p. viii; Loudon is not just in denying to Repton credit for originating this style which Loudon himself developed so much more fully. See also (besides the standard histories of gardening) H. F. Clark, "Parks and Pelargoniums," *The Architectural Review*, XCIX (February, 1946), 49-56; Clark attributes the gardenesque style to Repton's influence.

25. See Repton, *Designs*, in *Works*, pp. 365-66.

26. Repton, *Fragments*, xxvii, in *Works*, p. 530.

27. *Ibid.*, viii and xxxiv, in *Works*, pp. 433 and 595. The smell and taste interest themselves in the flowers and fruits.

28. *Ibid.*, xxvii, in *Works*, p. 525.

29. Repton, *Designs*, in *Works*, p. 365.

30. Price, *Letter to Repton*, in *Works*, III, 58-59 (*et sparsim*).

31. Repton, *Theory and Practice*, ix, in *Works*, p. 222. The French author is René Louis Girardin, Viscomte de Ermenonville, whose *De la composition des paysages* . . . (Paris, 1777) had been Englished in 1783.

32. Repton, *Sketches and Hints*, vii, in *Works*, p. 96; the list is repeated in *Inquiry*, iii, in *Works*, pp. 355-56.

33. Repton, *Sketches and Hints*, vii, in *Works*, p. 98.

34. Repton, *Theory and Practice*, ix, in *Works*, p. 228n.

35. Repton, *Sketches and Hints*, Introduction, in *Works*, pp. 29 and 30.

36. Repton, *Fragments*, xv, in *Works*, p. 467.

37. Repton, *Designs*, in *Works*, p. 365.

38. Repton, *Fragments*, vi, in *Works*, p. 427.

39. Repton, *Designs*, in *Works*, p. 362n.

40. Repton, *Fragments*, xxxiv, in *Works*, pp. 589-92.

41. Repton, *Sketches and Hints*, Appendix, in *Works*, p. 113.

42. See (one instance of many) *Sketches and Hints*, ii, in *Works*, pp. 56-57. It was this idea which Repton thinks Price stole from him; see *ibid.*, Appendix, in *Works*, pp. 105-6.

43. Repton, *Theory and Practice*, xii, in *Works*, p. 277; see also *Sketches and Hints*, ii, in *Works*, p. 56.

44. Repton, *Designs*, in *Works*, p. 385; similar remarks are found throughout this book.

45. Repton, *Fragments*, xiii, in *Works*, pp. 457-59; *Theory and Practice*, xii, in *Works*, pp. 277-78.

46. Repton, *Sketches and Hints*, v, in *Works*, p. 82.

47. Repton, *Fragments*, xxxiii, in *Works*, p. 575.

48. *Ibid.*, xxxvi, in *Works*, p. 603.

### Chapter 16

1. Repton, *Letter to Price*, in Price, *Works*, III, 3. (Price reprints Repton's *Letter* as prolegomenon to his own, and I quote from this edition.)

2. Price, *Letter to Repton*, in *Works*, III, 146-49.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.

4. Repton, *Letter to Price*, in Price, *Works*, III, 4n. In a conciliatory (manuscript) letter to Price, dated February 5, 1795 (bound in with the Newberry

Library copy of Price's *Essay*, &c.), Repton mentions that he had "softened some passages" in his printed *Letter* before including it as a footnote to *Sketches and Hints*. Comparison of the softened version with the original (as reprinted by Price), however, reveals only two trifling changes. A sarcastic reference is deleted from the passage here quoted from, and one other little sarcasm is omitted.

5. Price, *Letter to Repton*, in *Works*, III, 32-33.

6. Repton himself later speaks of time, neglect, and accident producing unexpected beauties in planting (*Inquiry*, i, in *Works*, p. 335n; repeated in *Fragments*, xxviii, in *Works*, p. 557). A controversial spirit informs the *Letter to Price* and causes Repton to exaggerate his position—though he doubtless did become in later years more sensible to the limitations of Brown.

7. Repton, *Letter to Price*, in Price, *Works*, III, 6.

8. Price, *Letter to Repton*, in *Works*, III, 49-50.

9. Burke himself seems to have favored Repton in this controversy, if we may believe Mrs. Crewe's report, "Extracts from Mr. Burke's Table-Talk at Crewe Hall. Written down by Mrs. Crewe," in the Philobiblon Society *Miscellanies*, VII, 42-43 (quoted, mediately, by Templeman, *Gilpin*, pp. 255-56). Burke "spoke often with great respect of Mr. Repton, & considered him as having much more comprehensive correct & even pure Views of these subjects, than his late Antagonists, & he often declared that much as he had thought & had amused himself with these, he felt unequal to enter the lists against Mr. Repton." He "admired many parts" of Price and Knight, but thought that "like most System-mongers they had pursued their Theories to a dangerous length." Repton, incidentally, had improved Crewe Hall.

10. Repton, *Letter to Price*, in Price, *Works*, III, 7.

11. Price, *Letter to Repton*, in *Works*, III, 89.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 72.

13. Repton, *Letter to Price*, in Price, *Works*, III, 10.

14. Price, *Letter to Repton*, in *Works*, III, 104; *Essay on the Picturesque*, in *Works*, I, 338.

15. Nikolaus Pevsner, "Genesis of the Picturesque," *The Architectural Review*, XCVI (November, 1944), 146.

16. I. de Wolfe, "Townscape: A Plea for an English Visual Philosophy Founded on the True Rock of Sir Uvedale Price," *The Architectural Review*, CVI (December, 1949), 354-74.

17. Price, *Letter to Repton*, in *Works*, III, 106.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 107. Price here repeats the advice of his *Essay*, that lower growths, especially of spinous plants, should be mixed with the young trees, which would at the same time protect the trees and vary and soften the summits and outlines of the plantation. Repton often repeats this idea in his Red Books, and may well have borrowed it from Price.

19. Repton, *Fragments*, x, in *Works*, p. 444, and xi, p. 452. It must be noted that even in *Theory and Practice* the sixth of Repton's objections to modern gardening asserted that Repton had never advised a belt, and the seventh spoke of "that ugly deformity called a *Clump*" (Preface, in *Works*, p. 128).

20. Repton, *Letter to Price*, in Price, *Works*, III, 19.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

22. Price, *Letter to Repton*, in *Works*, III, 130.

23. Lines 238-49 of "On Landscape Painting, A Poem," in Gilpin's *Three Essays*. Gilpin's travel books are full of scenes too extensive for the pencil, "views, which may rather be called *amusing*, than *picturesque*" (*Forest Scenery*, iii. 7, ed. cit., II, 131). Gilpin acknowledges that nine persons in ten prefer amusing views to those pleasing to the picturesque eye. ("Amusing" means, I presume, "absorbing," and the amusing may verge on the lower degrees of sublimity.)

24. Price, *Letter to Repton*, in *Works*, III, 151.

25. MS letter of December 24, 1794, bound in Newberry Library copy of Price's *Essay*.

26. Repton, *Theory and Practice*, ix, in *Works*, p. 229. Christopher Hussey, himself a practicing landscapist, declares that "Price's later essays are admirable practical guides to gardening. . ." (*The Picturesque*, p. 175); Repton's judgment is biased. Curiously, in his letter to Price of February 5, 1795 (bound in Newberry Library copy of Price's *Essay*), Repton stresses that "we perfectly agree concerning artificial water," and devotes a paragraph to detailing circumstances in which his plans regarding water have agreed with Price's views.

27. Repton, *Sketches and Hints*, Appendix, in *Works*, p. 116. Repton does not identify the author of the letter, but that the letter was Windham's was well known; Dugald Stewart refers it to him in the third edition of his *Philosophical Essays*, 1818.

28. MS letter, Repton to Robson, December 24, 1794 (bound in Newberry Library copy of Price's *Essay*). The copious marginalia Repton entered in his presentation copy of Price's *Essay* do not show Repton as altogether charmed, however; many of the marginalia are symbols referred to this key on the back of the flyleaf:

Marks explained

Y	I assent to the position
N.	I do not allow it
?	doubtful if so—
R—	Ridiculous
G.	Good description &c.
C.	contemptuous allusions
O—	obscure in Stile.
V.	Verbose or affected Stile
P.	Pointed either at me or personally Some one else

29. Price, *Letter to Repton*, in *Works*, III, 175 ff.

30. MS letter, Repton to Price, of February 5, 1795.

31. Repton, *Sketches and Hints*, Appendix, in *Works*, p. 111.

32. Repton, *Fragments*, v, in *Works*, p. 424.

33. *Ibid.*, xi, in *Works*, p. 447.

34. *Ibid.*, x, in *Works*, p. 440.

Chapter 17

1. Knight's writings include (among other works):  
The journal of a voyage to Sicily with Philip Hackert and Charles Gore,

April-June, 1777; the original is lost, but the journal was translated by Goethe as "Tagebuch einer Reise nach Sicilien" in his *Philip Hackert. Biographische Skizze . . .* (Tübingen, 1811); portions are retranslated by Brian Miller in Nikolaus Pevsner's "Richard Payne Knight," *Art Bulletin*, XXXI (December, 1949), 293-320.

*An Account of the Remains of the Worship of Priapus, Lately Existing at Isernia in the Kingdom of Naples, etc.; to Which Is Added a Discourse on the Worship of Priapus, and Its Connection with the Mystic Theology of the Ancients* (London, 1786).

*An Analytical Essay on the Greek Alphabet* (London, 1791).

*The Landscape, a Didactic Poem in Three Books. Addressed to Uvedale Price, Esq.* (London, 1794); 2d ed., 1795. My references, unless otherwise stated, are to the first edition.

*The Progress of Civil Society. A Didactic Poem in Six Books* (London, 1796).

Introduction to Vol. I of *Specimens of Ancient Sculpture*, "Preliminary Dissertation on the Rise, Progress and Decline of Antient Sculpture" (London: Published by the Dilettanti, 1809).

*An Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste* (London, 1805); 2d ed., 1805; 3d, 1806; 4th, 1808. My references are to the third edition.

*Alfred; a Romance in Rhyme* (London, 1823); a didactic poem on education.

This list, although incomplete, shows the scope of Knight's taste and thought, and suggests that he deserves to occupy a more conspicuous place in histories of English thought and literature than he has hitherto been granted.

2. Mayoux, writing of the picturesque controversy, declares: "Knight est à mon sens, l'esprit le plus vigoureux et le plus critique qui s'y soit jeté. Il représente le moment de conscience claire du mouvement. L'attitude pittoresque en lui se rattache d'une manière qu'il m'a paru intéressant de marquer, à une personnalité originale, et à une conception complexe, mais non confuse, du beau et du sentiment artistique . . ." (*Richard Payne Knight et le pittoresque*, p. 6).

3. Repton, *Sketches and Hints*, vii, in *Works*, pp. 101-2n. Nikolaus Pevsner sees Hearne's engraving of the picturesque scene as the most striking sign of the revival of Elizabethan and Jacobean architecture ("Good King James Gothic," *The Architectural Review*, CVII [February, 1950], 117-22).

4. Repton, *Sketches and Hints*, vii, in *Works*, p. 95.

5. [John Matthews], *A Sketch from The Landscape, a Didactic Poem. Addressed to R. P. Knight Esqr. With Notes, Illustrations, and a Postscript* (London, 1794), pp. 13-14.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-22.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 5 and 7.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

9. The formal system was at least "negatively good," says Knight, in that it was confined within narrow bounds. "Those who think, on the contrary, that it was *positively bad*," rejoins Matthews in a postscript, "who look up with reverence to the memory of BROWN, as the great destroyer of an unnatural and absurd system, will feel with indignation an injury offered to his ashes. This sentiment produced the present hasty SKETCH. . . ." In Knight are revived the wit and verse of Pope, in Matthews his taste.

10. This taste is illustrated by a plate of an Etruscan cup of the most ordinary manufacture but exhibiting nice correspondence of lines; this plate earned for Knight Walpole's epithet, "The Knight of the Brazen Milk-Pot." Matthews pretends to contrast with the old Grecian forms the modern chamber pot of his title page vignette, "So lumpy, round, without expression!"

11. Translated in Pevsner, "Richard Payne Knight," *Art Bulletin*, XXXI (December, 1949), 312.

12. The note to *The Landscape* is most readily available in Price's works, where it is reprinted as prolegomena to the *Dialogue on the Distinct Characters of the Picturesque and the Beautiful* . . . ; the quotation is in Price, *Works*, III, 249-51.

13. Knight, *Analytical Inquiry*, Introduction, ed. cit., p. 9.

14. *Ibid.*, ed. cit., p. 11. This distinction of figurative (employing the idea of one thing to illustrate another) and transitive (following common elements of meaning linking words together) is a hint from which Dugald Stewart constructs an entire aesthetics.

15. *Ibid.*, ed. cit., pp. 12-13.

16. *Ibid.*, ed. cit., p. 18.

17. *Ibid.*, i. 3. 11, ed. cit., p. 40.

18. *Ibid.*, i. 1. 4, ed. cit., p. 20.

19. *Ibid.*, i. 1. 6, ed. cit., pp. 23-24.

20. *Ibid.*, i. 3. 12-13, ed. cit., pp. 41-42.

21. *Ibid.*, i. 5. 9, ed. cit., p. 63.

22. *Ibid.*, i. 5. 11, ed. cit., p. 65.

23. *Ibid.*, i. 5. 16, ed. cit., p. 68.

24. *Ibid.*, i. 5. 17, ed. cit., p. 69.

25. *Ibid.*, i. 5. 35, ed. cit., p. 96.

26. *Ibid.*, i. 5. 22, ed. cit., p. 74. "Who shall ever understand the English language," cries Knight, "if new and uncouth words ["picturesqueness"] are thus to deprive those sanctioned by long usage of their authorized and established meaning?" (*ibid.*, i. 5. 17, ed. cit., p. 68n).

27. *Ibid.*, ii. 1. 15, ed. cit., p. 110.

28. *Ibid.*, ii. 1. 27, ed. cit., pp. 119-20. The pleasure from light or didactic verse, which does not sustain such enthusiasm, "arises from the charms of neatness, point, and emphasis; all of which are improved and invigorated by the regularity of a metrical style . . ." (*ibid.*, ii. 1. 34, ed. cit., p. 130).

29. The Huntington Library has a copy of the *Analytical Inquiry* with annotations by Coleridge and Wordsworth which have been elaborately edited by Edna Aston Shearer in "Wordsworth and Coleridge Marginalia in a Copy of Richard Payne Knight's *Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste*," *HLQ*, I (October, 1937), 63-99. The marginalia deal mostly with Knight's opinions on Milton, with his conception of poetic belief, and with the problem of fear in the sublime; many are in Coleridge's inimitably venomous style, epithets like "Booby," "Prater," "Rogue," &c. being heaped upon Knight. As to Milton, Coleridge justifies some of the labored lines cited by Knight as echoing the sense—which, though plausible, does not affect Knight's observation on the effect of the versification as such.

30. Knight, *Analytical Inquiry*, ii. 1. 37, ed. cit., p. 133.

31. *Ibid.*, ii. 2. 15, ed. cit., p. 146.

32. *Ibid.*, ii. 2. 19, ed. cit., p. 149.

33. *Ibid.*, ii. 2. 20-21, ed. cit., pp. 150-51. Knight notes (ii. 2. 27, ed. cit., pp. 154-55) the "late" application of the word "picturesque" to literature, signifying clear and vivid narration or description which paints to the imagination. In English, of course, this use was almost coeval with the sense "pictorial," and far older than the sense which Knight assigns the term. Early English use of the term in the sense "pictorial" usually referred to painting in a style appealing to imagination and intellect without the sensual appeal to vision which Knight stresses.

34. *Ibid.*, ii. 2. 24, ed. cit., pp. 152-53.

35. *Ibid.*, ii. 2. 28, ed. cit., p. 157.

36. *Ibid.*, ii. 2. 29, ed. cit., p. 158.

37. Knight constructed Downton Castle with an irregular Gothic exterior and a Grecian interior. Repton generously declares that "after the literary controversy between Mr. Knight and me, I should be sorry to be misunderstood as casting any reflection on the castle character of Downton; for although, perhaps, some may think that its outline was directed by the eye of a painter, rather than that of an antiquary, yet its general effect must gratify the good taste of both . . ." (*Fragments*, x, in *Works*, p. 441). Pevsner ("Richard Payne Knight," *Art Bulletin*, XXXI [December, 1949], 293-320) shows by photographs how Downton imitates buildings in Claude.

38. See *Inquiry*, i, in *Works*, p. 330; *Fragments*, xxvi, xxviii, and xxxiii, in *Works*, pp. 522, 546, 575, and 579. In the third of these passages, Repton speaks of the "absurdities of circuitous approaches, so aptly ridiculed by a modern poet!"

39. Repton, *Inquiry*, iii, in *Works*, pp. 352-53.

40. Knight, *Analytical Inquiry*, ii. 2. 94n, ed. cit., p. 220.

41. *Ibid.*, ii. 2. 54, ed. cit., p. 182.

42. *Ibid.*, pp. 181-82.

43. *Ibid.*, ii. 2. 101, ed. cit., p. 225.

44. *Ibid.*, ii. 2. 55, ed. cit., p. 184. It must be said in fairness to Hogarth that he criticized Rubens' lines as *too* undulating, as gross and clumsy.

45. *Ibid.*, ii. 2. 65, ed. cit., p. 192.

46. *Ibid.*, ii. 2. 68, ed. cit., p. 194.

47. *Ibid.*, ii. 2. 74, ed. cit., pp. 196-97. Mayoux and Hussey agree that Price was an "objectivist"—a view which I have examined above. Sir Thomas Dick Lauder observes more reasonably that Price confined himself to the popular view which contents itself with enumerating the objective properties that excite the emotions of sublimity, &c., in us, without penetrating into the deeper inquiry, why the mind is thus affected (*Sir Uvedale Price on the Picturesque*, p. 1).

48. Knight, *Analytical Inquiry*, ii. 2. 80, ed. cit., p. 204.

49. *Ibid.*, ii. 2. 86, ed. cit., p. 211.

50. *Ibid.*, ii. 2. 109, ed. cit., p. 234. I have been avoiding mention of the digressions on government, morals, love, &c., with which Knight enlivens his book; but I include this fragment as a sample of his style, both in content and in language reminiscent of Gibbon. Knight subscribes to a sentimental ethics, "for without some mixture of passion, sentiment, or affection, beneficence it-

self is but a cold virtue; and philosophers and divines, who have laboured to subject them all to the dominion of reason, or sink them in the more brilliant illuminations of faith, have only succeeded in suppressing the mild and seductive, together with some few of the sordid and selfish passions; while all those of a sour and sanguinary cast have acquired additional force and acrimony from that pride and confidence, which the triumph over the others naturally inspired. The censor Cato, the saint Bernard, and the reformer Calvin, were equally insensible to the blandishments of love, the allurements of pleasure, and the vanity of wealth; and so, likewise, were the monsters Marat and Robespierre: but all equally sacrificed every generous and finer feeling of humanity, which none are naturally without, to an abstract principle or opinion; which, by narrowing their understandings, hardened their hearts, and left them under the unrestrained guidance of all the atrocious and sanguinary passions, which party violence could stimulate or excite" (*ibid.*, ii. 2. 112, ed. cit., pp. 236-37).

51. *Ibid.*, ii. 2. 127, ed. cit., p. 253.

52. *Ibid.*, ii. 3. 1, ed. cit., p. 262.

53. *Ibid.*, ii. 3. 6, ed. cit., p. 265.

54. *Ibid.*, ii. 3. 8, ed. cit., p. 266. Identity is not really, it appears to me, a subject of demonstrative proof by number; identity is recognized intuitively rather than proved in the last analysis. But this correction does not affect Knight's inferences.

55. *Ibid.*, ii. 3. 16, ed. cit., p. 273.

56. Knight credits Johnson with discovery of our awareness of imitation in the drama, and with the rejection of the unities; he does not, here or elsewhere, seem familiar with Lord Kames, whose destructive analysis of stage illusion and the unities preceded Johnson's.

57. If the one action of the *Iliad*, Knight observes wittily, were really the arousal and allaying of Achilles' wrath, "the mighty and all-accomplished hero would have been introduced, with so much pomp of poetry, merely to wrangle with his prince, weep for his mistress, and carve a supper for three of his friends" (*ibid.*, ii. 3. 22, ed. cit., p. 276).

58. *Ibid.*, ii. 3. 23, ed. cit., p. 277.

59. *Ibid.*, ii. 3. 46, ed. cit., pp. 301-2.

60. *Ibid.*, ii. 3. 49n, ed. cit., p. 305.

61. *Ibid.*, iii. 1. 1, ed. cit., p. 318.

62. *Ibid.*, iii. 1. 7, ed. cit., p. 323.

63. *Ibid.*, iii. 1. 11, ed. cit., p. 327. Knight's position might be criticized in view of modern theories of sadistic pleasure; but even so, sadistic pleasure is not an aesthetic pleasure operating sympathetically.

64. *Ibid.*, ii. 1. 15, ed. cit., p. 332. This passage evoked from Coleridge a lengthy and confused note filling the margins of four pages, a note exposing the errors of Knight and outlining his own idea of poetic belief. The curious thing is that Coleridge attacks Knight with violence while asserting much the same thing in other terms. (Shearer, "Wordsworth and Coleridge Marginalia," *HLQ*, I [October, 1937], 79-81.)

65. Knight, *Analytical Inquiry*, iii. 1. 19, ed. cit., pp. 335-36.

66. *Ibid.*, iii. 1. 21, ed. cit., p. 337.

67. *Ibid.*, iii. 1. 26, ed. cit., p. 342.

68. *Ibid.*, iii. 1. 28, ed. cit., p. 346.

69. As Mayoux suggests (*Richard Payne Knight*, p. 114), "cette notion de sympathie avec les passions profondes ne se substitue pas sans intention chez Knight à la terreur et à la pitié aristotéliennes; il s'agit d'atteindre cette perversion de la notion prétendue esthétique de terreur que Burke a mise à la base de sa sublimité."

70. Knight, *Analytical Inquiry*, iii. 1. 41, ed. cit., p. 358.

71. The sublime may operate on the nervous system, that is, by stretching the nervous fibres. With characteristically venomous wit, Knight observes that "this stretching power of ideas of terror, no pathologist has, I believe, discovered or even surmised, though the laxative power of terror itself is so well known, as to have been celebrated even by poets; with more, indeed, of the accuracy of philosophy than the delicacy of poetry" (*ibid.*, iii. 1. 63, ed. cit., p. 378).

72. *Ibid.*, iii. 1. 51, ed. cit., pp. 367-68.

73. Burke, *Sublime and Beautiful*, i. 7, in *Works*, I, 91-92.

74. Knight, *Analytical Inquiry*, iii. 1. 61, ed. cit., p. 376.

75. *Ibid.*, iii. 1. 51, ed. cit., pp. 367-68. Curiously, in *The Landscape* Knight had admitted a role to terror; the sublime, he sings, is not the monstrous

"But nature's common works, by genius dress'd  
With art selected, and with taste express'd;  
Where sympathy with terror is combin'd,  
To move, to melt, and elevate the mind."

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76. Knight, *Analytical Inquiry*, ii. 3. 46, ed. cit., p. 302.

77. *Ibid.*, iii. 1. 59, ed. cit., p. 374.

78. *Ibid.*, iii. 1. 81, ed. cit., p. 391.

79. Monk finds treatment of the sublime "the least important part of Knight's book," and sees in this inferiority a deeper meaning: "The eighteenth century had set itself a task that was beyond its powers. It was not imaginatively equipped to deal with ultimates in art, and it failed" (*The Sublime*, pp. 161 and 163). This evaluation accords with the Kantian bias of Monk's study.

80. Knight, *Analytical Inquiry*, iii. 2. 1, ed. cit., p. 413.

81. *Ibid.*, iii. 2. 13, ed. cit., pp. 423-24.

82. *Ibid.*, iii. 2. 14, ed. cit., p. 425.

83. *Ibid.*, iii. 3. 2, ed. cit., pp. 429-30.

84. *Ibid.*, iii. 3. 9, ed. cit., p. 438.

85. *Ibid.*, iii. 3. 25, ed. cit., p. 454.

86. *Ibid.*, iii. 3. 40, ed. cit., pp. 472-73.

87. *Ibid.*, iii. 3. 32, ed. cit., p. 461.

### Chapter 18

1. Knight, note to *The Landscape*, in Price, *Works*, III, 251. (Price reprints Knight's note intact before breaking it up for his *Dialogue*.) Mayoux sums up Knight's view neatly: "Un phénomène de dissociation (et de culture spécialisée) est au fond de la beauté pittoresque simple; des phénomènes d'association sont audessous du pittoresque romantique et des mille espèces de beauté

transmises par la vue, mais autres que la primitive beauté de sensation: telle est sur ce point et sous sa première form la conception de Knight" (*Richard Payne Knight*, p. 80). The term "pittoresque romantique" is of course only Mayoux's, who considers the picturesque as a prelude to romanticism.

2. Hussey (*The Picturesque*, pp. 69-78) gives an entertaining running summary of the *Dialogue*; but I take it up here from a different point of view.

3. Price, *Works*, III, 266.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 270.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 272-73. It is of course not really the case that Price and Knight agree so entirely on "general principles."

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 325-26.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 329.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 314.

9. Nikolaus Pevsner argues that the *Dialogue* shows the difference between Knight and Price to be merely a matter of words. Price "insists on the necessity of the term Picturesque in addition to Burke's Sublime and Beautiful. Time has indeed proved its usefulness, if not its necessity. Regarding the latter, which would be the logical justification of Price's system, Knight, the more analytical thinker of the two, could not be confuted, once he had gathered his objections into a more coherent form [in the *Analytical Inquiry*]" ("Richard Payne Knight," *Art Bulletin*, XXXI [December, 1949], 305).

10. Gilpin had arrived at a similar paradox by different reasoning and for different purposes; cf. *supra*, p. 195.

11. Price, *Works*, III, 372-73. We have come full circle—Seymour said the same thing at the beginning of the outing.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 375.

13. Knight, *Analytical Inquiry*, ii. 2. 81, p. 208.

14. Price, *Works*, III, 399-400.

### Chapter 19

1. Monk, *The Sublime*, p. 6.

2. Of even greater importance than the positive advance of metaphysical psychology was the "satisfactory refutation of that sceptical philosophy, which had struck at the root of all knowledge and all belief," in which work Reid, Stewart assures us, was signally successful. "The rubbish being now removed, and the foundations laid, it is time to begin the superstructure": Dugald Stewart, *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind* (Part I, Introduction, Part i), in *The Collected Works of Dugald Stewart, Esq., F.R.S.S.*; ed. Sir William Hamilton ([2d ed.]; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1877), II, 56.

3. Volume I of the *Elements* was published in London, 1792; Volume II in Edinburgh, 1814; Volume III in London, 1827. The *Philosophical Essays* appeared at Edinburgh, 1810, with further editions in 1816 and 1818.

4. The *Active and Moral Powers* appeared in two volumes at Edinburgh, 1828; the *Lectures* as Vols. VIII and IX of Hamilton's edition of the *Works*. A brief conspectus of the entire system is afforded by Stewart's textbook, *Outlines of Moral Philosophy* (Edinburgh, 1793); in the *Works* this is divided by subject among Vols. I, VI, and VIII.

5. Stewart, *Elements*, Preface, Vol. III, in *Works*, IV, [1].

6. Stewart, *Essays*, i. 5. 2, in *Works*, V, 163.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 161.

8. *Ibid.*, i. 5. 3, in *Works*, V, 176.

9. Even such minor pronouncements as those of Joseph Warton, William Windham, and Whately are mentioned. Missing from the list of British writers are Harris, Spence, Webb, Usher, John Stedman (for his anonymous *Laelius and Hortensia* . . . [Edinburgh, 1782]), and the author, whether William Greenfield or Edward Mangin, of *Essays on the Sources of the Pleasures Received from Literary Compositions* (though this work, published London, 1809, may not have come into Stewart's hands).

10. Stewart, *Essays*, ii. 1. 1. 1, in *Works*, V, 191-92. Stewart himself, incidentally, speaks of the "beautiful result" of researches on conjunctions—a strange locution (*ibid.*, i. 5. 2, in *Works*, V, 166).

11. *Ibid.*, ii. 1. 1. 1, in *Works*, V, 193-94.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 195-96.

13. *Ibid.*, ii. 2. 5, in *Works*, V, 322. For the clue from Knight which Stewart has seized, see the *Analytical Inquiry*, Introduction, secs. 7 and 8.

14. [Francis Jeffrey], *Edinburgh Review*, XVII (November, 1810), 199.

15. Stewart, *Essays*, ii. 1. 1. 2, in *Works*, V, 204.

16. *Ibid.*, ii. 4. 1, in *Works*, V, 386.

17. *Ibid.*, ii. 1. 1. 2, in *Works*, V, 207.

18. *Ibid.*, ii. 1. 1. 3, in *Works*, V, 217.

19. Stewart, *Elements*, Introduction, Part i, in *Works*, II, 52-53; and *Essays*, Preliminary Dissertation, chap. i, in *Works*, V, 6-7, as well as Part I, Essay iv ("On the Metaphysical Theories of Hartley, Priestley, and Darwin").

20. Stewart appears to consider that brilliant reflection is organically pleasing (pleasing also in some circumstances as a sign of art). This is a point difficult to support. One recalls the equally plausible argument of Payne Knight that a blended variety of mellow tints is organically pleasing, and brilliant reflections harshly irritating to the eye.

21. Stewart, *Essays*, ii. 1. 1. 4, in *Works*, V, 224-25.

22. *Ibid.*, ii. 1. 1. 5, in *Works*, V, 230. Stewart considers that the primitive meaning of "picturesque" is "graphic"; I believe that he is mistaken, that the primitive meaning is that which Price supposes, "after the manner of painters."

23. *Ibid.*, Note X (referring to *Essays*, ii. 1. 1. 5, in *Works*, V, 233), in *Works*, V, 439.

24. *Ibid.*, ii. 1. 1. 5, in *Works*, V, 236.

25. *Ibid.*, ii. 1. 1. 6, in *Works*, V, 249.

26. I should put the case this way: the properties perceived by touch, excepting temperature and pressure (which are not deemed "beautiful"), are through experience judged of by sight; odors and tastes are not *seen*, and hence are not beautiful.

27. Stewart, *Essays*, ii. 1. 1. 6, in *Works*, V, 251.

28. *Ibid.*

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 252-53.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 248. There is here a double transition, from physical beauty to the expression of moral qualities in the countenance, and from this expres-