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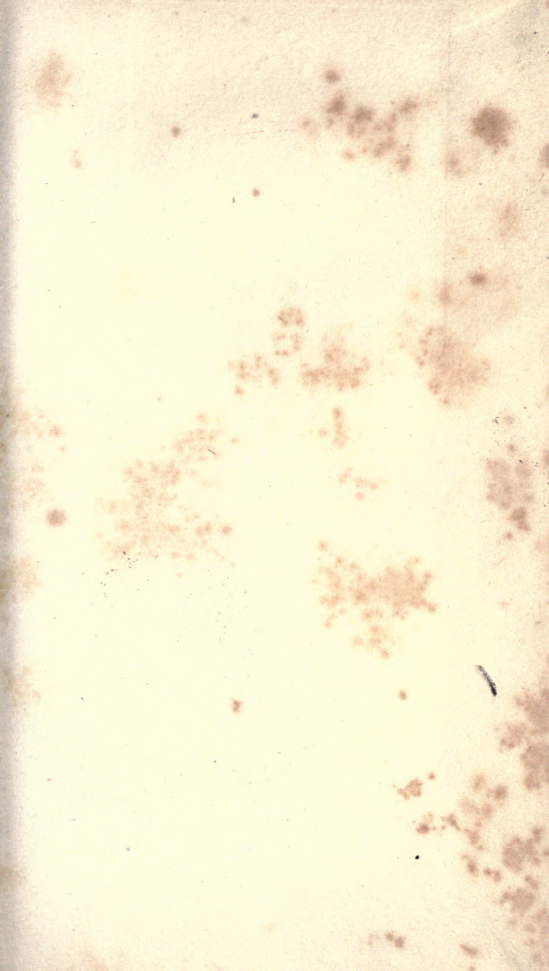


MEMOIRS

OF

EXTRAORDINARY PAINTERS.

Mr. Beckford's Biographical Memoirs of Extraordinary Painters would have excited considerable attention, under whatever circumstances they might have been given to the world. "They are a series of sharp and brilliant satires on the Dutch and Flemish schools—the language polished and pointed—the sarcasms at once deep and delicate; a performance in which the buoyancy of Juvenile spirits sets off the results of already extensive observation, and the judgments of a refined taste."—Quarterly Review, June 1834.





# BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIRS

OF

EXTRAORDINARY

P A I N T E R S.

— *Λόγος ἴστι ψευδῆς εἰκονίζων ἀλήθειαν.*

Aphthonius Progymnas. Pr.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "VATHEK."

*W. Beckford*

A NEW EDITION.

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1834.

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BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIRS

ESTRADOZ

PALMER

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PALMER"

LONDON

LONDON:

PRINTED BY SAMUEL BENTLEY,

Dorset Street, Fleet Street.

## ALDROVANDUS MAGNUS.

THIS illustrious artist was one of the first who brought the art of painting in oil to a degree of perfection. It is well known, that Hubert and John Van-eyck in a manner discovered this admirable secret, the finding of which occasioned almost as much trouble as the researches after the philosopher's stone; but though the Van-eycks succeeded to the admiration of all Europe, still the most experienced colourists unanimously allow Aldrovandus to have exceeded them in every respect. His varnish (composed chiefly of nut-oil) gave a superior glow to his paintings, rendered the tints more

mellow, and the nice strokes of his pencil far more discernible than those of the Van-eycks; this circumstance alone is sufficient to give the preference to our artist, had not his knowledge of the demi-tints raised him above all his predecessors. Bruges claims the honour of his birth, which happened on St. Simon's day, 1473. His parents, wealthy merchants trading to the Levant, intended to send him into those countries, that he might acquire the language and be serviceable in their commerce. Every thing was agreed upon, and the day fixed for his departure. Fortunately for the arts, Jean Hemmelinck, a disciple of the Van-eycks, chanced to pay a visit to the old Aldrovandus, his beloved friend, on the eve of his son's departure. Observing a number of loose papers covered with sketches of animals and figures,



scattered about the apartment, Hemmelinck was tempted to take up some of them, and sitting down began to examine them with attention. He had not long contemplated them, before he broke out into exclamations of surprise, and inquired hastily for their author. The father, who was writing at his desk by the fire side, paid little attention to his friend's enthusiasm, and it was not till Hemmelinck had pulled him three times by the sleeve that he cared to give any answer. Being of a very phlegmatic disposition, he replied coolly, "that they were his son's scratches, and that he believed he would ruin him in paper were he to live much longer in such an idle way." "Truly," said his mother, who was knitting in a great chair opposite to his father, and who was resolved to put in her word, "our child is very innocently em-

ployed, and although he doth marr a little paper, or so, there is no need of snubbing him as you always do.” “Woman,” answered old Aldrovandus, “cease thy garrulity, our son will be shipped off to-morrow, so there needs no farther words.” Upon this the mother burst into tears, and, as she was always averse to her son’s voyage, took this opportunity to give vent to her sorrow, and with a piteous voice, cried out, “You will, then, barbarous man! Father without bowels! you will, then, expose our first-born to dwell amongst a parcel of brutal circumcised Moors and infidels. You will, then, have him go over sea and be shipwrecked without christian burial. O Lord! O Lord! why cannot folks live every one under his own fig-tree, without roving and wandering through perils and dangers, that make my blood run

cold to think of. And all this for the lucre of gain! Are we not blessed with a competence at home, without looking for superfluities abroad? Yes, my precious baby, you shall not be torn from me. Here, take my ruby cross, my gold bodkins, and all my parafernalia, leave me but Anthony my son . . . Anthony, my son, . . . O!”—The poor lady pronounced these last words with such vehemence, that, her spirits failing her, she fell into a swoon; and whilst proper assistance was called for, Hemmelinck, touched with her situation (for he was full of sensibility), drew his chair near old Aldrovandus, and held the following discourse: “You know, my dear friend, that Providence has been bountiful unto me, and that under its protection my talents have procured me an affluent fortune, to which I have no heir; for to say

truth, I have had no time to beget children, and matrimony I have always regarded as a gilded pill, fair to the eye and bitter to the palate; therefore I have been several times on the very point of making you a proposition, which perhaps may not be disagreeable." There was a solemnity in this harangue very suitable to the genius of Aldrovandus; the mention of affluence too and fortune tickled his ears, and the proposition not yet explained roused his attention. So conveying his pen into his wig, and twirling his thumbs round each other, the merchant turned a very placid countenance towards Hemmelinck, who continued: "In good truth, I have fixed upon an heir; I have cast on Anthony the eyes of adoption, and if you will but consent, I will defray the expenses you have incurred in equipping him for the voy-

age, then I will take him home, nourish him with parental tenderness, and next I will teach him the principles of my art; for his capacity is capacious, and if the blossoms of his genius are duly cultivated, they will produce such fruit as will astonish the world. After my death he shall inherit all my possessions. Go then unto his mother, and comfort her, for she is grievously afflicted." That I may not detain my readers with unnecessary details, I will briefly acquaint them, that Anthony Aldrovandus was, after some deliberation, placed under the care of Hemmelinck, and the project of his voyage abandoned. Those who, after having been restrained in their warmest inclinations, find themselves on a sudden free, may conceive the joy of young Aldrovandus, when he found himself at liberty to pursue his beloved studies. He now applied himself with

such intensesness, that the kind Hemmelinck was obliged to check an ardour, which might have proved prejudicial to his health; but nothing could hinder our young artist from giving four hours in a day to chemistry, his favourite science. Hemmelinck was very assiduous in the laboratory, and had some part in the discovery of many admirable compositions, which contributed to the perfection of Aldrovandus's colours, ever famous for their splendour and durability. The judicious Hemmelinck, marking the progress of his disciple, thought him sufficiently grounded in his art to give his paintings to the public, and purposely to make his talents known, quitted the village of Dammé, which had been their residence for eight years, and travelled to Ghent, where they arrived the 6th of Sept. 1492. Hemmelinck immediately

hired a house and furnished it with his own and Aldrovandus's paintings, which soon attracted the admiration of the curious, who flocked in crowds to behold them. Adam Spindlemans, a rich burgher of Ghent, purchased five of the most capital performances, which he sent as presents to the Dukes of Parma and Placentia, princes who delighted in the encouragement of arts, and whose cabinets began to be filled with the choicest productions of the pencil. Such a genius as Aldrovandus could not long remain in obscurity. George Podebrac, Duke of Bohemia, formerly the patron of Hemmelinck, desired him to send his disciple to his court, at the same time promising the most ample encouragement. An offer like this was not to be rejected, especially as Hemmelinck was under such obligations to the Bohemian



monarch that he could hardly have refused it with decency. Besides he had other reasons, of no less consequence to his disciple's advancement. Aldrovandus was not insensible to the charms of the fair sex, and Ann Spindlemans, whose beauty and coyness had been fatal to many lovers, held him in her chains. In vain he presented her with eastern curiosities, which his mother had privately procured him. In vain he laid a pair of silk stockings at her feet, at that period a valuable rarity. Not all his assiduity could procure him the least favour, so far was he from hoping ever to garter his present above the knee. It is incredible what elegant closet pictures he lavished upon this haughty beauty. It was for her he finished so exquisitely the adventure of Salmacis and Hermaphroditus, a fable the very reverse of his own unhappy



situation. It was at her desire he impiously changed the sacred story of Bell and the Dragon, begun for the Benedictines, into the garden of the Hesperides, guarded by a more sagacious monster. This *trait* scandalized his master, whose chastity had taken the alarm at several other of his proceedings, and, under pretence of visiting his parents, he found means to snatch him from the allurements of Ann Spindlemans; nor was it till after he had left Ghent ten leagues behind, that he perceived the deceit. Such are the reveries into which love-lorn passion plunges his votaries!—Hemmelinck, who accompanied his disciple, tried by sage discourses to set his conduct in its proper light, and told him with his accustomed gravity, that what was right could not be wrong, and *vice versa*. He added, “that youth was the

season of folly, and that passion was like an unbridled horse, a torrent without a dike, or a candle with a thief in it, and ended by comparing Ann Spindlemans herself to a vinegar-bottle, who would deluge the sallad of matrimony with much more vinegar than oil." He continued for two long hours in this figurative style, when observing his disciple's eyes nearly closed, he gave another fillip to his imagination, and attempted to excite his attention by more splendid ideas. Now he represented to him what golden advantages would spring from his residence at Prague, what honours, what emoluments; and next he brought to view Duke Podebrac, with great solemnity appointing him his painter, and holding forth chains and medals decorated with costly gems, as the reward of his labours. These chains and medals

the sagacious painter took great care to wave frequently before the eye of his fancy, and this lessened, in some measure, the acuteness of his sorrow. These flattering dreams served to alleviate his grief during the journey, and before he arrived at Prague had almost effaced Ann Spindlemans from his memory. How inconstant is youth, how apt to change, how fond of roving! But let us return to our artists, who met with the most honourable reception from the Duke. He immediately gave them an apartment in his palace, appointed them a magnificent table, and officers to attend them.

Aldrovandus, delighted with the generous treatment he had received, resumed his employments with double alacrity, and began an altar-piece for

the cathedral, in which he may be said to have surpassed himself. The subject, Moses and the burning bush, was composed in the most masterly manner, and the flames represented with such truth and vivacity, that the young Princess Ferdinanda Joanna Maria being brought by the Duchess, for a little recreation, to see him work, cried out, "La! Mamma, I won't touch that bramble bush, for fear it should burn my fingers!" This circumstance, which I am well aware some readers will deem trifling, gained our painter great reputation amongst all the courtiers, and not a little applause to her Serene Highness, for her astonishing discernment and sagacity. All the nurses and some of the ladies in waiting declared, she was too clever to live long, and they were not mistaken, for this admirable Princess departed this life Jan,

23d, 1493, and it was unanimously observed, that had she lived, she would have been indubitably the jewel of Bohemia. This may seem a digression; but as it was her Serene Highness who first gave her spotless opinion of our artist's merit, I could not dispense with mentioning these few words in relation to her, and consecrating a tear to her memory. Aldrovandus was sensibly afflicted at her loss, and painted her apotheosis with wonderful intelligence. He represented the heavens wide open, and the Blessed Virgin in a rich robe of ultramarine, seated, according to custom, on the back of the old serpent, whose scales were horribly natural. Mercury, poetically habited, was placed judiciously in the off-skip, with an out-stretched arm, receiving the royal infant from the city of Prague. She was draped in a

saffron stole, which seemed to float so naturally in the air, that a spectator might have sworn the wind blew it into all its beautiful folds. Above were gods and goddesses, saints and angels. Below were forests and gilded spires, nymphs, fauns, dryads and hamadryads, all classically adorned with emblems and symbols. This master-piece gained him the esteem of Podebrac and the whole court, to which was added a rich chain with the Duke's picture, and a purse containing 1000 rixdollars. Encouraged by this liberality, Aldrovandus exerted himself more and more. It is from this time we may date some of his most capital productions. The tower of Babel, in which he expressed the confusion of languages, Lot's wife, the Duchess of Bohemia, and two highly finished landscapes, since lost in the confusion of war,

were all dispersed among the Bohemian nobles, who vied with each other in loading him with presents. His genius was now in its full vigour, his touch spirited, his colours harmonious, and his drawing correct. Italy envied the Bohemian court the possession of such an artist, and several of her Princes tried all possible means to engage him to visit them; but notwithstanding the great desire he had to behold the lovely prospects of Italy, the magnificence of Rome, and the remains of ancient grandeur so interesting to a picturesque eye, he refused every offer, and resolved never to quit a monarch, from whom he had experienced such generosity. Podebrac, charmed with these sentiments, decorated him with the order of the Ram, and gave him in marriage Joan Jablinouski, a young lady to whom nature and fortune had



been lavish of their favours. Their nuptials were celebrated by torch light in one of the royal gardens, and their Majesties and the whole court graced the ceremony with their presence; but this entertainment was unfortunately interrupted by the sudden death of Hemmelinck, who had long been troubled with a *boulomée*, or voracious appetite, which occasioned him to devour whatever was set before him with a frightful precipitation. He met his fate in a huge pike, which he soon reduced to a mere skeleton, and soon after feeling a death-like cold at his stomach, called feebly to Aldrovandus, squeezed his hand and expired. The bridegroom was dreadfully disconcerted by this event, for he sincerely esteemed his master, notwithstanding the reproofs he had often received from him; and indeed he had



every reason to respect his memory, as all the wealth of Hemmelinck now became his own.

Aldrovandus was now arrived at the summit of prosperity: universally esteemed and admired, caressed by a puissant Prince, solaced by the blandishments of a lovely spouse, this happy painter had not a wish unsatisfied. He now began to enjoy his opulence in a palace he had built, and there divided his time between the delights of his art and the pleasures of society. Disciples flocked from very remote parts to seek his instructions; but he dismissed them all with handsome presents, two only excepted, whose conduct particularly won his esteem. The two elect were Andrew Guelph and Og of Basan, since so famous in the annals of painting. The

assiduity of these young men was incredible, and their talents astonished Aldrovandus, who used always to be saying, "If Og had lived before the Deluge, he would certainly have obtained permission from Noah to have been of the party in the ark." Andrew Guelph he allowed to possess great merit, surprising fire of genius, and an imagination tempered by science, and consequently super-excellent. In conversing with his chosen friends, and instructing his disciples, Aldrovandus passed many happy years, diversified by the birth of four children, to whom Ferdinand gave letters of nobility. At length fortune, tired with lavishing on him her gifts, clouded the evening of his life by an unforeseen misfortune. As he and his disciples worked night and day at a suite of paintings which was to contain the whole history

of the Goths and Vandals, canvas began to grow exceedingly rare, and Ferdinand, touched with the lamentations of his favourite, summoned a solemn council, at which he ordered him to assist, with Andrew Guelph and Og of Basan bearing the sketches of part of the great historical work. The council assembled; Podebrac ascended the throne; the trumpets sounded; the painters arrived, and the paintings were exposed to the admiration of this august assembly, who conferred on Aldrovandus the title of Magnus, *nem. con.* Afterwards they proceeded to business, and voted a supply of canvas. Several of the nobles distinguished themselves by very elegant harangues, and his Highness issued forth a proclamation, whereby he declared it treason for any of his liege subjects to conceal, purloin, or alienate any roll, bundle, or

fardel of canvas within his dominions, thereby impeding the collection which the aforesaid Aldrovandus Magnus, Knight of the most noble order of the Ram, was empowered to make. Now waggons and sledges arrived from every quarter, bringing the tributary canvas to Aldrovandus's palace. He, transported with gratitude, and fired by that enthusiasm to which we owe so many capital works, resolved to outdo his former outdoings, on the subject of Prince Drahomire, who in the year 921 was swallowed up by an earthquake in that spot where now stands the palace of Radzen. Animated by this glorious subject, he cried aloud for canvas, but instead of canvas, his disciples, with singed beards, brought the news of the conflagration of his warehouse, in which every thread of it was consumed. What a disappoint-

ment to collected genius! A paroxysm of grief ensued; and calling out continually "Drahomire! Canvas! and St. Luke!" Aldrovandus Magnus expired. There was hardly a dry eye in Prague. The Duke groaned; the courtiers wept; his disciples painted his catastrophe; the people put on black; the university composed epitaphs, and Professor Clod Lumpewitz exceeded them all. His performance happily escaped the wreck of time, and I have the pleasure of setting it before my readers, with a version, supposed to be made by the ingenious Master John Ogilby.

Pictor Alexandri titulum gerit Aldrovandus;  
 Pictor erat magnus; magnus erat Macedo.  
 Mortis erat similis (sic fertur) causa duobus:  
 Huic regna, autem illi cannaba deficiunt.

Magnus, the title of old Alexander,  
 Was also that of Painter Aldrovand' here:

The one for want of \* worlds to conquer cried,  
T' other for lack of canvas nobly died.

\* It is remarkable that the learned Professor Clod Lumpewitz, ever maintained that this renowned Conqueror was cruelly aspersed, by those who have killed him by drinking; and instead of merely crying for more worlds to conquer, he insisted that he died solely on that account. The critical reader will observe, that the admirable Ogilby, in conformity with the general opinion, has taken a small liberty with his author.

ANDREW GUELPH,

AND

OG OF BASAN,

DISCIPLES OF ALDROVANDUS MAGNUS.

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THE obscure village of Basan, situated on the wilds of Pomerania, gave birth to Andrew Guelph and to Og, from thence denominated, of Basan. Andrew's parents were reputable farmers, who tilled their own lands, and had the comfort of seeing their numerous herds grazing in their own pastures. Without the delicacies of life, they enjoyed every necessary, and being ignorant of a higher

station, were amply contented with their own. Geoffry Simons, or Sikimonds, the brother of Andrew's mother, was esteemed the father of Og, tho' there are who assert he was of far more illustrious extraction; as Prince Henry Sucking-bottle and Felt Marshal Swappingback had passed through his native village some nine months before his birth, and had honoured his mother with particular marks of condescension and affability. But whether they really were his earthly fathers I will not pretend to determine; certain it is that they stood by proxy as his godfathers, Feb. 3, 1519, in the parish church of St. Sigismund, and by their desire he was baptized by the name of Og, common to their illustrious ancestors.

The relationship between Og and Andrew afforded them frequent opportuni-



ties of being together, and the similarity of disposition united them by much stronger ties than those of blood. Their employments frequently called them into the fields, and it was in mutually delighting to observe nature, that they first imbibed the desire of imitating her productions. Seldom did the sun set before they had engraven on the rocks the resemblance of some of the shrubs that grew from the fissures, or the likeness of several of the goats that came to drink at the spring beneath. The desire of excelling each other produced many surprising efforts of genius, and it happened after they had amused themselves almost five years in covering the neighbouring rocks with their sculptures, that Og's mother unfortunately lost a sheep, on which she had placed her affections. Searching for her lost favourite she climbed the rocks,

to which her son and his friend were accustomed to resort. The first object that struck her eyes was the portrait of the animal she was looking for, sketched out upon the stone. When she returned home she could not help relating what she had seen to a Jew, who frequented her house, and who had been educated a painter. The Jew offered to cultivate the talents of Og, and Andrew ardently begged to receive his instructions together with his friend. Their joint request granted, both learnt with the greatest avidity; but at the end of two years finding they excelled their master, they entreated their parents for permission to travel to Prague, where they might improve under so great a painter as the famous Aldrovandus.—The parents consented, and the young men set out in the depth of winter for

Bohemia, and arriving at Prague were received in the manner I have related by Aldrovandus. After his death they sold a cabinet of their own and their master's paintings for a considerable sum, and then set out together for Tyrol, which they had a great desire to see, as the wildness of the landscapes and the romantic grandeur of the mountains, promised them excellent subjects for the pencil. A tent, two mules, and an Hungarian servant (whose portrait Andrew took great delight in drawing) was all the baggage and suite with which they were encumbered. During the summer months they roved from one part of this beautiful country to another; now pitching their tent in a green valley by a waterfall, now gaining the highlands and living amongst the mountaineers; whose queer countenances and uncouth dresses furnished

them with admirable studies. The rude scenery of these mountains suited the melancholy of Og's imagination, which delighted in solitude and gloom. He sequestered himself from his companion, hid himself in the forests of pines, and descended into caverns where no one had ever penetrated. Whilst Og was delivering himself up to his genius in these wildernesses, Andrew, whose imagination was less fervid, contented himself with the humbler prospects of the valleys. He took pleasure in the conversation of the peasants, and on a moonlight evening would take his guitar, and accompanying it with his voice, enliven the assembled peasants before their simple habitations. There are said to have been two pictures in the Dusseldorp collection by his hand, in which he has placed himself at the door of a hovel, surrounded

with a groupe of children ; their eyes beaming with mirth, and looking at a young man, who is capering under the shade of a beech tree, through whose leaves quivers the light of the moon. On a bank sit several young peasants, whispering to one another ; their features scarce discernible ; their limbs finely proportioned and their attitudes spirited. Behind lies a wide extended country, concealed by a beautiful haze ; the distribution of light and shade are very masterly, the tints soft and mellow, and the aërial perspective admirable. Many connoisseurs give this moonlight the preference to any they have ever seen. Andrew, during his stay in these valleys, applied himself to botany, and introduced a vast variety of plants in the foreground of his landscapes, which he never failed of finishing with the most scrupu-

lous exactness. Monsieur Van Slingelandt, of the Hague, is in possession of one of these views from Tyrol, where the artist has faithfully imitated the cataract of Brawling-bubble, shaded by a variety of trees, and estimable on account of the innumerable aquatic plants he has placed on the margin of the torrent. They are coloured with truth, and touched with such lightness and facility as is truly surprising. A bridge formed of the stumps of fir-trees, and a rainbow produced by the spray of the water, has the finest effect imaginable. The sky is warm and glowing: several golden clouds envelope the setting sun, whose beams pierce through the thickets, and partially enlighten the off-skip; but a want of keeping in the back ground, where the painter has brought some very distant peaks too near the eye, of-



fends the critical spectator. Andrew waited near half the summer for his companion, and had nearly given him up for lost, when one morning, as he was straying by the banks of a rivulet, he saw a strange figure descending a precipice with wonderful alertness. Judge of his surprise, when shortly after he recollected the well known features of Og of Basan, most reverently mantled in a long beard. Andrew desired his friend to quit this savage state, and then begged to know for what purpose he had undertaken so wild an expedition. "For the love of my art," replied Og with some warmth; "I have beheld nature in her sanctuary, I have contemplated the tempest gathering at my feet, and venting its fury on these contemptible habitations. You have idly remained amongst these herdsmen, these unfeeling clowns,

whilst I have discovered the source of rivers and the savage animals that inhabit them. Here, take my papers and observe what scenes I have imitated." Andrew took the drawings with impatience and devoured them with his eyes. "What rocks!" exclaimed the transported painter; "what energy in the strokes of this pencil! Indeed," continued he, turning to his friend, who was reciting some lines he had composed amongst the mountains, "you have acquired a new manner. Our master Aldrovandus never equalled the magnificent forests you have represented. Then what harmony in these tints! What a gradation of shadow! But this sketch exceeds them all. What are these visionary beings you have introduced? Is not that august figure, bending over the torrent, Aldrovandus?" He continued a long while to interrogate his



friend, and then began a very serious conversation, in the course of which they agreed to quit Tyrol and pass into Italy, to make their talents known, and to cultivate the society of those illustrious painters, whose fame had reached the very extremities of Europe. This resolution taken was not long in executing, and passing over the mountains they discovered the plains of Italy, for the first time, Sept. 1540.

Every city presented to them a multiplicity of objects with which they were unacquainted. Venice struck them with surprise, and being long accustomed to scenes of nature, they were astonished, rather than delighted, with those of art. It was in this city, at this period the resort of foreigners from every part of the world, they became acquainted with

Soorcrout and Sucrewasser of Vienna, painters of whom we shall make honourable mention in the subsequent part of our work. These young men, who had already acquired a considerable reputation by their singular style of painting, totally different from the manner of Aldrovandus and his disciples, attempted to depreciate, by a meanness too remarkable in several great artists, the pictures, and studies which Andrew and Og of Basan had brought from the rocks of Tyrol. They deemed them preposterous and unmeaning, found great fault with the varnish, peculiar to Aldrovandus, condemned oils in general, and strenuously recommended white of egg. Not contented with these criticisms, they openly attacked the memory of Aldrovandus, treated him as a vile plagiarist, who copied nature instead

of the antique models, which alone they regarded as the standards of perfection; besides that, he had never been at Rome, was ignorant of the divine Raphaello, and, to crown all, was born in Flanders. Andrew Guelph, conscious of the ridiculous malignity of these assertions, prudently left the public to decide, whether his paintings ought to be condemned without trial; but Og of Basan, with his usual violence of temper, insisted upon an assembly of the *conoscenti* being summoned, and claimed the privilege of confronting his works with those of Sucrewasser and Soorcroust of Vienna. Accordingly the *conoscenti* were convoked, a day appointed, and a casino chosen for the rendezvous of the assembly.

Andrew Guelph prepared his moon-

light for the occasion, and Og of Basan a wilderness, in which he introduced the temptation of our Saviour. His rivals brought each of them pieces, which they esteemed capital. Signor Andrea Boccadolce, president of the society, having taken the chair, and the pictures being placed in a row before him, silence was proclaimed, and Og of Basan commanded to advance and vindicate the use his master, Aldrovandus Magnus, had made of nut-oil, preferably to white of egg, defended by Sucre-wasser and Soorcroust.

Og of Basan obeyed, and with a modest assurance stepped into the middle of the assembly, hemmed three times, cast a terrible eye upon his antagonists, bowed to the president, and began in the following terms. “ Had I even a third

part of my master's merit, I should not without fear hazard my opinion before so respectable an assembly, distinguished by their profession, and still more by that rare knowledge, and that taste in it, which they have displayed on so many preceding occasions. Imagine not, illustrious Signors ! I am ignorant of my rivals' merit. Their performances have doubtless met with no more than deserved applause ; and had the hens of your sacred republic ceased depositing their eggs, you would then have unani- mously allowed the beauty evident in every stroke ; for they might have been visible ; but I must confess the splendor of their incomparable varnish has bereft me of eyes to examine what, I doubt not, merits the most exact attention." Here Soorcrouit bit his lip, and Sucrewasser scratched his elbow : Signor Boccadolce

whistled gently, and the *conoscenti* looked at one another, as if they had never thought of this before. Og proceeded. "Aldrovandus, whom the Duke of Bohemia regretted to his last moments; Aldrovandus, the pupil of Hemmelinck; Aldrovandus, who obtained the title of Magnus, anointed his pictures with nut-oil: shew me a more illustrious example and I will follow it. Ah! if we could recall this great man from the tomb, in which I saw him interred, how ably would he defend the cause of nut-oil. Had my feeble voice but half the unction of his tongue, I should confound you partizans of white of egg: I should drive you to despair: Ye would hide yourselves from this assembly: Ye would make an omelet of your eggs and bury them in your own entrails." So saying, the artist advanced towards his rivals,

who retreated in proportion, and, with a full swing of his arm, tore away the curtain from his picture, and exposed his wilderness to view. A murmur of applause ran through the whole assembly, when they beheld this prodigy of art, where the tempter stood confessed in all his wiles, and Signor Boccadolce pronounced, that no varnish but nut-oil could smooth a wilderness, or give so amiable a polish to the devil's horn. Andrew immediately uncovering his moonlight, completed the astonishment of the spectators and the confusion of his rivals, who, refusing to disclose their pieces, retired without delay, and left Venice the day following. Now all the *conoscenti* hurried to compliment our artists upon the exquisite beauty of their performances, and no other varnish but nut-oil was approved. The sketches



they had brought from Tyrol were purchased with avidity, and most of the nobles desired them to make finished pictures after these bold designs, and in a short space of time they found themselves growing exceedingly rich. The Pococurante family, in particular, commanded a whole gallery of paintings, which was to immortalize the mighty deeds of their ancestors. The interesting conversation of Og of Basan, his natural eloquence and address, procured him access to the first houses in Venice, where he often conversed with strangers, whose discourse was full of the praises of Rome and Raphael, insomuch that he determined to visit that capital of the world, and leaving Andrew to finish the Pococurante gallery, he took the road of Bologna and hastened to Tivoli, whose cascades, cool grottos, venerable temples



and refreshing shades detained him during the heats, which continued two months. He spent his mornings in exploring the subterraneous apartments (many of which he was the first that had entered) and in copying the grotesques on the vaulted ceilings, of which he published two volumes in folio, elegantly illuminated. He was very fortunate in his researches after antiquities, having discovered some of the most estimable which now grace the Italian cabinets. His evenings were dedicated to music and the reading of Ariosto, then lately given to the world.

A young native of Tivoli, whose name we are ignorant of, was partly the cause of his lingering in this enchanted region. Her form was perfectly Grecian, and the contour of her face exceeded those of the

antique Julia ; but it was her taste which captivated the heart of our artist. Like him she delighted in woods and caverns, and was charmed, like him, with the ruins that lay scattered over her country. She would often lead him to meadows of greensward, where she had observed some sculptured marble overgrown with flowers ; when the sun had cast his setting gleams on the Sybil's temple, she would hasten to her love and conduct him to a grove of cypresses, and sing under their shades till the moon dimly discovered the waterfalls to her view. Then they would seat themselves together on the brink of the stream which runs foaming through the valleys, and when an universal stillness prevailed, interrupted alone by the waters and the bell of some distant monastery, she would select those stanzas in the Or-

lando which expressed her passion, and repeat them with rapture. Many are the nights they passed together, and many the mornings when they ascended the cliffs, and beheld the sun rising behind the towers of Rome. At length Og recollected, he was born not to spend all his days at Tivoli, and whilst his beloved nymph was sleeping by his side, he arose, and without venturing to cast one look behind, fled like a criminal towards Rome: But let us leave him a prey to his guilty reflections, and represent the distraction of the unhappy maid, who awoke never to recover her lost happiness. At first she imagined her lover in the neighbouring thicket, and putting aside the brambles with her tender arms, searched every brake in vain. She lifted up her voice, and filled all the valley with her cries. She ran in

all the wildness of grief to the river, and her troubled imagination represented the body of her lover floating down the floods. A peasant, who was trimming his vines, perceived her agitation, and running towards her, asked her the cause of her affliction. She described her lover in such a manner as to admit of no doubt, and the peasant declared he had seen him at the first dawn on the way to Rome. She started: A cold tremor seized her whole frame: She would have fallen had not an aged pine sustained her. She opened once more her eyes, and casting a last look on the scenes of her former happiness, plunged headlong into the tide, and was seen no more. Whilst this new Olimpia\* added another victim to love, her Bireno was

\* Alluding to a story in the 10th canto of the Orlando Furioso.

graciously received by the Cardinal Grossocavallo, who lodged him in his palace and presented him to his Holiness, who was pleased to command two altar-pieces, and to name two famous miracles for their subjects; the one St. Dennis bearing his own head, intended as a present for the King of France; the other St. Anthony preaching to the fishes, which was to be sent to Frederick the Simple, King of Naples. Og succeeded wonderfully in both performances. The astonishment in the head at finding itself off its own shoulders was expressed to admiration, and the attitude of the blessed St. Dennis as natural as that of any man, who ever carried such a burthen. In the second picture he placed St. Anthony on a rock projecting over the sea, almost surrounded by shoals of every species of fish, whose

countenances, all different, were highly expressive of the most profound attention and veneration. Many persons fancied they distinguished the likeness of most of the Conclave in these animals; but this is generally believed to be a false observation, as the painter had no pique against any of their Eminences. What, however, gave rise to this idea, was, as I learn from the best authority, some dislike he entertained against Cardinal Hippolito d'Est, on account of his stupid treatment of his beloved poet Ariosto. He was even heard to repeat one day, when this Cardinal was advancing towards him, the following line from the Orlando :

*Vi venia a bocca aperta il grosso tonno.*

After he had finished the altar-pieces above-mentioned, and presented them to his Holiness, he desired permission

to study the works of Raphael, dispersed in the apartments of the Vatican. So reasonable a request was not denied, and our artist, permitted to visit every part of this immense palace, spent two months in straying through the vast saloons, examining the antiques with a critical eye, and copying the paintings of Raphael. Charmed with the solitude of many of the coved halls, in this stupendous edifice, he frequently retired to them with a few books he had chosen from the famous library, and his own volumes of designs. It was with difficulty he could be forced from his retirement to take the necessary sustenance. Thus delivered up to meditation, he composed a treatise upon his art, and a dissertation upon the plurality of worlds, not published till after his death. He was perfectly serene whilst occupied in this



manner; but when his treatise and dissertation were ended, and his designs after Raphael completed, he abandoned himself to a melancholy, which overcast all his happiness. He would now walk by moonlight through the lonely galleries, and revolve in his mind the instability of human grandeur. The magnificence of the ancient Romans reduced to heaps of mouldering ruins, objects continually before his eyes, reminded him of the fall of empires, and this idea was attended by a series of others still more gloomy. "So many great characters (said he, as he was reading Tacitus on the capital of a broken column) passed away like fleeting clouds, of which no traces remain, fill me with the most interesting reflections. Where now are those crowds, which assisted at the dedication of the capitol, that rended



the air with their acclamations at the triumphs of Pompey, that feasted at the table of Lucullus? All are no more. The time too must come, when these halls will be levelled with the plain, these arches fall to the ground, and that awful period may also arrive when the moon shall cease to cast her gleams over their ruins." The recollection of Tivoli now stole insensibly into his mind: He grew troubled, and reproached himself a thousand times with having deserted one who had sacrificed all for him. Though he was ignorant of her sad fate, the delicacy of her sensations recurred to his memory with innumerable circumstances, which revived all his former tenderness, and many dreadful suspicions haunted his fancy. If he slept, his dreams represented her in the well-known woods, wailing as in anguish, or

on the distant shore of rapid torrents beckoning him to console her in vain, for the instant he attempted to advance, tempests arose, and whirlwinds of fire snatched her screaming from his sight. Often he imagined himself reclining by her side in meads of flowers, under a sky of the purest azure, and suddenly she would become ghastly pale, and frowning on him, drive him to a flood that rolled its black waves between terrifying precipices, and dashing into its current drag him after her, and then he would wake in horror, crying, "I drown! I drown!" Indeed he seems to have been selected as an example of divine vengeance. Alone in this great capital, without a friend to administer consolation, or sustain his sinking spirits, he returned to Tivoli, fully resolved to make every reparation to her who had

placed such unmerited confidence in his perjured breast. But ye who have any sensibility, figure to yourselves the poignancy of his grief, when the first object he beheld was a young man, the brother of her he had loved, and who had lately taken the monastic habit, shuddering at his sight, and exclaiming, "Avaunt, wretch! my sister plunged into that torrent for thee—for thee she is lost for ever—and scarce three days did my mother survive her. Thou too shouldst join them, or I would die a thousand deaths, did not my order forbid me to vindicate my wrongs. 'Tis to my future hopes thou owest thy present safety; but be gone, lest I break my vow, and sacrifice thee to my revenge." Cowardice generally accompanies guilt: Og, terrified at the resolute aspect of the young man, and appalled by the lively sense of his

wrongs, retired without making any reply, and remounting his horse, which he had led when he ascended the steeps of Tivoli, galloped away with astonishing swiftness, without determining where to direct his route. In every passing wind, he fancied he heard voices upbraiding him with his crimes, and cries denouncing vengeance seemed to issue from every thicket he left behind. At length, harassed by continual fears, he stopped towards the close of the evening, near the sepulchre of Cecilia Metella, and throwing himself from his wearied horse, which he left carelessly to drink at a fountain, sought the interior of the structure. There, beneath the covert of a solitary pine, he folded his arms and remained till night in silence, the image of despair. The screeches of noxious birds, which fre-

quented the edifice, roused him from his trance. He started up, and quitted the ruins with terror, as if he had been personally guilty of the murder, and without looking for his horse, turned his steps towards a garden he just distinguished in the twilight. As he had taken no sustenance the whole day, some branches loaded with fruit, that hung over the wall, offered themselves opportunely to allay his hunger. Whilst he was gathering them the moon arose, and discovered faintly the desolate scene around : There a pillar yet erect with an humble shed beneath, whose roof leaned on its base : Here a tract of uncultivated ground strewed with the fragments of superb edifices, long since laid low : There the remains of fountains and aqueducts, whose hollow arches still echoed the murmurs of rivulets,

which forced their feeble course with difficulty thro' heaps of mouldering marbles, and roots of fantastick laurels. Rome lay extended beyond, diversified by its domes and spires, and marked by a dim haze, proceeding from the lights in its palaces. Our wanderer listened to the confused sounds of music, of revelry, and triumph, which arose from the numerous habitations, but it was with disgust. He loathed every thing that was allied to joy, and abhorred all that bespoke festivity. He remained uneasy till the uproar ceased, and, when the surrounding regions were hushed in the most profound tranquillity, began his complaints. He was on the very point of depriving himself of existence, and walked to and fro, agitated by all the violent emotions of despair. Half the night was spent in vain lamen-

tations, and the grey twilight was just beginning to be visible, when, wearied with inquietude, he sunk down on the ground and fell into a slumber, in which the scene hovered before his fancy: A fictitious city was stretched out before him, enlightened by a fictitious moon. The shade of her he loved skimmed along a colonnade, which cast its shadows on the plain, and then stood leaning on the lonely pillar, uttered a feeble groan and glided by his side. Her wet garments clinging round her delicate shape, her swollen eyes and drooping hands, announced a melancholy fate. She seemed to say, “Why do my affections still linger on thee beyond the tomb!—Why doth my pale bosom still cherish its wonted fires!—How comes it that I do not appear riding on a sulphureous cloud, shaking a torch in my hand and



screaming out Perjury!—No! my gentle nature forbids me to injure thee. But mark! Quit yonder fatal city; seek the islands of the south, and may'st thou expiate thy crime!" The form next shed some visionary tears, and seemed to mingle with the mists of the morning. Og, awakened by the sun-beams, recollected his dream, and without even taking leave of the Cardinal Grossocavallo, in whose care he had deposited a coffer containing the rewards of his pencil, heedlessly took the road to Naples, resolving to pass into Sicily, and end his days in that island.

—For the sake of brevity, let us suppose him arrived as far as Naples, ignorant of any person to whom he might address himself, without money and ashamed to own himself in distress.



This was a mortifying situation to one who had been accustomed to affluence and familiarized with prosperity. A kind of false pride prevented his making use of his art to extricate himself from these difficulties, "What," said he, "shall I, who have been courted by the nobles of Venice and the princes of Rome, whose pieces have been sought after by the Holy Father himself, condescend to offer them to a Neapolitan rabble for a morsel of bread? But were I to present myself to the King, and implore his protection, my mean appearance, so different from the idea which has been formed of me, would expose me to the derision of the whole court. What shall I do?—To whom shall I apply for succour? Were I to measure back my steps to Rome, that city would remind me of all my misery, and renew all my

sorrows ; and must I not expect to be received as a man bereft of reason, a slave to inconsistency ?”

It happened, whilst Og was bewailing himself in this manner, that a vast concourse of people, all hurrying to enter a church, attracted his attention, and, without rightly knowing what he did, he joined the throng and followed it into a chapel, where, to his surprise, he beheld his picture of St. Anthony preaching to the fishes placed over the altar and admired with universal rapture. One person was charmed with the position of the saint, his outstretched arm and enthusiastic countenance. Another praised the amiable physiognomy of an huge thunny, first and foremost amongst the auditors. A third impiously wished such fine fish transferred to his own

table, and a wag, who was squinting in a corner of the chapel, would have said a smart thing if he had dared. In short, every body expressed their admiration after their own way, and our painter was so affected with these impartial praises, that he burst into tears, and made such an extravagant outcry that the priest was ready to souse him for a demoniac. But no sooner did he declare himself the author of that masterpiece which excited such admiration, and produce some designs he always carried about with him as credentials, than the Count Zigzaggi stepping forwards welcomed him to Naples, invited him to his house, and assured him of the King's protection. Though Og was secretly overjoyed at so obliging an offer, yet his delicacy prevented his immediately accepting it, and it was not

till after repeated entreaties and innumerable compliments, that he could be prevailed upon to accompany Signor Zigzaggi to his palace. As the pride of genius often increases with poverty, Zigzaggi was dreadfully perplexed how to treat his guest with sufficient respect; for Og, though encumbered with no great change of raiment, would not accept of any from the Count, and shutting himself up in a closet that looked towards the Bay, with his pallet and pencils, refused to see any person till he had acquainted Andrew Guelph with his condition. An express was speedily dispatched to Venice, and, in seven weeks after, his faithful friend arrived with a splendid suite, and a coffer filled with 15,000 sequines. Andrew had employed his time in a different manner from Og. He had met with no damsel that died

for love of him, and afterwards scared him in his dreams. He had whined away no months in shady retirements, nor wasted his youthful hours in sauntering through deserted galleries, or in moralizing upon the decline of empires. Though he had written no dissertation upon the plurality of worlds, he had realized, by his application, the plurality of sequines, with which he was far better contented, and Og, in his present circumstances, thought he had great reason. Andrew had heard of his friend's ridiculous conduct, and lamented his being carried away by the impetuosity of his imagination; but he was so happy in being restored to him, that he forgot all his faults, and from this time would never believe he had any. Og related his adventures with such a moving simplicity, that his friend

dissolved into tears, and mourned the maid of Tivoli with unfeigned affliction. He tried to sooth Og's melancholy by recounting what had happened to himself, and describing the ingenious productions of Schooreel, who had travelled to the Holy Land, where he had painted the sepulchre of Christ. Andrew would not allow his friend to depend long upon the Count's benevolence: he bought a house and gardens on the shore opposite to the island of Ischia, and provided himself with boats, in which he used to share the diversion of fishing with his friend, whose mind, calmed by the lovely prospects around this agreeable solitude, situated in one of the finest climates of Europe, began to recover its long-lost serenity. Og, willing to leave Zigzaggi a proof of his gratitude, desired Andrew's assistance

in composing and finishing a picture, which should excel all his former productions.

They chose a subject capable of displaying their various talents, and secluding themselves from all society in their romantic villa, spent a whole winter in bringing their scheme to perfection. The piece which resulted from this application was so transcendent as to merit a very particular description. Our painters had been reading an old Italian poem, which related the deeds of the antediluvian giants and heroes, their astonishing magnificence, and the wars they waged against the cherubim that guarded the sacred mount of Paradise. It sung of Noah and the inspirations he received from the Deity, by whose command he had raised the ark



and preserved himself and his children from universal destruction. The approach of the deluge, the consternation of mankind, the horrid despair of the giants, and the wreck of nature, were all described with such energy as set the imagination of Og all on fire, and totally possessed him with antediluvian subjects. He laboured with his ideas, he could not rest till he had embodied them, and during the whole time which he employed in painting the capital performance I am going to describe, he was in a kind of rapture.

He represented a vast hall in the ark, supported by tall slender columns of a strange unknown architecture. Above were domes, which admitted a pale watery light, diffusing a sacred gloom over the whole apartment. On the fore-

ground he placed the venerable patriarch, in extasy at the sight of an angel, descending majestically on a rainbow, which cast its vivid tints on the cornices of the hall, gleaming with gems. These bright hues were powerfully contrasted with the shade that prevailed in the back-ground, where a line of portals, inscribed with mysterious characters, seemed just emerging from the darkness. The form of the angel seemed to hover in the air. It was lucid and transparent, its hair seemed like waving sun-beams, and its countenance was worthy of a minister of the Deity. The rays which darted from the angel struck upon several altars, vases and golden ornaments dispersed in various parts of the apartment. These Andrew finished with his accustomed delicacy. But it would be in vain to attempt giving an

idea of the patriarch's countenance; so many expressions were united in his features. His arms were extended in the very act of veiling his face with his ample robe, which fell around him in variety of folds and partially covered the cedar floor, rendered with the greatest truth. Every person that was admitted to the sight of this performance, returned struck with astonishment. Sig. Zigzaggi, though by no means able to comprehend the subject, or admire its sublimity, gloried in possessing such a treasure, and encouraged Og of Basan to paint its companion, who still adhering to his antediluvian subject, designed another chamber in the ark, less awful than the former, but more pleasing. Noah and his family appeared in a spacious apartment enlightened by lamps depending from the

arched roof, which was studded with stars. The painter had lavished a variety of splendid decorations on the arcades which supported the edifice, under which Shem and his spouse were seated on beds covered with the furs of animals. Ham and Japhet were tending a number of quadrupeds, who were discovered behind a range of lattices. Heaps of flowers and baskets of various fruits occupied the space nearest the eye; where two children were sporting with peacocks and other birds, whose plumage seemed to give way under their pressure. Noah, with his hands clasped together, was represented in a transport of gratitude, extolling that Being who guided the ark through the waters, and forbade the waves to dash it against the peaks of the mountains. The imaginary costume was preserved with

judgment, and the light which the lamps yielded was warm, glowing, and well thrown on the objects. This picture was esteemed above criticism, and its fame reaching the King's ears, Og was sent for and conducted to a private audience by the Count Zigzaggi. His Majesty, charmed with the painter's eloquent conversation, took a rich diamond from his finger and presented it to him. Zigzaggi placed the family-piece of the ark in one of the royal apartments, from whence it was soon after transported to Spain, and forms at present the principal ornament of the Escorial. Cardinal Grossocavallo, who had heard of our artist's success at Naples, wrote him a very obliging letter, accompanied by the coffer he had placed under his care, which his Eminence had augmented by a considerable

present. The coffer and letter were delivered to Og by a young man the Cardinal recommended to his notice. This was Benboaro Benbacaio, who had studied under Julio Romano, but whose school he had quitted to place himself under the direction of Og of Basan. Benboaro resembled him in many respects; particularly in an imagination wild and singular, and a taste acquired by a particular observation of nature. Above all, an enthusiastic admiration of Og's productions prepossessed that painter in his favour, who received him without any hesitation, and heard with pleasure his critiques on the Roman school. "There they forced me," said he, "eternally to repeat the same subjects; they obliged me to study anatomy, to which science I had ever a disgust; they pinioned my imagi-

nation; in short, they enslaved my pencil, which is at present free, and shall be dedicated to your service." Benboaro had not remained a year with Og before the latter declared his resolution to him of going into Sicily, where he proposed spending the remainder of his days in the society of Andrew Guelph. "If," said he to his disciple, "a youth like you can forego the pleasures of this gay city, can spurn the allurements of the world and bury yourself in the solitudes of Mongebello, you may follow me; if not, open my coffers, and retire loaded with half their contents." The young man protested the world had no charms to entice him from one to whom he was eternally attached, and, throwing himself at his feet, beseeched him not to leave him behind. Og consented; and the week



following embarked with his disciple and Andrew Guelph for the island, in which he was to cast his last look on the face of nature. It was in the beginning of summer, the sea calm and reflecting the varied shores of the bay of Naples, when their bark was rowed out of port. At night they touched at the island of Caprea, where they landed, and pitched their tents in a little green spot, shaded with wood and in the midst of rocks and ruins. As soon as the morning star appeared on the horizon, they quitted Caprea, and taking advantage of a brisk gale, crowded their sails and reached Cape Policastro before sun-set. The face of the country seemed so delightfully wooded, that they cast anchor off a promontory, and landing, began to penetrate into the forests which covered the shores. Among

them they found many irregular lawns, hemmed in by thickets of laurel and bay, with here and there a tall pine rising from amongst them, whose stems were loaded with luxuriant woodbines. The sun had just sunk into the ocean when they attained these pleasing regions, where the freshness of the breezes, the clearness of the springs, and the odour of the plants and flowers, which began to be diffused in every gale, tempted them to erect their tents and remain there till the full of the moon. Another circumstance which persuaded them to stay was the neighbourhood of a ruin, where some very hospitable peasants had erected sheds to screen their herds from the heats.—These good folks supplied them with milk, bread and fruit in abundance. Being rather fatigued with their voyage, the lowing of

the cattle and the buzzing of night-flies, soon lulled them to sleep. Six days were spent in seeking herbs in the woods, drawing under the shade, and dancing with the peasants on the green. Benboaro declared he never knew happiness till now, and being charmed with the wild beauties of some of his rustic partners, he would fain have persuaded Og of Basan to fix his abode near their cottages ; but his designs were unalterable, and on the full of the moon he ordered him to descend the hillocks and repair to the shore, where the vessel was ready to receive them. He obeyed, not without reluctance, and kept his eyes fixed on the smoke which ascended from the cottages, whose roofs just peeped above the thickets, till the moon concealed herself behind a cloud. This moment of darkness plunged Og into a reverie ; he

thought of Tivoli and sighed. Andrew slept, and Benboaro wished himself with the cottagers. Before morning they were off Policastro, and the next day coasted the shores of Calabria, whose distant mountains were tinged with a deep azure. The vast forests which reached quite from the feet of the highlands to the water's edge concealed the ruins of Pestum, at that time unknown. Towards evening it fell calm, and our voyagers put their oars in motion till they approached a shady bay, where they rested on them and enjoyed the refreshing fragrance of the vegetation, washed by a gentle shower. The calm continuing, they landed in the bay, with some difficulty on account of the rocks, which bordered the shore. A ridge of cliffs projected into the sea, covered by dark thickets of oak. Below were se-

veral coves that received the waters and afforded convenient baths. Above were jagged pinnacles, shaded by Italian pines and trodden alone by goats, who were frisking carelessly amongst them. Whilst Og and his companions were examining this sylvan scene, they perceived a flight of birds, pursued by eagles, take refuge in a grotto which had escaped their observation. It was spacious and lofty, its sides seemed worn by the course of waters into variety of uncouth shapes, and a rill trickled along the pavement, which was strewed with dry leaves. The whole scene reminded them of Virgil's description of a bay in the first Eneid.

Hinc atque hinc vastæ rupes, geminique mi-  
nantur

In cœlum scœpuli, quorum sub verticelate  
Æquora tuta silent: tum sylvis Scenacorusis

Desuper, horrentique atrum nemus imminet  
 umbrâ.

Fronte sub adversâ scopulis pendentibus An-  
 trum:

Intus aquæ dulces vivoque sedilia saxo,  
 Nympharum domus.

Here they kindled a fire and spent the night in conversation. At the first dawn they set sail for the streights, and leaving the Lipari islands behind, arrived within sight of Messina just as its magnificent buildings and the galliots in its harbour were illuminated by the setting sun. They enjoyed the perfume of the clover fields which surround the city, and Og smiled with complacency on the island, where he promised himself many happy years of peaceful retirement. No sooner were they landed than some of the Sicilian nobles, who had notice of their arrival, came down

to the port to receive them, and desired they might lodge them in their houses. Og drew a favourable augury from this reception, and his disciple, pleased with the gay prospect of the city, and flattered by the compliments of the Sicilians, forgot his cottagers, and began secretly to wish his master might postpone his project of retirement. He could not conceal his pleasure at finding himself in an illuminated palace, at a splendid table, covered with delicacies and sparkling with wines, environed by fair Sicilians warbling the soft airs of their country. Andrew, who was of a very social disposition, blessed the art which procured him such company, and Og of Basan thought no more, at present, of the solitudes of Mongebello. After the repast succeeded a lively ball, at which Og danced, though rather untowardly ;



but when he was known to be the famous painter, nobody cared to laugh. The next day his kind patrons introduced him to the principal citizens of Messina, who delighted in the fine arts : to these he presented several volumes of sketches and designs after nature. During two years which he passed at Messina, he, together with his friend and his disciple, adorned many churches and cabinets with their paintings ; but tired at length with the bustle of a city life he languished after retirement.

Andrew Guelph, who had lately married a beautiful Sicilian with considerable riches, was by no means ready to accomplish this design, and pleaded the cares of a family for his excuse. As for Benboaro, he would never quit his master ; neither the charms of Mes-

sina, nor its gay inhabitants, nor the amusements of a lively society, could induce him to abandon him, and without discovering any reluctance, he followed Og into the forests and wilds, which skirt the little mountains and extinguished volcanoes around mount Etna. They wandered together over all the regions of this famous mountain, and at last pitched upon a spot near the celebrated chesnut trees, where they built a hut and fixed their residence. After they had remained about two months in this sequestered habitation, Og grew restless and melancholy. The parting injunction of the maid of Tivoli rushed fresh into his mind, and with redoubled force. He had now visited those regions, which he doubted not were meant by the islands of the south,

to which she had commanded him to fly. Recollecting her last wish, that he might expiate his crime, he was one day overheard to say, " Ah! those last words, so softened by her affection, were surely not so much a wish as a prophecy; and I, who till this moment fondly thought myself pursuing a calm and long retirement, in this delicious climate, have been making my progress hither but to finish my course. The time of expiating my baseness draws near, and methinks at this instant I see the pale form of her I betrayed hovering over me, and beckoning me up to the summit of yonder volcano. Yes, there must be the fated scene of expiation. Nor shall it be long, gentle spirit! ere I obey thy summons. I shall willingly submit to my doom, not

despairing it may one day render me worthy of thy society and friendship in a happier world."

Nothing could exceed the astonishment of Benboaro, who caught every syllable of this strange soliloquy. The youth, concluding his master's senses and imagination disturbed, neglected no means in his power to comfort, or assuage him. All his attention, however, failed to alleviate the sorrow which preyed upon Og's mind, and one morning he ordered him in a peremptory manner to leave him in entire solitude. Benboaro refusing to comply, his master rushed into the thickest of the forests, and was shortly concealed from his sight. Seven days the youth sought him in vain, traversing wildernesses where no one had ever penetrated,

and ascending precipices which the boldest peasant was afraid to scale, subsisting all the while on the fruits and berries he casually met with. The region of snow which encircles the Crater did not deter his enquiries. With incredible labour he struggled over rocks of ice, seeking his master's vestiges in vain. By night he was directed by the mournful light of those eternal fires which issue from the peak of the mountain, and by day a few straggling crucifixes, erected over the graves of unhappy travellers, who had perished in the expedition, served him at once as a mark and a memorial of the perils of his route. On the fourth day, after a night spent almost without sleep, he arose, and lifting up his eyes saw before him the mouth of that tremendous volcano, which the superstition of the

times led him to believe the entrance of Hell. The solitude in which he found himself, the sullen murmur of the volcano, and all the horrors of the scene worked so strongly on his imagination, that he fancied he beheld strange shapes descending and ascending the steeps of the fiery gulph. He even believed he heard the screams of desolation and the cries of torment issuing from the abyss. Such was his terror, that he neglected to turn his eyes on the vast prospects below, and hastening from the edge of the Crater, where he had stood petrified for some minutes, returned over the deserts of snow, fainting with his toils, and in despair of ever beholding his master more.

As soon as he reached the verge of the woods, he fell on the ground in a

deep sleep, from which he was awakened by some peasants, who were collecting sulphur. Of these he eagerly enquired, whether they had seen a man with a long beard and armed with a scymitar? "Yes," answered they, "we have seen him: the vile sorcerer has blasted us with his haggard eyes. He passed us just beneath the cliffs, which hang over the great chesnut-tree, muttering execrations and talking to the winds. A violent tempest ensued, which has destroyed three of our cottages, and in the midst of the storm we saw the wretch that occasioned it fall from the cliff, wrapped in a blue flame. The Virgin preserve us from his maledictions!" Benboaro wished to hear no more; and quitting the peasants without making any reply, he returned weeping to his hut, doubting no longer of



his master's unhappy fate. Having provided himself with chesnuts, he crossed the wilds between the foot of the mountain and Messina, sleeping in the day and travelling in the cool of the evening. All the way he bewailed the dangers and extravagances to which genius is exposed, and arrived pale with grief and fatigue at Andrew's house. His countenance told his tale before he related it. Andrew was almost distracted with the news, and never ceased till his death, which happened three years after, to lament the despair of his unhappy friend. Benboaro, still in search of instruction, sailed to Italy, shortly after his return from the mountain, in the beginning of the year 1547, where he greatly distinguished himself. The family of Andrew still subsist in Sicily, and have inherited many of his

valuable paintings : his son had a taste for the art, and has left behind him several pieces dispersed in the cabinets of the curious. For distinction, the father is called Old Andrew Guelph.

## SUCREWASSER OF VIENNA.

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OUR readers must now be presented with scenes and occurrences widely differing from those which last we placed before them. They will no longer behold an artist, consumed by the fervour of his genius and bewildered by the charms of his imagination; but the most prudent and sage amongst them will admire the regular and consistent conduct of Sucrewasser, which forms a striking contrast to the eccentricity of Og.

The family of the Sucrewassers had been long established at Vienna; they had kept a grocer's shop, which descended from father to son through a course of many generations. The fa-

ther of our artist exercised his hereditary business with the same probity as his ancestors. His mother, the daughter of a Lombard pawnbroker, was the best sort of woman in the world, and had no other fault than loving wine and two or three men besides her husband. Young Sürewasser was invested, at the age of six years, with the family apron, and after having performed errands for some time, was admitted to the desk at twelve ; but discovering a much greater inclination for designing the passengers, which were walking to and fro before the window where he was doomed to sit, than noting the articles of his father's commerce in his book, he was bound apprentice to an uncle of his mother, who painted heraldry for the Imperial Court, and his brother was promoted to the desk in his room. Sürewasser

took great delight in his new situation, and learnt, with success, to bestow due strength on a lion's paw, and give a courtly flourish to a dragon's tail. His eagles began to be remarked for the justness of their proportions and the neatness of their plumage; in short, an Italian painter, by name Insignificanti, remarked the delicacy of his pencil, and was resolved to obtain him for his scholar. The youth, finding himself in a comfortable habitation with a kind uncle, who was in a thriving way, and who offered him a share in his business when the time of his apprenticeship should expire, expressed no great desire to place himself under the tuition of Insignificanti; but as that painter had acquired a very splendid reputation, and was esteemed exceedingly rich, his parents commanded him to ac-

cept the offer, and Sucrewasser never disobeyed. He remained two or three years with this master, which he employed in faithfully copying his works ; generally small landscapes, with shepherds and shepherdesses feeding their flocks, or piping under Arcadian shades. These pieces pleased the world in general and sold well, which was all Insignificanti desired, and Sucrewasser had no other ambition than that of his master. The greatest harmony subsisted between them till three years were expired.

About this time the Princess Dolgoruki, then at the Court of Vienna, selected Insignificanti and his pupil to paint her favourite lap-dog, whose pendent ears and beautifully curling tail seemed to call loudly for a portrait.

Insignificanti, before he began the picture, asked his pupil, with all the mildness of condescension, Whether he did not approve his intentions of placing the dog on a red velvet cushion. Sucrewasser replied gently, that he presumed a blue one would produce a much finer effect. His master, surprised to find this difference of opinion, elevated his voice, and exclaimed, "Aye, but I propose adding a gold fringe, which shall display all the perfection of my art; all the feeling delicacy of my pencil; but, hark you! I desire you will abstain from spoiling this part of the picture with your gross touch, and never maintain again that blue will admit of half the splendour of red." These last words were pronounced with such energy, that Sucrewasser laid down his pencil, and begged leave



to quit his master ; who soon consented, as he feared Sucrewasser would surpass him in a very short space of time. The young man was but coolly received by his parents, who chided him for abandoning his master ; but when they perceived his performances sold as well as before this rupture, their anger ceased, and they permitted him to travel to Venice, after having bestowed on him their benediction with the greatest cordiality.

His route lay through some very romantic country, which he never deigned to regard, modestly conjecturing he was not yet worthy to copy nature ; so without straying either to the right or to the left, he arrived at Venice in perfect health, and recommended himself first to the public by painting in fresco

on the walls of some casinos. The subjects were either the four Seasons or the three Graces. Now and then a few blind Cupids, and sometimes a lean Fury, by way of variety. The colouring was gay and tender, and the drawing correct. The faces were pretty uniform and had all the most delightful smirk imaginable ; even his Furies looked as if they were half inclined to throw their torches into the water, and the serpents around their temples were as mild as eels. Many ladies stiled him *Pittore amabile*, and many gentlemen had their snuff-boxes painted by his hand. He lived happily and contentedly till he became acquainted with Soorcrout, who was a great admirer of Titian, and advised him by all means to copy his performances ; and as he generally followed the advice of those who

thought it worth their while to give him any, he immediately set about it, but did not profit so much as he expected. It was Soorcroust who engaged him in that unlucky dispute with Og of Basan and Andrew Guelph; a controversy which lowered them considerably in the eyes of the world, and forfeited them the protection of Signor Boccadolce.

After this disgrace, Soorcroust went to England, and Sucrewasser loitered in the environs of Venice till the storm was blown over. He then returned, lived peaceably there many years, and died at length of a cold he caught at a party on the water. His most splendid performance, Salome, mother of the Maccabees, which he imitated from Titian, was sold by Soorcroust in England.

## BLUNDERBUSSIANA.

It is with difficulty we can ascertain the place or even the country where this artist was born; but we have most reason to imagine it was in Dalmatia, towards the confines of Croatia. Rouzinski Blunderbussiana, father of him whose adventures will be the subject of the following pages, was captain of some banditti, for many years the terror of Dalmatia and the neighbouring countries. This formidable band exercised the most unlimited depredations, and as they were very numerous, nothing but an army could oppose them. Finding, however, security in defiles amongst the

mountains, known but to themselves, the Venetian and Hungarian soldiery attempted their extirpation in vain. Rouzinski, their leader, was one of the haughtiest of mankind ; his uncommon stature, matchless intrepidity, and wonderful success, had raised him to the despotic command of these brave savages, to whom no enterprise seemed impossible, and who executed their projects almost as soon as they were conceived. The caves in which they resided were hollowed in the rocks, forming the summit of a mountain in the wild province of the Morlakes, which they had in a manner subdued ; no one daring to approach the spot where they had established their habitations. The peak of this mountain, seen from afar, was regarded by the Dalmatians with horror. Had they

known what scenes it concealed, they would have trembled indeed. The plan of this work will not admit a particular description of this mountain and its caves, or else I should certainly have lain before my readers some particulars concerning the residence of these banditti, which, perhaps, might have been worthy their attention; but at present I must confine myself merely to what relates to the life of Blunderbussiana. His father returning with a rich booty from Turkey, brought with him a lady of some distinction, who had fallen unfortunately into his hands. He conveyed her to his cave, attempted to amuse her with the sight of those magazines (immense grottos) which contained his treasures, and by degrees falling deeply in love with her, laid them all at her feet.

The young Turk, who had seen but little of the world, was charmed with the manly aspect of her admirer, and dazzled by his liberality, after some time forgot the disgust his savage profession inspired. She at length consented to make him happy ; and our hero sprung from this connexion, which was celebrated with tumultuous festivity throughout all the subterraneous empire. Blunderbussiana's first ideas, caught from the objects around, cannot be supposed of the gentlest nature. He beheld gloomy caverns hollowed in craggy rocks, which threatened every instant to fall upon his head. He heard each night dreadful relations of combats which had happened in the day, and often, when wandering about the entrance of the caves, he spied his father and his companions stripping the slain, and letting down



their bodies into pits and fissures which had never been fathomed. Being long inured to such ghastly sights, he by degrees grew pleased with them, and his inclination for painting first manifested itself in the desire he had of imitating the figures of his father's warriors.

Rouzinski, as soon as his son was able to dart a javelin or bear a musket, led him to the chace, and exulted in the activity with which he pursued the boar, and the alacrity with which he murdered the trembling stag. After he had spent a year in these sanguinary amusements, his father thought him worthy to partake his expeditions, and led him first to the rencounter of a pretty large body of Turks, who escorted some Hungarian merchants. "Such for the future must be your game," said the ruth-

less robber to his son, who performed prodigies of cruelty and valour. But let me draw a veil over such frightful pictures. Though the truth forbids me entirely to conceal them, humanity pleads strongly for the abridgment of their relation. Two summers passed away in continual rapines and eternal scenes of active oppression. The winter was the season of repose, and the young Rouzinski employed it in recollecting the adventures of the summer months and fixing them by his pencil. Sometimes he read a treatise upon painting, found amongst the spoils of some Italians, which assisted him infinitely. They much recommended the study of anatomy, and he did not hesitate to follow the advice they gave. His father's band frequently bringing bodies to their caves, he amused himself with dissect-

ing and imitating the several parts, till he attained such a perfection in muscular expression as is rarely seen in the works of the greatest masters. His application was surprising; for his curiosity to examine the structure of the human frame being inflamed, he pursued the study with such eagerness as those who are not *amateurs* cannot easily imagine. Every day discovered some new artery, or tendon to his view; every hour produced some masterly design, and though without any person to guide him, he made a progress which would have done credit to the most eminent artists. He now began to put his figures together in a great manner, and to group them with judgment; but colours were wanting, and without materials, Michael Angelo would have conceived the dome of St. Peter's in

vain. He had read in his treatise of the works of Italian painters, which he languished to behold, and was determined, if possible, in the ensuing summer, to escape from his father and fly to a country, where he might indulge his inclinations; however, for the present he was charmed with the opportunities of perfecting himself in anatomy, and that occupation diverted his intention of taking flight for some time. In the spring he used early in the morning to quit his cave, and frequently trussing a body over his shoulders, repaired to a wood, and delighted himself in exploring it. Instead of carrying with him, in his walks, a nice pocket edition of some Elzevir classic, he never was without a leg or an arm, which he went slicing along, and generally accompanied his operations with a melo-

dious whistling ; for he was of a cheerful disposition, and, if he had had a different education, would have been an ornament to society.

Summer came, and he was called to attend his father and a select detachment of the band, on an expedition into the Hungarian territories ; but some regular troops being aware of their intentions, lay in ambush for their coming, sallied upon them, and left the old Rouzinski, with thirty of his comrades, dead upon the field. Blunderbussiana escaped, and made the best of his way through forests deemed impenetrable, and mountains, where he subsisted on wild fruit and the milk of goats. When he reached the borders of cultivation, his savage mien and the barbarous roll of his eyes, frightened every villager that

beheld him; and so strange was his appearance, that some said he could be nothing but the Antichrist, and others believed him to be the Wandering Jew. After having experienced innumerable hardships, which none but those accustomed from their infancy to fatigues could have sustained, he arrived at Friuli; where he was employed in cutting wood, by a Venetian surgeon, who had retired there to enjoy an estate which had been lately bequeathed him. One day, after he had worked very hard, he seized a cat that was frisking about near him, and, by way of recreation, dissected the animal with such skill, that his master, who happened to pass by, was quite surprised, and mentioned this circumstance to several of his friends at dinner, amongst whom the famous Joseph Porta chanced to

be present. This painter, who was a great admirer of anatomy, wished to see the young proficient, and being struck with his uncouth figure, began to sketch out his portrait on some tablets he carried about him. Blunderbussiana was in raptures during the performance, and begging earnestly to examine it more narrowly, snatched the pencil from Porta's hand, and in a few strokes corrected some faults in the anatomy with such boldness and veracity, as threw the painter into amazement. Happening to want a servant at this time, Porta desired his friend to permit Blunderbussiana's returning with him to Venice; a request he granted without delay, and the young man joyfully accompanied him. He did not long remain with his master as a servant, being soon considered in the light



of a disciple. All possible advantages were procured him, and after a year's study he gave several pieces to the public, in which the *clair obscure* was finely observed. The scenes of his former life were still fresh in his memory, and his pictures almost always represented vast perspective caverns red with the light of fires, around which banditti were carousing; or else dark valleys between shaggy rocks strewed with the spoils of murdered travellers. His father, leaning on his spear, and giving orders to his warriors, was generally the principal object in these pieces, characterised by a certain horror, which those ignorant of such dreadful scenes fancied imaginary. If he represented waters, they were dark and troubled; if trees, deformed and withered. His skies were lowering, and his *clair ob-*

*scure* in that style the Italians call *sgraffito* (a greyish melancholy tint) which suited the gloominess of his subjects. It might be conjectured from this choice of subjects, that Blunderbussiana was a very dismal personage. On the contrary, he was, as we hinted before, of a social disposition, and much relished by those with whom he spent the hours he dedicated to amusement. His pleasures, to be sure, were singular, and probably will not be styled such by many of our readers. For example; after a cheerful repast, which he never failed to enliven by his sallies, he would engage some of his friends to ramble about at midnight, and leading them slyly to some burying grounds, entice them, by way of frolick, to steal some of the bodies, which he bore off with the greatest glee; exulting more

than if he had carried alive in his arms the fairest ladies in the environs. This diversion proved fatal to him at length; for he caught a violent fever in consequence of a drinking match, which was to precede one of these delicious excursions. The disorder, attacking his robust constitution, reduced him in two days to a very critical situation; and, burning with heat, he plunged into a cold bath, out of which he was taken delirious, and being conveyed to his bed, began to rave in a frightful manner. Every minute he seemed to behold the mangled limbs of those he had anatomized, quivering in his apartment. "Haste, give me my instruments," cried he, "that I may spoil the gambols of three cursed legs, that are just stalked into the room, and are going to jump upon me. Help! help! or they will

kick me out of bed. There again; only see those ugly heads, that do nothing but roll over me!—Hark! what a lumbering noise they make! now they glide along as smoothly as if on a bowling green.—Mercy defend me from those gogling eyes!—Open all the windows, set wide the doors,—let those grim cats out that spit fire at me and lash me with their tails. O how their bones rattle!—Help!—Mercy!—O!”

—The third day released him from his torments, and his body, according to his desire, was delivered, with all his anatomical designs, to the college of surgeons. Such was the end of the ingenious Blunderbussiana, whose skeleton the faculty have canonized, and whose paintings, dispersed in most of the Venetian palaces, still terrify the tender-hearted.

## WATERSOUCHY.

WE will now change our scenery from the rocks of Dalmatia to the levels of Holland, and instead of sailing on the canals of Venice saunter a little by those of Amsterdam. It was in the Kalverstraat, opposite to the hotel of Etan-shasts, next door to the Blue Lion, that Watersouchy, whose delicate performances are so eagerly sought after by the curious, first drew his breath. The name of Watersouchy had been known in Amsterdam since the first existence of the republic. Two wax-chandlers, and at least twelve other capital dealers in grease, had rendered it famous, and the head of the family can never be for-

gotten, since he invented that admirable dish from which his descendants derived their appellation. Our artist's father, from humbly retailing farthing candles, rose, by a monopoly on tallow, to great affluence, and had the honour of enlightening half the city. He was a thrifty diligent man, loved a pipe of reflection in the evening, and invented *save-alls*; but it was for the sole use of his own family. This prudent character endeared him so much to Mynheer Bootersac, a rich vintner, his next door neighbour, that he proposed to him his only daughter in marriage, and from this alliance, which happily took place on the 3d of May, 1640, sprung the hero of these memoirs.

The birth of young Watersouchy was marked by a decent though jovial meet-

ing of his kindred on both sides. Much wine was drunk, and ten candles assigned for home consumption. Such festivity had not been displayed in the family since it first began. Nor were these rejoicings without other foundation, as old Watersouchy, who had hitherto toiled and moiled from morn till eve, resolved, at the birth of his child to leave off business, and enjoy at ease the fortune he had acquired. It will be needless to mention particularly the great care that was taken of the young Jeremy (for so he was baptized.) Let it suffice to relate, that two years elapsed before he was weaned—so great was the tenderness of his parents, and such their fears lest a change of diet might endanger his constitution. It was no wonder that this child inspired such affectionate sentiments in his pa-



rents, so winning was his appearance. How could they fail to be struck with the prettiest, primmest mouth in the world, a rose-bud of a nose, large rolling eyes, and a complexion soft and mellow like his paternal candles? This sweet baby gave early signs of delight in rich and pleasing objects. The return of his parents from church in their holiday apparel ever attracted his attention and excited a placid smile, and any stranger garnished with lace might place him on his knee with impunity. He seemed to feel peculiar pleasure at seeing people bow to each other, and learnt sooner than any child in the street to handle his knife, to spare his bib and kiss his hand with address. This promising heir of the Watersouchies had just entered into his fifth year, when his father ventured for the first time to take

him about to the Bootersacs and his other relations. These good people, enchanted with the neatness of his person and the correctness of his behaviour, never failed to load him with toys, sugar plumbs, and gingerbread ; but a spruce set of Æsop's Fables, minutely engraved, and some designs for Brussels point, were the presents in which he chiefly delighted. These delicate drawings drew his whole attention, and they were not long in his hands before he attempted to imitate them, with a perseverance and exactness, surprising at his years. These infantine performances were carefully framed and glazed, and hung up in Madam Watersouchy's apartment, where they always produced the highest admiration. Amongst those who were principally struck with their merit was the celebrated Francis

Van Cuyck de Mierhop, a noble artist from Ghent, who, during his residence at Amsterdam, frequently condescended to pass his evenings at Watersouchy's. Mierhop could boast of illustrious descent, to which his fortune was by no means equal, and having a peculiar genius for painting eatables, old women, and other pieces of still life, applied himself to the art, and made a considerable figure. Watersouchy's table was quite an academy in the branches he wished to cultivate, daily exhibiting the completest old women, the most portly turbots, the plumpest soles, and, in a word, the best conditioned fish imaginable, of every kind. Mierhop availed himself of his friend's invitations to study legs of mutton, sirloins of beef, and joints of meat in general. It was

for Madam Watersouchy he painted the most perfect fillet of veal, that ever made the mouth of man to water, and she prided herself not a little upon the original having appeared at her table.

The air of Amsterdam agreeing with Mierhop's constitution, and Watersouchy's table not less with his palate, he was quite inspired during his residence there, and took advantage of these circumstances to immortalize himself, by an immense and most inviting picture, in which he introduced a whole entertainment. No part was neglected.—The vapour smoking over the dishes judiciously concealed the extremities of the repast, and gave the finest play to the imagination. This performance was placed with due solemnity in the

Butchers-hall at Ghent, of which respectable corps he had been chosen protector.

Whilst he remained at Amsterdam, young Watersouchy was continually improving, and arrived to such perfection in copying point lace, that Mierhop entreated his father to cultivate these talents, and to place his son under the patronage of Gerard Dow, ever renowned for the exquisite finish of his pieces. Old Watersouchy stared at the proposal, and solemnly asked his wife, to whose opinion he always paid a deference, whether painting was a genteel profession for their son. Mierhop, who overheard their conversation, smiled disdainfully at the question, and Madam Watersouchy answered, that she believed it was one of your liberal

arts. In few words, the father was persuaded, and Gerard Dow, then resident at Leyden, prevailed upon to receive the son as a disciple.

Our young artist had no sooner set his foot within his master's apartment, than he found every object in harmony with his own dispositions. The colours finely ground, and ranged in the neatest boxes, the pencils so delicate as to be almost imperceptible, the varnish in elegant phials, the easel just where it ought to be, filled him with agreeable sensations, and exalted ideas of his master's merit. Gerard Dow on his side was equally pleased, when he saw him moving about with all due circumspection, and noticing his little prettinesses at every step. He therefore began his pupil's initiation with great

alacrity, first teaching him cautiously to open the cabinet door, lest any particles of dust should be dislodged and fix upon his canvas, and advising him never to take up his pencil without sitting motionless a few minutes, till every mote casually floating in the air should be settled. Such instructions were not thrown away upon Watersouchy: he treasured them up, and refined, if possible, upon such refinements.

Whilst he was thus learning method and arrangement, the other parts of his education were not neglected. A neighbouring schoolmaster instructed him in the rudiments of Latin, and a barber, who often served as a model to Gerard Dow, when composing his most sublime pieces, taught him the management of the violin. With the happiest



dispositions we need not be surprised at the progress he made, nor astonished when we hear that Gerard Dow, after a year's study, permitted him to finish some parts of his own choicest productions. One of his earliest essays was in a large and capital perspective, in which a christening entertainment was displayed in all its glory. To describe exactly the masterly group of the gossips, the demureness of the maiden aunts, the puling infant in the arms of its nurse, the plaits of its swaddling-clothes, the gloss of its ribbons, the fringe of the table-cloth, and the effect of light and shade on a salver adorned with custard-cups and jelly-glasses, would require at least fifty pages. In this space, perhaps, those details might be included; but to convey a due idea of that preciseness, that air of decorum, which was

spread over the whole picture, surpasses the power of words. The collar of a lap-dog, a velvet bracelet, and the lace round the caps of the gossips, were the parts of this *chef d'oeuvre*, which Watersouchy had the honour of finishing, and he acquitted himself with a truth and exactness that enraptured his master, and brought him to place unbounded confidence in the hair strokes of his pencil. By degrees he rose to the highest place in the esteem of that incomparable artist, who, after eight years had elapsed, suffered him to group without assistance. An arm chair of the richest velvet, and a Turkey carpet, were the first compositions of which he claimed the exclusive honour. The exquisite drawing of these pieces was not less observable than the softness of their tints and the absolute nature of their

colouring. Every man wished to sit down in the one, and every dog to repose on the other.

Whilst Watersouchy was making daily advances in his profession, his father was attacked by a lethargy, that, insensibly gaining ground, carried him off, and left his son in the undisturbed possession of a considerable sum of money. No sooner was he apprized of this event than he took leave of Gerard Dow, and arrived at his native city time enough to attend the funeral procession, and to partake of the feast which followed it; where his becoming sorrow and proper behaviour fixed him in the esteem of all his relations. This good opinion he took care to maintain, never shewing more attention to one than to another, but as it were portioning out his compliments

into equal shares. Having passed the usual time without frequenting the world, and having closed the account of condolence, he began to take pleasure in society, and make himself known. His scrupulous adherence to form and propriety procured him the *entré* of many considerable houses, and recommended him to the particular notice of some of the principal magistrates of Amsterdam. These grave personages thought he would do honour to their city in foreign parts, and therefore advised his going to Antwerp for the advancement of his reputation.

Antwerp was at this period the centre of arts and manufactures; its public buildings were numerous and magnificent; its citizens wealthy; strangers from every quarter resorted thither, for

business, or for pleasure. Rubens had introduced a fondness for painting, and had ornamented his cabinet with the most valuable productions of the pencil. This example was followed, and collections began to be formed by the opulent inhabitants. Where then could a painter, blessed with such talents as Watersouchy, expect a more favourable reception? He soon resolved to follow the advice of his respectable friends, and having settled his affairs and passed a month or two in taking leave of his acquaintance with due form, he began his journey. Many commendatory letters were given him, and particularly one to Monsieur Baise-la-main, a banker of the first eminence, and an encourager of the fine arts, who united the greatest wealth with the most exemplary politeness. All the way he amused himself

in the trackskuit with looking over the stock of compliments he had treasured up from his youth, in order to perfect himself in all the rules of that good breeding, he purposed to display at Antwerp. "Consider," said he to himself, "before whom you are to appear; reflect that you are now almost arrived at the zenith of propriety. Let all your actions be regular as the strokes of your pencil, and let the varnish of your manners shine like that of your paintings. Regulate your conduct by the fair example of those you will shortly behold, and do not the smallest thing but as if Monsieur Baise-la-main were before you." Full of these resolutions he drew near to Antwerp. Advancing between spruce gardens and trim avenues he entered the city, not without some presentiment of the fame he was to acquire

within its walls. Every mansion with high chequered roofs and mosaic chimnies, every fountain with elaborate dolphins and gothic pinnacles, found favour in his eyes. He was pleased with the neat perspectives continually presenting themselves, and augured well from a regularity so consonant to his own ideas. After a few hours repose at an inn, arranging each part of his dress with the utmost precision, he sallied forth in the cool of the evening, (for it was now the midst of summer) to deliver his recommendatory letters. The first person to whose acquaintance he aspired was Monsieur Baise-la-main, who occupied a sumptuous hotel near the cathedral. Directing his steps to that quarter, he passed through several lanes and alleys with slowness and caution, and arrived in a spotless condition



at the area of that celebrated edifice, which was enlivened by crowds of well dressed people passing and repassing each other, with many courteous bows and salutations, whilst two sets of chimes in the spire above them filled the air with sober psalmody. Watersouchy was charmed when he found himself in this region of smirking faces, and stepping forwards amongst them, inquired for Monsieur Baise-la-main. Every body pointed to a gentleman in a modish perruque, blue coat with gold frogs, and black velvet breeches. To this prepossessing personage he advanced with his very best bow, and delivered his letter. No sooner did the gentleman arrange his spectacles, and glance over the first lines of the epistle, than he returned the greeting fourfold. Watersouchy was as prodigal of salutations,

and could hardly believe his ears when they were saluted with these flattering expressions. “Your arrival, Mr. Watersouchy, is an event I shall always have the honour to remember. And, Sir, permit me to assure you, from the bottom of my heart, that nobody can feel more thoroughly the obligations I have to my most estimable friends at Amsterdam, for the opportunity, Sir, they give me, of shewing any little, trifling, miserable attentions in my power, to a disciple of Gerard Dow. Let me entreat you to tarry some time in my poor mansion: Indeed, Sir, you must not refuse me—I beg, my dear and respectable Sir,—I beseech”—It was impossible to resist such a torrent of civility. Watersouchy prepared to follow the courteous banker, who, taking him by the hand, led him, with every demonstra-

tion of kindness, to the door of his hotel.

Its frontispiece, rich with allegorical figures, of which I never could obtain a satisfactory explanation, was distinguished from more vulgar entrances, and seats of coloured marble on each side added to its magnificence. Let my readers figure to themselves Monsieur Baise-la-main, leading the obsequious Watersouchy through several large halls and long passages, 'till they entered a rich apartment, where a circle of company, very splendidly attired, rose up to receive them. Half an hour was spent in presenting the artist to every individual. At length a pause in this ceremony ensued, and then the congratulations, with which he had been first received, were begun anew with re-

doubled ardour. Watersouchy, finding himself surrounded by so many solemn ruffs and consequential farthingales, was penetrated with the sublimity of etiquette, and thought himself in the very Athens of politeness. This service of rites and ceremonies, with which strangers in those times were ushered into Antwerp, being hardly ended, the company began at length to relax into some degree of familiarity.

Mieris and Sibylla Merian were now announced. These two exquisite artists had carried the minute delicacy of the pencil to the highest pitch, and were pleased with an opportunity of conversing with one of the most promising disciples of Gerard Dow. Our artist was equally happy in their society, and a conversation was accordingly set on

foot, in which Mons. Baise-la-main joining displayed infinite knowledge and precision. Having disserted previously upon his own collection, this great patron of the arts led them into his interior cabinet, where Elsheimers, Rowland Saveries, Albert Durers, Brughels, and Polemburgs, collected at an immense expence, appeared on all sides. Mieris and Merian had also contributed to render it the most complete in the Netherlands. Their performances entirely engrossed the choicest corner in an apartment, which a profusion of gilding and carved work rendered superlatively fine. The chimney-piece was encrusted with the right old porcelain of China, and its aperture, in this season, was closed by a capital *Pietà* of Julio Romano, which immediately struck Watersouchy as an eye sore.

He detested such colossal representations, such bold limbs and woeful countenances : conscious they were out of his reach, he condemned them as out of nature. With such sentiments, we may suppose he did not bestow much attention on the *Pietà*, but expatiated with delight on the faithful representation of an apothecary's shop by Mieris, and a cupid, holding a garland of flowers, by Merian. This ingenious lady was high in his esteem. He adored the extremeness of her touch, and not a little admired that strict sense of propriety which had induced her to marriage ; for it seems she had chosen Jean Graff of Nuremburg for her husband, merely to study the *Nud* in a modest way. After he had felicitated Madam Merian and Mieris upon their innumerable perfections, he took a cursory survey of the

rest of the collection. He commended Albert Durer; but could not help expressing some discontent at Polemburg. The woody landscapes, which this painter imagined with so much happiness, were in general interspersed with the remains of antique temples, with rills and bathing nymphs in a style our artist could never taste. He liked their minuteness, but condemned the choice of subjects. "O!" said Monsieur Baiselamain, "I love Polemburg; he is the essence of smoothness and suavity. But I agree, that there is something rather confused and unintelligible in his buildings, far unlike those comfortable habitations which our friend Mieris represents with such meritorious accuracy." Mieris bowed, and Watersouchy, encouraged by Monsieur Baiselamain's coincidence with his opinion,



continued his critique. He shook his head at a picture wherein Polemburg had introduced a group of ruins, and exclaimed——“ Why not substitute, for example, the great church of Antwerp flourishing in the height of its perfection, in the room of those Roman lumps of confusion and decay?—Instead of representing the flowers of the parterre, he crowds his foreground with all manner of woods, and bestows as much pains on a dock leaf as I should on the most estimable carnation in your garden. Naked figures too I abhor: Madam Merian’s cupids excepted, they are unfit to be viewed by the eye of decorum. And what opportunities does an artist lose by the banishment of dress! In dress and drapery are displayed the glory of his pencil! In ear-rings and bracelets the perfection of his touch—

in a carpet all his science is united—grouping, colouring, shading, effect, every thing! Polemburg might have been a delightful master, had he remained with us; but he removed to Italy, and quitting the manner of Elsheimer for the caprices of Raphael, no wonder his taste should have been corrupted.” Monsieur Baise-la-main and the artists listened attentively to this harangue, and conceived great ideas of Watersouchy’s taste and abilities. The banker thought himself possessed of the eighth wonder of the world, and from this moment resolved to engross it entirely.

Supper being served up, the company left the cabinet and entered a large hall, ornamented with the decollation of Holofernes by Mabuse, and a brawn’s

head by Mierhop.—In the midst appeared a table covered with dainties, in dishes of massive plate, and illuminated by innumerable wax lights, around which the company was assembled. Watersouchy was placed betwixt Monsieur Baise-la-main and the Burgomaster Van Gulph, a solemn upright man of glowing nose and fair complexion. Our artist could not for some time take his eye from off the Burgomaster's band, which was edged with the finest lace, and took an opportunity, whilst the other guests were closely engaged with the entertainment, to make a sketch from it, that did him honour and served to confirm him in his patron's good opinion.

The repast was conducted in the most orderly manner. By the time the Hip-

pocras and Canary wines were handed about, universal satiety and good humour prevailed. The little disappointments of those, who were too late for one dish, or too full to taste another, were forgotten, and the respectable Van Gulph, having swallowed his usual portion of the good things of this world, began to expand, and pledged Watersouchy with much affability, who loudly descanted on the taste and discernment of Monsieur Baise-la-main, so apparent in his rare collection. Mieris taking the hint, seconded the observation, which was enforced by Madam Merian, whose example was followed by the rest of the ladies—Every one vied with his neighbour in steeping sugar'd cakes in sweet wine, and bestowing the amplest commendations on the cabinet of Monsieur Baise-la-main, who,

in the midst of transport, exclaimed, "Now truly my pictures pay me interest for my money!" The desert was ushered in with profusion of applause: All was smirk and compliment, whilst this sweetmeat was offered and that declined. At length it grew late, and the company separated after the accustomed formalities.—Watersouchy was conducted to his apartment, which corresponded with the magnificence of the mansion; and lulled asleep by the most flattering reflections, dreamt all the night of nothing but of painting the Burgomaster and his band. At breakfast next morning, he expressed to Monsieur Baise-la-main the ambition he had of distinguishing himself at Antwerp, and begged to seclude himself a small space from the world, that he might pursue his studies. Monsieur Baise-la-main approved of

this idea, and assigned a room for his reception, where he soon arranged his pallet, pencils, &c. with all the precision of Gerard Dow. Nobody but the master of the house was allowed to enter this sanctuary. Here our artist remained six weeks in grinding his colours, composing an admirable varnish, and preparing his canvass, for a performance he intended as his *chef d'oeuvre*. A fortnight more passed before he decided upon a subject. At last he determined to commemorate the opulence of Monsieur Baise-la-main, by a perspective of his counting-house. He chose an interesting moment, when heaps of gold lay glittering on the counter, and citizens of distinction were soliciting a secure repository for their plate and jewels. A Muscovite wrapped in fur, and an Italian glistening in brocade, occupied

the foreground. The eye glancing over these figures highly finished, was directed through the windows of the shop into the area in front of the cathedral; of which, however, nothing was discovered, except two sheds before its entrance, where several barbers were represented at their different occupations. An effect of sunshine upon the counter discovered every coin that was scattered upon its surface. On these the painter had bestowed such intense labour, that their very legends were distinguishable. It would be in vain to attempt conveying, by words, an idea adequate to this *chef d'oeuvre*, which must have been seen to have been duly admired. In three months it was far advanced; during which time our artist employed his leisure hours in practising jigs and minuets on the violin, and writing the



first chapter of Genesis on a watch-paper, which he adorned with a miniature of Adam and Eve, so exquisitely finished, that every ligament in their fig-leaves was visible. This little *jeu d'esprit* he presented to Madam Merian.

When the hour of publicly displaying his great performance was drawing near, Monsieur Baise-la-main invited a select party of connoisseurs to a splendid repast, and after they had well feasted, all joined in extolling the picture as much as they had done the entertainment itself. Were I not afraid of fatiguing my readers more than I have done, I should repeat, word for word, the exuberant encomiums this masterpiece received upon this occasion; but I trust it will be fully sufficient to say, that none of the connoisseurs were un-

interested, and every one had a pleasure in pointing out some new perfection. The ladies were in extasies. The Burgomaster Van Gulph was so charmed that he was resolved to have his portrait by this delicate hand, and Monsieur Baise-la-main immediately settled a pension upon the painter, merely to have the refusal of his pieces, paying largely at the same time for those he took.

These were the golden days of Watersouchy, who, animated by so much encouragement, was every week producing some agreeable novelty. Attaching himself strongly to the manner of Mieris, he, if possible, excelled him: his lillies were more glossy, and his carnations softer, and so harmonious, that the Flemish ladies, ever renowned for their fresh complexions, declared

they had now found a painter worthy of portraying their beauty. Thus our happy artist, blown forwards by a continued gale of applause, reached a degree of merit unknown to his contemporaries, and soon left Gerard Dow and Mieris behind him. His pictures were eagerly sought after by the first collectors, and purchased at so extravagant a rate, that he refused sketching a slipper, or designing an ear-ring under the sum of *two hundred florins*. Every body desirous of possessing one of these treasures approached him with purses of gold, and he was so universally caressed and admired, that I (as a faithful biographer) am obliged to say, he soon mistook his rank among the professors of the art, and grew intolerably vain.

Become thus confident, he embraced,

without hesitation, the proposal of drawing the Burgomaster Van Gulph. All his skill, all his minuteness was exhausted upon this occasion. The Burgomaster was presented in his formalities, sitting in his magisterial chair: his band was not forgotten; it was finished to the superlative degree. The very hairs of his eyelashes were numbered, and the pendent carbuncle below his nose, which had baffled Mieris and the first artists, was at length rendered with perfect exactitude and splendour. During the execution of this incomparable portrait, he absented himself from Monsieur Baise-la-main, and established his abode at Van Gulph's, whose inflexible propriety surpassed even that of the banker. Watersouchy, flattered by the pomp and importance of this great character, exclaimed, "You are truly wor-

thy to possess me !” The Burgomaster’s lady, who was a witness to his matchless talents, soon expressed an ambition of being immortalized by his pencil, and begged to be honoured the next with his consideration. He having almost determined never to undertake another portrait after this *chef d’oeuvre* of her consort, with difficulty consented.

At length he began : Ambitious of shewing his great versatility, and desirous of producing a contrast to the portrait just finished, he determined to put the lady in action. She was represented watering a capsacum, with an air of superior dignity mingled with ineffable sweetness. Every part of her dress was minutely attended to ; her ruffle was admirable ; but her hands and arms exceeded all idea. Gerard Dow had be-

stowed five days\* labour on this part of Madam Spiering's person, whose portrait was one of his best performances. Watersouchy, that he might surpass his master, spent a month in giving only to his patroness's fingers the last touch of perfection. Each had its ring, and so tinted, as almost at first sight to have deceived a discerning jeweller:

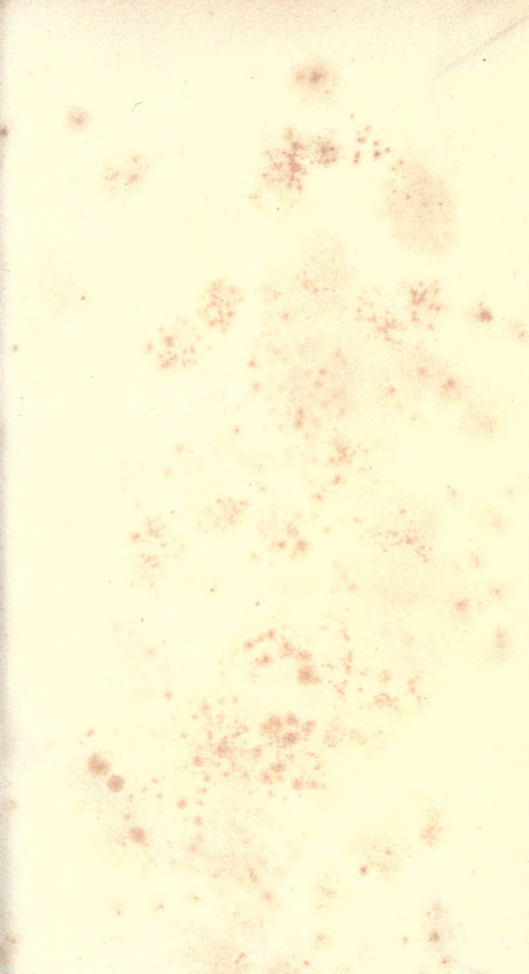
When he had finished this last masterpiece, he found himself quite weak and exhausted. The profound study in which he had been absorbed, impaired his health, and his having neglected exercise for the two last years brought on a hectic and feverish complaint. The only circumstance that now cheered his spirits was the conversation of a circle of old ladies; the friends of Madame

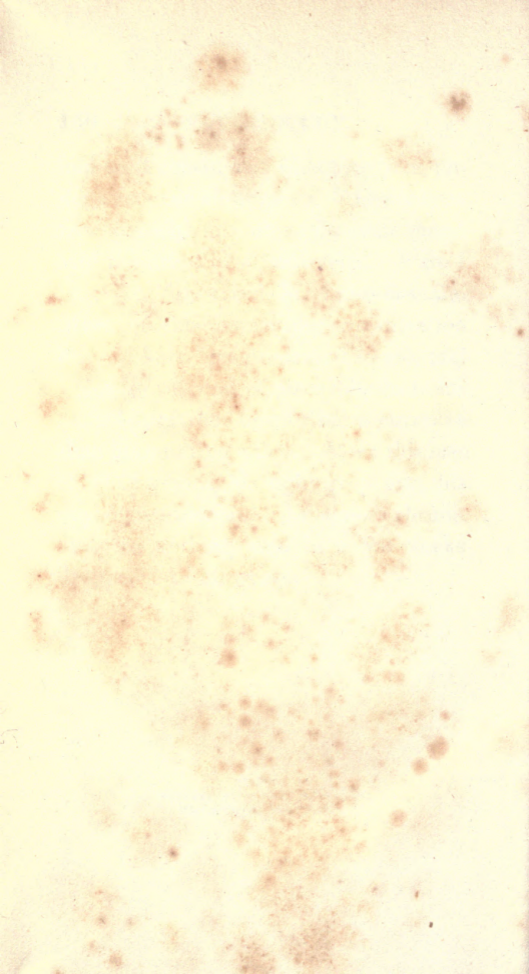
\* See *Vies des Peintres Flamands*, vol. 2. 217.

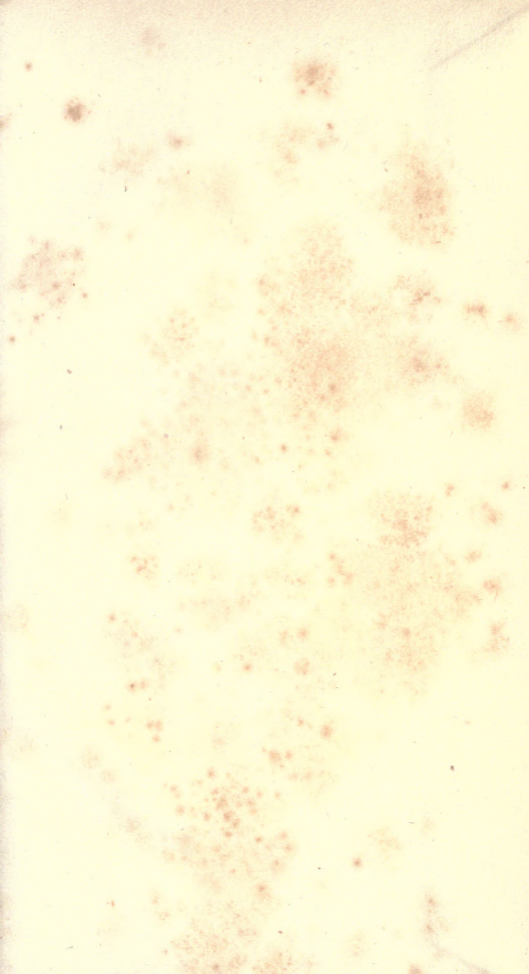
Gulph. These good people had ever some little incident to entertain him, some gossiping narration that soothed and unbended his mind. But all their endeavours to restore him could not prevent his growing weaker and weaker. At last he took to cordials by their recommendation, became fond of news and tulips, and for a time was a little mended; so much indeed, that he resumed his pallet, and painted little pieces for his kind comforters; such as a favourite dormouse for Madam Dozinburg, and a cheese in a China dish with mites in it for some other venerable lady, whose name has not descended to us. But these performances were not much relished by Monsieur Baisela-main, who plainly saw in them the approaching extinction of his genius. One day at the Burgomaster's, he found him



laid on a couch, and wheezing from under a brocade night gown. "I have been troubled with an asthma for some time," said the artist in a faint voice. "So I perceive," answered M. Baise-la-main. More of this interesting conversation has not been communicated to me, and I find an interval of three months in his memoirs, marked by no other occurrence than his painting a flea. After this last effort of genius, his sight grew dim, his oppression increased, he almost shrunk away to nothing, and in a few weeks dropped into his grave.

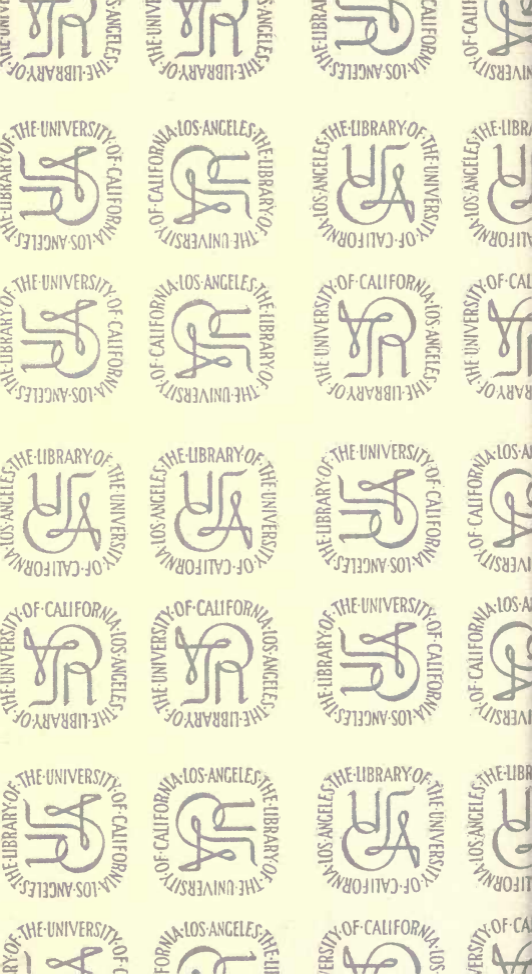






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