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1808

THREE ESSAYS:
ON
PICTURESQUE BEAUTY;
ON
PICTURESQUE TRAVEL;
AND ON
SKETCHING LANDSCAPE;
WITH A POEM, ON
LANDSCAPE PAINTING.

TO THESE ARE NOW ADDED
TWO ESSAYS,
GIVING AN ACCOUNT OF THE PRINCIPLES AND MODE IN WHICH THE
AUTHOR EXECUTED HIS OWN DRAWINGS.

By WILLIAM GILPIN, A.M.
PREBENDARY OF SALISBURY; AND VICAR OF BOLDRE IN
NEW-FOREST, NEAR LYMINGTON.

THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR T. CADELL AND W. DAVIES, STRAND.

1808.

AN Apology may be necessary for presenting a new Edition of a Work, in a more enlarged form than the one in which it was published by its author. But the two Essays which are added to the present re-publication, tho' written by him for a particular purpose, contain so much general precept on the art of drawing, and are in themselves so natural an appendage to the three Essays on *Picturesque Beauty*, &c. that the Editors conceive they are only forwarding the wishes of the author, and presenting a more connected view of his valuable instruction, already before the public, by bringing them forward in their present shape.

In the year 1802, and in a subsequent one, Mr. Gilpin prepared a number of drawings for sale, the produce of his own pencil, for the endowment of a school for the benefit of the day-labouring part of the parishioners of Boldre, and affixed the two Essays to the sale catalogues, for which they were particularly written. It is to these sales that remarks in the Essays so frequently refer. It was at first intended to omit,

in the present edition, these several references, and to publish only the general perceptive part. But the alteration was found, on trial, too extensive and hazardous; and therefore, as a better mode, both of elucidating and exemplifying the sense and precepts of the author, the Editors have added impressions of a set of sketches, afforted by him, and referred to, as illustrative of the principles of his drawings, and the mode of their execution.

TO
WILLIAM LOCK, Esq;
OF
NORBURY-PARK, in SURREY.

DEAR SIR,

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

A published work is certainly a fair object of criticism: but I think, my dear sir, we admirers of the picturesque are a little misunderstood with regard to our *general intention*. I

have several times been surprized at finding us represented, as supposing, *all beauty* to consist in *picturesque beauty*—and the face of nature to be examined *only by the rules of painting*. Whereas, in fact, we always speak a different language. We speak of the grand scenes of nature, tho' uninteresting in a *picturesque light*, as having a strong effect on the imagination—often a stronger, than when they are properly disposed for the pencil. We every where make a distinction between scenes, that are *beautiful, amusing*, or otherwise pleasing; and scenes that are *picturesque*. We examine, and admire both. Even artificial objects we admire, whether in a grand, or in a humble stile, tho' unconnected with picturesque beauty—the palace, and the cottage—the improved garden-scene, and the neat homestead. Works of tillage also afford us equal delight—the plough, the mower, the reaper, the hay-field, and the harvest-wane. In a word, we reverence, and admire the works of God; and look with benevolence, and pleasure, on the works of men.

In

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

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

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

With

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

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

* Edward Forster, Esq.; of Walthamstow.

I troubled my head no farther with my verses.

Some time after, another friend*, finding fault with my mode of describing the lakes and mountains of Cumberland, and Westmoreland, as too poetical, I told him the fate of my fragment; lamenting the hardship of my case — when I wrote verse, one friend called it prose; and when I wrote prose, another friend called it verse. In his next letter he desired to see my verses; and being pleased with the subject, he offered, if I would finish my poem (however carelessly as to metrical exactness) he would adjust the versification. But he found, he had engaged in a more arduous task, than he expected. My rules, and technical terms were stubborn, and would not easily glide into verse; and I was as stubborn, as they, and would not relinquish the scientific part for the poetry. My friend's

* Rev. Mr. Mason.

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

* Extract of a letter from Mr. Mason.

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

hope,

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

Your sincere,

and most obedient,

humble servant,

WILLIAM GILPIN.

*Vicar's-hill,
October 12, 1791.*

EXPLANATION

OF THE

PRINTS.

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

Two facing p. 75. The first of these prints is meant to illustrate the idea of *simple illumination*. The light falls strongly on *various* parts; as indeed it often does in nature. But, as it is the painter's business to take nature in her most beautiful form, he chuses to throw his light more into a *mass*, as represented in the second print, which exhibits the *same landscape*, only better inlightened. When we merely take the *lines* of a landscape from nature; and *inlighten* it (as we must often do) from our own taste, and judgment, the massing of the light must be well attended to, as one of the great sources of beauty. It must not be scattered

scattered in spots; but must be brought more together, as on the rocky side of the hill in the second print: and yet it must graduate also in different parts; so as not to appear affected.

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

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

One facing p. 85. This print is an explanation of a few rules in perspective; just sufficient for the use of common landscape.

* * *Four Prints belonging to the TWO ADDITIONAL ESSAYS are sufficiently explained in the pages facing which they are respectively placed.*

ESSAY I.

ON

PICTURESQUE BEAUTY.

ESSAY I.

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

Ideas of beauty vary with objects, and with the eye of the spectator. The stone-mason sees beauties in a well-jointed wall, which escape the architect, who surveys the building under a different idea. And thus the painter, who compares his object with the rules of his art, sees it in a different light from the man of general taste, who surveys it only as simply beautiful.

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

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

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

Mr.

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

How far Mr. Burke may be right in making smoothness the *most considerable* source of beauty, I rather doubt †. A considerable one it certainly is.

Thus

* Upon the sublime and beautiful, page 213.

† Mr. Burke is probably not very accurate in what he farther says on the connection between *beauty*, and *diminutives*. — Beauty excites love ; and a loved object is generally characterized by diminutives. But it does not follow, that all objects characterized by diminutives, tho they may be so because they are loved, are therefore beautiful. We often love them for their moral qualities ; their affections ; their gentleness ; or their docility. Beauty, no doubt, awakens love ; but also excites admiration, and respect. This combination forms the sentiment, which prevails, when we look

Thus then, we suppose, the matter stands with regard to *beautiful objects in general*. But in *picturesque representation* it seems somewhat odd, yet perhaps we shall find it equally true, that the reverse of this is the case; and that the ideas of *neat* and *smooth*, instead of being picturesque, in reality strip the object, in which they reside, of all pretensions to *picturesque beauty*. — Nay, farther, we do not scruple to assert, that *roughness* forms the most essential point of difference between the *beautiful*, and the *picturesque*; as it seems to be that particular quality, which makes objects chiefly pleasing in painting. — I use the general term *roughness*; but properly speaking roughness relates only to the surfaces of bodies: when we speak of their delineation, we use the word *ruggedness*. Both ideas however equally enter into the picturesque; and both are observable in the

at the Apollo of Belvidere, and the Niobe. No man of nice discernment would characterize these statues by diminutives. — There is then a beauty, between which and diminutives there is no relation; but which, on the contrary, excludes them: and in the description of figures, possessed of that species of beauty, we seek for terms, which recommend them more to our *admiration* than our *love*.

smaller,

smaller, as well as in the larger parts of nature — in the outline, and bark of a tree, as in the rude summit, and craggy sides of a mountain.

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

A piece of Palladian architecture may be elegant in the last degree. The proportion of it's parts — the propriety of it's ornaments — and the symmetry of the whole may be highly pleasing. But if we introduce it in a picture, it immediately becomes a formal object, and ceases to please. Should we wish to give it picturesque beauty, we must use the mallet instead of the chissel: we must beat down one half of it, deface the other, and throw the mutilated members around in heaps. In short, from a *smooth* building we must turn it into a *rough* ruin. No painter, who had the choice of the two objects, would hesitate which to chuse.

Again, why does an elegant piece of garden-ground make no figure on canvas? The shape

is pleasing; the combination of the objects, harmonious; and the winding of the walk in the very line of beauty. All this is true; but the *smoothness* of the whole, tho right, and as it should be in nature, offends in picture. Turn the lawn into a piece of broken ground: plant rugged oaks instead of flowering shrubs: break the edges of the walk: give it the rudeness of a road; mark it with wheel-tracks; and scatter around a few stones, and brush-wood; in a word, instead of making the whole *smooth*, make it *rough*; and you make it also *picturesque*. All the other ingredients of beauty it already possessed.

You sit for your picture. The master, at your desire, paints your head combed smooth, and powdered from the barber's hand. This may give it a more striking likeness, as it is more the resemblance of the real object. But is it therefore a more pleasing picture? I fear not. Leave Reynolds to himself, and he will make it picturesque by throwing the hair dishevelled about your shoulders. Virgil would have done the same. It was his usual practice in all his portraits. In his figure of Ascanius, we have the *fusos crines*; and in his portrait
of

of Venus, which is highly finished in every part, the artist has given her hair,

diffundere ventis *.

Modern poets also, who have any ideas of natural beauty, do the same. I introduce Milton to represent them all. In his picture of Eve, he tells us, that

to her slender wattle
Her unadorned golden tresses were
Dishevelled, and in wanton ringlets waved.

That lovely face of youth smiling with all its sweet, dimpling charms, how attractive is

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

Portitor has horrendus aquas, et flumina servat
Terribili squalore Charon, cui plurima mento
Canities inculta jacet.

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

it

it in life! how beautiful in representation! It is one of those objects, that please, as many do, both in nature, and on canvas. But would you see the human face in it's highest form of *picturesque beauty*, examine that patriarchal head. What is it, which gives that dignity of character; that force of expression; those lines of wisdom and experience; that energetic meaning, so far beyond the rosy hue, or even the bewitching smile of youth? What is it, but the forehead furrowed with wrinkles? the prominent cheek-bone, catching the light? the muscles of the cheek strongly marked, and losing themselves in the shaggy beard? and, above all, the austere brow, projecting over the eye — the feature which particularly struck Homer in his idea of Jupiter*, and which he

* It is much more probable, that the poet copied *forms* from the sculptor, who must be supposed to understand them better, from having studied them more; than that the sculptor should copy them from the poet. Artists however have taken advantage of the pre-possession of the world for Homer to secure approbation to their works by acknowledging them to be reflected images of his conception. So Phidias assured his countrymen, that he had taken his Jupiter from the description of that god in the first book of Homer. The fact is, none of the features contained in that image, except the brow, can be rendered

he had probably seen finely represented in some statue; in a word, what is it, but the *rough touches* of age?

As an object of the mixed kind, partaking both of the *beautiful*, and the *picturesque*, we admire the human figure also. The lines, and surface of a beautiful human form are so infinitely varied; the lights and shades, which it receives, are so exquisitely tender in some parts, and yet so round, and bold in others; it's proportions are so just; and it's limbs so fitted to receive all the beauties of grace, and

rendered by sculpture. But he knew what advantage such ideas, as his art could express, would receive from being connected in the mind of the spectator with those furnished by poetry; and from the just partiality of men for such a poet. He seems therefore to have been as well acquainted with the mind of man, as with his shape, and face.— If by *κυμανεσιν εποφρευσι*, we understand, as I think we may, a *projecting brow*, which casts a broad, and deep shadow over the eye, Clarke has rendered it ill by *nigris superciliis*, which most people would construe into *black eye-brows*. Nor has Pope, tho he affected a knowledge of painting, translated it more happily by *sable eye-brows*.— But if Phidias had had nothing to recommend him, except his having availed himself of the only feature in the poet, which was accommodated to his art, we should not have heard of inquirers wondering from whence he had drawn his ideas; nor of the compliment, which it gave him an opportunity of paying to Homer.

contrast;

contrast; that even the face, in which the charms of intelligence, and sensibility reside, is almost lost in the comparison. But altho' the human form in a quiescent state, is thus beautiful; yet the more it's *smooth surface* is *ruffled*, if I may so speak, the more picturesque it appears. When it is agitated by passion, and it's muscles swoln by strong exertion, the whole frame is shewn to the most advantage.—But when we speak of muscles swoln by exertion, we mean only natural exertions, not an affected display of anatomy, in which the muscles, tho' justly placed, may still be overcharged.

It is true, we are better pleased with the usual representations we meet with of the human form in a quiescent state, than in an agitated one; but this is merely owing to our seldom seeing it naturally represented in strong action. Even among the best masters we see little knowledge of anatomy. One will inflate the muscles violently to produce some trifling effect: another will scarce swell them in the production of a laboured one. The eye soon learns to see a defect, tho' unable to amend it. But when the anatomy is perfectly just, the human body will always be more picturesque
in

in action, than at rest. The great difficulty indeed of representing strong muscular motion, seems to have struck the ancient masters of sculpture: for it is certainly much harder to model from a figure in strong, momentary action, which must, as it were, be shot flying; than from one sitting, or standing, which the artist may copy at leisure. Amidst the variety of statues transmitted from their hands, we have only three, or four in very spirited action*. Yet when we see an effect of this kind well executed, our admiration is greatly increased. Who does not admire the Laocoon more than the Antinous?

* Tho there are only perhaps two or three of the first antique statues in *very spirited* action — the Laocoon, the fighting gladiator, and the boxers — yet there are several others, which are in *action* — the Apollo Belvidere — Michael Angelo's Torso — Arria and Pætus — the Pietas militaris, sometimes called the Ajax, of which the Pasquin at Rome is a part, and of which there is a repetition more entire, tho still much mutilated, at Florence — the Alexander and Bucephalus; and perhaps some others, which occur not to my memory. The paucity however of them, even if a longer catalogue could be produced, I think, shews that the ancient sculptors considered the representation of *spirited action* as an achievement. The moderns have been less daring in attempting it. But I believe connoisseurs universally give the preference to those statues, in which the great masters have so successfully exhibited animated action.

Animal

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

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

Perching on the scepter'd hand
 Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feathered king
 With ruffled plumes, and flagging wing:
 Quenched in dark clouds of slumber lie
 The terror of his beak, and lightening of his eye.

Akenfide's

kind: Smooth-coated animals could not produce so picturesque an effect.

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

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

————— With slackened wings,
While now the solemn concert breathes around,
Incumbent on the sceptre of his lord
Sleeps the stern eagle; by the numbered notes
Possessed; and satiate with the melting tone;
Sovereign of birds. —————

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

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

Suggestions

Suggestions of this kind are ungrateful. The art of painting allows you all you wish. You desire to have a beautiful object painted—your horse, for instance, led out of the stable in all his pampered beauty. The art of painting is ready to accommodate you. You have the beautiful form you admired in nature exactly transferred to canvas. Be then satisfied. The art of painting has given you what you wanted. It is no injury to the beauty of your Arabian, if the painter think he could have given the graces of his art more forcibly to your cart-horse.

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

I should not vindicate him, if he did. At the same time, a free execution is so very fascinating a part of painting, that we need

not wonder, if the artist lay a great stress upon it.—It is not however intirely owing, as some imagine, to the difficulty of mastering an elegant line, that he prefers a rough one. In part indeed this may be the case; for if an elegant line be not delicately hit off, it is the most insipid of all lines: whereas in the description of a rough object, an error in delineation is not easily seen. However this is not the whole of the matter. A free, bold touch is in itself pleasing*. In elegant figures indeed there must be a delicate outline — at least a line true to nature: yet the surfaces even of such figures may be touched with freedom; and in the appendages of the composition there must be a mixture of rougher objects, or there will be a want of contrast. In landscape universally the rougher objects are admired; which give the freest scope to execution. If the pencil

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

be timid, or hesitating, little beauty results. The execution then only is pleasing, when the hand firm, and yet decisive, freely touches the characteristic parts of each object.

If indeed, either in literary, or in picturesque composition you endeavour to draw the reader, or the spectator from the *subject* to the *mode of executing* it, your affectation* disgusts. At the same time, if some care, and pains be not bestowed on the *execution*, your slovenliness disgusts as much. Tho perhaps the artist has more to say, than the man of letters, for paying attention to his *execution*. A truth is a truth, whether delivered in the language of a philosopher, or of a peasant: and the *intellect* receives it as such. But the artist, who

* Language, like light, is a medium; and the true philosophic stile, like light from a north-window, exhibits objects clearly, and distinctly, without soliciting attention to itself. In subjects of amusement indeed, language may gild somewhat more, and colour with the dyes of fancy: but where information is of more importance than entertainment, tho you cannot throw too *strong* a light, you should carefully avoid a *coloured* one. The stile of some writers resembles a bright light placed between the eye, and the thing to be looked at. The light shews itself; and hides the object: and, it must be allowed, the execution of some painters is as impertinent, as the stile of such writers.



deals in lines, surfaces, and colours, which are an immediate address to the *eye*, conceives the *very truth itself* concerned in his *mode* of representing it. Guido's angel, and the angel on a sign-post, are very different beings; but the whole of the difference consists in an artful application of lines, surfaces, and colours.

It is not however merely for the sake of his *execution*, that the artist values a rough object. He finds it in many other respects accommodated to his art. In the first place, his *composition* requires it. If the history-painter threw all his draperies smooth over his figures; his groups, and combinations would be very awkward. And in *landscape-painting* smooth objects would produce no composition at all. In a mountain-scene what composition could arise from the corner of a smooth knoll coming forward on one side, intersected by a smooth knoll on the other; with a smooth plain perhaps in the middle, and a smooth mountain in the distance? The very idea is disgusting. Picturesque composition consists in uniting in one whole a variety of parts; and these parts can only be obtained from rough objects. If the smooth moun-

c 2

tains,

tains, and plains were broken by different objects, the composition would be good, if we suppose the great lines of it were so before.

Variety too is equally necessary in his composition: so is *contrast*. Both these he finds in rough objects; and neither of them in smooth. *Variety* indeed, in some degree, he may find in the outline of a smooth object: but by no means enough to satisfy the eye, without including the surface also.

From *rough* objects also he seeks the *effect of light and shade*, which they are as well disposed to produce, as they are the beauty of composition. One uniform light, or one uniform shade produces no effect. It is the various surfaces of objects, sometimes turning to the light in one way, and sometimes in another, that give the painter his choice of opportunities in massing, and graduating both his lights, and shades. — The *richness* also of the light depends on the breaks, and little recesses, which it finds on the surfaces of bodies. What the painter calls *richness* on a surface, is only a variety of little parts; on which the light shining shews all its small inequalities, and roughnesses; or in the

the

the painter's language, *enriches* it. — The beauty also of *catching lights* arises from the roughness of objects. What the painter calls a *catching light* is a strong touch of light on some prominent part of a surface, while the rest is in shadow. A smooth surface hath no such prominences.

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

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

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

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

It is thus too in other glossy bodies. Tho' the horse, in a *rough* state as we have just observed, or worn down with labour, is more adapted to the pencil, than when his sides shine with brushing, and high-feeding; yet in this latter state also he is certainly a picturesque object. But it is not his smooth, and shining coat, that makes him so. It is the apparent interruption of that smoothness by a variety of shades, and colours, which produces the effect. Such a play of muscles appears
every

every where, through the fineness of his skin, gently swelling, and sinking into each other — he is all over so *lubricus aspici*, the reflections of light are so continually shifting upon him, and playing into each other, that the eye never considers the smoothness of the surface; but is amused with gliding up, and down, among those endless transitions, which in some degree, supply the room of *roughness*.

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

pears only of one simple hue, is in fact varied with a thousand soft shadows, and brilliant touches, at once discoverable to the picturesque eye.

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

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

* On all human flesh held between the eye and the light, there is a degree of polish. I speak not here of such a polish
as

therefore are false; and smoothness being here one of the chief qualities to admire, we are disgusted; and say, it makes bad, worse.

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

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

as this, which wrought-marble always, in a degree, possesses, as well as human flesh; but of the highest polish, which can be given to marble; and which has always a very bad effect. If I wanted an example, the bust of arch-bishop Boulter in Westminster-abbey would afford a very glaring one.

say,

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

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

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

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

* See page 19, &c.

for *smoothness*; and the images of nature with *irregularity*, which is only another name for *roughness*, we have here a solution of our question.

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

tribute greatly to embellish his pictures with pleasing shapes.

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

By no means. *Simplicity and variety* are sources of the *beautiful*, as well as of the *picturesque*. Why does the architect break the front of his pile with ornaments? Is it not to add variety to simplicity? Even the very black-smith acknowledges this principle by forming ringlets and bulbous circles on his tongs, and pokers. In nature it is the same; and your plain will just as much
be

be improved *in reality* by breaking it, as *upon canvases*. — in a garden-scene the idea is different. There every object is of the neat, and elegant kind. What is otherwise, is inharmonious; and *roughness* would be disorder.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A fourth

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

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

True, says an admirer of the antique; but this proportion must have a rule, or we gain nothing: and a *rule of proportion* there certainly is: but we may inquire after it in vain. The secret is lost. The ancients had it. They well knew the principles of beauty; and had that unerring rule, which in all things adjusted their taste. We see it even in their slightest vases. In *their* works, proportion, tho varied
 4 through

through a thousand lines, is still the same; and if we could only discover their *principles of proportion*, we should have the arcanum of this science; and might settle all our disputes about taste with great ease.

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

Empedocles, an Stertini deliret acumen?

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

END OF THE FIRST. ESSAY.

As the subject of the foregoing essay is rather new, and I doubted, whether sufficiently founded in truth, I was desirous, before I printed it, that it should receive the *imprimatur* of sir Joshua Reynolds. I begged him therefore to look it over, and received the following answer.

London,
April 19, 1791.

DEAR SIR,

Tho I read now but little, yet I have read with great attention the essay, which you was so good to put into my hands, on the difference between the *beautiful*, and the *picturesque*; and I may truly say, I have received from it much pleasure, and improvement.

Without opposing any of your sentiments, it has suggested an idea, that may be worth consideration — whether the epithet *picturesque* is not applicable to the excellences of the inferior schools, rather than to the higher.

The

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

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

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

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

The essay has lain upon my table; and I think no day has passed without my looking at it, reading a little at a time. Whatever objections presented themselves at first view*,

were

* Sir Joshua Reynolds had seen this essay, several years ago, through Mr. Mason, who shewed it to him. He then made

were done away on a cloſer inſpection: and I am not quite ſure, but that is the caſe in regard to the obſervation, which I have ventured to make on the word *picturesque*.

I am, &c.

JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

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

THE ANSWER.

May 2d, 1791.

DEAR SIR,

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

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

ſome objections to it: particularly he thought, that the term *picturesque*, ſhould be applied only to the *works of nature*. His conceſſion here is an inſtance of that candour, which is a very remarkable part of his character; and which is generally one of the diſtinguiſhing marks of true genius.

so that, according to *my definition*, one of the cartoons, and a flower piece are equally picturesque.

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

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

I am, &c.

WILLIAM GILPIN.

To Sir Joshua Reynolds,
Leicester-square.

ESSAY II.

ON

PICTURESQUE TRAVEL.

ESSAY II.

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

In treating of picturesque travel, we may consider first its *object*; and secondly its sources of *amusement*.

It's

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

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

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

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

The *curious*, and *fantastic* forms of nature are by no means the favourite objects of the lovers of landscape. There may be beauty in a *curious* object ; and so far it may be picturesque : but we cannot admire it merely for the sake of it's curiosity. The *lusus naturæ* is the naturalist's province, not the painter's. The spiry pinnacles of the mountain, and the castle-like arrangement of the rock, give no peculiar pleasure to the picturesque eye. It is fond of the simplicity of nature ; and sees most beauty in her *most usual* forms. The *Giant's causeway* in Ireland may strike it as a novelty ; but the lake of Killarney attracts it's attention. It would range with supreme
delight

delight among the sweet vales of Switzerland ; but would view only with a tranſient glance, the Glaciers of Savoy. Scenes of this kind, as unuſual, may pleaſe *once* ; but the great works of nature, in her ſimpleſt and pureſt ſtile, open inexhauſted ſprings of amuſement.

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

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

we often find *casually* in greater variety, and beauty, than any selection can procure.

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

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

* See page 8.

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

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

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

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

first good, first perfect, and first fair.

But

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

Nature is but a name for an *effect*,
Whose *cause* is God. —————

If however the admirer of nature can turn his amusements to a higher purpose; if it's great scenes can inspire him with religious awe; or it's tranquil scenes with that complacency of mind, which is so nearly allied to benevolence, it is certainly the better. *Apponatus lucro*. It is so much into the bargain; for we dare not *promise* him more from picturesque travel, than a rational, and agreeable amusement. Yet even this may be of some use in an age teeming with licentious pleasure; and may in this light at least be considered as having a moral tendency.

The first source of amusement to the picturesque traveller, is the *pursuit* of his object—the expectation of new scenes continually opening, and arising to his view. We suppose the country to have been unexplored. Under this circumstance the mind is kept constantly in an agreeable

agreeable suspense. The love of novelty is the foundation of this pleasure. Every distant horizon promises something new; and with this pleasing expectation we follow nature through all her walks. We pursue her from hill to dale; and hunt after those various beauties, with which she every where abounds.

The pleasures of the chase are universal. A hare started before dogs is enough to set a whole country in an uproar. The plough, and the spade are deserted. Care is left behind; and every human faculty is dilated with joy.—And shall we suppose it a greater pleasure to the sportsman to pursue a trivial animal, than it is to the man of taste to pursue the beauties of nature? to follow her through all her recesses? to obtain a sudden glance, as she flits past him in some airy shape? to trace her through the mazes of the cover? to wind after her along the vale? or along the reaches of the river.

After the pursuit we are gratified with the *attainment* of the object. Our amusement, on this head, arises from the employment of the mind in examining the beautiful scenes we have found. Sometimes we examine them under the idea of a *whole*: we admire the composition,

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

But it is not from this *scientific* employment, that we derive our chief pleasure. We are most delighted, when some grand scene, tho' perhaps of incorrect composition, rising before the eye, strikes us beyond the power of thought — when the *vox faucibus hæret*; and every mental operation is suspended. In this pause of intellect; this *deliquium* of the soul, an enthusiastic sensation of pleasure overspreads

it, previous to any examination by the rules of art. The general idea of the scene makes an impression, before any appeal is made to the judgment. We rather *feel*, than *survey* it.

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

Having gained by a minute examination of incidents a compleat idea of an object, our next amusement arises from enlarging, and correcting our general stock of ideas. The variety of nature is such, that *new objects*, and new combinations of them, are continually adding something to our fund, and enlarging our collection: while the *same kind of object* occurring frequently, is seen under various shapes; and makes us, if I may so speak, more learned in nature. We get it more by heart.

He

He who has seen only one oak-tree, has no complete idea of an oak in general: but he who has examined thousands of oak-trees, must have seen that beautiful plant in all its varieties; and obtains a full, and complete idea of it.

From this correct knowledge of objects arises another amusement; that of representing, by a few strokes in a sketch, those ideas, which have made the most impression upon us. A few scratches, like a short-hand scrawl of our own, legible at least to ourselves; will serve to raise in our minds the remembrance of the beauties they humbly represent; and recal to our memory even the splendid colouring, and force of light, which existed in the real scene. Some naturalists suppose, the act of ruminating, in animals, to be attended with more pleasure, than the act of grosser mastication. It may be so in travelling also. There may be more pleasure in recollecting, and recording, from a few transient lines, the scenes we have admired, than in the present enjoyment of them. If the scenes indeed have *peculiar greatness*, this secondary pleasure cannot be attended with those enthusiastic feelings, which accompanied the real exhibition. But, in
E 2
general,

general, tho it may be a calmer species of pleasure, it is more uniform, and uninterrupted. It flatters us too with the idea of a sort of creation of our own; and it is unallayed with that fatigue, which is often a considerable abatement to the pleasures of traversing the wild, and savage parts of nature. — After we have amused *ourselves* with our sketches, if we can, in any degree, contribute to the amusement of others also, the pleasure is surely so much enhanced.

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

Some artists, when they give their imagination play, let it loose among uncommon scenes — such as perhaps never existed: whereas the nearer they approach the simple standard
of

of nature, in it's most beautiful forms, the more admirable their fictions will appear. It is thus in writing romances. The correct taste cannot bear those unnatural situations, in which heroes, and heroines are often placed: whereas a story, *naturally*, and of course *affectingly* told, either with a pen, or a pencil, tho known to be a fiction, is considered as a transcript from nature; and takes possession of the heart. The *marvellous* disgusts the sober imagination; which is gratified only with the pure characters of nature.

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

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

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

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

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

Believe the muse,
 She does not know that un auspicious spot,
 Where beauty is thus niggard of her store.

Believe

Believe the muse, through this terrestrial waste
 The seeds of grace are sown, profusely sown,
 Even where we least may hope. —————

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

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

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

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

But altho the picturesque traveller is seldom disappointed with *pure nature*, however rude,
yet

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

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

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

END OF THE SECOND ESSAY.

ESSAY III.

ON

THE ART OF SKETCHING
LANDSCAPE.

ESSAY III.

THE *art of sketching* is to the picturesque traveller, what the art of writing is to the scholar. Each is equally necessary to *fix* and *communicate* it's respective ideas.

Sketches *are* either taken from the *imagination*, or from *nature*. — When the *imaginary sketch* proceeds from the hands of a master, it is very valuable. It is his first conception : which is commonly the strongest, and the most brilliant. The imagination of a painter, really great in his profession, is a magazine abounding with all the elegant forms, and striking effects, which are to be found in nature. These, like a magician, he calls up at pleasure with a wave of his hand ; bringing before the eye, sometimes a scene from history, or romance ;

mance; and sometimes from the inanimate parts of nature. And in these happy moments when the enthusiasm of his art is upon him, he often produces from the glow of his imagination, with a few bold strokes, such wonderful effusions of genius, as the more sober, and correct productions of his pencil cannot equal.

It will always however be understood, that such sketches must be *examined* also by an eye *learned in the art*, and accustomed to picturesque ideas — an eye, that can take up the half-formed images, as the master leaves them; give them a new creation; and make up all that is not expressed from it's own store-house: — I shall however dwell no longer on *imaginary sketching*, as it hath but little relation to my present subject. Let me only add, that altho this essay is meant chiefly to assist the picturesque traveller in taking *views from nature*, the method recommended, as far as it relates to *execution*, may equally be applied to *imaginary sketches*.

Your intention in taking *views from nature*, may either be to *fix them in your own memory*

— or to convey, in some degree, your ideas to others.

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

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

In

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

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

with a few strokes of our own imagination*."—
 What Mr. Gray says relates chiefly to *verbal* description: but in *lineal* description it is equally true. The leading ideas must be fixed on the spot: if left to the memory, they soon evaporate.

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

* Letter to Mr. Palgrave, page 272, 4to.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

She rules the foreground; she can swell, or sink
 It's surface; here her leafy skreen oppose,
 And there withdraw; here part the varying greens,

And

And croud them there in one promiscuous gloom,
As best befits the genius of the scene.

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

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

— I shall add only, on the subject of fore-

grounds, that you need not be very nice in finishing them, even when you mean to *adorn* your sketches. In a finished picture the foreground is a matter of great nicety: but in a sketch little more is necessary, than to produce the effect you desire.

Having fixed your foreground, you consider in the same way, tho with more caution, the other parts of your *composition*. In a *hasty transcript* from nature, it is sufficient to take the lines of the country just as you find them: but in your *adorned sketch* you must grace them a little, where they run false. You must contrive to hide offensive parts with wood; to cover such as are too bald, with bushes; and to remove little objects, which in nature push themselves too much in sight, and serve only to introduce too many parts into your *composition*. In this happy adjustment the grand merit of your sketch consists. No beauty of light, colouring, or execution can atone for the want of *composition*. It is the foundation of all picturesque beauty. No finery of dress can set off a person, whose figure is awkward and uncouth.

Having thus *digested the composition* of your *adorned sketch*, which is done with black-lead,
you

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

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

Of these free touches with a pen the chief characteristic is *expression*; or the art of giving each object, that peculiar touch, whether smooth, or rough, which best expresses its form. The art of painting, in its highest perfection, cannot give the richness of nature. When we examine any natural form, we find the multiplicity of its parts beyond the highest finishing; and indeed generally an attempt at the highest finishing would end in stiffness. The painter is obliged therefore to deceive the eye by some natural tint, or expressive touch, from which the imagination takes its cue. How often do we see in the landscapes of Claude the full effect of distance; which, when examined closely, consists of a simple dash, tinged with the hue of nature,
intermixed

intermixed with a few expressive touches? — If then these expressive touches are necessary where the master carries on the deception both in form and colour; how necessary must they be in mere sketches, in which colour, the great vehicle of deception, is removed? — The art however of giving those expressive marks with a pen, which impresses ideas, is no common one. The inferior artist may give them by chance: but the master only gives them with precision. — Yet a sketch may have its use, and even its merit, without these strokes of genius.

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

It is true: but what other instrument shall we put into his hands, that will do better? His black-lead, his brush, whatever he touches, will be unmasterly. But my chief reason for putting a pen into his hands, is, that without a pen it will be difficult for him to preserve his outline, and distances. His touches with a pen may be unmasterly, we allow: but still they will preserve *keeping* in his landscape,
without

without which the whole will be a blot of confusion. — Nor is it perhaps so difficult to obtain some little freedom with the pen. I have seen assiduity, attended with but little genius, make a considerable progress in the use of this instrument; and produce an effect by no means displeasing. — If the drawing be large, I should recommend a reed-pen, which runs more freely over paper.

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

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





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

But mere *light and shade* are not sufficient: something of *effect* also should be aimed at in the *adorned sketch*. Mere light and shade propose only the *simple illumination* of objects. *Effect*, by balancing *large masses* of each, gives the whole a greater force. — Now tho in the exhibitions of nature, we commonly find only the *simple illumination* of objects; yet as we often do meet with *grand effects* also, we have sufficient authority to use them: for under these circumstances we see nature in her best attire, in which it is our business to describe her.

As to giving rules for the production of effect, the subject admits only the *most general*. There must be a strong opposition of light and shade; in which the sky, as well as the landscape, must combine. But in what way this opposition must be varied — where
the

the full tone of shade must prevail — where the full effusion of light — or where the various degrees of each — depends intirely on the circumstances of the *composition*. All you can do, is to examine your drawing (yet in it's naked outline) with care; and endeavour to find out where the force of the light will have the best effect. But this depends more on *taste*, than on *rule*.

One thing both in light and shade should be observed, especially in the former — and that is *gradation*; which gives a force beyond what a glaring display of light can give. The effect of light, which falls on the stone, produced as an illustration of this idea, would not be so great, unless it *graduated* into shade. — In the following stanza Mr. Gray has with great beauty and propriety, illustrated the vicissitudes of life by the principles of picturesque effect.

Still where rosy pleasure leads,
 See a kindred grief pursue:
 Behind the steps, which misery treads,
 Approaching comfort view.
 The hues of bliss more brightly glow,
 Chastised by fabler tints of woe;
 And, blended, form with artful strife,
 The strength, and harmony of life.

I may

CACULIAE 2-CRETICIF
METELIA CRASSI

I may farther add, that the production of an *effect* is particularly necessary in *drawing*. In *painting*, colour in some degree makes up the deficiency: but in simple clair-obscur there is no fuccedaneum. It's force depends on effect; the virtue of which is such, that it will give a value even to a barren subject. Like striking the chords of a musical instrument, it will produce harmony, without any richness of composition.

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

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

touches are sufficient. Attempts at finishing offend*.

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

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

* See the preceding essay.



The strength, or faintness of this tinge depends on the strength, or faintness of the drawing. A slight sketch, should be slightly tinged. But if the drawing be highly finished, and the shadows strong; the tinge also may be stronger. Where the shadows are very dark, and the lights catching, a deep tinge may sometimes make it a good fun-set. —

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

Some chuse rather to add a little colour to their sketches. My instructions attempt not the art of mixing a variety of tints; and finishing a drawing from nature; which is generally executed in colours from the beginning, without any use of Indian ink; except

as

as a grey tint, uniting with other colours. This indeed, when chafely executed, (which is not often the cafe) exceeds in beauty every other fpecies of drawing. It is however beyond my fkill to give any inftruction for this mode of drawing. All I mean is only to offer a modeft way of tinting a fketeh already finifhed in Indian ink, by the addition of a little colour; which will give fome diftinction to objects; and introduce rather a gayer ftile into a landfcape.

When you have finifhed your fketeh therefore with Indian ink, as far as you propofe, tinge the whole over with fome light horizon hue. It may be the rofy tint of morning; or the more ruddy one of evening; or it may incline more to a yellowifh, or a greyifh caft. The firft tint you fpread over your drawing, is compofed of light red, and oaker, which make an orange. It may incline to one, or the other, as you chufe. By wafhing this tint over your *whole drawing*, you lay a foundation for harmony. When this wafh is nearly dry, repeat it in the horizon; foftening it off into the fky, as you afcend. — Take next a purple tint, compofed of lake, and blue,

4 inclining

inclining rather to the former ; and with this, when your first wash is dry, form your clouds ; and then spread it, as you did the first tint, over your *whole drawing*, except where you leave the horizon-tint. This still strengthens the idea of harmony. Your sky, and distance are now finished.

You next proceed to your *middle*, and *foregrounds* ; in both which you distinguish between the *soil*, and the *vegetation*. Wash the *middle grounds* with a little umber. This will be sufficient for the *soil*. The *soil* of the *foreground* you may go over with a little light red. The *vegetation* of each may be washed with a green, composed of blue, and oker ; adding a little more oker as you proceed nearer the eye ; and on the nearest grounds a little burnt terra Sienna. This is sufficient for the *middle grounds*. The *foreground* may farther want a little heightening both in the *soil*, and *vegetation*. In the *soil* it may be given in the lights with burnt terra Sienna ; mixing in the shadows a little lake : and in the *vegetation* with gallstone ; touched in places, and occasionally varied, with burnt terra Sienna.

Trees on the foreground are considered as a part of it ; and their foliage may be co-

loured like the vegetation in their neighbourhood. Their stems may be touched with burnt terra Sienna. — Trees, in middle distances are darker than the lawns, on which they stand. They must therefore be touched twice over with the tint, which is given only once to the lawn.

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

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

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

I shall only add, that the *strength of the colouring* you give your sketch, must depend (as in the last case, where the whole drawing is tinged,) on the height, to which you have carried the Indian ink *finishing*. If it be only a

flight sketch, it will bear only a light wash of colour.

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

But the advocate for these glaring tints may perhaps say, he does not make his sky more

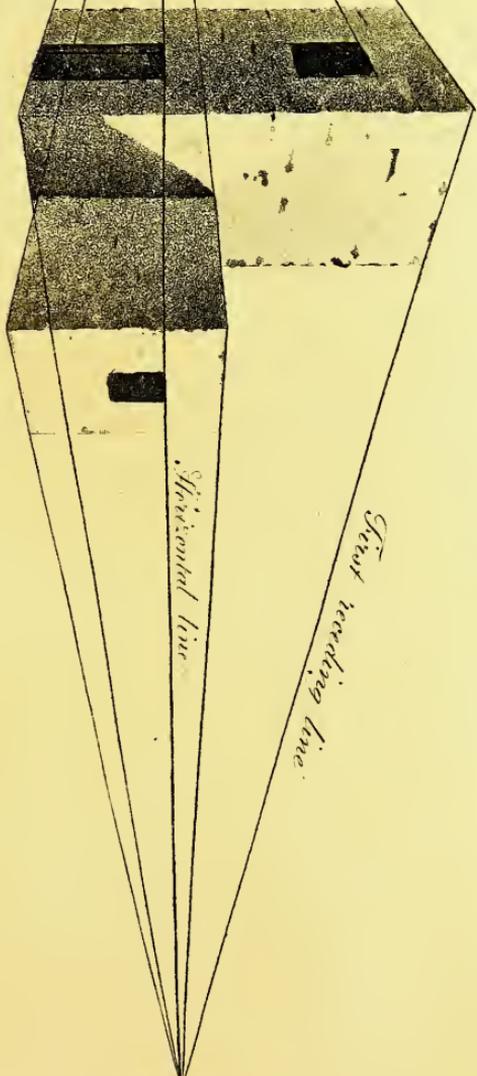
* I have been informed, that many of the purchasers of the first edition of this work, have thought the plate, which illustrates what hath been said above, was not so highly coloured, as they wished it to have been. I apprehend this was chiefly owing to the particular care I took, to have it rather *under*, than *over* tinted. The great danger, I think, is on the side of being over-loaded with colour. I have however taken care that a number of the prints in this edition shall be coloured higher, that each purchaser may have an option.

blue than nature; nor his grafs, and trees more green.

Perhaps fo: but unlefs he could work up his drawing with the *finifhing* of nature alfo, he will find the effect very unequal. Nature mixes a variety of femi-tints with her brighteft colours: and tho the eye cannot readily feparate them, they have a general chaftizing effect; and keep the feveral tints of landscape within proper bounds, which a glare of deep colours cannot do. Befides, this chaftizing hue is produced in nature by numberlefs little fhadows, beyond the attention of art, which fhe throws on leaves, and piles of grafs, and every other minute object; all of which, tho not eafily diftinguifhed in *particulars*, tell *in the whole*, and are continually chaftening the hues of nature.

Before I conclude thefe remarks on fketehing, it may be ufeul to add a few words, and but a few, on perspective. The nicer parts of it contain many difficulties; and are of little ufe in common landscape. Indeed in wild, irregular objects, it is hardly poffible to apply it. The eye muft regulate the winding
of

*Vanishing
Point*



*Nearest
Perpendicular*

Horizontal line

Short receding line

Vanishing Point

of the river; and the receding of the distant hill. Rules of perspective give little assistance. But it often happens, that on the nearer grounds you wish to place a more regular object, which requires some little knowledge of perspective. The subject therefore should not be left wholly untouched.

If a building stand exactly in front, none of it's lines can go off in perspective: but if it stand with a corner towards you, (as the picturesque eye generally wishes a building to stand) the lines will appear to recede. In what manner they may be drawn in perspective, the following mechanical method may explain.

Trace on your paper the *nearest perpendicular* of the building you copy. Then hold horizontally between it, and your eye, a shred of paper, or flat ruler; raising, or lowering it, till you see only the edge. Where it cuts the *perpendicular* in the building, make a mark on your paper; and draw a slight line through that point, parallel with the bottom of your picture. This is called the *horizontal line*. Observe next, with what accuracy you can (for it would require a tedious process to conduct it geometrically) the angle, which the *first receding line* of the building makes with the *nearest perpendicular*;

perpendicular; and in your drawing continue a similar line, till it meet the *horizontal line*, The point where it meets the *horizontal line*, is called the *vanishing point*: and regulates the whole perspective. From this point you draw a line to the *bottom* of the *nearest perpendicular*, which gives you the perspective of the base. In the same manner all the lines, which recede on both sides of the building, as well above, as below the *horizontal line*; windows, doors, and projections of every kind, if they are on the *same plane*, are regulated.

If the building consist of projections on *different planes*, it would be tedious to regulate them all by the rules of perspective; but the eye being thus master of the grand points, will easily learn to manage the smaller projections. — Indeed in drawing landscape, it may in general be enough to be acquainted with the principles of perspective. One of the best rules in adjusting *proportion* is, *to carry your compasses in your eye*. The same rule may be given in *perspective*. Accustom your eye to judge, how objects recede from it. Too strict an application of rules tends only to give your drawing stiffness, and formality. Indeed where the regular works of art make the *prin-*
cipal

cipal part of your picture, the strictest application of rule is necessary. It is this, which gives it's chief value to the pencil of Canaletti. His truth in perspective has made subjects interesting, which are of all others the most unpromising.

Before I conclude the subject, I should wish to add, that the plate here given as an explanation, is designed merely as such; for no building can have a good effect, the base of which is so far below the horizontal line.

After all, however, from the mode of sketching here recommended (which is as far as I should wish to recommend drawing landscape to those, who draw only for amusement) no great degree of accuracy can be expected. General ideas only must be looked for: not the peculiarities of portrait. It admits the winding river — the shooting promontory — the castle — the abbey — the flat distance — and the mountain melting into the horizon. It admits too the relation, which all these parts bear to each other. But it descends not to the minutiae of objects. The
 G 4 fringed

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

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

studied it their whole lives, have acquired perfection.

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

———— Sine rivali teque, et tua solus amares.

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

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

different

different sketch. You may please yourself by administering strongly to recollection; and you may please others by conveying your ideas more distinctly in an ordinary sketch, than in the best language.

END OF THE THIRD ESSAY.



ON

LANDSCAPE PAINTING,

A P O E M.

C O N T E N T S

OF THE FOLLOWING

P O E M.

Line

- 1 **I**NTRODUCTION, and address.
- 26 A close attention to the various scenes of nature recommended; and to the several circumstances, under which they appear.
- 78 A facility also in copying the different *parts* of nature should be attained, before the young artist attempts a *whole*.
- 90 This process will also be a kind of *test*. No one can make any progress, whose imagination is not fired with the scenes of nature.
- 107 On a supposition, that the artist is enamoured with his subject; and is well versed in copying the parts of nature, he begins
to

to combine, and form those parts into the subjects of landscape. He pays his first attention to *design*, or to the bringing together of such objects, as are suited to his subject; not mixing trivial objects with grand scenes; but preserving the *character* of his subject, whatever it may be.

150 The different parts of his landscape must next be studiously arranged, and put together in a picturesque manner. This is the work of *disposition*; or, as it is sometimes called, *composition*. No rules can be given for this arrangement, but the experience of a nice eye: for the nature seldom presents a complete composition, yet we every where see in her works beautiful arrangements of parts; which we ought to study with great attention.

159 In general, a landscape is composed of three parts — a foreground — a middle ground — and a distance.

163 Yet this is not a universal rule. A *balance of parts* however there should always be; tho sometimes those parts may be few.

176 It is a great error in landscape-painters, to lose the *simplicity* of a whole, under the idea of giving *variety*.

- 182 Some *particular scene*, therefore, or *leading subject* should always be chosen; to which the parts should be subservient.
- 205 In balancing a landscape, a spacious foreground will admit a small thread of distance: but the reverse is a bad proportion. In every landscape there *must* be a considerable foreground.
- 216 This theory is illustrated by the view of a *disproportioned distance*.
- 243 An objection answered, why vast distances, tho unsupported by foregrounds, may please *in nature*, and yet offend *in representation*.
- 266 But tho the several parts of landscape may be *well balanced*, and adjusted; yet still without *contrast in the parts*, there will be a great deficiency. At the same time this contrast must be easy, and natural.
- 285 Such pictures, as are painted from fancy, are the most pleasing efforts of genius. But if an untoward subject be given, the artist must endeavour to conceal, and vary the unaccommodating parts. The foreground he *must* claim as his own.
- 308 But if nature be the source of all beauty, it may be objected, that imaginary views can have little merit. — The objection has weight, if the imaginary view be not formed

- formed from the select parts of nature ;
but if it be, it is nature still.
- 322 The artist having thus adjusted his forms, and disposition ; conceives next the best effect of light ; and when he has thus laid the foundation of his picture, proceeds to colouring.
- 335 The author avoids giving rules for colouring, which are learned chiefly by practice.
- 341 He just touches on the theory of colours.
- 362 Artists, with equally good effect, sometimes blend them on their pallet ; and sometimes spread them raw on their canvas.
- 383 In colouring, the sky gives the ruling tint to the landscape : and the hue of the whole, whether rich, or sober, must be harmonious.
- 426 A predominancy of shade has the best effect.
- 449 But light, tho it should not be scattered, should not be collected, as it were, into a focus.
- 464 The effect of *gradation* illustrated by the colouring of cattle.
- 483 Of the disposition of light.
- 508 Of the *general harmony* of the whole.
- 517 A method proposed of examining a picture with regard to it's *general harmony*.
- 531 The scientific part being closed, all that can be said with regard to *execution*, is, that, as there are various modes of it, every
artist

artist ought to adopt his own, or else he becomes a servile imitator. On the whole, the bold free method recommended; which aims at giving the *character* of objects, rather than the *minute detail*.

- 565 Rules given with regard to figures. History in miniature, introduced in landscape, condemned. Figures should be suited to the scene.
- 620 Rules to be observed in the introduction of birds.
- 645 An exhibition is the truest test of excellence; where the picture receives it's stamp, and value not from the airs of coxcombs; but from the judgment of men of taste, and science.

ON

LANDSCAPE PAINTING.

A P O E M.

THAT Art, which gives the practis'd pencil power
To rival Nature's graces ; to combine
In one harmonious whole her scattered charms,
And o'er them fling appropriate force of light,
I sing, unskill'd in numbers ; yet a Muse, 5
Led by the hand of Friendship, deigns to lend
Her aid, and give that free colloquial flow,
Which best befits the plain preceptive song.

To thee, thus aided, let me dare to sing,
Judicious Lock ; who from great Nature's realms 10
Hast culled her loveliest features, and arranged
In thy rich memory's storehouse : Thou, whose glance,
Practis'd in truth and symmetry can trace
In every latent touch, each Master's hand ;
Whether the marble by his art subdued 15
Be softened into life, or canvas smooth

Be swell'd to animation : Thou, to whom
 Each mode of landscape, beauteous or sublime,
 With every various colour, tint, and light,
 It's nice gradations, and it's bold effects, 20
 Are all familiar, patient hear my song,
 That to thy taste and science nothing new
 Presents ; yet humbly hopes from thee to gain
 That plaudit, which, if Nature first approve,
 Then, and then only, thou wilt deign to yield. 25

First to the youthful artist I address
 This leading precept : Let not inborn pride,
 Prefuming on thy own inventive powers,
 Mislead thine eye from Nature. She must reign
 Great archetype in all. Trace then with care 30
 Her varied walks. Observe how she upheaves
 The mountain's towering brow ; on it's rough sides
 How broad the shadow falls ; what different hues
 Invest it's glimmering surface. Next survey
 The distant lake ; so seen, a shining spot : 35
 But when approaching nearer, how it flings
 It's sweeping curves around the shooting cliffs.
 Mark every shade it's Proteus-shape assumes
 From motion and from rest ; and how the forms
 Of tufted woods, and beetling rocks, and towers 40
 Of ruined castles, from the smooth expanse,
 Shade answering shade, inverted meet the eye.
 From mountains hie thee to the forest-scene.
 Remark the form, the foliage of each tree,
 And what it's leading feature. View the oak, 45
 It's

It's massy limbs, it's majesty of shade ;
 The pendent birch ; the beech of many a stem ;
 The lighter ash ; and all their changeful hues
 In spring or autumn, russet, green, or grey.

Next wander by the river's mazy bank. 50

See where it dimpling glides ; or briskly where
 It's whirling eddies sparkle round the rock ;
 Or where, with headlong rage, it dashes down
 Some fractured chasm, till all it's fury spent,

It sinks to sleep, a silent stagnant pool, 55

Dark, tho translucent, from the mantling shade.

Now give thy view more ample range : explore

The vast expanse of ocean ; see, when calm,

What Iris-hues of purple, green, and gold,

Play on it's glassy surface ; and when vexed 60

With storms, what depth of billowy shade, with light

Of curling foam contrasted. View the cliffs ;

The lonely beacon, and the distant coast,

In mists arrayed, just heaving into sight

Above the dim horizon ; where the sail 65

Appears conspicuous in the lengthened gleam.

With studious eye examine next the vast

Ethereal concave : mark each floating cloud ;

It's form, it's colour ; and what mass of shade

It gives the scene below, pregnant with change 70

Perpetual, from the morning's purple dawn,

Till the last glimmering ray of russet eve.

Mark how the sun-beam, steeped in morning-dew,

Beneath each jutting promontory flings

A darker shade ; while brightened with the ray 75

Of

Of fultry noon, not yet entirely quenched,
The evening-shadow less opaquely falls.

Thus stored with fair ideas, call them forth
By practice, till thy ready pencil trace
Each form familiar: but attempt not thou 80
A *whole*, till every *part* be well conceived.
The tongue that awes a senate with it's force,
Once lisped in syllables, or e'er it poured
It's glowing periods, warm with patriot-fire.

At length matured, stand forth for honest Fame 85
A candidate. Some nobler theme select
From Nature's choicest scenes; and sketch that theme
With firm, but easy line; then if my song
Assist thy power, it asks no higher meed.

Yet if, when Nature's sovereign glories meet 90
Thy sudden glance, no corresponding spark
Of vivid flame be kindled in thy breast;
If calmly thou canst view them; know for thee
My numbers flow not: seek some fitter guide
To lead thee, where the low mechanic toils 95
With patient labour for his daily hire.

But if the true genius fire thee, if thy heart
Glow, palpitate with transport, at the sight;
If emulation seize thee, to transfuse
These splendid visions on thy vivid chart; 100
If the big thought seem more than Art can paint;
Haste, snatch thy pencil, bounteous Nature yields
To thee her choicest stores; and the glad Muse
Sits by assistant, aiming but to fan

The Promethèan flame, conscious her rules 105
 Can only guide, not give, the warmth divine.

First learn with *objects suited to each scene*
 Thy landscape to adorn. If some rude view
 Thy pencil culls, of lake, or mountain-range,
 Where Nature walks with proud majestic step, 110
 Give not her robe the formal folds of art,
 But bid it flow with ample dignity.

Mix not the mean and trivial: Is the *whole*
 Sublime, let each accordant *part* be grand.

Yet if through dire necessity (for that 115
 Alone should force the deed) some *polished scene*
 Employ thy pallet, dressed by human art,
 The lawn so level, and the bank so trim,
 Yet still *preserve thy subject*. Let the oak
 Be elegant of form, that mantles o'er 120
 Thy shaven fore-ground. The rough forester
 Whose peeled and withered boughs, and gnarled trunk,
 Have stood the rage of many a winter's blast,
 Might ill such cultured scenes adorn. Not less
 Would an old Briton, rough with martial scars, 125
 And bearing stern defiance on his brow,
 Seem fitly stationed at a Gallic feast.

Such apt selection of accordant forms
 The muse herself requires from those her sons
 Epic, or Tragic, who aspire to fame 130
 Legitimate. On them, whose motly taste
 Unites the sock, and buskin — who produce
 Kings, and buffoons in one incongruous scene,
 She darts a frown indignant. Nor suppose

Thy humbler subject less demands the aid 135
 Of just *Design*, than Raphael's; tho his art
 Give all but motion to some group divine,
 While thine inglorious picture woods, and streams.

With equal rigour DISPOSITION claims
 Thy close attention. Would'st thou learn it's laws, 140
 Examine Nature, when combined with art,
 Or simple; mark how various are her forms,
 Mountains enormous, rugged rocks, clear lakes,
 Castles, and bridges, aqueducts and fanes.
 Of these observe, how some, united please; 145
 While others, ill-combined, disgust the eye.
 That principle, which rules these various parts,
 And harmonizing *all*, produces *one*,
 Is *Disposition*. By it's plastic pow'r
 Those rough materials, which *Design* selects,
 Are nicely balanced. Thus with friendly aid 150
 These principles unite: *Design* presents
 The general subject; *Disposition* culls,
 And recombines, the various forms anew.

Rarely to more than three distinguished parts
 Extend thy landscape: nearest to the eye 155
 Present thy foreground; then the midway space;
 E'er the blue distance melt in liquid air.

But tho full oft these parts with blending tints
 Are softened so, as wakes a frequent doubt
 Where each begins, where ends; yet still preserve 160
 A *general balance*. So when Europe's sons

Sound

Sound the alarm of war ; some potent hand
 (Now thine again my Albion) poises true
 The scale of empire ; curbs each rival power ;
 And checks each lawless tyrant's wild career. 165

Not but there are of fewer parts who form
 A pleasing picture. These a forest-glade
 Suffices oft ; behind which, just removed,
 One tuft of foliage, WATERLO, like thine,
 Gives all we wish of dear variety. 170

For even variety itself may pall,
 If to the eye, when pausing with delight
 On one fair object, it presents a mass
 Of many, which disturb that eye's repose.
 All hail Simplicity ! To thy chaste shrine,
 Beyond all other, let the artist bow. 175

Oft have I seen arranged, by hands that well
 Could pencil Nature's *parts*, landscapes, that knew
 No *leading subject* : Here a forest rose ;
 A river there ran dimpling ; and beyond, 180
 The portion of a lake : while rocks, and towers,
 And castles intermixed, spread o'er the whole
 In multiform confusion. Ancient dames
 Thus oft compose of various filken shreds,
 Some gaudy, patched, unmeaning, tawdry thing, 185
 Where bucks and cherries, ships and flowers, unite
 In one rich compound of absurdity.

Chuse then some *principal commanding theme*,
 Be it lake, valley, winding stream, cascade,
 Castle, or sea-port, and on *that* exhaust 190
 Thy powers, and make to that all else conform.

Who

Who paints a landscape, is confined by rules,
 As fixed and rigid as the tragic bard,
 To *unity of subject*. Is the scene
 A forest, nothing there, save woods and lawns 195
 Must rise conspicuous. Episodes of hills
 And lakes be far removed; all that obtrudes
 On the chief theme, how beautiful foe'er
 Seen as a *part*, disgusts us in the *whole*.

Thus in the realms of landscape, to preserve 200
Proportion just is *Disposition's* task.
 And tho a glance of distance it allow,
 Even when the foreground swells upon the sight;
 Yet if the distant scenery wide extend,
 The foreground must be ample: Take free scope: 205
 Art must have space to stand on, like the Sage,
 Who boasted power to shake the solid globe.
 This thou must claim; and if thy distance spread
 Profuse, must claim it amply: Uncombined
 With foreground, distance loses power to please. 210

Where rising from the solid rock, appear
 Those ancient battlements, their lived a knight,
 Who oft surveying from his castle wall
 The wide expanse before him; distance vast;
 Interminable wilds; savannahs deep; 215
 Dark woods; and village spires, and glittering streams,
 Just twinkling in the sun-beam, wished the view
 Transferred to canvass; and for that sage end,
 Led to the spot some docile son of art,
 Where his own taste unerring previous fixed 220
 The point of amplest prospect. "Take thy stand
 "Just here," he cried, "and paint me *all* thou seest,
 "Omit

"Omit no single object." It was done ;
 And soon the live-long landscape cloaths his hall,
 And spreads from base to ceiling. *All* was there ; 225
 As to his guest, while dinner cooled, the knight
 Full oft would prove ; and with uplifted cane
 Point to the distant spire, where slept entombed
 His ancestry ; beyond, where lay the town,
 Skirted with wood, that gave him place and voice 230
 In Britain's fenate ; nor untraced the stream
 That fed the goodly trout they soon should taste ;
 Nor every scattered feat of friend, or foe,
 He calls his neighbours. Heedless he, meanwhile,
 That what he deems the triumph of his taste, 235
 Is but a painted survey, a mere map ;
 Which light and shade, and perspective misplaced,
 But serve to spoil.

Yet why (methinks I hear
 Some Critic say) do ample scenes, like this,
 In *picture* fail to please ; when every eye 240
 Confesses they transport on *Nature's chart* ?
 Why ; but because, where *She* displays the scene,
 The roving sight can pause, and swift select,
 From all she offers, parts, whereon to fix,
 And form distinct perceptions ; each of which 245
 Presents a *separate picture*. Thus as bees
 Condense within their hives the varying sweets ;
 So does the eye a *lovely whole* collect
 From *parts disjointed* ; nay, perhaps, *deformed*.
 Then deem not Art defective, which divides, 250
 Rejects,

Rejects, or recombines : but rather say,
 'Tis her chief excellence. There is, we know,
 A charm unspeakable in converse free
 Of lover, or of friend, when soul with soul
 Mixes in social intercourse ; when choice 255
 Of phrase, and rules of rhetoric are disdained ;
 Yet say, adopted by the tragic bard,
 If Jaffier thus with Belvidera talked,
 So vague, so rudely ; would not want of skill,
 Selection, and arrangement, damn the scene? 260

Thy forms, tho *balanced*, still perchance may want
 The charm of *Contrast* : Sing we then it's power.
 'Tis Beauty's surest source ; it regulates
 Shape, colour, light, and shade ; forms every line
 By *opposition just* ; whate'er is *rough* 265
 With skill delusive counteracts by *smooth* ;
Sinuuous, or *concave*, by it's opposite ;
 Yet ever *covertly* : should *Art appear*,
 That art were *Affectation*. Then alone
 We own the power of *Contrast*, when the lines 270
 Unite with Nature's freedom : then alone,
 When from it's careless touch each part receives
 A pleasing form. The lake's contracted bounds
 By contrast varied, elegantly flow ;
 The unweildy mountain sinks ; here, to remove 275
 Offensive parallels, the hill depressed
 Is lifted ; there the heavy beech expunged
 Gives place to airy pines ; if two bare knolls

Rife to the right and left, a castle here,
And there a wood, diversify their form. 280

Thrice happy he, who always can indulge
This pleasing feast of fancy ; who, replete
With rich ideas, can arrange their charms
As his own genius prompts, creating thus
A novel whole. But tasteless wealth oft claims 285
The *faithful portrait*, and will fix the scene
Where Nature's lines run falsely, or refuse
To harmonize. Artist, if thus employed,
I pity thy mischance. Yet there are means
Even here to hide defects. The human form 290
Portrayed by Reynolds, oft abounds with grace
He saw not in his model ; which nor hurts
Resemblance, nor fictitious skill betrays.
Why then, if o'er the limb uncouth he flings
The flowing vest, may not thy honest art 295
Veil with the foliage of some spreading oak,
Unpleasing objects, or remote, or near ?
An ample licence for such needful change,
The foregrounds give thee. There both mend and make.
Whoe'er opposes, tell them, 'tis the spot 300
Where fancy needs must sport ; where, if restrained
To close resemblance, thy best art expires.

What if they plead, that from thy general rule,
That rests on Nature as the only source
Of beauty, thou revolt'st ; tell them that rule 305
Thou hold'st still sacred : Nature *is* it's source ;
Yet Nature's *parts* fail to receive alike

The

The fair impressiſion. View her varied range :
 Each form that charms is there ; yet her beſt forms
 Muſt be *ſelected*. As the ſculptured charms 310
 Of the famed Venus grew, ſo muſt thou cull
 From various ſcenes ſuch parts as beſt create
 One perfect whole. If Nature ne'er arrayed
 Her moſt accompliſhed work with grace compleat,
 Think, will ſhe waſte on deſert rocks, and dells, 315
 What ſhe denies to Woman's charming form ?

And now, if on review thy chalked *deſign*,
 Brought into form by *Diſpoſition's* aid,
 Diſpleaſe not, trace thy lines with pencil free ;
 Add lightly too that *general maſs* of ſhade, 320
 Which ſuits the form and faſhion of it's parts.
 There are who, ſtudioſ of the beſt effects,
 Firſt ſketch a ſlight cartoon. Such previous care
 Is needful, where the Artiſt's fancy fails
 Preciſely to foreſee the future whole. 325

This done, prepare thy pallet, mix thy tints,
 And call on chaſte Simplicity again
 To ſave her votary from whate'er of hue,
 Diſcordant or abrupt, may flaunt, or glare.

Yet here to bring materials from the mine, 330
 From vegetable dies, or animal,
 And ſing their various properties and powers,
 The muſe deſcends not. To mechanic rules,
 To proſe, and practice, which can only teach
 The uſe of pigments, ſhe reſigns the toil. 335

One truth she gives, that Nature's simple loom
 Weaves but with three distinct, or mingled, hues,
 The vest that cloaths Creation. These are red,
 Azure, and yellow. Pure and unstained white
 (If colour justly called) rejects her law, 340
 And is by her rejected. Dost thou deem
 The glossy surface of yon heifer's coat
 A perfect white? Or yon vast heaving cloud
 That climbs the distant hill? With ceruse bright
 Attempt to catch it's tint, and thou wilt fail. 345
 Some tinge of purple, or some yellowish brown,
 Must first be blended, e'er thy toil succeed.
 Pure white, great Nature wishes to expunge
 From all her works; and only then admits,
 When with her mantle broad of fleecy snow 350
 She wraps them, to secure from chilling frost;
 Conscious, mean while, that what she gives to guard,
 Conceals their every charm: the stole of night
 Not more eclipses: yet that sable stole
 May, by the skilful mixture of these hues, 355
 Be shadowed even to dark Cimmerian gloom.
 Draw then from these, as from three plenteous springs,
 Thy brown, thy purple, crimson, orange, green,
 Nor load thy pallet with a useless tribe
 Of pigments: when commix'd with needful white, 360
 As suits thy end, these native three suffice.
 But if thou dost, still cautious keep in view
 That harmony which these alone can give.

Yet

Yet still there are, who scorning all the rules
 Of dull mechanic art, with random hand 365
 Fling their *unblended* colours, and produce
 Bolder effects by opposition's aid.

The sky, whate'er it's hue, to landscape gives
 A corresponding tinge. The morning ray
 Spreads it with purple light, in dew-drops steeped; 370
 The evening fires it with a crimson glow.
 Blows the bleak north? It sheds a cold, blue tint
 On all it touches. Do light mists prevail?
 A soft grey hue o'erspreads the general scene,
 And makes that scene, like beauty viewed through gauze,
 More delicately lovely. Chuse thy sky; 376
 But let that sky, whate'er the tint it takes,
 O'er-rule thy pallet. Frequent have I seen,
 In landscapes well composed, aerial hues
 So ill-preserved, that whether cold or heat, 380
 Tempest or calm, prevailed, was dubious all.
 Not so thy pencil, CLAUDE, the season marks:
 Thou makest us pant beneath thy summer noon;
 And shiver in thy cool autumnal eve.

Such are the powers of sky; and therefore Art 385
 Selects what best is suited to the scene
 It means to form: to this adapts a morn,
 To that an evening ray. Light mists full oft
 Give mountain-views an added dignity;
 While tame impoverished scenery claims the force 390
 Of splendid lights and shades; nor claims in vain.

Thy

Thy sky adjusted, all that is *remote*
 First colour faintly : leaving to the last
 Thy foreground. Easier 'tis, thou know'st, to spread
 Thy floating foliage o'er the sky ; than mix 395
 That sky amid the branches. Venture still
 On warmer tints, as distances approach
 Nearer the eye : Nor fear the richest hues,
 If to those hues thou giv'st the meet support
 Of strong opposing shade. A canvas once 400
 I saw, on which the artist dared to paint
 A scene in Indostan ; where gold, and pearl
 Barbaric, flamed on many a brodered vest
 Profusely splendid ; yet chaste art was there,
 Opposing hue to hue ; each shadow deep 405
 So spread, that all with sweet accord produced
 A bright, yet modest whole. Thus blend thy tints,
 Be they of scarlet, orange, green, or gold,
 Harmonious, till one general glow prevail
 Unbroken by abrupt and hostile glare. 410

Let shade predominate. It makes each light
 More lucid, yet destroys offensive glare.
 Mark when in fleecy showers of snow, the clouds
 Seem to descend, and whiten o'er the land,
 What unsubstantial unity of tinge 415
 Involves each prospect : Vision is absorbed ;
 Or, wandering through the void, finds not a point
 To rest on. All is mockery to the eye.
 Thus light diffused, debases that effect 419
 Which shade improves. Behold what glorious scenes
 Arise through Nature's works from shade. Yon lake
 With

With all it's circumambient woods, far less
 Would charm the eye, did not that dusky mist
 Creeping along it's eastern shores, ascend
 Those towering cliffs, mix with the ruddy beam 425
 Of opening day, just damp it's fires, and spread
 O'er all the scene a sweet obscurity.

But would'st thou see the full effect of shade
 Well massed, at eve mark that upheaving cloud,
 Which charged with all th' artillery of Jove, 430
 In awful darkness, marching from the east,
 Ascends; see how it blots the sky, and spreads,
 Darker, and darker still, it's dusky veil,
 Till from the east to west, the cope of heaven
 It curtains closely round. Haply thou stand'st 435
 Expectant of the loud convulsive burst,
 When lo! the sun, just sinking in the west,
 Pours from th' horizon's verge a splendid ray,
 Which tenfold grandeur to the darkness adds.
 Far to the east the radiance shoots, just tips 440
 Those tufted groves; but all it's splendor pours
 On yonder castled cliff, which chiefly owes
 It's glory, and supreme effect, to shade.

Thus light, enforced by shadow, spreads a ray
 Still brighter. Yet forbid that light to shine 445
 A glittering speck; for this were to illumine
 Thy picture, as the convex glass collects,
 All to one dazzling point, the solar rays.

Whate'er the force of *opposition*, still
 In soft *gradation* equal beauty lies. 450
 When

When the mild lustre glides from light to dark,
 The eye well-pleas'd pursues it. Mid the herds
 Of variegated hue, that graze the lawn,
 Oft may the artist trace examples just
 Of this sedate effect, and oft remark 455
 It's opposite. Behold yon lordly bull,
 His fable head, his lighter shoulders tinged
 With flakes of brown ; at length still lighter tints
 Prevailing, graduate o'er his flank and loins
 In tawny orange. What, if on his front 460
 A star of white appear ? The general mass
 Of colour spreads unbroken ; and the mark
 Gives his stern front peculiar character.

Ah ! how degenerate from her well-clothed fire
 That heifer. See her sides with white and black 465
 So studded, so distinct, each jostling each,
 The groundwork-colour hardly can be known.

Of lights, if more than two thy landscape boast,
 It boasts too much. But if two lights be there,
 Give one pre-eminence : with that be sure 470
 Illume thy *foreground*, or thy *midway space* ;
 But rarely spread it on the *distant scene*.
 Yet there, if level plains, or fens appear,
 And meet the sky, a lengthened gleam of light
 Discreetly thrown, will vary the flat scene. 475

But if that distance be abruptly clos'd
 By mountains, cast them into general shade :
 Ill suit gay robes their hoary majesty.
 Sober be all their hues ; except, perchance,

Approaching nearer in the midway space, 480
 One of the giant-brethren tower sublime :
 To him thy art may aptly give a gleam
 Of radiance : 'twill befit his awful head,
 Alike, when rising through the morning-dews
 In misty dignity, the pale, wan ray, 485
 Invests him ; or when, beaming from the west,
 A fiercer splendor opens to our view
 All his terrific features, rugged cliffs,
 And yawning chafms, which vapours through the day
 Had veiled ; dens where the lynx or pard might dwell
 In noon-tide safety, meditating there 491
 His next nocturnal ravage through the land.

Are now thy lights and shades adjusted all ?
 Yet pause : perhaps the perspective is just ;
 Perhaps each local hue is duly placed ; 495
 Perhaps the light offends not ; *harmony*
 May still be wanting. That which forms a whole
 From colour, shade, gradation, is not yet
 Obtained. Avails it ought, in civil life,
 If here and there a family unite 500
 In bonds of peace, while discord rends the land,
 And pale-eyed Faction, with her garment dipped
 In blood, excites her guilty sons to war ?

To aid thine eye, distrustful if this end
 Be fully gained, wait for the twilight hour. 505
 When the grey owl, sailing on lazy wing,
 Her circuit takes ; when lengthened shades dissolve ;
 Then in some corner place thy finished piece,
 Free from each garish ray : Thine eye will there

Be undisturbed by *parts*; there will the *whole* 510
 Be viewed collectively; the distance there
 Will from it's foreground pleasingly retire,
 As distance ought, with true decreasing tone.
 If not, if shade or light be out of place,
 Thou see'st the error, and mayest yet amend. 515

Here science ceases: but to close the theme,
 One labour still, and of Herculean cast,
 Remains unfulg, the art to *execute*,
 And what it's happiest mode. In this, alas!
 What numbers fail; tho' paths, as various, lead 520
 To that fair end, as to thy ample walls,
 Imperial London. Every artist takes
 His own peculiar manner; save the hand
 Coward, and cold, that dare not leave the track
 It's master taught. Thou who wouldest boldly seize 525
 Superior excellence, observe, with care,
 The style of every artist; yet disdain
 To mimic even the best. Enough for thee
 To gain a knowledge from what various modes
 The same effect results. Artists there are 530
 Who, with exactness painful to behold,
 Labour each leaf, and each minuter moss,
 Till with enamelled surface all appears
 Completely smooth. Others with bolder hand,
 By Genius guided, mark the general form, 535
 The leading features, which the eye of taste,
 Practised in Nature, readily translates.
 Here lies the point of excellence. A piece,

Thus finished, tho perhaps the playful toil
 Of three short mornings, more enchants the eye, 540
 Than what was laboured through as many moons.

Why then such toil mispent? We never mean,
 With close and microscopic eye, to pore
 On every studied *part*. The practised judge
 Looks chiefly on the *whole*; and if thy hand 545
 Be guided by true science, it is sure
 To guide thy pencil freely. Scorn thou then
 On *parts minute* to dwell. The *character*
 Of objects aim at, not the *nice detail*.

Now is the scene compleat: with Nature's ease, 550
 Thy woods, and lawns, and rocks, and splendid lakes,
 And distant hills unite; it but remains
 To *people these fair regions*. Some for this
 Consult the sacred page; and in a nook
 Obscure, present the Patriarch's test of faith, 555
 The little altar, and the victim son:
 Or haply, to adorn some vacant sky,
 Load it with forms, that fabling bard supplies
 Who sang of bodies changed; the headlong steeds,
 The car upheaved of Phaeton, while he, 560
 Rash boy! spreads on the plain his pallid corse,
 His sisters weeping round him. Groups like these
 Besit not landscape: Say, does Abraham there
 Ought that some idle peasant might not do?
 Is there expression, passion, character, 565
 To mark the Patriarch's fortitude and faith?
 The scanty space which perspective allows,

Forbids.

Forbids. Why then degrade his dignity
 By paltry miniature? Why make it thus
 A mere appendage? Rather deck thy scene 570
 With figures simply suited to it's style.
 The *landscape* is thy object; and to that,
 Be these the *under parts*. Yet still observe
 Propriety in all. The speckled pard,
 Or tawny lion, ill would glare beneath 575
 The British oak; and British flocks and herds
 Would graze as ill on Afric's burning sands,
 If rocky, wild, and awful be thy views,
 Low arts of husbandry exclude: The spade,
 The plough, the patient angler with his rod, 580
 Be banished thence; far other guests invite,
 Wild as those scenes themselves, banditti fierce,
 And gypsey-tribes, not merely to adorn,
 But to impress that sentiment more strong,
 Awaked already by the savage-scene. 585
 Oft winding slowly up the forest glade,
 The ox-team labouring, drags the future keel
 Of some vast admiral: no ornament
 Assists the woodland scene like this; while far
 Removed, seen by a gleam among the trees, 590
 The forest-herd in various groups repose.
 Yet, if thy skill should fail to people well
 Thy landscape, leave it desert. Think how CLAUDE
 Oft crowded scenes, which Nature's self might own,
 With forms ill-drawn, ill-chosen, ill-arranged, 595
 Of man and beast, o'er loading with false taste

His fylvan glories. Seize them, Pestilence,
And sweep them far from our disgusted fight!

If o'er thy canvass Ocean pours his tide,
The full sized vefsel, with it's swelling fail, 600
Be cautious to admit; unless thy art
Can give it cordage, pennants, masts, and form
Appropriate; rather with a careless touch
Of light, or shade, just mark the distant skiff.

Nor thou refuse that ornamental aid, 605
The feathered race afford. When fluttering near
The eye, we own absurdity results;
They seem both fixed and moving: but beheld
At proper distance, they will fill thy sky
With animation. Leave them there free scope: 610
Their *distant motion* gives us no offence.

Far up yon river, opening to the sea,
Just where the distant coast extends a curve,
A lengthened train of sea-fowl urge their flight.
Observe their files! In what exact array. 615
The dark battalion floats, distinctly seen
Before yon silver cliff! Now, now, they reach
That lonely beacon; now are lost again
In yon dark cloud. How pleasing is the sight!
The forest-glade from it's wild, timorous herd, 620
Receives not richer ornament, than here
From birds this lonely sea-view. Ruins too
Are graced by such addition: not the force
Of strong and catching lights adorn them more,
Than do the dusky tribes of rooks, and daws 625
Fluttering their broken battlements among.

Place

Place but these feathered groups at distance due,
 The eye, by fancy aided, sees them move,
 (Flit past the cliff, or circle round the tower)
 Tho each, a centinel, observe his post.

Thy landscape finished, tho it meet thy own 630
 Approving judgment, still requires a test,
 More general, more decisive. Thine's an eye
 Too partial to be trusted. Let it hang
 On the rich wall, which emulation fills ;
 Where rival masters court the world's applause. 635
 There travelled virtuosi, stalking round,
 With strut important, peering though the hand,
 Hollowed in telescopic form, survey
 Each luckless piece, and uniformly damn ;
 Assuming for their own, the taste they steal. 640
 " This has not *Guido's* air : " " That poorly apes
 " *Titian's* rich colouring : " " *Rembrandt's* forms are here,
 " But not his light and shadow." Skilful they
 In every hand, save Nature's. What if these
 With *Gaspar* or with *Claude* thy work compare, 645
 And therefore scorn it ; let the pedants prate
 Unheeded. But if taste, correct and pure,
 Grounded on practice ; or, what more avails
 Than practice, observation justly formed
 On Nature's best examples and effects, 650
 Approve thy landscape ; if judicious *Lock*
 See not an error he would wish removed,
 Then boldly deem thyself the heir of Fame.



N O T E S

ON THE FOREGOING

P O E M.

Line

34 **S**OME perhaps may object to the word *glimmering*: but whoever has observed the playing lights, and colours, which often invest the summits of mountains, will not think the epithet improper.

45 *What it's leading feature*; that is the *particular character* of the tree. The different shape of the leaves, and the different mode of spreading it's branches, give every tree, a *distinct form*, or *character*. At a little distance you easily distinguish the oak from the ash; and the ash from the beech. It is this *general form*, not any *particular detail*, which the artist is instructed to get by heart. The same remark holds with regard

regard to other parts of nature. These *general forms* may be called the *painter's alphabet*. By these he learns to read her works; and also to make them intelligible to others.

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

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

101 *If the big thought seem more than art can paint.* It is always a sign of genius to be dissatisfied with our own efforts; and to conceive more than we can express.

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

159 The *general* composition of a landscape consists of three parts — the foreground — the second ground — and the distance. But no rule can be given for proportioning these parts to each other. There are ten thousand beautiful proportions; from which the eye of taste must select a good one. The foreground must always be considerable — in some cases, ample. It is the very basis, and foundation of the whole. — Nor is it a bad rule, I think, that some part of the foreground should be the highest part of the picture. In rocky, and mountainous views this is easy, and has generally a good effect. And sometimes even when a country is more level, a tree on the foreground, carried higher than the rest of the landscape, answers the end. At the same time in many species of landscape this
rule

rule cannot easily be observed: nor is it by any means essential.

169 *Waterlo, like thine.* The subjects of this master seldom went beyond some little forest-view. He has etched a great number of prints in this stile of landscape; which for the beauty of the trees in particular, are much admired.

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

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

When the landscape takes it's character from a ruin, or other object on the foreground, the *distance* introduced, is merely an appendage; and must plainly appear to be an under-part; not interfering with the subject

subject of the piece. But most commonly the scene, or leading subject of the picture, occupies the middle distance. In this case, the *foreground* becomes the appendage; and without any striking object to attract the eye, must plainly shew, that it is intended only to introduce the leading-subject with more advantage.

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

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

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

319 *Trace thy lines with pencil free.* The master is discovered even in his chalk, or black-lead lines — so free, firm, and intelligent.

We

We often admire these first, rude touches. The story of the two old masters will be remembered, who left cards of compliments to each other, on which only the simple outline of a figure was drawn by one, and corrected by the other; but with such a superior elegance in each, that the signature of names could not have marked them more decisively.

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

336 *One truth she gives, &c.* From these three virgin colours, *red, blue, and yellow*, all the tints of nature are composed. Greens

of various hues, are composed of blue, and yellow : orange, of red, and yellow : purple and violet, of red, and blue. The tints of the rainbow seem to be composed also of these colours. They lie in order thus : violet—*red*—orange—*yellow*—green—*blue*—violet—*red* : in which assortment we observe that orange comes between *red*, and *yellow* ; that is, it is composed of those colours melting into each other. Green is in the same way composed of *yellow* and *blue* ; and violet, or purple of *blue*, and *red*.—Nay even browns of all kinds may, in a degree, be effected by a mixture of these original colours : so may grey ; and even a kind of black, tho not a perfect one.—As all pigments however are deficient, and cannot approach the rainbow colours, which are the purest we know, the painter must often, even in his splendid tints, call in different reds, blues, and yellows. Thus as vermillion, tho an excellent red on many occasions, cannot give a rosy, crimson hue, he must often call in lake, or carmine. Nor will he find any yellow, or blue, that will answer every purpose. In the tribe of browns he will still be more at a loss ; and must have recourse to different earths.—In oil-painting one of the finest earths is known,
at

at the colour-shops, by the name of *castle-earth*, or *Vandyke's-brown*; as it is supposed to have been used by that master.

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

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

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

depends more on his eye, than on his knowledge. He works out his effect by a more laboured process; and yet he may produce a good picture in the end.

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

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

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

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

449 *Opposition*, and *gradation* are the two grand means of producing effect by light. In

the picture just given (l. 429. &c.) of the evening-ray, the effect is produced by *opposition*. Beautiful effects too of the same kind arise often from *catching lights*. — The power of producing effect by *gradation*, is not less forcible. Indeed, without a degree of *gradation opposition* itself would be mute. In the picture just given of the evening-ray, the grand part of the effect, no doubt, arises from the *opposition* between the gloom, and the light: but in part it arises also from the *gradation* of the light, till it reach its point. It just tips

The tufted groves; but all its splendor pours
On yonder catted cliff. —————

- 452 The colours of animals often strongly illustrate the idea of *gradation*. When they soften into each other, from light or dark, or from one colour into another, the mixture is very picturesque. It is as much the reverse, when white and black, or white, and red, are patched over the animal in blotches, without any intermediate tints. Domestic cattle, cows, dogs, swine, goats, and cats, are often disagreeably patched. tho we sometimes see them pleasingly coloured with a graduating tint. Wild animals, in general, are more uniformly coloured,

coloured, than tame. Except the zebra, and two or three of the spotted race, I recollect none which are not, more or less, tinted in this graduating manner. The tiger, the panther, and other variegated animals have their beauty: but the zebra, I think, is rather a curious, than a picturesque animal. It's streaked sides injure it both in point of colour, and in the delineation of it's form.

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

case, it should be distinguished by light; unless it be so situated as to receive more distinction from shade.

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

493 Tho the objects may lessen in due proportion, which is called *keeping*; tho the graduating hue of retiring objects, or the *aerial perspective*, may be just; and tho the light may be distributed according to the rules of art; yet still there may not be that general result of harmony, which denotes the picture *one-object*: and as the eye may be misled, when it has the *several parts* before it, the best way of examining it as a *perfect whole*, is to examine it in such a light, as will not admit the investigation of *parts*.

- 534 *Others, &c.* Some painters copy exactly what they see. In this there is more mechanical precision, than genius. Others take a *general, comprehensive view* of their object; and marking just the *characteristic points*, lead the spectator, if he be a man of taste, and genius likewise, into a truer knowledge of it, than the copier can do, with all his painful exactness.
- 568 *Why then degrade, &c.* If by bringing the figures forward on the foreground, you give room for *character*, and *expression*, you put them out of place as *appendages*, for which they were intended.
- 586 *Of slowly winding, &c.* The machine itself here described is picturesque: and when it is seen in *winding motion*, or (in other words) when half of it is foreshortened, it receives additional beauty from contrast. In the same manner a cavalcade, or an army on it's march, may be considered as *one object*; and derive beauty from the same source. Mr. Gray has given us a very picturesque view of this kind, in describing the march of Edward I.;

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

Through

Through a passage in the mountain we see the troops winding round at a great distance. Among those nearer the eye, we distinguish the horse and foot; and on the foreground, the action, and expression of the principal commanders.

The ancients seem to have known very little of that source of the picturesque, which arises from perspective: every thing is introduced in front before the eye: and among the early painters we hardly see more attention paid to it. Raphael is far from making a full use of the knowledge of it: and I believe Julio Romano makes still less.

I do not remember meeting any where with a more picturesque description of a line of march, than in Vaillant's travels into the interior parts of Africa. He was passing with a numerous caravan, along the borders of Caffraria. I first, says he, made the people of the hord, which accompanied me, set out with their cattle. Soon after my cattle followed cows, sheep, and goats: with all the women of the hord, mounted on oxen with their children. My waggons, with the rest of my people, closed the rear. I myself, mounted on horseback, rode backwards, and forewards. This caravan

on

on it's march, exhibited often a singular, and amusing spectacle. The turns it was obliged to make in following the windings of the woods, and rocks, continually gave it new forms. Sometimes it intirely difappeared: then suddenly, at a distance, from the summit of a hill, I again discovered my vanguard slowly advancing perhaps towards a distant mountain: while the main body, following the track, were just below me.

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

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

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

of the antique, think *Guido's air*, in general somewhat theatrical.

643 *Skilful they, &c.* The greatest obstruction to the progress of art arises from the prejudices of conceited judges; who, in fact, know less about the matter, than they who know nothing; inasmuch as truth is less obvious to error, than it is to ignorance. Till they can be prevailed on to return upon their steps, and look for that criterion in nature, which they seek in the half-perished works of great names, the painter will be discouraged from pursuing knowledge in those paths, where Raphael, and Titian found it.—We have the same idea well enforced in Hogarth's analysis of beauty. (Introduc. p. 4.)

“ The reason why gentlemen, inquisitive
 “ after knowledge in pictures, have their
 “ eyes less qualified to judge, than others,
 “ is because their thoughts have been con-
 “ tinually employed in considering, and
 “ retaining the various *manners*, in which
 “ pictures are painted—the histories, names,
 “ and characters of the masters, together
 “ with many other little circumstances be-
 “ longing to the *mechanical* part of the
 “ art; and little or no time has been given
 “ to perfect the ideas they ought to have
 “ in

“ in their minds, of the objects themselves
 “ in nature. For having adopted their
 “ first notions merely from *imitations* ; and
 “ becoming too often as bigotted to their
 “ faults, as to their beauties, they totally
 “ disregard the works of nature, merely
 “ because they do not tally with what their
 “ minds are so strongly prepossessed with.
 “ Were it not for this, many a reputed
 “ capital picture, which now adorns the
 “ cabinet of the curious, would long ago
 “ have been committed to the flames.”

644 *What if these compare, &c.* Bruyere observes, that the inferior critic judges only by *comparifon*. In one fenfe all judgment muft be formed by comparifon. But Bruyere, who is fpeaking of poetry, means, that the inferior critic has no fcale of judgment of a work of art, but by comparing it with fome other work of the fame kind. He judges of Virgil by a comparifon with Homer ; and of Spencer by comparing him with Taffo, By fuch criticifm he may indeed arrive at certain truths ; but he will never form that mafterly judgment, which he might do by comparing the work before him with the great archetypes of nature, and the folid rules of his art.—What Bruyere fays of the critic in poetry, is
 very

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

END OF THE NOTES.

TWO ESSAYS:

ON THE

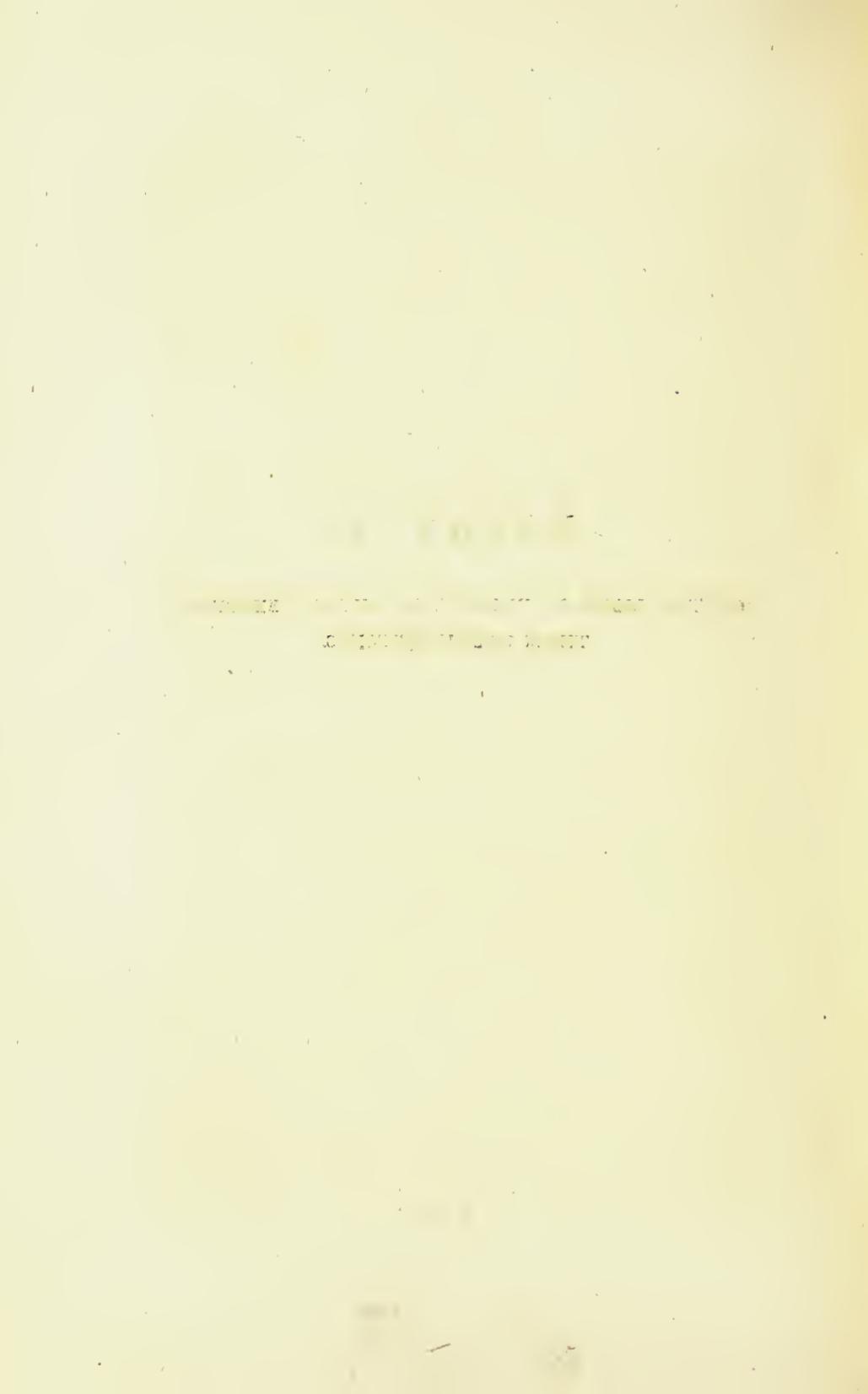
PRINCIPLES ON WHICH THE AUTHOR MADE
HIS DRAWINGS;

AND

THE MODE OF EXECUTING THEM.

ESSAY I.

ON THE MODE IN WHICH THE AUTHOR EXECUTES
THESE ROUGH SKETCHES.



THESE sketches are in the same style as most of those which were offered before. They are *roughly finished*, pretending only to exhibit a little composition and effect. They are taken, indeed, from the same rough scenes of nature; and consist chiefly of mountains, rocks, rivers, and lakes. These ingredients, however, though few, afford such variety, and may be so infinitely combined, that the same objects may recur in various scenes, and yet none of those scenes may resemble each other: as in the human face there are only four features, yet they are capable of receiving so many variations, that no two faces are exactly alike.

The *pen* I use is made of a reed, which gives a much freer and easier stroke than a pen made of a quill, which never runs fluently on paper, but scratches it, and often sputters the ink. The reed pen may be cut to a fine point, where a slight touch is required, as sometimes in distant foliage; and when it grows blunt with a little use, it becomes something between a brush and a pen, and

gives a bold stroke, which has a good effect on the boles of trees, or on a foreground. But care should be taken to leave the strongest marks of the pen on the side opposite to that on which you mean the light to enter.

In *highly finished* drawings the pen is not generally used. The black lead lines are commonly wrought up into effect by the brush; but, in a rough sketch, the pen I think, is the best instrument, it gives a termination to an object at once, and marks it with freedom and spirit, which are the grand characteristics of a sketch.

The ink which is used with the pen in these drawings is what the callico-printers, I believe, call *iron-water*, and use in fixing their colours. It has a brownish tint, which is more pleasing to the eye, and unites better with the shade of Indian ink than common ink. Both Indian ink and common ink, lowered by water, want strength, and the latter retains always an unpleasant hue. I could never find any ink that was indelible but this iron-water. You may easily make an ink of the colour you wish, but when you wash a shade over it, it blurs, and runs. Sometimes, indeed, you find in old ink-stands a
yellowish

yellowish ink, which is very good. But this is a precarious supply. I remember once being much disappointed in an attempt to procure some of this picturesque ink. I had money to pay to an old lady, who gave me a receipt, written out of a leaden stand full of it. It was before I had heard of the iron-water, and thinking I had met with a great treasure, I cast about how to get possession of it. I told the old lady, therefore, that I thought her ink was bad, and if she would trust her leaden pot with me, I would fill it with better. She courteously told me, if I did not like her receipt, she would draw me out another. It would have been in vain to have told her, as she was half deaf, and of confused intellect, that her bad ink was to me better than any other, and for what use I wanted it.

No instrument is more useful in drawing than a piece of moistened sponge. When the shade is too strong, it easily rubs it down, and the paper, when dry, as easily admits it again.

The tint, which is thrown over these drawings, after they are finished, is composed of gamboge and any brownish colour. It gives

harmony to the whole, and takes off the rawness of white paper. It should be stronger or lighter, according to the depth of shadow in the drawings. The harmonizing effect of it is such, that I well remember, (if I may be allowed to mention so trifling a circumstance,) when a boy I used to make little drawings, I was never pleased with them till I had given them a brownish tint. And, as I knew no other method, I used to hold them over smoke till they had assumed such a tint as satisfied my eye.

For the use of those who may perhaps like my mode of drawing, I have separated a few parcels, each parcel consisting of three drawings, two of which may be called skeletons. They will easily shew my process. The first drawing is only in its black-lead state, and points out merely the composition.—The next drawing goes a step farther. The distance is still left in black lead; but the objects on the foreground are roughly touched with a pen. This introduces some idea of *keeping*.—The third drawing adds light and shade, and carries the idea as far as my drawings commonly go.—The composition of these three drawings shews the great advantage of
light





light and shade, and gives some idea of the disposition of light, and of its great utility in combining the several *parts* of a landscape into one *whole*.

I am very far from calling this mode of drawing the *best*, or even a *good* one, if finishing is required: but it is a very quick method of conveying picturesque ideas, and very capable of producing an effect. — Nor let the professional man laugh at these little instructions; I mean them not for him; but only for the use of those who wish for an easy mode of expressing their ideas; who draw only for amusement, and are satisfied, without colouring and high finishing, with an endeavour, by a rough sketch, to produce a little *composition* and *effect*.

Under this idea I have sometimes presumed to recommend my own drawings to those who are fond of neater work than mine, and even to young ladies. I offer them, however, only as useful in pointing out the *form* and *component parts* of a landscape, marking where the light may fall to most advantage. In all these points the drawings of young artists are most deficient. They chiefly depend on the beauty and neatness of the several objects.

But

But if these objects are not well united, and formed into some composition, the most valuable part of the drawing is still wanting; and, what should be a landscape, becomes only a beautiful piece of patch-work.

Under many of these drawings, also, are descriptions, as if they were real scenes. Indeed, if artificial landscape cannot be thus analyzed as a *whole*, it must consist of *unconnected parts*; and can be only indifferently composed.

The *skeleton drawings* relate more to the first Essay; these *descriptive* drawings rather to the second. The former relate to the *mode of executing the parts*; the latter to the *management of a whole*.

When I sold my last drawings, I advertized a *catalogue*, and *added* to it an Essay upon the *Principles on which the Drawings were executed*. But, as the *catalogue* seemed the principal thing intended, it took the eye, and the *Essay*, which had not been advertized, was overlooked: thus three or four hundred copies of this essay were left upon my hands. I thought it a pity, therefore, that so much of my time had been taken up in vain, in writing the Essay; and so much loss should accrue to my

my endowment for want of its sale. In the following little work, therefore, I have endeavoured to make the instruction of the Effay more complete. I have taken away the catalogue-part as now uselefs, and have added another little effay, which seems to be a proper appendage to the first. In the first Effay, printed with the catalogue, an account is given of the *principles* on which the drawings offered in sale were made. In this additional effay, the *mode of executing* them is explained.

ESSAY II.

ON THE PRINCIPLES ON WHICH THE AUTHOR'S SKETCHES
ARE COMPOSED.

—— Contented with a humble theme,
He pours the stream of imitation down
The vale of nature, where it creeps and winds
Among her wild and lovely works.

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

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

Yet

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

Every part of nature exhibits itself in, what may be called, *prominent features*. At the first glance, without a minute examination, the difference is apparent between the bole of a beech, for instance, and that of an oak; between the foliage of an ash, and the foliage of a fir. These *discriminating* features the painter seizes; and the more faithfully he transfuses them into his work, the more ex-

* ——— Verbum verbo curabis reddere, fidus

Interpres ———

cellent will be his representation. And when these *prominent features* are naturally expressed, and judiciously combined in a *fictitious* view, that view may not only be a *natural* one, but a *more beautiful exhibition of nature*, than can easily be found in real landscape. It may even be called more *natural*, than nature itself: inasmuch as it seizes, and makes use, not only of nature's *own* materials, but of the best of each kind.

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

Besides, pleasing circumstances in *nature* will not always please in *painting*. We often see effects of light, and deceptions in composition, which delight us, when we can ex-

amine, and develope them *in nature*. But when they are *represented*, like a text without its context, they may mislead; and the painter had better reject such scenery, though strictly natural. *Obscurity* in painting should be as much avoided, as in writing; unless in distances, or in some particular incidents, where obscurity is intended.

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

The

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

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

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

— ita mentitur, sic veris falsa remiscet,
Primo ne medium, medio ne discrepet inum.

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

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

There is still a *higher character* in landscape, than what arises from the *uniformity of objects* — and that is the power of furnishing
 images

images *analogous to the various feelings, and sensations of the mind.* If the landscape-painter can call up such representations, (which seems not beyond his art) where would be the harm of saying, that landscape, like history-paintings, hath its ethics!

————— Such thy pencil, Claude!
 It makes us pant beneath thy summer-sun,
 And shiver in thy cool autumnal eve.

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

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

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

* Sir George Beaumont, Bart.

“ a view which always displeases me; and is
 “ even less interesting than a map. It must be full
 “ of awkward lines; and the artist, cramped
 “ by given shapes, gives his work always the
 “ air of a copy. The old masters rarely
 “ painted views from nature. I believe never,
 “ but when commissioned. Like poets they
 “ did not confine themselves to matter of fact;
 “ they chose rather to exhibit what a country
 “ suggested, than what it really comprized;
 “ and took, as it were, the essence of things.
 “ The servile imitator seems to me to mistake
 “ the *body* for the *soul*; and will never touch
 “ the heart. Besides, every thing looks well
 “ in nature. Lumpish forms, and counter-
 “ acting lines, touched by her exquisite hand,
 “ are hardly noticed. But in art they are
 “ truly disgusting; and the artist must avail
 “ himself of every advantage, if he wishes to
 “ cope with her. If he attack her on equal
 “ terms, he is sure of being disgracefully van-
 “ quished.”

Having said thus much in favour of *imagi-
 nary composition*, we are compelled however by
 truth to add, on the other side, that a constant
 application to his own resources is apt to lead
 the artist without great care, into the disagree-
 able

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

The hints, from which most of these sketches offered to the public are taken, were collected from mountainous, and lake scenery, where the author chiefly sought his picturesque ideas.

Such scenery affords two great sources of picturesque composition—*sublimity*, or *simple grandeur*; and *grandeur united with beauty*. The former arises from a *uniformity of large parts*, without *ornament*, without *contrast*, and without *variety*. The latter arises from the introduction of *these appendages*, which forms scenery of a *mixed kind*.

Some of these sketches are attempts at *sublimity* or *simple grandeur*. But as this is an idea, which is neither easily caught, nor ge-

nerally admired, most of them aim at mixing *grandeur* and *beauty* together.

But whether the artist paint from *nature* or from his *imagination*, certain general rules, which belong to his art, should never be transgressed.

In the first place, he should always remember, that the excellence of landscape-painting consists in bringing before the *spectator's eye*, or rather in raising to his *imagination* such scenes as are most *pleasing*, or most *striking*. Every painter therefore should have this idea always in view; and should paint such scenes only. In the choice of these interesting subjects he chiefly discovers his taste. The full effect indeed of such scenes can only be given by the *pallet*; yet it should be aimed at, as far as possible, even in the *sketch*.

Again, a landscape, as well as a history-piece, should have some *master-subject*. We often indeed see landscape composed without much idea of this kind. One piece of ground is tacked to another, with little meaning or connection. We should attend more to the simplicity of a *whole*. Some uniform, distinct





tinct plan should always be presented ; and the several parts should have relation to each other. The scenery about a castle, a ruin, a bridge, a lake, a winding river, or some remarkable disposition of ground, may make the leading part of a landscape ; and if it be set off with a suitable distance, if necessary, and a proper fore-ground, we have subject enough for a picture. In short, there should be some idea of *unity* in the *design*, as well as in the *composition* ; and every part should concur in shewing it to advantage. The parts being thus few and simple, the eye at once conceives the *general idea*. If the landscape be a finished piece, all these parts should be enriched with a variety of *detail*, which, at the same time, must unite in embellishing the *general effect*.

Still farther, the *probability* of every part should appear. A castle should never be placed where a castle cannot be supposed to stand. A lake should generally have the appendage of a mountainous country ; and the course of a winding river should be made intelligible by the folding of the hills. In some of the drawings now offered to the public, it is endeavoured to explain this idea by a few remarks on the back of each. These

explanatory

explanatory drawings are particularly mentioned in the catalogue. Indeed, a landscape, which cannot bear to be analyzed in this way, must be faulty. Sometimes, it is true, we find in nature itself improbable circumstances. The artist for that reason rejects them. But he is inexcusable, if he purposely introduce them.

The *general effect* of a picture is produced by a unity of *light*, as well as of *composition*. When we have gotten the several parts of a landscape together, — that is, when we are satisfied with the *composition*, still we cannot judge of the *effect*; nor appreciate the picture, till we have *introduced the light*, which makes a complete change in a landscape, either for the better or the worse. It is thus in nature. The appearance of the same country, under different effects of light, is totally different. These effects therefore cannot be too much studied; and should be studied when the artist *finishes a picture*, by making different sketches of the same subject, so as to ascertain the best. This is not always perhaps enough attended to. In *painting* indeed, a bad distribution of light is less discernable. The variety of colouring

ing imposes on the sight; but in a collection of *prints* or *drawings*, the defects in light are obvious.

Gradation is another principle with regard to light, which is very essential in point of beauty. Neither lights, nor shades, should *uniformly* spread over one surface; but should *graduate* from more to less. *Gradation* in light and shade, though not always seen in nature, is however frequently enough seen to be acknowledged among its best sources of beauty. It removes that disgusting effect, which in sound is called *monotony*; and produces, in its room, a pleasing variety on the surfaces of objects.

The illustration of these few principles (as far as a sketch, or rough drawing can illustrate them) is all that is aimed at in the drawings now offered to sale. Few of them will afford more than the *rude conception* of a landscape. They pretend to some degree of *composition* and *effect*; but to little farther. Hard lines must be excused, and an inaccurate detail. They may perhaps have somewhat more of *science* in them, than of *art*. What merit they have, is readily allowed without affectation.

Though

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

In *teaching* to draw, the stress is laid at first, as it ought to be, on the *parts*. If a scholar can touch a tree, or a building with accuracy, he has so far attained perfection. But it is the perfection only of a scholar. The great principles

ciples of his art are still behind. Often, however, our *riper* judgment is swayed by the excellence of the *parts*, in preference to a *whole*. The merit of a picture is fixed perhaps by the *master's touch*; or by the beauty of his *colouring*; or some other inferior excellence. But a great critic in arts, formed a different opinion;

Æmiliū circa ludum faber imus, & unguis
 Exprimet, & molles imitabitur ære capillos,
 Infelix operis *summá*, quia ponere *totum*
 Nesciet.

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

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

A few of the drawings here offered to sale, are slightly tinted; not as finished drawings;
 but

but just enough to give a distinction among objects. Yet even in these slight sketches, unless there is some appearance of *harmony*, a very little degree of colouring glares. When therefore you have put in your light and shade, with Indian ink, spread over the *whole* a slight wash of red and yellow mixed, which make an orange. It may incline either to one or the other, as may best suit your composition. A cold bluish tint may sometimes have effect. This general wash will produce a degree of *harmony*. While the sky is yet moist, tint the upper part of it, if it be orange, with blue, blending them together. Or if a little part only of the sky appear, it may be all blue, or all orange, as may have the best effect. When the sky is dry, throw a little blue, or what Reeves calls a *neutral tint**, into the distances; and over any water, that may be in the landscape. Then introduce your browns, which are of various kinds, into the foreground; but let them be introduced slightly; and when all is dry, you may touch some of the brightest parts with dead green, or a little gall-stone. Burnt terra-de-Sienna, mixed with a little gall-stone, make a good tint for foliage.

* See his box of colours.

Some apology may perhaps be necessary for the uniformity of one principle, which runs through most of the designs here exhibited; and that is the practice of *throwing the foreground into shade*. Many artists throw their *lights* on the *foreground*; and often, no doubt, with good effect. But, in general, we are perhaps better pleased with a *dark* foreground. It makes a kind of graduating shade, from the eye through the removed parts of the picture; and carries off the distance better than any other contrivance. By throwing the *light* on the *foreground*, this *gradation* is *inverted*. In many of these sketches the lights were at first left on the foreground; but on examining them with a fresh eye, they glared so disagreeably, that they were afterwards put out. — Besides, the foreground is commonly but an *appendage*. The middle distance generally makes the scene, and requires the most distinction. In history-painting it is the reverse. The *principal* part of the subject occupies the *foreground*; and the *removed* parts of the picture form the *appendages*. In a landscape too, when a building, or other object of consequence, appears on the foreground, and the distance is of little value, the light, on the same principle, may

may then fall on the *foreground*: though a building is sometimes thrown, even in that case, with more effect into shadow. — In most of these sketches it may be added, that the foreground is only just *washed in*. If the drawings had been *finished*, the foregrounds should have been broken into parts. But the author vies for candour on the head of *finishing*.

An apology may perhaps be due, on the other side also, for preserving too strong a light on some of the removed parts of the composition. In general, no part of the surface of a country (except, here and there, the reflected parts of water) should be so light, as the lightest parts of the sky. But this rule is not always observed in these sketches; partly because in work so slight, it might induce heaviness; and partly, because a little colour might easily supply the want of shade, if these sketches should ever be honoured with painting from them.

With regard to *figures* introduced in landscape, there is often great deformity. Bad appendages of this sort are very disgusting: and yet we often see views enlivened, (if it can be called

called enlivening) with ill-drawn figures of men, horses, cows, sheep, waggons, and other objects, which have not even the *air* of the things they represent. Or perhaps if the figures of a landscape are tolerably touched, too great a *number* of them are introduced; or they are *ill put together*; or perhaps *ill-suited* to the scene. Some of these circumstances are too often found in the best landscapes — as often in those of Claude, as of any other master. And yet I have heard, that Claude had a higher opinion of his own excellence in figures, than in any other part of his profession. Sir Peter Lely, we are told, wished for one of Claude's best landscapes; but delicately hinted to him, that he should rather chuse it without figures. Claude felt himself hurt at Sir Peter's depreciating that excellence, which he himself valued. He filled his landscape therefore with more figures, than he commonly introduced; and desired Sir Peter, if he did not like it, to leave it for those who understood the composition of landscape better. — This picture, is at present, I am told, in the hands of Mr. Agar in London; and the history of it affords good instruction to such conceited artists as value

themselves on what nobody else values. Many landscape painters however might be named, who knew how to touch a small figure, and could people their landscapes with great beauty. Among these the late Mr. Wilson, one of the best landscape-painters, that hath appeared in our days, might be mentioned. Other painters, who could not paint figures themselves, have borrowed assistance from those who could. The late ingenious Mr. Barret, who painted every part of inanimate nature with singular beauty, had the discretion to get his landscapes generally peopled by a better hand than his own.

It cannot be supposed, the figures in these sketches are set up as models. So far from it, that they do not even pretend to the name of *figures*. They are meant only as substitutes to shew, where two or three figures might be placed to advantage. And yet even such figures are better than those, in which *finishing* is attempted and legs and arms set on without either life, air, or proportion. Indeed the figures here introduced, are commonly dressed in cloaks, which conceal their deformities. If legs and arms be not well set on, they are certainly better concealed.

As

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

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

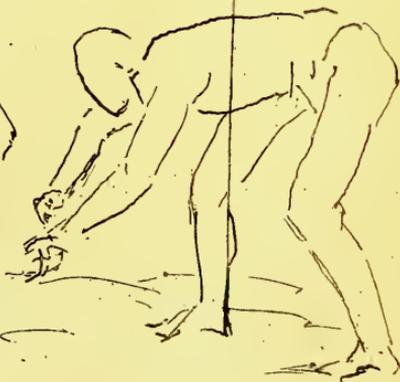
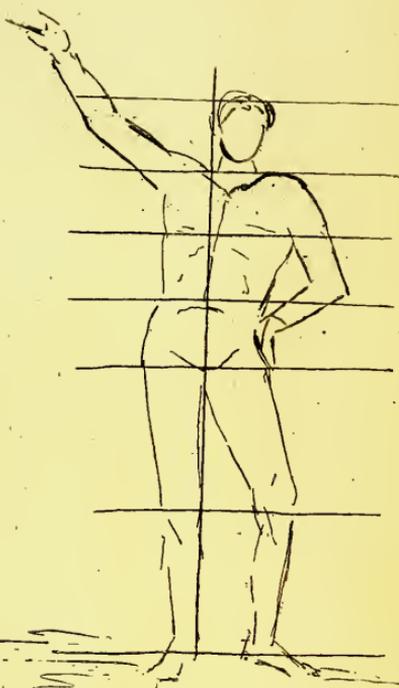
In the first place, with regard to the *size* of figures, as the known dimensions of the human body give a scale to the objects around, exactness in this point is a matter of no little consequence. If the figure be too large, it diminishes the landscape—if too small, it makes it enormous: and yet it seems no very

* Mr. S. G. had once thoughts of giving the public a few remarks on landscape-figures, both human and animal; and illustrating his remarks by a variety of etched examples. It would be a work (in my opinion at least) highly useful to all, who draw or paint landscape. But I fear his engagements will prevent his ever bringing this work to such perfection, as would satisfy himself; and this little extract from it is probably the only part of it that will ever appear.

difficult matter to adjust the proportion, by comparing the figure with some object on the same ground.

Though in figures, meant only to adorn landscape, the exactness of *anatomy* is not required, yet a small degree of *disproportion* strikes the eye with disgust, even in a sketch — in the *head* and *limbs* especially. The body naturally forms itself into two parts of equal length. From the crown of the head to the point where the limbs divide, is one half. This may be subdivided into four parts. The head and neck to the top of the shoulder make one of these sub-divisions: from the top of the shoulder to the lower line of the muscle of the breast we measure another: from thence to the hips a third; and from the hips to the point where the limbs divide, a fourth. The *legs* and *arms* admit each of a division into two parts. In the former, the upper part of the knee is the point of division; as the elbow is in the latter, when the hand is closed. When the arm hangs down, and the fingers are extended, their points will reach the middle of the thigh. But though we have no occasion to observe this division accurately in ornamental figures,

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it may be useful to have a *general idea* of it.

The *balance*, however, of a figure, even in landscape, is matter of great consequence. If every thing else were right but this, the effect of the figure would be destroyed. A figure intended to be in *motion*, from an unhappy poise of its limbs, would appear to *stand still*. And from the same cause, a *standing* figure would appear to be a *falling* one. The balance of *standing* figures may be regulated by a supposed perpendicular dividing the body, from the crown of the head, into two parts. If the legs bear equal weight, this line will fall exactly between them. If the weight is borne unequally, the line will fall nearer that leg which bears the greatest proportion: and if the whole burden be thrown on one leg, the line will pass through the centre of its heel. When the weight is thus unequally distributed, the shoulder on one side forms a counterpoise to the hip on the other: and when the shoulder is not a sufficient counterpoise, as in the case of bearing a weight in one hand, the contrary arm is thrown out to restore the balance.—*Stooping* figures come under the same rule; only

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

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

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

* To illustrate these remarks, see plate 1.

† To illustrate these remarks, see plate 2.



N.3.

taste. A few landscape-groups are here specified, which may assist the young artist in combining his figures*.

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

* See plate 3.

THE END.

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ON
P R I N T S.

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AND VICAR OF BOLDRE IN NEW-FOREST,
NEAR LYMINGTON.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED BY A. STRAHAN, PRINTERS-STREET;
FOR T. CADELL, JUN. AND W. DAVIES, IN THE STRAND.

1802.

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Y A S S E

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P R I N T E R

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

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TO THE HONORABLE
HORACE WALPOLE,

IN DEFERENCE TO HIS TASTE
IN THE POLITE ARTS;
AND THE
VALUABLE RESEARCHES HE HAS MADE
TO IMPROVE THEM;

THE FOLLOWING WORK
IS INSCRIBED

BY HIS MOST OBEDIENT

AND VERY HUMBLE SERVANT,

WILLIAM GILPIN.

P R E F A C E.

TH E chief intention of the following work, was to put the elegant amusement of collecting prints on a more rational footing; by giving the *unexperienced* collector a few principles, and cautions to assist him.

With this view the author thought it necessary to apply the principles of painting to prints: and as his observations are not always new, he hath at least made them concise.

His account of artists might easily have been enlarged, by having recourse to books : particularly he could have availed himself much of the ingenious researches of Mr. Walpole. He did not however choose to swell his volume with what others had said ; but wished rather to rest on such observations, as he had himself made. He had many opportunities of seeing some of the best collections of prints in England ; and occasionally availed himself of them by minuting down remarks.

Of the works of living artists the author hath purposely said little.

He

He thought himself not at liberty to find fault ; and when he mentions a modern print, he means not, by praising one, to imply inferiority in another ; but merely to illustrate his subject, when he had occasion, with such prints, as occurred to his memory.

The author wishes to add, that when he speaks *positively* in any part of the following work, he means not to speak *arbitrarily* : but only to avoid the tedious repetition of qualifying phrases.

N. B. When the figures on the *right hand* are spoken of, those are meant, which are opposite to the spectator's right hand : and so of the left.

EXPLANATION

OF

TERMS.

COMPOSITION, in its *large* sense means, a picture in general: in its *limited* one, the art of grouping figures, and combining the parts of a picture. In this latter sense it is synonymous with *disposition*.

Design, in its strict sense, applied chiefly to *drawing*: in its more enlarged one, defined page 2. In its most enlarged one, sometimes taken for a picture in general.

A whole: The idea of *one* object, which a picture should give in its comprehensive view.

Expression: its strict meaning defined page 16: but it often means the force, by which objects of *any* kind are represented.

Effect arises chiefly from the management of light ; but the word is sometimes applied to the general view of a picture.

Spirit, in its strict sense, defined page 21 : but it is sometimes taken in a more enlarged one, and means the *general* effect of a masterly performance.

Manner, synonymous with *execution*.

Pictureesque : a term expressive of that peculiar kind of beauty, which is agreeable in a picture.

Pictureesque grace : an agreeable form which may be given even to a clownish figure.

Repose, or *quietness* applied to a picture, when the *whole* is harmonious ; when nothing glares either in the light, shade, or colouring.

To *keep down*, *take down*, or *bring down*, signify throwing a degree of shade upon a glaring light.

A middle tint, is a medium between a strong light, and strong shade : the phrase is not at all expressive of colour.

Catching

Catching lights are strong lights, which strike on some particular parts of an object, the rest of which is in shadow.

Studies are the sketched ideas of a painter, not wrought into a whole.

Freedom is the result of quick execution.

Extremities are the hands and feet.

Air, expresses chiefly the graceful action of the head ; but often means a graceful attitude.

Contrast, is the opposition of one part to another.

Needle is the instrument used in etching.

C O N T E N T S.

CHAPTER I.

THE principles of painting considered, as far as they relate to prints - *Page* 1

CHAP. II.

Observations on the different kinds of prints 2

CHAP. III.

Characters of the most noted masters - 43

CHAP. IV.

Remarks on particular prints - - 127

CHAP. V.

Cautions in collecting prints - - 165

C H A P. I.

The principles of Painting considered, so far as they relate to Prints.

A PAINTING, or picture, is distinguished from a print only by colouring, and the manner of execution. In other respects, the foundation of beauty is the same in both; and we consider a print, as we do a picture, in a double light, with regard to the *whole*, and with regard to its *parts*. It may have an agreeable effect as a *whole*, and yet be very culpable in its *parts*. It may be likewise the reverse. A man may make a good appearance on the *whole*; though his *limbs*, examined separately, may be wanting in exact proportion. His *limbs* on the other hand, may be exactly formed, and yet his person, on the *whole*, may be awkward, and displeasing.

To make a print agreeable as a *whole*, a just observance of those rules is necessary,

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which

which relate to *design, disposition, keeping,* and the *distribution of light*: to make it agreeable in its *parts*—of those which relate to *drawing, expression, grace,* and *perspective*.

We consider the *whole* before its *parts*, as it naturally precedes in practice. The painter first forms his general ideas; and disposes them, yet crude, in such a manner, as to receive the most beautiful form, and the most beautiful effect of light. His last work is to finish the several parts: as the statuary shapes his block, before he attempts to give delicacy to the limbs.

By *design*, (a term which painters sometimes use in a more limited sense) we mean the general conduct of the piece, as a representation of such a particular story. It answers, in the historical relation of a fact, to a judicious choice of circumstances; and includes a *proper time, proper characters,* the *most affecting manner of introducing those characters,* and *proper appendages*.

With regard to a *proper time*, the painter is assisted by good old dramatic rules; which inform him, that *one* point of time only should be taken—the most affecting in the action; and that no other part of the story should interfere

interfere with it. Thus *in the death of ANANIAS*, if the instant of his falling down be chosen, no anachronism should be introduced; every part of the piece should correspond; each character should be under the strongest impresson of astonishment, and horror: those passions being yet unallayed by any cooler passions succeeding.

With regard to *characters*, the painter must suit them to his piece, by attending to historical truth, if his subject be history; or to heathen mythology, if it be fabulous.

He must also *introduce them properly*. They should be ordered in so advantageous a manner, that the principal figures, those which are most concerned in the action, should catch the eye *first*, and engage it *most*. This is very essential in a well-told story. In the first place, they should be the least embarrassed of the group. This alone gives them distinction. But they may be farther distinguished, sometimes by a *broad light*; sometimes by a *strong shadow*, in the midst of a light; sometimes by a remarkable *action*, or *expression*; and sometimes by a combination of two or three of these modes of distinction.

The last thing included in *design* is the use of *proper appendages*. By *appendages* are meant animals, landscape, buildings, and in general, whatever is introduced into the piece by way of ornament. Every thing of this kind should correspond with the subject, and rank in a proper subordination to it. BASSAN would sometimes paint a scripture-story: and his method was, to crowd his foreground with cattle; while you seek for his story, and at length with difficulty find it in some remote corner of his picture. Indeed neither the *landscape*, nor the *story* is principal; but his cattle. A *story* therefore is an absurd appendage.

When all these rules are observed, when a proper point of time is chosen; when characters corresponding with the subject are introduced, and these ordered so judiciously as to point out the story in the strongest manner; and lastly when all the appendages, and under-parts of the piece are suitable, and subservient to the subject; then the story is well told, and of course the *design* is perfect.

The second thing to be considered with regard to a *whole*, is *disposition*. By this word is meant the art of grouping figures, and of combining the several parts of a picture. *Design* considers the several parts as producing a *whole*;—but a *whole*, arising from the *unity of the subject*, not the *effect of the object*. For the figures in a piece may be so ordered, as to tell a story in an affecting manner, which is as far as *design* goes; and yet may want that agreeable *combination*, which is necessary to please the eye. To produce such a combination is the business of *disposition*. In the cartoon of St. PAUL *preaching at Athens*, the *design* is perfect; and the characters in particular, are so ordered, as to tell the story in a very affecting manner: yet the several parts of the picture are far from being agreeably combined. If RUBENS had had the *disposition* of the materials of this picture, its effect as a *whole* had been very different.

Having thus distinguished between *design* and *disposition*, I shall explain the latter a little farther.

It is an obvious principle, that one object at a time is enough to engage either the senses, or the intellect. Hence the necessity of *unity*, or a *whole*, in painting. The eye, on a complex view, must be able to comprehend the picture as *one object*, or it cannot be satisfied. It may be pleased indeed by feeding on the parts separately: but a picture, which can please no otherwise, is as poor a production as a machine, whose springs and wheels are finished with nicety, but are unable to act in concert, and effect the intended movement.

Now *disposition*, or the art of grouping and combining the figures, and several parts of a picture, contributes greatly to make the picture appear as *one object*. When the parts are scattered, they have no dependence on each other; they are still only parts: but when, by an agreeable grouping, they are massed together, they become a *whole*.

In disposing figures, great artifice is necessary to make each group open itself in such a manner, as to set off advantageously the several figures,

figures, of which it is composed. The *action* at least of each figure should appear.

No group can be agreeable without *contrast*. By *contrast* is meant the opposition of one part to another. A sameness in attitude, action, or expression, among figures in the same group, will always disgust the eye. In the cartoon of St. PAUL *preaching at Athens*, the contrast among the figures is pleasing; and the want of it, *in the death of ANANIAS*, makes the group of the apostles rather disagreeable.

Nor indeed is *contrast* required only among the *figures* of the *same* group, but also among the *groups themselves*, and among *all the parts*, of which the piece is composed. In the *beautiful gate of the temple*, the figures of the principal group are well contrasted; but the adjoining group is disposed almost in the same manner; which, together with the formal pillars, introduce a disagreeable regularity into the picture.

The judicious painter, however, whether he group, combine, or contrast, will always avoid the *appearance of artifice*. The several

parts of his picture will be so suited to each other, that his art will seem the result of chance. In the *sacrifice at Lystra*, the head of the ox is bowed down, with a design, no doubt, to group the figures around it more harmoniously: but their action is so well suited to the posture of the ox, and the whole is managed with so much judgment, that, although the figures are disposed with the utmost art, they appear with all the ease of nature. The remaining part of the group is an instance of the reverse; in which a number of heads appear manifestly stuck in to fill up vacancies.

But farther, as a *whole*, or *unity*, is an essential of beauty, *that disposition* is certainly the most perfect, which admits but of *one* group. All subjects, however, will not allow this *close* observance of unity. When this is the case, the several groups must again be combined; chiefly by a proper distribution of light, so as to constitute a *whole*.

But as the *whole* will soon be lost, if the constituent *parts* become *numerous*, it follows, that *many* groups must not be admitted.

Judicious

Judicious painters have thought *three* the utmost number, that can be allowed. Some subjects indeed, as battles and triumphs, necessarily require a great number of figures, and of course various combinations of groups. In the management of *such* subjects, the greatest art is necessary to preserve a *whole*. Confusion in the figures must be expressed without confusion in the picture. A writer should treat his subject *clearly*, though he write upon *obscurity*.

With regard to *disposition*, I shall only add, that the *shape* or *form* of the group should also be considered. The *triangular* form MICHAEL ANGELO thought the most beautiful. And indeed there is a lightness in it, which no other form can receive. The group of the apostles, in the cartoon of *giving the keys*, and the same group, in the *death of ANANIAS*, are both heavy; and this heaviness arises from nothing more than from the form of a parallelogram, within the lines of which these groups are contained. The triangular form too is capable of the most variety: for the vertical angle of a group so disposed may either be acute, or obtuse, in any degree. Or a *segment* only of
a tri-

a triangle may be taken, which still increases the variety.

I know well, that many of these remarks (on the cartoons especially) oppose the opinions of very great masters. The sublimity of the Roman school, they say, totally disregarded the mechanical construction of a group. And without doubt, simplicity, and a sameness of figure, are ingredients of the sublime. But perhaps this theory, like other theories, may be carried too far. I cannot conceive, that the group of the apostles in the cartoon of ANANIAS, for instance, would be less sublime in the form of a triangle, than in that of a parallelogram. The triangle is certainly the more simple figure, as it consists of three sides only, while the parallelogram occupies four. Besides, Raphael himself by no means adopted the square form as a *ruling principle*.—But I speak with diffidence on this subject; nor indeed is this a place to discuss it.

A third thing to be considered in a picture, with regard to a *whole*, is *keeping*. This word implies the different degrees of strength and faintness,

faintness, which objects receive from nearness, and distance. A nice observance of the gradual fading of light and shade contributes greatly towards the production of a *whole*. Without it, the distant parts, instead of being connected with the objects at hand, appear like foreign objects, without meaning. Diminished in *size* only, they unite Lilliput and Brobdignag in one scene. *Keeping* is generally found in great perfection in DELLA BELLA's prints: and the want of it, as conspicuously in TEMPESTA's.

Nearly allied to *keeping* is the doctrine of *harmony*, which equally contributes towards the production of a *whole*. In *painting*, it has great force. A judicious arrangement of according tints will strike even the unpractised eye. The *effect* of every picture, in a great measure, depends on one principal and master-tint; which, like the key-tone in music, prevails over the whole piece. Of this ruling tint, whatever it is, every object in the picture should in a degree participate. This theory is founded on principles of truth; and produces a fine effect from the *harmony*,
in

in which it unites every object. Harmony is opposed to glaring and gaudy colouring. Yet the skilful painter fears not, when his subject allows it, to employ the greatest variety of rich tints; and though he may depreciate their value in shadow, he will not scruple in his lights, to give each its utmost glow. His art lies deeper. He takes the glare from one vivid tint by introducing another; and from a nice assemblage of the brightest colours, each of which alone would stare, he creates a glow in the highest degree harmonious. But these great effects are only to be produced by the magic of colours. The harmony of a print is a more simple production: and yet unless a print possess the same *tone of shadow*, if I may so express myself, there will always appear great harshness in it. We often meet with hard touches in a print; which, standing alone, are unharmonious: but if every contiguous part should be touched-up to that *tone*, the effect would be harmony.—*Keeping* then proportions a proper degree of strength to the near and distant parts, in respect to *each other*. *Harmony* goes a step farther, and keeps each part quiet, with respect to the *whole*. I shall only add, that in sketches,

and

and rough etchings, no *harmony* is expected: it is enough, if *keeping* be observed. *Harmony* is looked for only in finished prints. If you would see the want of it in the strongest light, examine a worn-print, harshly touched by some bungler.

The last thing, which contributes to produce a *whole*, is a proper *distribution of light*. This, in a print especially, is most essential. Harmony in colouring may, in some measure, supply its place in painting: but a print has no succedaneum. Were the *design, disposition,* and *keeping* ever so perfect, beautiful, and just; without this essential, instead of a whole, we should have only a piece of patch-work. Nay, such is the power of *light*, that by an artificial management of it we may even harmonize a bad disposition.

The general rule which regards the distribution of *light*, is, that it should be spread in *large masses*. This gives the idea of a *whole*. Every grand object catches the light only on one large surface. Where the light is spotted, we have the idea of several objects; or at least of an incoherent one, if
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the object be single; which the eye surveys with difficulty. It is thus in painting. When we see, on a *comprehensive* view, *large masses* of light and shade, we have, of course, the idea of a *whole*—of *unity* in that picture. But where the light is scattered, we have the idea of several objects; or at least of one broken and confused. TITIAN'S known illustration of this point by a bunch of grapes is beautiful, and explanatory. When the light falls upon the *whole bunch* together (one side being illuminated, and the other dark) we have the representation of those large masses, which constitute a *whole*. But when the grapes are stripped from the bunch, and scattered upon a table (the light shining upon each separately) a *whole* is no longer preserved.

Having thus considered those essentials of a print, which produce a *whole*, it remains to consider those, which relate to the *parts*—*drawing, expression, grace, and perspective*. With regard to these, let it be first observed, that in order, they are inferior to the other. The production of a *whole* is the great effect, that should be aimed at in a picture. A
picture

picture without a *whole* is properly only a study: and those things, which produce a *whole*, are of course the *principal* foundation of beauty. So thought a great master of composition. With him no man was entitled to the name of artist, who could not produce a *whole*. However exquisitely he might finish, he would still be defective.

Infelix operis summâ, quia ponere totum
Nesciet.-----

By *drawing* we mean the exactness of the out-line. Without a competent knowledge of this there can be no just representation of nature. Every thing will be distorted and offensive to the eye. *Bad* drawing therefore is that disgusting object which no practised eye can bear.

Drawing, however, may be very tolerable, though it fall short, in a *certain degree*, of absolute perfection. The defect will only be observed by the most critical, and anatomical eye: and we may venture to say, that drawing is ranked too high, when the *niceties* of it are considered

in preference to those essentials, which constitute a *whole*.

Expression is the life and soul of painting. It implies a just representation of *passion*, and of *character*: of *passion*, by exhibiting every emotion of the mind, as outwardly discovered by any peculiarity of gesture; or the extension, and contraction of the features: of *character*, by representing the different manners of men, as arising from their particular tempers, or professions. The cartoons are full of examples of the first kind of *expression*; and with regard to the second, commonly called *manners-painting*, it would be invidious not to mention our countryman HOGARTH; whose works contain a variety of characters, *represented* with more force, than most men can *conceive* them.

Grace consists in such a disposition of the parts of a figure, as forms it into an agreeable attitude. It depends on *contrast* and *ease*. *Contrast*, when applied to a single figure, means the same, as when applied to a group; the
 opposition

opposition of one part to another. It may be considered with reference to the *body*, the *limbs*, and the *head*; the graceful attitude arising sometimes from a contrast in one, sometimes in another, and sometimes in all. With reference to the *body*, contrast consists in giving it an easy turn, opposing concave parts to convex. Of this St. PAUL in *the sacrifice at Lystra* is an instance.—With reference to the *limbs*, it consists in the opposition between extention and contraction. MICHAEL ANGELO's illustration by a triangle, or pyramid, may here likewise again be introduced; this form giving grace and beauty to a *single figure*, as well as to a *group*. Only here a greater liberty may be allowed. In *grouping*, the triangle should, I think, always rest upon its base; but in a single figure, it may be inverted, and stand upon its apex. Thus if the lower parts of the figure be extended, the upper parts should be contracted; but the same beautiful form is given by extending the arms, and drawing the feet to a point.—Lastly, contrast often arises from the air of the head; which is given by a turn of the neck from the line of the body. The cartoons abound with ex-

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amples of this species of *grace*. It is very remarkable in the figure of St. JOHN healing the cripple: and the same cartoon affords eight or nine more instances. I say the less on this subject, as it hath been so well exp'ined by the ingenious author of the *Analysis of Beauty*.

Thus *contrast* is the foundation of *grace*; but it must ever be remembered, that *contrast* should be accompanied with *ease*. The body should be *turned* not *twisted*; every *constrained* posture avoided; and every motion such, as nature, which loves ease, would dictate.

What hath been said on this head relates equally to *all* figures; those drawn from *low*, as well as those from *high* life. And here we may distinguish between *picturesque* grace, and that grace which arises from *dignity of character*. Of the *former* kind, which is the kind here treated of, *all* figures should partake: you find it in BERGHEM's clowns, and in CALLOT's beggars: but it belongs to *expression* to mark those characteristics, which distinguish the *latter*.

I shall

I shall only observe farther, that when the piece consists of many figures, the contrast of *each single* figure should be subordinate to the contrast of the *whole*. It will be improper therefore, in many cases, to practise the rules, which have been just laid down. They ought, however, to be a general direction to the painter; and at least to be observed in the *principal* figures.

Perspective is that proportion, with regard to *size*, which near and distant objects, with their parts, bear to each other. It is an attendant on *keeping*: one gives the out-line; and the other fills it up. Without a competent knowledge of *perspective* very absurd things would be introduced: and yet to make a vain shew of it, is pedantic.—Under this head may be mentioned *fore-shortening*. But unless this be done with the utmost art, it were better omitted: it will otherwise occasion great awkwardness. RUBENS is famous for *fore-shortening*; but the effect is chiefly seen in his *paintings*; seldom in his *prints*.

To this summary of the rules, which relate to the *whole* of the picture, and to its *parts*, I shall just add a few observations on *execution*; which relates equally to both.

By *execution* is meant that manner of working, by which each artist produces his effect. Artists may differ in their *execution* or *manner*, and yet all excel. CALLOT, for instance, uses a strong, firm stroke; SALVATOR, a slight, and loose one; while REMBRANDT executes in a manner different from both, by scratches seemingly at random.

Every artist is in some degree a *mannerist*: that is, he executes in a *manner* peculiar to himself. But the word *mannerist* has generally a closer sense. Nature should be the standard of imitation: and every object should be executed, as nearly as possible, in *her manner*. Thus WARTERLO's trees are all strongly impressed with the character of nature. Other masters again, deviating from this standard, execute in some manner of their own. They have a particular touch for a figure, or a tree:

tree: and this they apply on all occasions. Instead therefore of representing that endless variety which nature exhibits on every subject, a sameness runs through all their performances. Every figure, and every tree bears the same stamp. Such artists are *properly* called *mannerists*. TEMPEST, CALLOT, and TESTA are all *mannerists* of this kind.

By the *spirit* and *freedom* of *execution*, we mean something, which is difficult to explain. A certain heaviness always follows; when the artist is not sure of his stroke, and cannot execute his idea with precision. The reverse is the case, when he is certain of it, and gives it boldly. I know not how to explain better what is meant by *spirit*. Mere *freedom* a quick execution will give; but unless that *freedom* be attended with precision, the stroke, however free, will be so unmeaning as to lose its effect.

To these observations, it may not be improper to add a short comparative view of the *peculiar* excellences of pictures, and prints; which will shew us, in what points the picture has the advantage.

In *design* and *composition* the effect of each is equal. The print exhibits them with as much force and meaning, as the picture.

In *keeping* the picture has the advantage. The *business* of distance cannot well be expressed by any thing but the *hue of nature*, which the pencil is very able to give. The print *endeavours* to preserve this business; and to give the idea: but does it imperfectly. It does little more than aid the memory. We know the appearance exists in nature; and the print furnishes a hint to recollect it.

In the *distribution of light* the comparison runs very wide. Here the painter avails himself of a thousand varied tints, which assist him in this business; and by which he can harmonize his gradations from light to shade with an almost infinite variety. Harmonious colouring has in itself the effect of a proper distribution of light. The engraver, in the mean time, is left to work out his effect with two materials only, plain white
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and black.—In the print, however, you can more easily trace the *principles* of light and shade. The pencil is the implement of deception; and it requires the eye of a master to distinguish between the effect of light, and the effect of colour: but in the print, even the unpractised eye can readily catch the mass; and follow the distribution of it through all its variety of middle tints.—One thing more may be added: If the picture has no harmony in its colouring, the tints being all at discord among themselves, which is often the case in the works even of reputable painters, a good print, from such a picture, is more beautiful than the picture itself. It preserves what is valuable (upon a supposition there is any thing valuable in it), and removes what is offensive.

Thus the comparison runs with regard to those essentials, which relate to a *whole*: with regard to *drawing, expression, grace, and perspective*, we can pursue it only in the two former: in the latter, the picture and print have equal advantages.—With regard to *perspective* indeed, the lines of the print verging

more conspicuously to one point, mark the *principles* of it more strongly.

Drawing, in a *picture*, is effected by the contiguity of two different colours: in a *print* by a positive line. In the *picture*, therefore, *drawing*, has more of nature in it, and more of effect: but the student in anatomy finds more precision in the print; and can more easily trace the line, and follow it in all its windings through light and shade.—In mezzotinto the comparison fails; in which, drawing is effected nearly as it is in painting.

With regard to *expression*, the painter glories in his many advantages. The passions receive their force almost as much from *colour*, as from the emotion of feature. Nay lines, without colour, have frequently an effect very opposite to what is intended. Violent expressions, when lineal only, are often grotesque. The complexion should support the distortion. The bloated eyes of immoderate grief degenerate into coarse features, unless the pencil add those high-blown touches, which mark
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the passion. Ask the engraver, why he could not give the dying saint of DOMINICHINO his true expression *? Why he gave him that ghastly horror, instead of the serene languor of the original? The engraver may with justice say, he went as far as lines could go; but he wanted DOMINICHINO's pencil to give those pallid touches, which alone could make his lines expressive.—Age also, and sex, the bloom of youth, and the wan cheek of sickness, are equally indebted for their most characteristic marks, to the pencil.—In *portrait*, the different hues of hair, and complexion;—in *animal-life* the various dyes of furs, and plumage;—in *landscape*, the peculiar tints of seasons; of morning, and evening; the light azure of a summer-sky; the sultry glow of noon; the bluish, or purple tinge, which the mountain assumes, as it recedes, or approaches; the grey moss upon the ruin; the variegated greens, and mellow browns of foliage, and broken ground: in short, the colours of every part of nature, have a wonderful force in strengthening the expression

* JAC FRIE's copy of DOMINICHINO's St. Jerome.

of objects.—In the room of all this, the deficient print has only to offer mere form, and the gradations of simple light. Hence the sweet touches of the pencil of CLAUDE, mark his pictures with the strongest expressions of nature, and render them invaluable; while his prints are generally the dirty shapes of something, which he could not express.

The idea also of *distant magnitude*, the print gives very imperfectly. It is expressed chiefly by colour. Air, which is naturally blue, is the medium through which we see; and every object participates of this blueness. When the distance is small, the tinge is imperceptible: as it increases, the tinge grows stronger; and when the object is very remote, it intirely loses its natural colour, and becomes blue. And indeed this is so familiar a criterion of distance, at least with those who live in mountainous countries, that if the object be visible at all, after it has received the full *ether-tinge*, if I may so speak, the sight immediately judges it to be very large. The eye ranging over the plains of Egypt, and catching the blue point of a pyramid, from the colour concludes

concludes the distance; and is struck with the magnitude of an object, which, through such a space, can exhibit form.—Here the print fails: this criterion of distant magnitude, it is unable to give.

I cannot forbear inserting here a short criticism on a passage in VIRGIL. The poet describing a tower retiring from a vessel in full sail, says,

Protinus aërias Phæacum abscondimus arces.

RUÆUS, and other commentators, explain *aëreas* by *altas*, or some equivalent word; which is magnifying an idea which in nature should be diminished. The idea of magnitude is certainly not the striking idea that arises from a retiring object: I should rather imagine that VIRGIL, who was of all poets perhaps the most picturesque, meant to give us an idea of colour, rather than of shape; the tower, from its distance, having now assumed the *aërial* tinge.

The print equally fails, when the medium itself receives a foreign tinge from a strength
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of colour behind it. The idea of horror, impressed by an expanse of air glowing, in the night, with distant fire, cannot be raised by black and white. VANDERVELDE has often given us a good idea of the dreadful glare of a fleet in flames: but it were ridiculous for an engraver to attempt such a subject; because he cannot express that idea, which principally illustrates his story.

Transparency, again, the print is unable to express. Transparency is the united tinge of two colours, one behind the other; each of which, in part, discovers itself singly. If you employ one colour only, you have the idea of opaqueness. A fine carnation is a white transparent skin, spread over a multitude of small blood vessels, which blush through it. When the breath departs, these little fountains of life cease to flow: the bloom fades; and livid paleness, the colour of death, succeeds. —The happy pencil marks both these effects. It spreads the glow of health over the cheek of beauty; and with equal facility it expresses the cold, wan, tint of human clay. The print can express neither; representing, in

the same dry manner, the bright transparency of the one, and the inert opaqueness of the other.

Lastly, the print fails in the expression of *polished bodies*; which are indebted for their chief lustre to *reflected colours*. The print indeed goes farther here, than in the case of transparency. In this it can do very little; in *polished bodies*, it can at least give *reflected shapes*. It can shew the *forms* of hanging woods upon the edges of the lake; though unable to give the kindred tinge. But in many cases the *polished* body receives the *tinge*, without the *shape*. Here the engraver is wholly deficient: he knows not how to stain the gleaming silver with the purple liquor it contains; nor is he able to give the hero's armour its highest polish from the tinge of the crimson vest, which covers it.

A single word upon the subject of *execution*, shall conclude these remarks. Here the advantage lies wholly on the side of painting. *That* manner which can best give the idea of
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the surface of an object, is the best; and the lines of the finest engraving are harsh in comparison of the smooth flow of the pencil. *Mezzotinto*, though deficient in some respects, is certainly in this the happiest mode of execution; and the ancient *wooden print*, in which the middle tint is used, has a softness, when well executed, which neither etching, nor engraving can give.

CHAP. II.

Observations on the different Kinds of Prints.

THERE are three kinds of Prints, *engravings*, *etchings*, and *mezzotintos*. The characteristic of the first is *strength*; of the second, *freedom*; and of the third, *softness*. All these, however, may in some degree be found in each.

From the shape of the engraver's tool, each stroke is an angular incision; which must of course give the line strength, and firmness; if it be not very tender. From such a line also, as it is a deliberate one, correctness may be expected; but no great freedom: for it is a laboured line, ploughed through the metal; and must necessarily, in a degree, want ease.

Unlimited *freedom*, on the other hand, is the characteristic of *etching*. The needle, gliding
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along the surface of the copper, meets no resistance; and easily takes any turn the hand pleases to give it. Etching indeed is mere drawing: and may be practised with the same facility.—But as *aqua-fortis* bites in an *equable* manner, it cannot give the lines that strength, which they receive from a pointed graver cutting into the copper. Besides, it is difficult to prevent its biting the plate *all over* alike. The *distant parts* indeed may easily be covered with wax, or varnish, and the *general effect* of the *keeping* preserved; but to give each *smaller* part its proper relief, and to *harmonize* the *whole*, requires so many different degrees of strength, such easy transitions from one into another, that *aqua-fortis* alone is not equal to it. Here, therefore, engraving hath the advantage; which by a stroke, deep or tender, at the artist's pleasure, can vary strength and faintness in any degree.

As engraving, therefore, and etching have their respective advantages, and deficiencies, artists have endeavoured to unite their powers; and to correct the faults of each, by joining the *freedom* of the one, with the *strength* of the
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the other. In most of our modern prints, the plate is first etched, and afterwards strengthened, and finished by the graver. And when this is *well* done, it has a happy effect. The flatness, which is the consequence of an equable strength of shade, is taken off; and the print gains a new effect, by the relief given to those parts which *hang* (in the painter's language) on the parts behind them.—But great art is necessary in this business. We see many a print, which wanted only a *few* touches, receive afterwards so *many*, as to become laboured, heavy, and disgusting.

In *etching*, we have the greatest variety of excellent prints. The case is, it is so much the same as *drawing*, that we have the very works themselves of the most celebrated masters: many of whom have left behind them prints in this way; which, however slight and incorrect, will always have something *masterly*, and of course *beautiful* in them.

In the muscling of human figures, of any considerable size, *engraving* hath undoubtedly

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the advantage of *etching*. The soft and delicate transitions, from light to shade, which are there required, cannot be so well expressed by the needle: and, in general, *large prints* require a strength which *etching* cannot give; and are therefore fit subjects for *engraving*.

Etching, on the other hand, is more particularly adapted to sketches, and slight designs; which, if executed by an engraver, would entirely lose their freedom; and with it their beauty. Landscape too, in general, is the object of *etching*. The foliage of trees, ruins, sky, and indeed every part of landscape, requires the utmost freedom. In finishing an *etched* landscape with the *tool* (as it is called), too much care cannot be taken to prevent heaviness. We remarked before the nicety of touching upon an etched plate; but in landscape the business is peculiarly delicate. The foregrounds, and the boles of such trees as are placed upon them, may require a few strong touches; and here and there a few harmonizing strokes will add to the effect: but if the engraver venture much farther, he has good luck if he do no mischief.

An *engraved* plate, unless it be cut very slightly, will cast off seven or eight hundred good impressions: and yet this depends, in some degree, on the hardness of the copper. An *etched* plate will not give above two hundred; unless it be eaten very deep, and then it may perhaps give three hundred. After that, the plate must be retouched, or the impressions will be faint.

Before I conclude the subject of etching, I should mention an excellent mode of practising it on a *soft ground*; which has been lately brought into use, and approaches still nearer to drawing, than the common mode. On a thin paper, somewhat larger than the plate, you trace a correct outline of the drawing you intend to etch. You then fold the paper, thus traced, over the plate; and laying the original drawing before you, finish the outline on the traced one with a black lead pencil. Every stroke of the pencil, which you make on one side, licks up the soft ground on the other. So that when you have finished your drawing with

black-lead, and take the paper off the plate, you will find a complete, and very beautiful drawing on the reverse of the paper; and the etching likewise as complete on the copper. You then proceed to bite it with aqua-fortis, in the common mode of etching: only as your ground is softer, the aqua-fortis must be weaker.

Besides these several methods of engraving on *copper*, we have prints engraven on pewter, and on wood. The pewter plate gives a coarseness and dirtiness to the print, which is often disagreeable. But engraving upon wood is capable of great beauty. Of this species of engraving more shall elsewhere be said.

Mezzotinto is very different from either *engraving* or *etching*. In these you cut out the *shades* on a smooth plate. In *mezzotinto*, the plate is covered with a rough ground; and you scrape the lights. The plate would otherwise give an impression entirely black.

Since the time of its invention by Prince RUPERT, as is commonly supposed, the art
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of scraping *mezzotintos* is greatly more improved than either of its sister arts. Some of the earliest *etchings* are perhaps the best; and *engraving*, since the times of GOLTZIUS and MULLER, hath not perhaps made any great advances. But *mezzotinto*, compared with its original state, is, at this day, almost a new art. If we examine some of the modern pieces of workmanship in this way by our best mezzotinto-scrapers, they as much exceed the works of WHITE and SMITH, as those masters did BECKET and SIMONS. It must be owned, at the same time, they have better originals to copy. KNELLER's portraits are very paltry, compared with those of our modern artists; and are scarce susceptible of any effects of light and shade. As to Prince RUPERT's works, I never saw any, which were *certainly* known to be his: but those I have seen for his, were executed in the same black, harsh, disagreeable manner, which appears so strong in the masters who succeeded him. The invention however was noble; and the early masters have the credit of it: but the truth is, the ingenious mechanic hath been called in to the painter's aid; and hath invented a manner of

laying ground, wholly unknown to the earlier masters: and they who are acquainted with *mezzotinto*, know the *ground* to be a very capital consideration.

The characteristic of *mezzotinto* is *softness*; which adapts it chiefly to portrait, or history, with a few figures, and these not too small. Nothing, except paint, can express flesh more naturally, or the flowing of hair, or the folds of drapery, or the catching lights of armour. In engraving and etching we must get over the prejudices of cross lines, which exist on no natural bodies: but *mezzotinto* gives us the strongest representation of the real *surface*. If however, the figures are too crowded, it wants strength to detach the several parts with a proper relief: and if they are very small, it wants precision, which can only be given by an outline; or, as in painting, by a different tint. In miniature-works also, the unevenness of the ground will occasion bad drawing, and awkwardness—in the extremities especially. Some inferior artists have endeavoured to remedy this, by terminating their figures with an engraved, or etched line: but they have tried the experiment with bad success. The strength of the line, and the softness of the ground,
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accord ill together. I speak not here of that judicious mixture of *etching* and *mezzotinto*, which was formerly used by WHITE; and which our best mezzotinto-scrapers at present use, to give a strength to particular parts; I speak only of a harsh, and injudicious lineal termination.

Mezzotinto excels each of the other species of prints, in its capacity of receiving the most beautiful effects of light and shade: as it can the most happily unite them, by blending them insensibly together.—Of this REMBRANDT seems to have been aware. He had probably seen some of the first mezzotintos; and admiring the effect, endeavoured to produce it in etching, by a variety of intersecting scratches.

You cannot well cast off more than an hundred good impressions from a mezzotinto plate. The rubbing of the hand soon wears it smooth: And yet by constantly repairing it, it may be made to give four or five hundred, with tolerable strength. The first impressions are not always the best. They are too black and harsh. You will commonly have the best impressions from the fortieth to the sixtieth: the harsh edges will be softened down; and yet there will be spirit and strength enough left.

I should not conclude these observations without mentioning the manner of working with the *dry needle*, as it is called; a manner between etching and engraving. It is performed by cutting the copper with a steel point, held like a pencil; and differs from etching only in the force with which you work. This method is used by all engravers in their skies, and other tender parts; and some of them carry it into still more general use.

Since the last edition of this work was published, a new mode of etching hath come much into use, called aquatinta. It is so far similar to the common mode of etching, that the shadows are bitten into copper by aquafortis, from which the lights are defended by a prepared, *granulated* ground. Through the minute interstices of this ground the aquafortis is admitted, and forms a kind of wash. In the composition of this *granulation*, the great secret of the art, I understand, consists; and different artists have their different modes of preparing their ground. Some also strengthen the aquatinta wash by the use of
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the needle, as in common etching; which, in landscape especially, has a good effect. The secret of the art however, does not entirely consist in preparing, and laying on the ground. Much experience is necessary in the management of it.

The great advantage of this mode of etching is, that it comes nearer the idea of drawing, than any other species of working on copper: the shades are thrown in by a wash, as if with a brush. It is also, when perfectly understood, well calculated for dispatch. In general indeed, it seems better adapted to a rough sketch, than a finished work; yet in skilful hands, when assisted by the needle, or the engraver's tool, it may be carried to a great height of elegant finishing.

On the other hand, the great disadvantage of this mode of etching arises from the difficulty of making the shades graduate softly into the lights. When the artist has made too harsh an edge, and wishes to burnish it off, there is often a middle tint below it: in burnishing off the one, he disturbs the other; and instead of leaving a soft graduating edge, he introduces, in its room, an edging of light.

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The aquatinta mode of etching was first introduced into England, though but little known, about thirty, or forty years ago, by a Frenchman of the name of La Prince: but whether he was the inventor of it, I never heard. It has since been improved by several artists. Mr. Sandby has used it very happily in several of his prints. Mr. Jukes also, and Mr. Malton have done some good things in this way: but, as far as I can judge, Mr. Alken has carried it to the highest degree of perfection; and has some secret in preparing, and managing his ground, which gives his prints a superior effect.

C H A P. III.

Characters of the most noted Masters.

MASTERS IN HISTORY.

ALBERT DURER, though not the inventor, was one of the first improvers of the art of engraving. He was a German painter, and at the same time a man of letters, and a philosopher. It may be added in his praise, that he was the intimate friend of Erasmus; who revised, it is supposed, some of the pieces which he published. He was a man of business also; and was, during many years, the leading magistrate of Nuremburg.—His prints, considered as the first efforts of a new art, have great merit. Nay, we may add, that it is astonishing to see a new art, in its earliest essays, carried to such a length. In some of those prints, which he executed on copper, the engraving is elegant to a great degree. His *Hell-scene* particularly, which was engraved in the year 1513, is as highly finished

finished a print as ever was engraved, and as happily finished. The labour he has bestowed upon it, has its full effect. In his wooden prints too we are surpris'd to see so much meaning, in so early a master; the heads so well marked; and every part so well executed. — This artist seems to have understood the principles of design. His composition too is often pleasing; and his drawing generally good: but he knows very little of the management of light; and still less of grace: and yet his ideas are purer, and more elegant, than we could have supposed from the awkward archetypes, which his country and education afforded. He was certainly a man of a very extensive genius; and, as *Vafari* remarks, would have been an extraordinary artist, if he had had an Italian, instead of a German education. His prints are numerous. They were much admired in his own life-time, and eagerly bought up: which put his wife, who was a teasing woman, on urging him to spend more time upon engraving, than he was inclin'd to do. He was rich, and chose rather to practise his art as an amusement, than as a business. He died in the year 1527.

The immediate successors, and imitators of ALBERT DÜRER were LUCAS VAN LEIDEN, ALDGRAVE, PENS, HISBEN, and some others of less note. Their works are very much in their master's style; and were the admiration of an age which had seen nothing better. The best of ALDGRAVE's works are two or three small pieces of the story of Lot.

GOLTZIUS flourished a little after the death of these masters; and carried engraving to a great height. He was a native of Germany, where he learned his art: but travelling afterwards into Italy, he improved his ideas. We plainly discover in him a mixture of the Flemish and Italian schools. His forms have sometimes a degree of elegance in them; but, in general, the Dutch master prevails. GOLTZIUS is often happy in *design* and *disposition*; and fails most in the *distribution of light*. But his chief excellence lies in *execution*. He engraves in a noble, firm, expressive manner; which hath scarce been excelled by any succeeding

ceeding masters. There is a variety too in his mode of execution, which is very pleasing. His print of the *circumcision* is one of the best of his works. The story is well told; the groups agreeably disposed; and the execution admirable: but the figures are Dutch; and the whole, through the want of a proper distribution of shade, is only a glaring mass.

MULLER engraved very much in the style of GOLTZIUS—I think in a still bolder and firmer manner. We have no where greater master-pieces in execution, than the works of this artist exhibit. The *baptism of JOHN* is perhaps the most beautiful specimen of bold engraving, that is extant.

ABRAHAM BLOEMART was a Dutch master also, and contemporary with GOLTZIUS. We are not informed what particular means of improvement he had; but it is certain he designed in a more elegant taste, than any of his countrymen. His figures are often graceful; excepting only, that he gives them sometimes an affected twist; which

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is still more conspicuous in the fingers; an affectation which we sometimes also find in the prints of GOLTZIUS.—The *resurrection of LAZARUS* is one of BLOEMART'S master-pieces; in which are many faults, and many beauties; both very characteristic.

While the Dutch masters were thus carrying the art of engraving to so great a height, it was introduced into Italy by ANDREA MANTEGNA; to whom the Italians ascribe the invention of it. The paintings of this master abound in noble passages, but are formal and disagreeable. We have a specimen of them at Hampton-Court, in the triumph of JULIUS CÆSAR.—His prints, which are said to have been engraved on tin plates, are transcripts from the same ideas. We see in them the chaste, correct out-line, and noble simplicity of the Roman school; but we are to expect nothing more; not the least attempt towards an agreeable *whole*.—And indeed, we shall perhaps find, in general, that the masters of the Roman school were more studious of those essentials of painting, which regard the *parts*; and the Flemish
masters,

masters, of those, which regard the *whole*. The former therefore drew better *figures*; the latter made better *pictures*.

MANTEGNA was succeeded by PARMIGIANO and PALMA, both masters of great reputation. PARMIGIANO having formed the most accurate taste on a thorough study of the works of RAPHAEL, and MICHAEL ANGELO, published many single figures, and some designs engraven on wood, which abounded with every kind of beauty; if we may form a judgment of them from the few which we sometimes meet with. Whether PARMIGIANO invented the art of engraving on wood, does not certainly appear. His pretensions to the invention of etching are less disputable. In this way he published many slight pieces, which do him great credit. In the midst of his labours, he was interrupted by a knavish engraver, who pilaged him of all his plates. Unable to bear the loss, he forswore his art, and abandoned himself to chemistry.

PALMA

PALMA was too much employed as a painter to have much leisure for etching. He hath left several prints, however, behind him; which are remarkable for the delicacy of the drawing, and the freedom of the execution. He etches in a loose, but masterly manner. His prints are scarce; and indeed we seldom meet with any that deserve more than the name of sketches.

FRANCIS PARRA seems to have copied the manner of PALMA with great success. But his prints are still scarcer than his master's; nor have we a sufficient number of them, to enable us to form much judgment of his merit.

But the great improver of the art of engraving on wood, and who at once carried it to a degree of perfection, which hath not since been exceeded, was ANDREA ANDREANI, of Mantua. The works of this master are remarkable for the freedom, strength, and spirit

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of the execution ; the elegant correctness of the drawing ; and in general for their effect. Few prints come so near the idea of painting. They have a force, which a pointed tool on copper cannot reach : and the wash, of which the middle tint is composed, adds often the softness of drawing. But the works of this master are seldom seen in perfection. They are scarce ; and when we do meet with them, it is a chance if the impressions be good : and very much of the beauty of these prints depends on the goodness of the impression. For often the outline is left hard, the middle tint being lost ; and sometimes the middle tint is left without its proper termination. So that on the whole, I should not judge this to be the happiest mode of engraving.

Among the ancient Italian masters, we cannot omit MARK ANTONIO ; and AUGUSTIN of Venice. They are both celebrated ; and have handed down to us many engravings from the works of RAPHAEL : but their *antiquity*, not their *merit*, seems to have recommended them. Their execution is harsh, and formal to the last degree : and if their prints

give us any idea of the works of RAPHAEL, we may well wonder, as PICART observes, how that master got his reputation.—But we cannot, perhaps, in England, form an adequate idea of these masters. I have been told, their best works are so much valued in Italy, that they are engrossed there by the curious: that very few of them find their way into other countries; and that what we have, are, in general, but the refuse.

FREDERIC BAROCCHI was born at Urbin; where the genius of RAPHAEL inspired him. In his early youth he travelled to Rome: and giving himself up to intense study, he acquired a great name in painting. At his leisure hours he etched a few prints from his own designs; which are highly finished, and executed with great softness and delicacy. The *Salutation* is his capital performance: of which we seldom meet with any impressions, but those taken from the retouched plate, which are very harsh.

ANTHONY TEMPESTA was a native of Florence, but resided chiefly at Rome; where he was employed in painting by GREGORY XIII. —His prints are very numerous: all from his own designs. Battles and huntings are the subjects in which he most delighted. His merit lies in expression, both in feature and in action; in the grandeur of his ideas; and in the fertility of his invention. His figures are often elegant, and graceful; and his heads marked with great spirit, and correctness. His horses, though fleshy and ill drawn, and evidently never copied from nature, are, however, noble animals, and display an endless variety of beautiful actions.—His imperfections at the same time, are glaring. His composition is generally bad. Here and there you have a good group; seldom an agreeable whole. He had not the art of preserving his back-grounds tender; so that we are not to expect any effect of keeping. His execution is harsh; and he is totally ignorant of the distribution of light.—But notwithstanding all his faults, such is his merit, that, as studies at least, his prints deserve a much higher rank in the cabinets of

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connoisseurs, than they generally find; you can scarce pick out one of them, which does not furnish materials for an excellent composition.

AUGUSTIN CARACCI has left a few etchings; which are admired for the delicacy of the drawing, and the freedom of the execution. But there is great flatness in them, and want of strength. Etchings, indeed, in this style are rather meant as sketches, than as finished prints.—I have heard his print of St. Jerome much commended; but I find no remarks upon it in my own notes.

GUIDO's etchings, most of which are small, are esteemed for the simplicity of the design; the elegance and correctness of the outline; and that grace, for which this master is generally—perhaps too generally esteemed. The extremities of his figures are particularly touched with great accuracy. But we have the same flatness in the works of GUIDO, which we find in those of his master CARACCI; accompanied, at the same time, with less free-

dom. The *parts* are finished; but the *whole* neglected.

CANTARINI copied the manner of GUIDO, as PARIA did that of PALMA; and so happily, that it is often difficult to distinguish the works of these two masters.

CALLOT was little acquainted with any of the grand principles of painting: of composition, and the management of light he was totally ignorant. But though he could not make a picture, he was admirably skilled in drawing a figure. His attitudes are generally graceful, when they are not affected; his expression strong; his drawing correct; and his execution masterly, though rather laboured. His *Fair* is a good epitome of his works. Considered as a *whole*, it is a confused jumble of ideas; but the *parts*, separately examined, appear the work of a master. The same character may be given of his most famous work, the *Miseries of War*: in which there is more expression, both in action and feature, than was ever perhaps shewn in so small a compass. And yet I know not
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whether his *Beggars* be not the more capital performance. In the *Miseries of War*, he aims at composition, in which he rarely succeeds: his *Beggars* are detached figures, in which lay his strength. Though the works of this master are generally small, I have seen one of a large size. It consists of two prints; each of them near four feet square, representing the siege of Toulon. They are rather indeed perspective plans, than pictures. The pains employed on them, is astonishing. They contain multitudes of figures; and, in miniature, represent all the humour, and all the employment of a camp.—I shall only add, that a vein of drollery runs through all the designs of this master: which sometimes, when he chuses to indulge it freely, as in the *Temptation of St. ANTHONY*, displays itself in a very facetious manner.

COUNT GAUDE contracted a friendship at Rome with ADAM ELSHAMAR; from whose designs he engraved a few prints. GAUDE was a young nobleman on his travels; and never practised engraving as a profession. This would call for indulgence, if his prints wanted it: but in their way, they are beautiful; though

on the whole, formal, and unpleasant. They are highly finished; and this correctness has deprived them of freedom. Moon-lights, and torch-lights are the subjects he generally chuses; and he often preserves the effects of these different lights. His prints are generally small. I know only one, the *Flight into Egypt*, of a larger size.

SALVATOR ROSA *Painted* landscape more than history; but his *prints* are chiefly historical. He was bred a painter; and understood his art; if we except the *management of light*, of which he seems to have been ignorant. The capital landscape of this master at Chiswick, is a noble picture. The contrivance, the composition, the distances, the figures, and all the parts and appendages of it are fine: but in point of light it might perhaps have been improved, if the middle ground, where the figures of the second distance stand, had been thrown into sunshine.—In *design*, and generally in *composition*, SALVATOR is often happy. His figures, which he drew in good taste, are graceful, and expressive, well grouped, and varied in agreeable attitudes. In the legs, it must be owned, he
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is a *mannerist*: they are well drawn; but all cast in one mould. There is a stiffness too in the backs of his extended hands: the palms are beautiful. But these are trivial criticisms.

—His *manner* is slight; so as not to admit either softness or effect: yet the simplicity and elegance of it are pleasing; and bear that strong characteristic of a master's hand, *sibi quivis speret idem*.—One thing in his manner of shading, is disagreeable. He will often shade a *face* half over with long lines; which, in so small and delicate an object, gives an unpleasant abruptness. It is treating a face like an egg: no distinction of feature is observed.—

SALVATOR was a man of genius, and of learning: both which he has found frequent opportunities of displaying in his works. His style is grand; every object that he introduces is of the heroic kind; and his subjects in general shew an intimacy with ancient history, and mythology.—A roving disposition, to which he is said to have given a full scope, seems to have added a wildness to all his thoughts. We are told, he spent the early part of his life in a troop of banditti: and that the rocky and desolate scenes, in which he was accustomed to take refuge, furnished him with those romantic ideas

ideas in landscape, of which he is so exceedingly fond; and in the description of which he so much excels. His *Robbers*, as his detached figures are commonly called, are supposed to have been taken from the life.

REMBRANDT'S excellency, as a painter, lay in colouring; which he possessed in such perfection, that it almost screens every fault in his pictures. His prints, deprived of this palliative, have only his inferior qualifications to recommend them. These are expression, and skill in the management of light, execution, and sometimes composition. I mention them in the order in which he seems to have possessed them. His expression has the most force in the character of age. He marks as strongly as the hand of time. He possesses too, in a great degree, that inferior kind of expression, which gives its proper, and characteristic touch to drapery, fur, metal, and every object he represents.—His management of light consists chiefly in making a very strong contrast; which has often a good effect: and yet in many of his prints, there is no effect at all; which gives us reason to think, he either
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ther had no principles, or published such prints before his principles were ascertained.—His execution is peculiar to himself. It is rough, or neat, as he meant a sketch, or a finished piece; but always free and masterly. It produces its effect by strokes intersected in every direction; and comes nearer the idea of painting than the execution of any other master in etching—Never painter was more at a loss than REMBRANDT, for that species of grace, which is necessary to support an elevated character. While he keeps within the sphere of his genius, and contents himself with low subjects, he deserves any praise. But when he attempts beauty, or dignity, it were good-natured to suppose, he means only burlesque and caricature. He is a strong contrast to SALVATOR. The one drew all his ideas from nature, as she appears with grace and elegance: The other caught her in her meanest images; and transferred those images into the highest characters. Hence SALVATOR exalts banditti into heroes: REMBRANDT degrades patriarchs into beggars. REMBRANDT, indeed, seems to have affected awkwardness. He was a man of humour; and would laugh at those artists who studied the antique. “ I’ll
 shew

shew you my antiques," he would cry; and then he would carry his friends into a room furnished with head-dresses, draperies, household-stuff, and instruments of all kinds: "These," he would add, "are worth all your antiques."—His best etching is that, which goes by the name of the *hundred-guilders-print*; which is in such esteem, that I have known thirty guineas given for a good impression of it. In this all his excellencies are united: and I might add, his imperfections also. Age and wretchedness are admirably described; but the principal figure is ridiculously mean.—REMBRANDT is said to have left behind him near three hundred prints; none of which are dated before 1628; none after 1659. They were in such esteem, even in his own life time, that he is said to have retouched some of them four or five times.

PETER TESTA studied upon a plan very different from that, either of SALVATOR, or REMBRANDT. Those masters drew their ideas from nature: TESTA, from what he esteemed a superior model—the antique. Smitten with the love of painting, this artist travelled

velled to Rome in the habit of a pilgrim ; destitute of every mean of improvement, but what mere genius furnished. He had not even interest to procure a recommendation ; nor had he any address to substitute in its room. The works of sculpture fell most obviously in his way ; and to these he applied himself with so much industry, copying them over, and over, that he is said to have gotten them all by heart. Thus qualified, he took up the pencil. But he soon found the school, in which he had studied, an insufficient one to form a painter. He had neglected colouring ; and his pictures were in no esteem. I have heard it said, that some of his pictures were excellent : and that if the house of Medici had continued to direct the taste of Italy, his works would have taken the lead among the first productions of the age. But it was TESTA's misfortune to live when the arts were under a less discerning patronage : and P. DA CORTONA, who was TESTA's rival, though far inferior to him in genius, carried the palm. Disappointed and mortified, he threw aside his pallet, and applied himself to etching ; in which he became a thorough proficient.—His prints have great merit ; though they are little esteemed. We are seldom, indeed to expect

pect a coherency of design in any of them. An enthusiastic vein runs through most of his compositions; and it is not an improbable conjecture, that his head was a little disturbed. He generally crouds into his pieces such a jumble of inconsistent ideas; that it is difficult sometimes only to guess at what he aims. He was as little acquainted with the distribution of light, as with the rules of design: and yet, notwithstanding all this, his works contain an infinite fund of entertainment. There is an exuberance of fancy in him, which, with all its wildness, is agreeable: his ideas are sublime and noble; his drawing is elegantly correct; his heads exhibit a wonderful variety of characters; and are touched with uncommon spirit, and expression; his figures are graceful, rather too nearly allied to the antique; his groups often beautiful; and his execution, in his best etchings, (for he is sometimes unequal to himself,) very masterly.* Perhaps, no prints afford more useful studies for a painter.—The *Procession of SILENUS*, if we may guess at so confused a design, may illustrate all that hath been said. The *whole* is as inco-

* Some of his works are etched by CÆS. TESTA.

herent, as the *parts* are beautiful.—This unfortunate artist was drowned in the Tyber; and it is left uncertain, whether by accident or design.

SPANIOLET etched a few prints in a very spirited manner. No master understood better the force of every touch. SILENUS and BACCHUS, and the *Martyrdom of St. BARTHOLOMEW*, are the best of his historical prints: and yet these are inferior to some of his caricatures, which are admirably executed.

MICHAEL DORIGNY, or OLD DORIGNY, as he is often called, to distinguish him from NICHOLAS, had the misfortune to be the son-in-law of SIMON VOUET; whose works he engraved, and whose imperfections he copied. His execution is free, and he preserves the lights extremely well on single figures: his drapery too is natural, and easy: but his drawing is below criticism; in the extremities especially. In this his master misled him. VOUET excelled in composition; of which we have many beautiful instances in DORIGNY's prints.

VILLAMENA was inferior to few engravers. If he be deficient in strength and effect, there is a delicacy in his manner, which is inimitable. One of his best prints is, the *Descent from the Cross*.—But his works are so rare, that we can scarce form an adequate idea of his merit.

STEPHEN DE LA BELLA was a minute genius. His manner wants strength for any larger work; but in small objects it appears to advantage: there is great freedom in it, and uncommon neatness. His figures are touched with spirit; and sometimes his composition is good: but he seldom discovers any skill in the management of light; though the defect is less striking, because of the smallness of his pieces. His *Pont Neuf* will give us an idea of his works. Through the bad management of the light, it makes no appearance as a *whole*; though the composition, if we except the modern architecture, is tolerable. But the figures are marked with great beauty; and the distances extremely fine.—Some of his single heads are very elegant.

LA FAGE's works consist chiefly of sketches. The great excellency of this master lay in drawing; in which he was perfectly skilled. However unfinished his pieces are, they discover him to have been well acquainted with anatomy and proportion. There is very little in him besides, that is valuable; grace, and expression sometimes; seldom composition: his figures are generally too much crowded, or too diffuse. As for light and shade, he seems to have been totally ignorant of their effect; or he could never have shewn so bad a taste, as to publish his designs without, at least, a bare expression of the masses of each. Indeed, we have positive proof, as well as negative. Where he has attempted an effect of light, he has only shewn how little he knew of it.—His genius chiefly displays itself in the gambols of nymphs and satyrs; in routs and revels: but there is so much obscenity in his works of this kind, that, although otherwise fine, they scarce afford an innocent amusement.—In some of his prints, in which he has attempted the sublimest characters, he has given them a wonderful dignity. Some of his figures of Christ

are not inferior to the ideas of RAPHAEL : and in a slight sketch, intituled, *Vocation de Moÿse*, the Deity is introduced with surprising majesty. —His best works are slightly etched from his drawings by ERTINGER ; who has done justice to them.

BOLSWERT engraved the works of RUBENS, and in a style worthy of his master. You see the same free, and animated manner in both. It is said that RUBENS touched his proofs : and it is probable ; the ideas of the painter are so exactly transfused into the works of the engraver.

PONTIUS too engraved the works of RUBENS ; and would have appeared a greater master, if he had not had such a rival as BOLSWERT.

SCIAMINOSI etched a few small plates, of the *Mysteries of the Rosary*, in a masterly style. There is no great beauty in the composition ; but the drawing is good ; the figures are generally

rally graceful ; and the heads touched with spirit.

ROMAN LE HOOGHE is inimitable in execution. Perhaps, no master etches in a freer and more spirited manner : there is a richness in it likewise, which we seldom meet with. His figures too are often good ; but his composition is generally faulty : it is crowded, and confused. He knows little of the effect of light. There is a flutter in him too, which hurts an eye pleased with simplicity. His prints are generally historical. The *deluge at Coeverden* is finely described.—LE HOOGHE was much employed, by the authors of his time, in composing frontispieces ; some of which are very beautiful.

LUIKEN etches in the manner of LE HOOGHE, but it is a less masterly manner. His *History of the Bible* is a great work ; in which there are many good figures, and great freedom of execution : but poor composition, much confusion, and little skill in the distribution of light. This master hath also etched a

book of various kinds of capital punishment; amongst which, though the subject is disgusting, there are many good prints.

GERRARD LAIRESSE etches in a loose, and unfinished; but free, and masterly manner. His light is often well distributed; but his shades have not sufficient strength to give his pieces effect. Though he was a Dutch painter, you see nothing of the Dutchman in his works. His composition is generally elegant and beautiful; especially where he has only a few figures to manage. His figures themselves are graceful, and his expression strong.—It may be added, that his draperies are particularly excellent. The simple and sublime ideas, which appear every where in his works, acquired him the title of the *Dutch* RAPHAEL; a title which he well deserves. LAIRESSE may be called an ethic painter. He commonly inculcates some truth either in morals, or religion; which he illustrates by a Latin sentence at the bottom of his print.

CASTIG-

CASTIGLIONE was an Italian painter of eminence. He drew human figures with grace and correctness: yet he generally chose such subjects as would admit the introduction of animal life, which often makes the more distinguished part.—There is a simplicity in the designs of this master, which is beautiful. In composition he excels. Of his elegant groups we have many instances, in a set of prints, etched from his paintings, in a slight, free manner, by C. MACEE; particularly in those of the *patriarchal journeyings*. He hath left us several of his *own* etchings, which are very valuable. The subjects, indeed, of some of them, are odd and fantastic; and the composition not equal to some prints we have from his paintings, by other hands; but the execution is greatly superior. Freedom, strength, and spirit, are eminent in them; and delicacy likewise, where he chuses to finish highly; of which we have some instances.—One of his best prints is, the *entering of NOAH into the ark*. The composition; the distribution of light; the spirit and expression, with which

the animals are touched; and the freedom of the execution, are all admirable.

TIEPOLO was a distinguished master: but by his merit; rather than the number of his etchings. He was chiefly employed, I have heard, as a painter, in the Escorial, and other palaces in Spain. The work, on which his reputation as an etcher is founded, is a series of twenty plates, about nine inches long, and seven broad. The subject of them is emblematical; but of difficult interpretation. They contain, however, a great variety of rich, and elegant composition; of excellent figures; and of fine old heads and characters. They are scarce; at least, they have rarely fallen in my way.— I have seen a few other prints by this master: but none, except these, which I have thought excellent. He was a strange, whimsical man; and, perhaps, his best pieces were those, in which he gave a loose to the wildness of his imagination.

VANDER MUILEN has given us historical representations' of several modern battles.

Lewis

Lewis XIV. is his great hero. His prints are generally large, and contain many good figures, and agreeable groups: but they have no effect, and seldom produce a *whole*. A disagreeable monotony (as the musical people speak) runs through them all.

OTHO VENIUS has entirely the air of an Italian, though of Dutch parentage. He had the honour of being master to RUBENS; who chiefly learned from him his knowledge of light and shade. This artist published a book of love-emblems; in which the Cupids are engraved with great elegance. His pieces of fabulous history have less merit.

GALESTRUZZI was an excellent artist. There is great firmness in his stroke; great precision; and, at the same time, great freedom. His drawing is good; his heads are well touched, and his draperies beautiful. He has etched several things from the antique; some of them, indeed, but indifferently. The best of his works, which I have seen, is the

Story of NIOBE, (a long, narrow print) from
POLIDORE.

MELLAN was a whimsical engraver. He shadowed entirely with parallel lines; which he winds round the muscles of his figures, and the folds of his draperies, with great variety and beauty. His manner is soft and delicate; but void of strength and effect. His compositions of course make no *whole*, though his single figures are often elegant. His saints and statues are, in general, his best pieces. There is great expression in many of the former; and his drapery is often incomparable. One of his best prints is inscribed, *Per se surgens*: and another very good one, with this strange passage from St. AUSTIN; *Ego evangelio non crederem, nisi me catholicæ ecclesiæ commoveret auctoritas*.—His head of Christ, effected by a single spiral line, is a masterly, but whimsical performance.

OSTADE's etchings, like his pictures, are admirable representations of low life. They abound in humour and expression; in which
lies

lies their merit. They have little besides to recommend them. His composition is generally very indifferent; and his execution no way remarkable. Sometimes, but seldom, you see an effect of light.

CORNELIUS BEGA etches very much in the manner of OSTADE; but with more freedom.

VAN TULDEN has nothing of the Dutch master in his design; which seems formed on the study of the antique. It is chaste, elegant, and correct. His manner is rather firm, and distinct; than free, and spirited. His principal work is, *the voyage of ULYSSES, in fifty-eight plates*; in which we have a great variety of elegant attitudes, excellent characters of heads, good drawing; and though not much effect, yet often good grouping. His drapery is heavy.

JOSEPH PARROCELLE painted battles for LEWIS XIV. He etched also several of his own designs. The best of his works are eight
small

small battles, which are very scarce. Four of these are of a size larger than the rest; of which, the *Battle*, and *Stripping the Slain*, are very fine. Of the four smaller, that entitled *Vesper* is the best.—His manner is rough, free, and masterly; and his knowledge of the effect of light considerable.—His greatest undertaking was, the *Life of Christ*, in a series of plates: but it is a hasty, and incorrect work. Most of the prints are mere sketches: and many of them, even in that light, are bad; though the freedom of the manner is pleasing in the worst of them. The best plates are the 14th, 17th, 19th, 22d, 28th, 39th, 41st, 42d, and 43d.

V. LE FEBRE etched many designs from TITIAN and JULIO ROMANO, in a very miserable manner. His drawing is bad; his drapery frittered; his lights ill-preserved; and his execution disgusting: and yet we find his works in capital collections.

BELLANGE's prints are highly finished, and his execution is not amiss. His figures also have something in them, which looks like
 grace;

grace; and his light is tolerably well massed. But his heads are ill set on; his extremities incorrectly touched; his figures badly proportioned; and, in short, his drawing in general very bad.

CLAUDE GILLOT was a French painter: but finding himself rivalled, he laid aside his pencil, and employed himself entirely in etching. His common subjects are *dances* and *revels*; adorned with satyrs, nymphs, and fauns. By giving his sylvans a peculiar cast of eye, he has introduced a new kind of character. The invention, and fancy of this master are pleasing; and his composition is often good. His manner is flight; which is the best apology for his bad drawing.

WATTEAU has great defects; and, it must be owned, great merit. He abounds in all that flutter, and affectation, which is so disagreeable in the generality of French painters. But, at the same time, we acknowledge, he draws well; gives grace and delicacy to his figures; and produces often a beautiful effect
of

of light. I speak, chiefly of such of his works, as have been engraved by others.—He etched a few slight plates himself, with great freedom and elegance. The best of them are contained in a small book of figures, in various dresses and attitudes.

CORNELIUS SCHUT excels chiefly in execution; sometimes in composition: but he knows nothing of grace; and has, upon the whole, but little merit.

WILLIAM BAUR etches with great spirit. His largest works are historical. He has given us many of the sieges and battles, which wasted Flanders in the sixteenth century. They *may* be exact, and probably they *are*; but they are rather plans than pictures; and have little to recommend them but historic truth, and the freedom of the execution. BAUR'S best prints are, characters of different nations; in which the peculiarities of each are well observed. His OVID is a poor performance.

COYPEL hath left a few prints of his own etching; the principal of which is, an *Ecce Homo*, touched with great spirit. Several of his own designs he etched, and afterwards put into the hands of engravers to finish. It is probable he overlooked the work: but we should certainly have had better prints, if we had received them pure from his own needle. What they had lost in force, would have been amply made up in spirit.

PICART was one of the most ingenious of the French engravers. His *imitations* are among the most entertaining of his works. The taste of *his day*, ran wholly in favour of antiquity: "No modern masters were worth looking at." PICART, piqued at such prejudice, etched several pieces in imitation of ancient masters; and so happily, that he almost out-did, in their own excellences, the artists whom he copied. These prints were much admired, as the works of GUIDO, REMBRANDT, and others. Having had his joke, he published them under the title of *Impostures innocentes*.

centes.—PICART's own manner is highly finished ; yet, at the same time, rich, bold, and spirited : his prints are generally small ; and most of them from the designs of others. One of the best is from that beautiful composition of POUSSIN, in which *Truth is delivered by Time, from Envy.*

ARTHUR POND, our countryman, succeeded admirably in this method of imitation ; in which he hath etched several valuable prints ; particularly two oval landscapes after SALVATOR—a monkey in red chalk after CARRACHE—two or three ruins after PANINI, and some others equally excellent.

But this method of imitation hath been most successfully practised by *Count CAYLUS*, an ingenious French nobleman ; whose works, in this way, are very voluminous. He hath ransacked the French king's cabinet ; and hath scarce left a master of any note, from whose drawings he hath not given us an excellent specimen. Infomuch, that if we had nothing remaining of those masters, but *Count CAYLUS's* works,

works, we should not want a very sufficient idea of them. So versatile is his genius, that with the same ease he presents us with an elegant outline from RAPHAEL, a rough sketch from REMBRANDT, and a delicate portrait from VANDYKE.

LE CLERC was an excellent engraver; but chiefly in miniature. He immortalized ALEXANDER, and LEWIS XIV. in plates of four or five inches long. His genius seldom exceeds these dimensions; within which he can draw up twenty thousand men with great dexterity. No artist, except CALLOT and DELLA BELLA, could touch a small figure with so much spirit. He seems to have imitated CALLOT's manner; but his stroke is neither so firm, nor so masterly.

PETER BARTOLI etched with freedom; though his manner is not agreeable. His capital work is LANFRANK's gallery.

JAC. FREII is an admirable engraver. He unites, in a great degree, strength, and softness; and comes as near the force of painting, as an engraver can well do. He has given us the strongest ideas of the works of several of the most eminent masters. He preserves the drawing, and expression of his original; and often, perhaps, improves the effect. There is a richness too in his manner, which is very pleasing. You see him in perfection, in a noble print from C. MARATTI, intitled, *In conspectu angelorum psallam tibi.*

R. V. AUDEN AERD copied many things from C. MARATTI, and other masters, in a style indeed very inferior to JAC. FREII, (whose rich execution he could not reach,) but yet with some elegance. His manner is smooth, and finished; but without effect. His drawing is good, but his lights are frittered.

S. GRIBELIN is a careful, and laborious engraver; of no extensive genius; but painfully
fully

fully exact. His works are chiefly small; the principal of which are his copies from the Banqueting-House at Whitehall; and from the Cartoons. His manner is formal; yet he has contrived to preserve the spirit of his original. I know no copies of the Cartoons so valuable as his. It is a pity he had not engraved them on a larger scale.

LE BAS etches in a clear, distinct, free manner; and has done great honour to the works of TENIERS, WOVERMAN, and BERGHEM; from whom he chiefly copied. The best of his works are after BERGHEM.

BISCHOP's etching has something very pleasing in it. It is loose, and free; and yet has strength, and richness. Many of his statues are good figures: the drawing is sometimes incorrect; but the execution is always beautiful. Many of the plates of his drawing-book are good. His greatest single work, is the representation of JOSEPH *in Egypt*; in which there are many faults, both in the drawing and effect; some of which are chargeable on himself, and others on the artist from

whom he copied; but on the whole, it is a pleasing print.

FRANCIS PERRIER was the debauched son of a goldsmith in Franche-comté. His indiscretion forcing him from home, his inclination led him to Italy. His manner of travelling thither was whimsical. He joined himself to a blind beggar, whom he agreed to lead for half his alms. At Rome, he applied to painting; and made a much greater proficiency than could have been expected from his dissipated life. He published a large collection of statues and other antiquities; which are etched in a masterly manner. The drawing is often incorrect; but the attitudes are well chosen, and the execution spirited. Many of them seem to have been done hastily; but there are marks of genius in them all.

MAROT, architect to K. WILLIAM, hath etched some statues likewise, in a masterly manner. Indeed all his works are well executed; but they consist chiefly of ornaments in the way of his profession.

FRAN.

FRAN. ROETTIERS etches in a very bold manner, and with spirit; but there is a harshness in his outline, which is disagreeable; though the less so, as his drawing is generally good. Few artists manage a crowd better; or give it more effect by a proper distribution of light. Of this management we have some judicious instances in his two capital prints, the *Assumption of the cross*, and the *Crucifixion*.

NICHOLAS DORIGNY was bred a lawyer: but not succeeding at the bar, he studied painting; and afterwards applied to engraving. His capital work is, the *Transfiguration*; which Mr. ADDISON calls the noblest print in the world. It is unquestionably a noble work; but DORIGNY seems to have exhausted his genius upon it: for he did nothing afterwards worth preserving. His Cartoons are very poor. He engraved them in his old age; and was obliged to employ assistants, who did not answer his expectation.

MASTERS IN PORTRAIT.

Among the masters in portrait, REMBRANDT takes the lead. His heads are admirable copies from nature; and perhaps the best of his works. There is great expression in them, and character.

VAN ULIET followed REMBRANDT's manner; which he hath in many things excelled. Some of his heads are exceedingly beautiful. The force which he gives to every feature, the roundness of the muscle, the spirit of the execution, the strength of the character, and the effect of the whole, are admirable.

J. LIEVENS etches in the same style. His heads are executed with great spirit; and deserve

serve a place in any collection of prints ; though they are certainly inferior to ULIET's.—ULIET, and LIEVENS etched some historical prints ; particularly the latter, (whose *Lazarus*, after REMBRANDT, is a noble work), but their portraits are their best prints.

Among the imitators of REMBRANDT, we should not forget our countryman WORLIDGE ; who has very ingeniously followed the manner of that master ; and sometimes improved upon him. No man understood the drawing of a head better.—His small prints also, from antique gems, are neat, and masterly.

Many of VAN DYKE's etchings do him great credit. They are chiefly to be found in a collection of the portraits of eminent artists, which VAN DYKE was at the expence of getting engraved. They are done slightly ; but bear the character of a master. LUKE VOSTERMAN is one of the best. It is probable VAN DYKE made the drawings for most of them : his manner is conspicuous in them all.

—A very finished etching of an *Ecce homo*, passes under the name of this master. It is a good print, but not equal to what we might have expected from VAN DYKE.

We have a few prints of Sir PETER LELY's etching likewise; but there is nothing in them that is very interesting.

R. WHITE was the principal engraver of portraits, in CHARLES the Second's reign; but his works are miserable performances. They are said to be good likenesses; and they may be so; but they are wretched prints.

BECKET and SIMONS are names which scarce deserve to be mentioned. They were in their time, mezzotinto-scrapers of note, only because there were no others.

WHITE, the mezzotinto-scrafer, son of the engraver, was an artist of great merit. He
copied

copied after Sir GODFREY KNELLER; whom he teased so much with his proofs, that it is said Sir GODFREY forbid him his house. His mezzotintos are very beautiful. BAPTISTE, WING, STURGES, and HOOPER are all admirable prints. He himself used to say, that old and young PARR were the best portraits he ever scraped. His manner was peculiar, at the time he used it: though it hath since been adopted by other masters. He first etched his plate, and then scraped it. Hence his prints preserve their spirit longer than the generality of mezzotintos.

SMITH was the pupil of BECKET; but he soon excelled his master. He was esteemed the best mezzotinto-scraper of his time; though, perhaps, inferior to WHITE. He hath left a very numerous collection of portraits: so numerous, that they are often bound in two large folios. He copied chiefly from Sir GODFREY; and is said to have had an apartment in his house.—LORD SOMERS was so fond of the works of this master; that he seldom travelled, without carrying them with him in the seat

of his coach.—Some of his best prints are two holy families, ANTHONY LEIGH, MARY MAGDALENE, SCALKEN, a half-length of Lady ELIZABETH CROMWELL, the duke of SCHOMBERG on horse-back, the countess of SALISBURY, GIBBON the statuary, and a very fine hawking piece from WYKE.—After all, it must be owned, that the best of these mezzotintos are inferior to what we have seen executed by the masters of the present age.

MELLAN's portraits are the most indifferent of his works. They want strength, spirit, and effect.

PITTERI hath lately published a set of heads, from PIAZZETA, in the style of MELLAN; but in a much finer taste, with regard both to composition, and manner. Though, like MELLAN, he never crosses his stroke; yet he has contrived to give his heads more force and spirit.

J. MORIN'S

J. MORIN's heads are engraved in a very peculiar manner. They are stippled with a graver, after the manner of mezzotinto; and have a good effect. They have force; and, at the same time, softness. Few portraits, on the whole, are better. GUIDO BENTIVOLIUS from VAN DYKE is one of the best.

J. LUTMA's heads are executed in the same way: we are told, with a chisel and mallet. They are inferior to Morin's; but are not without merit.

EDM. MARMION etched a few portraits in the manner of VAN DYKE, and probably from him; in which there is ease and freedom. He has put his name only to one of them.

WOLFGANG, a German engraver, managed his tools with softness, and delicacy; at the same time preserving a considerable degree of spirit.

spirit. But his works are scarce. I make these remarks indeed, from a single head, that of HUET, bishop of Auranches; which is the only work of his, that I have seen.

DREVET'S portraits are neat, and elegant; but laboured to the last degree. They are copied from RIGAUD, and other French masters; and abound in all that flutter, and licentious drapery, so opposite to the simple and chaste ideas of true taste. DREVET excels chiefly in copying RIGAUD'S frippery; lace, silk, fur, velvet, and other ornamental parts of drefs,

RICHARDSON hath left us several heads, which he etched for Mr. POPE, and others of his friends. They are slight, but shew the spirit of a master. Mr. POPE'S profile is the best.

VERTUE was a good antiquarian, and a worthy man, but no artist. He copied with
painful

painful exactness; in a dry, disagreeable manner, without force, or freedom. In his whole collection of heads, we can scarce pick out half a dozen, which are good.

Such an artist in mezzotinto, was FABER. He has published nothing extremely bad; and yet nothing worth collecting. *Mrs. COLLIER* is one of his best prints; and has some merit. She is leaning against a pillar; on the base of which is engraved the story of the golden apple,

HOUBRACKEN is a genius; and has given us, in his collection of English portraits, some pieces of engraving at least equal to any thing of the kind. Such are his heads of HAMBDEN, SCHOMBERG, the earl of BEDFORD, the duke of RICHMOND particularly, and some others. At the same time we must own, that he has intermixed among his works, a great number of bad prints. In his best, there is a wonderful union of softness, and freedom. A more elegant and flowing line no artist ever employed.

Our

Our countryman FRY has left behind him a few very beautiful heads in mezzotinto. They are all copied from nature; have great softness, and spirit; but want strength. Mezzotinto is not adapted to works so large, as the heads he has published.

MASTERS IN ANIMAL LIFE.

BERGHEM has a genius truly pastoral; and brings before us the most agreeable scenes of rural life. The simplicity of Arcadian manners is no where better described than in his works. We have a large collection of prints from his designs; many etched by himself, and many by other masters. Those by himself are slight, but masterly. His execution is inimitable. His cattle, which are always the distinguished part of his pieces, are well drawn, admirably characterized, and generally well grouped. Few painters excelled more in composition than BERGHEM; and yet we have more beautiful instances of it in the prints etched from him by others, than in those by himself. Among his own etchings a few small plates of sheep and goats are exceedingly valued.

J. VISSCHER

J. VISSCHER never appears to more advantage than when he copies BERGHEM. His excellent drawing, and the freedom of his execution, give a great value to his prints; which have more the air of originals, than of copies. He is a master both in etching, and engraving. His lightest etchings, though copies only, are the works of a master; and when he touches with a graver, he knows how to add strength and firmness, without destroying freedom and spirit. He might be said to have done all things well, if he had not failed in the distribution of light: it is more than probable, he has not attended to the effect of it, in many of the paintings which he has copied.

DANKER DANKERTS is another excellent copyist from BERGHEM. Every thing, that has been said of VISSCHER, may be said of him; and perhaps still in a stronger manner.—Like VISSCHER too he fails in the management of his lights.

HONDIUS, a native of Rotterdam, passed the greater part of his life in England. He painted animals chiefly; was free in his manner; extravagant in his colouring; incorrect in his drawing; ignorant of the effect of light; but great in expression. His prints therefore are better than his pictures. They possess his chief excellency, with fewer of his defects. They are executed in a neat stroke; but with great spirit; and afford strong instances of animal fury. His *hunted wolf* is an admirable print.

DU JARDIN understood the anatomy of domestic animals perhaps better than any other master. His drawing is correct; and yet the freedom of the master is preserved. He copied nature strictly, though not servilely: and has given us not only the form, but the characteristic peculiarities, of each animal. He never, indeed, like **HONDIUS**, animates his creation with the violence of savage fury. His genius takes a milder turn. All is quietness, and repose. His dogs, after their exercise,

are stretched at their ease; and the languor of a meridian sun prevails commonly through all his pieces. His composition is beautiful; and his execution, though neat, is spirited.—His works, when bound together, make a volume of about fifty leaves; among which there is scarce one bad print.

RUBENS'S huntings are undoubtedly superior on the whole, to any thing of the kind we have. There is more invention in them, and a grander style of composition, than we find any where else. I class them under his name, because they are engraved by *several* masters. But all their engravings are poor. They represent the paintings they are copied from, as a shadow does the object which projects it. There is something of the *shape*; but all the *finishing* is lost. And there is no doubt, but the awkwardnesses, the patch-work, and the grotesque characters, which every where appear in these prints, are in the originals bold fore-shortnings, grand effects of light, and noble instances of expression.—But it is as difficult to copy the flights of RUBENS, as to translate

translate those of PINDAR. The spirit of each master evaporates in the process.

WOVERMAN'S composition is generally crowded with little ornaments. There is no simplicity in his works. He wanted a chaste judgment to correct his exuberance.—VISCHER was the first who engraved prints from this artist. He chose only a few good designs; and executed them masterly.—MOYREAU undertook him next, and hath published a large collection. He hath finished them highly; but with more softness than spirit. His prints however have a neat appearance, and exhibit a variety of pleasing representations; cavalcades, marches, huntings, and encampments.

ROSA of TIVOLI etched in a very finished manner. No one out-did him in composition and execution: he is very skilful too in the management of light. His designs are all pastoral; and yet there is often a mixture of the heroic style in his composition, which is very pleasing. His prints are scarce; and, were they not so, would be valuable.

STEPHEN DE LA BELLA may be mentioned among the masters in animal life; though few of his works in this way deserve any other praise, than what arises from the elegance of the execution. In general, his animals are neither well drawn, nor justly characterized. The best of his works in animal life are some heads of camels and dromedaries.

ANTHONY TEMPESTA hath etched several plates of single horses, and of huntings. He hath given great expression to his animals; but his composition is more than ordinarily bad in these prints: nor is there in any of them the least effect of light.

J. FYT hath etched a few animals; in which we discover the drawing, and something of that strength and spirit, with which he painted. But I never saw more than two or three of his prints.

In curious collections we meet with a few of CUYP's etchings. The *pictures* of this master excel in colouring, composition, drawing, and the expression of character. His *prints* have all these excellences, except the first.

PETER DE LAER hath left us several small etchings of horses, and other animals, well characterized, and executed in a bold and masterly manner. Some of them are single figures; but when he composes, his composition is generally good, and his distribution of light seldom much amiss; often pleasing: his drawing too is commonly good.

PETER STOOP came from Lisbon with queen CATHARINE; and was admired in England, till WYCK's superior excellence in painting eclipsed him. He hath etched a book of horses, which are much valued; as there is in general, accuracy in the drawing, nature in the characters, and spirit in the execution.

REMBRANDT'S lions, which are etched in his usual style, are worthy the notice of a connoisseur.

BLOTELING'S lions are highly finished ; but with more neatness than spirit.

PAUL POTTER etched several plates of cows and horses in a masterly manner. His manner, indeed, is better than his drawing ; which, in his sheep especially, is but very indifferent : neither does he characterize them with any accuracy.

BARLOW'S etchings are numerous. His illustration of Æsop is his greatest work. There is something pleasing in the composition and manner of this master, though neither is excellent. His drawing too is very indifferent ; nor does he characterize any animal justly. His birds in general are better than his beasts.

FLAMEN has etched several plates of birds and fishes: the former are bad; the latter better than any thing of the kind we have.

I shall close this account with RIDINGER, who is one of the greatest masters in animal life. This artist has marked the characters of animals, especially of the more savage kind, with great expression. His works may be considered as natural history. He carries us into the forest among bears, and tygers; and, with the exactness of a naturalist, describes their forms, haunts, and manner of living.—His composition is generally beautiful; so that he commonly produces an agreeable whole. His landscape too is picturesque and romantic; and well adapted to the subject he treats.—On the other hand, his manner is laboured, and wants freedom. His human figures are seldom drawn with taste. His horses are ill-characterized, and worse drawn; and, indeed, his drawing, in general, is but slovenly.—The prints of this master are often real history; and represent the por-

traits of particular animals, which had been taken in hunting. We have sometimes, too, the story of the chase in High-Dutch, at the bottom of the print. The idea of historical truth adds a relish to the entertainment; and we survey the animal with new pleasure, which has given diversion to a German prince for nine hours together.—The productions of RIDINGER are very numerous; and the greater part of them good. His huntings in general, and different methods of catching animals, are the least picturesque of his works. But he meant them rather as didactic prints, than as pictures. Many of his fables are beautiful; particularly the 3d, the 7th, the 8th, and the 10th. I cannot forbear adding a particular encomium, on a book of the heads of wolves and foxes.—His most capital prints are two large uprights; one representing bears devouring a deer; the other, wild-boars reposing in a forest.

MASTERS IN LANDSCAPE.

SADLER'S landscapes have some merit in composition: they are picturesque and romantic; but the manner is dry and disagreeable; the light ill-distributed; the distances ill-kept; and the figures bad.—There were three engravers of this name; but none of them eminent. JOHN engraved a set of plates for the Bible; and many other small prints in the historical way: in which we sometimes find a graceful figure, and tolerable drawing; but, on the whole, no great merit. EGIDIUS was the engraver of landscape; and is the person here criticised. RALPH chiefly copied the designs of BASSAN; and engraved in the dry disagreeable manner of his brother.

REMBRANDT'S landscapes have very little to recommend them, besides their effect; which is often surprising. One of the most admired of them goes under the name of *The Three Trees*.

GASPER POUSSIN etched a few landscapes in a very loose, but masterly manner. It is a pity we have not more of his works.

ABRAHAM BLOEMART understood the beauty of composition, as well in landscape, as in history. But his prints have little force, through the want of a proper distribution of light. Neither is there much freedom in the execution.

HOLLAR was born at Prague; and brought into England by that great patron of arts, the earl of ARUNDEL, in CHARLES I's time. He was an artist of great merit, and in various ways: but I place him here, as his principal works

works are views of particular places ; which he copied with great truth, as he found them. If we are satisfied with *exact representation*, we have it no where better, than in HOLLAR's works. But we are not to expect pictures. His *large views* are generally bad : I might indeed say, all his *large works*. His shipping, his Ephesian matron, his Virgil, and his Juvenal, are among the worst. Many of these prints he wrought, and probably wrought hastily, for booksellers. His smaller works are often good. Among these are many views of castles, which he took on the Rhine, and the Danube ; and many views also in England. His distances are generally pleasing. In his foregrounds, which he probably took exactly as he found them, he fails most. Among his other views is a very beautiful one of London bridge, and the parts adjacent, taken somewhere near Somerset-house. HOLLAR has given us also several plates in animal life, which are good ; particularly two or three small plates of domestic fowls, wild ducks, woodcocks, and other game. Among his prints of game, there is particularly one very highly finished, in which a hare is represented hanging with a basket of birds.

His

His shells, muffs, and butterflies, are admirable. His loose etchings too are far from wanting spirit; and his imitations are excellent, particularly those after count GAUDE, CALLOT, and BARLOW. He has admirably expressed the manner of those masters—of CALLOT especially, whose *Beggars* have all the spirit of the originals, in a reduced size.—In general, however, HOLLAR is most admired as an antiquarian. We consider his works as a repository of curiosities; and records of antiquated dresses, abolished ceremonies, and edifices now in ruins. And yet many of his antiquities are elegantly touched. The Gothic ornaments of his cathedrals are often masterly. The sword of EDWARD VI. the cup of ANDREA MONTEGNA, and the vases from HOLBEIN, are all beautiful.—I have dwelt the longer on this artist, as he is in general much esteemed; and as I had an opportunity of examining two of the noblest collections of his works, I believe, in England—one in the King's library, collected, as I have heard, by king WILLIAM; the other in the library of the late duchess dowager of PORTLAND. And yet though these collections are so very numerous (each, as I remember,

con-

contained in two large volumes in folio) neither of them is complete. There were some prints in each, which were not in the other.—Notwithstanding HOLLAR was so very indefatigable, and was patronized by many people of rank, he was so very poor, that he died with an execution in his house.

STEPHEN DE LA BELLA's landscapes have little to recommend them, besides their neatness, and keeping. His composition is seldom good; and the foliage of his trees resembles bits of sponge. I speak chiefly of his larger works; for which his manner is not calculated. His neatness qualifies him better for miniature.

BOLSWERT's landscapes after REUBENS are executed in a grand style. Such a painter, and such an engraver, could not fail of producing something great. There is little variety in them: nor any of the more minute beauties arising from contrast, catching lights, and such little elegances; but every thing is simple, and great. The print, which goes
by

by the name of *The waggon*, is particularly, and deservedly admired. Of these prints we generally meet with good impressions; as the plates are engraved with great strength.

NEULANT hath etched a small book of the ruins of Rome; in which there is great simplicity, and some skill in composition, and the distribution of light: but the execution is harsh and disagreeable.

We have a few landscapes by an earl of *Sunderland*, in an elegant, loose manner. One of them, in which a Spaniard is standing on the foreground, is marked *G. & J. sculpservunt*: another *J. G.*

WATERLO is a name beyond any other in landscape. His subjects are perfectly rural. Simplicity is their characteristic. We find no great variety in them, nor stretch of fancy. He selects a few humble objects. A coppice, a corner of a forest, a winding road, or a straggling village is generally the extent of his view;

view: nor does he always introduce an off-skip. His composition is generally good, so far as it goes, and his light often well distributed; but his chief merit lies in execution; in which he is a consummate master. Every object that he touches, has the character of nature: but he particularly excels in the foliage of trees.—It is a difficult matter to meet with the larger works at least, of this master in perfection; the original plates are all retouched, and greatly injured.

SWANEVELT painted landscape at Rome; where he obtained the name of *the hermit*, from his solitary walks among the ruins of TIVOLI, and FRESCATI; among the rocky vallies of the Sabine mountains; and the beautiful wooded lakes of the Latin hills. He etched in the manner of WATERLO; but with less freedom. His trees, in particular, will bear no comparison with those of that master. But if he fell short of WATERLO in the freedom of execution, he went greatly beyond him in the dignity of design. WATERLO saw nature with a Dutchman's eye. If we except two or three of his pieces, he never went
beyond

beyond the plain simplicity of a Flemish landscape. SWANEVELT's ideas were of a nobler cast. SWANEVELT had trodden classic ground; and had warmed his imagination with the grandeur and variety of Italian views, every where ornamented with the splendid ruins of Roman architecture: but his favourite subjects seem to have been the mountain-forests, where a magnificent disposition of ground, and rock is embellished with the noblest growth of forest-trees. His composition is often good; and his lights judiciously spread. In his execution, we plainly discover two manners: whether a number of his plates have been retouched by some judicious hand; or whether he himself altered his manner in the different periods of his life.

JAMES ROUSSEAU, the disciple of SWANEVELT, was a French protestant; and fled into England from the persecution of LEWIS XIV. Here he was patronized by the duke of MONTAGUE; whose palace, now the *British Museum*, he contributed to adorn with his paintings; some of which are good. The few etchings he hath left are beautiful. He understood

derstood composition, and the distribution of light; and there is a fine taste in his landscapes; if we except perhaps only that his horizon is often taken too high. Neither can his perspective, at all times, bear a critical examination; and what is worse, it is often pedantically introduced. His figures are good in themselves, and generally well placed.—His manner is rather dry and formal.—ROUSSEAU, it may be added, was an excellent man. Having escaped the rage of persecution himself, he made it his study to lessen the sufferings of his distressed brethren; by distributing among them great part of the produce of his genius. Such an anecdote, in the life of a painter, should not be omitted, even in so short a review as this.

We now and then meet with an etching by RUYSDALE; but I never saw any, that was not exceedingly slight.

J. LUTMA hath etched a few small landscapes in a masterly manner; which discover
some

some skill in composition, and the management of light.

ISRAEL SYLVESTRE has given us a great variety of small views (some indeed of a larger size) of ruins, churches, bridges and castles, in France and Italy. They are exceedingly neat, and touched with great spirit. This master can give beauty even to the outlines of a modern building; and what is more, he gives it without injuring the truth: insomuch that I have seen a gentleman just come from his travels, pick out many of SYLVESTRE'S views, one by one, (though he had never seen them before,) merely from his acquaintance with the buildings. To the praise of this master it may be farther added, that in general he forms his view into an agreeable whole; and if his light is not always well distributed, there are so many beauties in his execution, that the eye cannot find fault. His works are very numerous, and few of them are bad. In trees he excels least.

The etchings of CLAUDE LORRAIN are below his character. His execution is bad; and there is a dirtiness in it, which displeases: his trees are heavy; his lights seldom well-massed; and his distances only sometimes observed.—The truth is, CLAUDE'S talents lay upon his pallet; and he could do little without it.—His *Via sacra* is one of his best prints. The trees and ruins on the left, are beautifully touched; and the whole (though rather formal) would have been pleasing, if the foreground had been in shadow.—After all, it is probable, I may not have seen some of his best prints. I have heard a sea-port much praised for the effect of a setting sun; and another print, in which a large group of trees fill the centre, with water, and cattle on the foreground; and a distance, on each side of the trees. But I do not recollect seeing either of these prints.

PERELLE has great merit. His fancy is fruitful; and supplies him with a richness, and variety in his views, which nature seldom exhibits.

hibits. It is indeed too exuberant; for he often confounds the eye with too great a luxuriance. His manner is his own; and it is difficult to say, whether it excels most in richness, strength, elegance, or freedom. His trees are particularly beautiful; the foliage is loose, and the ramification easy. And yet it must be confessed, that PERELLE is rather a mannerist, than a copier of nature. His views are all ideal; his trees are of one family; and his light, though generally well distributed, is sometimes affected: it is introduced as a spot; and is not properly melted into the neighbouring shade by a middle tint. Catching lights, used sparingly, are beautiful: PERELLE affects them.—These remarks are made principally on the works of *Old* PERELLE: For there were three engravers of this name; the grandfather, the father, and the son. They all engraved in the same style; but the juniors, instead of improving the family taste, degenerated. The grandfather is the best, and the grandson the worst.

VANDER CABEL seems to have been a careless artist; and discovers great slovenliness
in

in many of his works : but in those which he has studied, and carefully executed, there is great beauty. His manner is loose, and masterly. It wants effect ; but abounds in freedom. His trees are often particularly well managed ; and his small pieces, in general, are the best of his works.

In WEIROTTER we see great neatness, and high finishing ; but often at the expence of spirit and effect. He seems to have understood best the management of trees ; to which he always gives a beautiful looseness.—There is great effect in a small moon-light by this master : the whole is in dark shade, except three figures on the foreground.

OVERBECK etched a book of Roman ruins : which are in general good. They are pretty large, and highly finished. His manner is free, his light often well distributed, and his composition agreeable.

GENOEL'S landscapes are rather free sketches, than finished prints. In that light they are beautiful. No effect is aimed at: but the free manner in which they are touched, is pleasing; and the composition is in general good, though often crowded.

BOTH'S taste in landscape is elegant. His ideas are grand; his composition beautiful; and his execution rich and masterly in a high degree. His light is not always well distributed. His figures are excellent. We regret that we have not more of his works; for they are certainly, on the whole, among the best landscapes we have.

MARCO RICCI'S works, which are numerous, have little merit. His human figures indeed are good, and his trees tolerable; but he produces no effect, his manner is disgusting, his cattle ill-drawn, and his distances ill-kept.

LE VEAU'S landscapes are highly finished: they are engraved with great softness, elegance, and spirit. The keeping of this master is particularly well observed. His subjects too are well chosen; and his prints indeed, in general, make beautiful furniture.

ZUINGG engraves in a manner very like LE VEAU; but not quite so elegantly.

ZEEMAN was a Dutch painter; and excelled in sea-coasts, beaches, and distant land; which he commonly adorned with skiffs, and fishing-boats. His prints are copies from his pictures. His execution is neat, and his distances well kept: but he knows nothing of the distribution of light. His figures too are good, and his skiffs admirable. In his *sea-pieces* he introduces larger vessels; but his prints in this style are commonly awkward, and disagreeable.

VANDIEST left behind him a few rough sketches, which are executed with great freedom.

GOUPY very happily caught the manner of SALVATOR ; and in some things excelled him. There is a richness in his execution, and a spirit in his trees, which SALVATOR wants. But his figures are bad. Very gross instances, not only of indelicacy of outline, but even of bad drawing, may be found in his print of PORSENNA, and in that of DIANA. Landscape is his fort ; and his best prints are those which go under the titles of the *Latrones*, the *Augurs*, *Tobit*, *Hagar*, and its companion.

PIRANESI has given us a larger collection of Roman antiquities, than any other master ; and has added to his ruins a great variety of modern buildings. The critics say, he has trusted too much to his eye ; and that his proportions and perspective are often faulty. He seems to be a rapid genius ; and we are told,

told, the drawings, which he takes on the spot, are as slight and rough as possible: the rest he makes out by memory and invention. His invention indeed is wonderful; and I know not whether such of his works as are entirely of his own invention are not the best. From so rapid, and voluminous an artist, indeed we cannot expect much correctness: his works complete, sell at least for fifty pounds.—But the great excellence of this artist lies in execution; of which he is a consummate master. His stroke is firm, free, and bold, in the greatest degree; and his manner admirably calculated to produce a grand, and rich effect. But the effects he produces are rarely seen, except in single objects. A defaced capital, a ruined wall, or broken fluting, he touches with great spirit. He expresses even the stains of weather-beaten marble: and those of his prints, in which he has an opportunity of displaying expression in this way, are generally the best. His stroke has much the appearance of etching; but I have been informed that it is chiefly engraved, and that he makes great use of the dry needle.—His faults are many. His horizon is often taken too high; his views are frequently ill-chosen; his objects crowded; his forms ill-shaped. Of the distribution of light he

has little knowledge. Now and then we meet with an effect of it ; which makes us only lament, that in such masterly performances it is found so seldom. His figures are bad : they are ill-drawn, and the drapery hangs in tatters. It is the more unhappy, as his prints are populous. His trees are in a paltry style ; and his skies hard, and frittered.

Our celebrated countryman HOGARTH cannot properly be omitted in a catalogue of engravers ; and yet he ranks in none of the foregoing classes. With this apology I shall introduce him here.

The works of this master abound in true humour ; and satire, which is generally well directed. They are admirable moral lessons, and afford a fund of entertainment suited to every taste : a circumstance, which shews them to be just copies of nature. We may consider them too as valuable repositories of the manners, customs, and dresses of the present age. What amusement would a collection of this kind afford, drawn from every period of the history of Britain ?—How far the works of HOGARTH will bear a *critical examination*, may be the subject of a little more inquiry.

In

In *design* HOGARTH was seldom at a loss. His invention was fertile; and his judgment accurate. An improper incident is rarely introduced; a proper one rarely omitted. No one could tell a story better; or make it, in all its circumstances, more intelligible. His genius, however, it must be owned, was suited only to *low*, or *familiar* subjects. It never soared above *common* life: to subjects naturally sublime; or which from antiquity, or other accidents borrowed dignity, he could not rise.

In *composition* we see little in him to admire. In many of his prints, the deficiency is so great, as plainly to imply a want of all principle; which makes us ready to believe, that when we do meet with a beautiful group, it is the effect of chance. In one of his minor works, the *idle 'prentice*, we seldom see a crowd more beautifully managed, than in the last print. If the sheriff's officers had not been placed in a line, and had been brought a little lower in the picture, so as to have formed a pyramid with the cart, the composition had been unexceptionable; and yet the first print of this work is so striking an instance of disagreeable composition, that it is amazing, how an artist, who had any idea of beautiful forms,

forms, could suffer so unmasterly a performance to leave his hands.

Of the *distribution of light* HOGARTH had as little knowledge as of *composition*. In some of his pieces we see a good effect; as in the *execution* just mentioned: in which, if the figures at the right and left corners, had been *kept down* a little, the light would have been beautifully distributed on the foreground, and a fine secondary light spread over part of the crowd: but at the same time there is so obvious a deficiency in point of effect, in most of his prints, that it is very evident he had no principles.

Neither was HOGARTH a master of *drawing*. Of the muscles and anatomy of the head and hands he had perfect knowledge; but his trunks are often badly moulded, and his limbs ill set on. I tax him with plain bad drawing; I speak not of the niceties of anatomy, and elegance of out-line: of these indeed he knew nothing; nor were they of use in that mode of design which he cultivated: and yet his figures, on the whole, are inspired with so much life, and meaning; that the eye is kept in good humour, in spite of its inclination to find fault.

The

The author of the *Analysis of Beauty*, it might be supposed, would have given us more instances of *grace*, than we find in the works of HOGARTH; which shews strongly that theory and practice are not always united. Many opportunities his subjects naturally afford of introducing graceful attitudes; and yet we have very few examples of them. With instances of *picturesque grace* his works abound.

Of his *expression*, in which the force of his genius lay, we cannot speak in terms too high. In every mode of it he was truly excellent. The passions he thoroughly understood; and all the effects which they produce in every part of the human frame: he had the happy art also of conveying his ideas with the same precision, with which he conceived them.— He was excellent too in expressing any humorous oddity, which we often see stamped upon the human face. All his heads are cast in the very mould of nature. Hence that endless variety, which is displayed through his works: and hence it is, that the difference arises between *his* heads, and the affected caricatures of *those* masters, who have sometimes amused themselves with patching together an assemblage of features from their own ideas.

Such

Such are SPANIOLET's; which, though admirably executed, appear plainly to have no archetypes in nature. HOGARTH's, on the other hand, are collections of natural curiosities. The *Oxford-heads*, the *physician's-arms*, and some of his other pieces, are expressly of this humorous kind. They are truly comic; though ill-natured effusions of mirth: more entertaining than SPANIOLET's, as they are pure nature; but less innocent, as they contain ill-directed ridicule.—But the species of expression, in which this master perhaps most excels, is that happy art of catching those peculiarities of air, and gesture, which the ridiculous part of every profession contract; and which, for that reason, become characteristic of the whole. His counsellors, his undertakers, his lawyers, his usurers, are all conspicuous at sight. In a word, almost every profession may see in his works, that particular species of affectation, which they should most endeavour to avoid.

The execution of this master is well suited to his subjects, and manner of treating them. He etches with great spirit; and never gives one unnecessary stroke. For myself, I greatly more value the works of his own needle, than
those

those high-finished prints, on which he employed other engravers. For as the production of an effect is not his talent; and as this is the chief excellence of high-finishing; his own rough manner is certainly preferable; in which we have most of the force, and spirit of his expression. The *manner* in none of his works pleases me so well, as in a small print of a corner of a play-house. There is more spirit in a work of this kind, struck off at once, warm from the imagination, than in all the cold correctness of an elaborate engraving. If all his works had been executed in this style, with a few improvements in the composition, and the management of light, they would certainly have been a more valuable collection of prints than they are. The *Rake's Progress*, and some of his other works, are both etched and engraved by himself: they are well done; but it is plain he meant them as furniture. As works designed for a critic's eye, they would have been better without the engraving; except a few touches in a *very few* places. The want of effect too would have been less conspicuous, which in his highest finished prints is disagreeably striking.

C H A P. IV.

Remarks on particular Prints.

HAVING thus examined the characters of several masters, I shall now make a few remarks on some particular prints, by way of illustrating the observations that have been made. The first print I shall criticize, is

THE RESURRECTION OF LAZARUS, BY
BLOEMART.

With regard to design, this print has great merit. The point of time is very judiciously chosen. It is a point between the first command, *Lazarus, come forth*; and the second, *Loose him, and let him go*. The astonishment of the two sisters is now over. The predominant passion is gratitude; which is discovering itself in praise. One of the attendants is telling

the stupified man, "That is your sister." Himself, collecting his scattered ideas, directs his gratitude to Christ. Jesus directs it to heaven. So far the design is good. But what are those idle figures on the right hand; and on the left? Some of them seem no way concerned in the action. Two of the principal are introduced as grave-diggers; but even in that capacity they were unwanted; for *the place*, we are told, *was a cave, and a stone lay upon it*. When a painter is employed on a barren subject, he must make up his groups as he is able; but there was no barrenness here: the artist might, with propriety, have introduced, in the room of the grave-diggers, some of the Pharisaical party maligning the action. Such, we are told, were on the spot; and, as they are figures of consequence in the story, they ought not to have been shoved back, as they are, among the appendages of the piece.

The *composition* is almost faultless. The principal group is finely disposed. It opens in a beautiful manner, and discovers every part. It is equally beautiful, when considered in combination with the figures on the left hand.

The *light* is but ill-distributed, though the figures are disposed to receive the most beautiful effect

effect of it. The whole is one glare. It had been better, if all the figures on the elevated ground, on the right, had been in strong shadow. The extended arm, the head and shoulder of the grave-digger, might have received catching lights. A little more light might have been thrown on the principal figure; and a little less on the figure kneeling. The remaining figures, on the left, should have been *kept down*. Thus the light would have centered strongly on the capital group, and would have faded gradually away.

The single figures are in general good. The principal one indeed is not so capital as might be wished. The character is not quite pleasing; the right arm is awkwardly introduced, if not ill-drawn; and the whole disagreeably incumbered with drapery.—Lazarus is very fine: the drawing, the expression, and grace of the figure are all good.—The figure kneeling contrasts with the group.—The grave-diggers are both admirable. It is a pity, they should be incumbrances only.

The *drawing* is in general good: yet there seems to be something amiss in the pectoral muscles of the grave-digger on the right. The hands too of almost all the figures are con-

strained and awkward. Few of them are in natural action.

The *manner*, which is mere engraving, without any etching, is strong, distinct, and expressive.

THE DEATH OF POLYCRATES; BY
SALVATOR ROSA.

The *story* is well told: every part is fully engaged in the subject, and properly subordinate to it.

The *disposition* is agreeable. The contrivance of the groups, falling one into another, is pleasing: and yet the form would have been more beautiful, if a ladder with a figure upon it, a piece of loose drapery, a standard, or some other object, had been placed on the left side of the cross, to have filled up that formal vacancy, in the shape of a right-angle, and to have made the pyramid more complete. The groups themselves are simple and elegant. The three figures on horse-back indeed are bad. A line of heads is always unpleasing.

There is little idea of *keeping*. The whole is too much one surface; which might have been prevented by more force on the fore-ground, and a slighter sky.

The *light* is distributed without any judgment. It might perhaps have been improved, if the group of the soldier resting on his shield, had been in shadow; with a few catching lights. This shadow, passing through the label, might have extended over great part of the foreground above it; by which we should have had a body of shadow to balance the light of the centre-group. The lower figures of the equestrian-group might have received a middle tint, with a few strong touches; the upper figures might have caught the light, to detach them from the ground.—There are some lights too in the sky, which would be better removed.

With regard to the figures taken separately, they are almost unexceptionably good. We seldom indeed see so many good figures in any collection of such a number. The young soldier leaning over his shield; the other figures of that group; the soldier pointing, in the middle of the picture; and the figure behind him spreading his hands, are all in the highest degree elegant, and graceful. The distant figures too are beautiful. The expression, in the whole body of the spectators, is striking. Some are more, and some less affected; but every

every one in a degree.—All the figures, however, are not faultless. POLYCRATES hangs ungracefully on his cross: his body is composed of parallel lines, and right angles. His face is strongly marked with agony: but his legs are disproportioned to his body.—The three lower figures of the equestrian-group have little beauty.—One of the equestrian figures also, that nearest the cross, is formal and displeasing: and as to a horse, SALVATOR seems to have had very little idea of the proportion and anatomy of that animal.—Indeed the *whole* of this corner of the print is bad; and I know not whether the composition would not be improved by the removal of it.

The scenery is beautiful. The rock broken, and covered with shrubs at the top; and afterwards spreading into one grand, and simple shade, is in itself a pleasing object; and affords an excellent back-ground to the figures.

The *execution* of this print is equal to that of any of SALVATOR's works.

THE TRIUMPH OF SILENUS; BY PETER
TESTA.

P. TESTA seems, in this elegant and masterly performance, as far as his sublime ideas can be comprehended, to have intended a satire on the indulgence of inordinate desires.

The *design* is perfect. Silenus representing drunkenness, is introduced in the middle of the piece, holding an ivy-crown, and supported by his train, in all the pomp of unwieldy majesty. Before him dance a band of bacchanalian rioters; some of them, as described by the poets,

— inter pocula læti,
Mollibus in pratis, *unctos saliere per utres.*

Intemperance, Debauchery, and unnatural Lusts complete the immoral festival. In the offskip rises the temple of Priapus; and hard-by a mountain, dedicated to lewdness, nymphs, and satyrs.—In the heavens are represented the

Moors

Moon and *Stars* pushing back the *Sun*. This group is introduced in various attitudes of surprize, and fear. The Moon is hiding her face; and one of her companions, extinguishing a torch—all implying, that such revels, as are here described, dreaded the approach of day.

The *disposition* has less merit; yet is not unpleasing. The group, on the left, and the *several parts* of it, are happily disposed. The group of dancers, on the other side, is crowded, and ill-shaped. The disposition might, perhaps, have had a better effect, if an elegant canopy had been held over SILENUS; which would have been no improper appendage; and, by forming the apex of a pyramid over the principal figure, would have given more variety and beauty to the whole.

The *light*, with regard to *particular figures*, is just, and beautiful. But such a light, at best, gives us only the idea of a picture examined by a candle. Every figure, as you hold the candle to it, appears well lighted; but instead of an *effect* of light, you have only a succession of *spots*. Indeed the light is not only ill, but absurdly distributed. The upper part is enlightened by one sun, and the lower part by another; the direction of the light

being different in each.—Should we endeavour to amend it, it might be better perhaps to leave out the Sun; and to represent him, by his symbols, as *approaching* only. The sky-figures would of course receive catching lights, and might be left nearly as they are. The figure of *Rain* under the *Moon* should be in shadow. The bear too, and the lion's head should be *kept down*. Thus there would be nothing glaring in the celestial figures. SILENUS, and his train, might be enlightened by a strong torch-light, carried by the dancing figures. The light would then fall nearly as it does, on the principal group. The other figures should be *brought down* to a middle tint. This kind of light would naturally produce a gloom in the background, which would have a good effect.

With regard to the figures taken separately, they are conceived with such classical purity, and simplicity of taste; so elegant in the drawing, and so graceful in every attitude; that if I were obliged to fix upon any print, as an example of all the beauties which single figures are capable of receiving, I should almost be tempted to give the preference to this.

The

The most striking instances of fine *drawing* are seen in the principal figure ; in the legs of the figure that supports him ; and in those of the figure dancing with the pipes ; in the man and woman behind the centaur ; in the figure in the clouds, with his right hand over his knee ; and particularly in that bold fore-shortened figure on the right of the Sun.

Instances of *expression* we have in the unwieldiness of SILENUS. He appears so dead a weight, so totally unelastic, that every part of him, which is not supported, sinks with its own gravity. The sensibility too with which his bloated body, like a quagmire, feels every touch, is strongly expressed in his countenance. The figure, which supports him, expresses strongly the labour of the action. The dancing figures are all well characterized. The pushing figures also in the sky are marked with great expression ; and above all the threatening figure, represented in the act of drawing a bow.

With regard to *grace*, every figure, at least every capital one, is agreeable ; if we except only that figure, which lies kicking its legs upon the ground. But we have the strongest instances of grace in the figure dancing with

the pipes ; in the man and woman behind the centaur, (who, it is not improbable, might be designed for BACCHUS and ARIADNE ;) and in the boy lying on the ground.

With regard to *execution*, we rarely see an instance of it in greater perfection. Every head, every muscle, and every extremity is touched with infinite spirit. The very appendages are fine ; and the stone-pines, which adorn the background, are marked with such taste and precision, as if landscape had been this artist's only study.

SMITH'S PORTRAIT OF THE DUKE OF
SCHOMBERG ; FROM KNELLER.

KNELLER, even when he laid himself out to excel, was often but a tawdry painter. His equestrian portrait of king WILLIAM, at Hampton-court, is a very unmasterly performance: the composition is bad; the colouring gaudy; the whole is void of effect, and there is scarce a good figure in the piece.—The composition before us is more pleasing, though the effect is little better. An equestrian figure, at best, is an awkward subject. The legs of a horse are great incumbrances in grouping. VANDYKE, indeed, has managed king CHARLES the First, on horseback, with great judgment: and RUBENS too, at Hampton-court, has made a noble picture of the duke of ALVA; though his horse is ill drawn.—In the print before us the figure fits with grace and dignity; but the horse is no Bucephalus: his character is only that

that of a managed pad. The bush, growing by the duke's truncheon, is a trifling circumstance; and helps to break, into more parts, a composition already too much broken.—The *execution* is throughout excellent; and though the parts are rather too small for mezzotinto, yet SMITH has given them all their force.

PETHER'S MEZZOTINTO OF REMBRANDT'S
JEWISH RABBI.

The character is that of a stern, haughty man, big with the idea of his own importance. The *rabbi* is probably fictitious; but the *character* was certainly taken from nature. There is great dignity in it; which in a work of REMBRANDT'S is the more extraordinary.—The full expression of it is given us in the print. The unelastic heaviness of age, which is so well described in the original, is as well preserved in the copy. The three equidistant lights on the head, on the ornament, and on the hands, are disagreeable: in the print they could not be removed; but it might have been judicious to have *kept down* the two latter a little more.—With regard to the execution, every part is scraped with the utmost softness, and delicacy. The muscles are round and plump; and the insertions of them, which in an old face are very apparent, are well expressed.

pressed. Such a variety of middle tints, and melting lights, were difficult to manage; and yet they are managed with great tenderness. The looseness of the beard is masterly. The hands are exactly those of a fat old man. The stern eyes are full of life; and the nose and mouth are admirably touched. The separation of the lips in some parts, and the adhesion of them in others, are characteristic strokes; and happily preserved. The folds and lightness of the turban are very elegant. The robe, about the shoulder, is unintelligible, and ill managed: but this was the painter's fault.—In a word, when we examine this very beautiful mezzotinto, we must acknowledge, that no engraving can equal it in softness, and delicacy.

HONDIUS'S HUNTED WOLF.

The composition, in this little print, is good; and yet there is too much similitude, in the direction of the bodies of the several animals. The group also is too much broken, and wants solidity. The horizon is taken too high; unless the dimensions of the print had been higher. The rising ground, above the wolf's head, had been offskip enough: and yet the rock, which rises higher, is so beautifully touched; that it would be a pity to remove it.—The *light* is distributed without any judgment. It might have been improved, if all the interstices among the legs, and heads of the animals, had been *kept down*; and the shadow made very strong under the fawn, and the wounded dog. This would have given a bold relief to the figures; and might, without any other alteration, have produced a good effect.—The *drawing* is not faultless. The legs and body of the wounded dog are inaccurate: nor does the attacking dog stand

stand firm upon his right leg.—With regard to *expression*, HONDIUS has exerted his full force. The expression, both of the wounded dog, and of the wolf, is admirable: but the expression of the attacking dog is a most bold and masterly copy from nature. His attitude shews every nerve convulsed; and his head is a masterpiece of animal fury.—We should add, that the slaughtered animal is so ill characterized, that we scarce know what it is.—The *execution* is equal to the expression. It is neat, and highly finished; but discovers in every touch the spirit of a master.

THE FIFTH PLATE OF DU JARDIN'S
ANIMALS.

The *design*, though humble, is beautiful. The two dogs reposing at noon, after the labour of the morning, the implements of fowling, the fictitious hedge, and the loop-holes through it, all correspond; and agreeably tell the little history of the day.—The *composition* also is good: though it might have been better, if another dog, or something equivalent, had been introduced in the vacancy at the left corner. This would have given the group of dogs a better form. The nets, and fowling-pieces are judiciously added; and make an agreeable shape with the dogs. The hedge also adds another pyramidal form; which would have been more pleasing if the left corner of the reeds had been a little higher.—The *light* is well distributed; only there is too much of it. The farther dog might have been *taken down*
L a little;

WATERLOO'S TOBIAS.

The landscape I mean, is an upright near twelve inches, by ten. On the near ground stands an oak, which forms a diagonal through the print. The second distance is composed of a rising ground, connected with a rock, which is covered with shrubs. The oak, and the shrubs make a vista, through which appears an extensive view into the country. The figures, which consist of an angel, Tobias, and a dog, are descending a hill, which forms the second distance. The print, with this description, cannot be mistaken.—The *composition* is very pleasing. The trees, on the foreground, spreading over the top of the print, and sloping to a point at the bottom, give the beautiful form of an inverted pyramid: which, in trees especially, has often a fine effect. To this form the inclined plane, on which the figures stand, and which is beautifully broken, is a good contrast. The rock approaches to a

perpendicular, and the distance to an horizontal line. All together make such a combination of beautiful and contrasting lines, that the whole is pleasing. If I should find fault with any thing, it is the regularity of the rocks. There is no variety in parallels; and it had been very easy to have broken them.—The *keeping* is well preserved. The second and third distances are both judiciously managed. The *light* is well disposed. To prevent heaviness, it is introduced upon the tree, both at the top and at the bottom; but it is properly *kept down*. A mass of shade succeeds over the second distance; and the water. The light breaks, in a blaze, on the bottom of the rock, and masses the *whole*. The trees, shrubs, and upper part of the rock are happily thrown into a middle tint. Perhaps the effect of the distant country might have been better, if the light had been *kept down*; leaving only one easy catching light upon the town, and the rising ground on which it stands.—The *execution* is exceedingly beautiful. No artist had a happier manner of expressing trees than WATERLO; and the tree before us is one of his capital works. The shape of it we have already criticized. The

bole

bole and ramification are as beautiful as the shape. The foliage is a masterpiece. Such a union of strength, and lightness is rarely found. The extremities are touched with great tenderness; the strong masses of light are relieved with shadows equally strong; and yet ease, and softness are preserved. The foreground is highly enriched; and indeed the whole print, and every part of it, is full of art, and full of nature.

different from that of the first WATERBURY had nothing in view but to form an accurate picture. The first which he intended, unconnected with his subject, gave only to establish it. But as the work was confined within narrow lines. He had a country to describe, and a story to tell. The country is the country of Governor, a Dutch town, with a view of an immense park, thrown up against the sea. The town is the town of that park; which was taken through in three pieces by the violence of a storm. The subject was great and difficult; and yet the artist has executed himself in a masterly manner. The town of Governor fills the distance of the country is spread with a deluge; the sky with a tempest; and the prospect is the park appear in all their horrors.—I am, &c.

THE DELUGE AT COEVERDEN, BY ROMAN

LE HOOGHE,

This is an historical landscape, a style very different from that of the last. WATERLOO had nothing in view, but to form an agreeable picture. The figures, which he introduced, unconnected with his subject, serve only to embellish it. But LE HOOGHE was confined within narrower lines. He had a *country* to describe, and a *story* to tell. The *country* is the environs of Coeverden, a Dutch town, with a view of an immense bank, thrown up against the sea. The *story*, is the ruin of that bank; which was broken through in three places, by the violence of a storm. The subject was great and difficult; and yet the artist has acquitted himself in a masterly manner. The town of Coeverden fills the distant view. The country is spread with a deluge; the sky with a tempest; and the breaches in the bank appear in all their horror.—The *composition,*

tion, in the distant and middle parts, is as pleasing as such an extensive subject can be. An elevated horizon, which is always displeasing, was necessary here to give a distinct view of the whole.—The *light* too is thrown over the distant parts in good masses.—The *expression* of the figures, of the horses especially, is very strong: those, which the driver is turning, to avoid the horrid chasm before him, are impressed with the wildest character of terror: and, indeed, the whole scene of distress, and the horrible confusion in every part of it, are admirably described.—The *execution* is good, though not equal to that of many of LE HOOGHE's works. It may be added, that the shape of the print is bad. A little more length would have enlarged the idea; and the town would have stood better, not quite in the middle.—But what is most faulty, is the disproportion, and littleness of the foreground on the right. The spirit, which the artist had maintained through the whole description, seems here to flag. Whereas *here* he should have closed the whole with some noble confusion; which would have set off the distant parts, and struck the spectator with the strongest images of horror. Instead of this,

we are presented with a few pigs, and calves
floundering in the water. The thought seems
borrowed from OVID. In the midst of a world
in ruins, *Nat lupus inter oves.*

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HOGARTH'S RAKE'S PROGRESS.

The first print of this capital work is an excellent representation of a young heir, taking possession of a miser's effects. The passion of avarice, which hoards every thing, without distinction, what is and what is not valuable, is admirably described.—The *composition*, though not excellent, is not unpleasing. The principal group, consisting of the young gentleman, the taylor, the appraiser, the papers, and chest, is well shaped: but the eye is hurt with the disagreeable regularity of three heads nearly in a line, and at equal distances.—The *light* is not ill disposed. It falls on the principal figures: but the effect might have been improved. If the extreme parts of the mass (the white apron on one side, and the memorandum-book on the other) had been in shade, the *repose* had been less injured. The detached parts of a group should rarely catch a strong body of light.—We have no striking

striking instances of *expression* in this print. The principal figure is unmeaning. There are several modes of expression, very suitable to the character, under which he is represented. He might have entertained himself with an old wig, or some other object of his father's attention—or he might have been grinning over a bag of money—or, as he is introduced dismissing a girl he had debauched, he might have returned the old woman's threatening with a sneer. The only figure, which displays the true *vis comica* of HOGARTH, is the appraiser fingering the gold. We enter at once into his character.—The young woman might have furnished the artist with an opportunity of presenting a graceful figure; which would have been more pleasing. The figure she has introduced, is by no means an object of allurements.—The *perspective* is accurate; but affected. So many windows, and open doors, may show the author's learning; but they break the background, and injure the simplicity of it.

The second print introduces our hero into all the dissipation of modern life. We became first acquainted with him, when a boy of eighteen.

eighteen. He is now of age; has entirely thrown off the clownish school-boy; and assumes the man of fashion. Instead of the country taylor, who took measure of him for his father's mourning, he is now attended by French-barbers, French-tailors, poets, milliners, jockies, bullies, and the whole retinue of a fine gentleman.—The *expression*, in this print, is wonderfully great. The—dauntless front of the bully; the keen eye, and elasticity of the fencing-master; and the simpering importance of the dancing-master are admirably expressed. The last is perhaps rather a little *outré*. The architect is a strong copy from nature.—The *composition* seems to be entirely subservient to the expression.—It appears, as if HOGARTH had sketched, in his memorandum-book, all the characters which he has here introduced, but was at a loss how to group them: and chose rather to introduce them in detached figures, as he had sketched them, than to lose any part of the expression by combining them.—The *light* is ill distributed. It is spread indiscriminately over the print, and destroys the *whhole*.—The *execution* is good. It is elaborate, but free.—The satire on operas, though it may be well directed, is forced and unnatural.

The third plate carries us still deeper into the history. We meet our hero engaged in one of his evening amusements. This print, on the whole, is no very extraordinary effort of genius.—The *design* is good; and may be a very exact description of the humours of a brothel.—The *composition* too is not amiss. But we have few of those masterly strokes which distinguish the works of HOGARTH. The whole is plain history. The lady setting the world on fire, is the best thought: and there is some humour in furnishing the room with a set of Cæsars; and not placing them in order.—The *light* is ill managed. By a few alterations, which are obvious, particularly by throwing the lady dressing, into the shade, the disposition of it might have been tolerable. But still we should have had an absurdity to answer, whence comes it? Here is light in abundance; but no visible source.—*Expression* we have very little through the whole print. That of the principal figure is the best. The ladies have all the air of their profession; but no variety of character. HOGARTH'S women are, in general, very inferior

inferior to his men. For which reason I prefer the *nake's progress* to the *barlot's*. The female face indeed has seldom strength of feature enough to admit the strong markings of expression.

Very disagreeable accidents often befall gentlemen of pleasure. An event of this kind is recorded in the fourth print; which is now before us. Our hero going, in full dress, to pay his compliments at court, on St. David's day, was accosted in the rude manner which is here represented.—The *composition* is good. The form of the group, made up of the figures in action, the chair, and the lamp-lighter, is pleasing. Only, here we have an opportunity of remarking, that a group is disgusting when the extremities of it are heavy. A group in some respect should resemble a tree. The heavier part of the foliage (the *cup*, as the landscape-painter calls it) is always near the middle: the outside branches, which are relieved by the sky, are light and airy. An inattention to this rule has given a heaviness to the group before us. The two bailiffs, the woman, and the chairman, are all huddled together

together in that part of the group which should have been the lightest; while the middle part, where the hand holds the door, wants strength and consistence. It may be added too, that the four heads, in the form of a diamond, make an unpleasing shape. All regular figures should be studiously avoided.—The *light* had been well distributed, if the bailiff holding the arrest, and the chairman, had been a little lighter, and the woman darker. The glare of the white apron is disagreeable.—We have, in this print, some beautiful instances of *expression*. The surprize and terror of the poor gentleman is apparent in every limb, as far as is consistent with the fear of discomposing his dress. The insolence of power in one of the bailiffs, and the unfeeling heart, which can jest with misery, in the other, are strongly marked. The self-importance too of the Welshman is not ill portrayed; who is chiefly introduced to settle the chronology of the story.—In point of *grace*, we have nothing striking. HOGARTH might have introduced a degree of it in the female figure; at least he might have contrived to vary the heavy and unpleasing form of her drapery.—The *perspective* is good, and makes
an

an agreeable shape.—I cannot leave this print without remarking the *falling band-box*. Such representations of quick motion are absurd; and every moment, the absurdity grows stronger. Objects of this kind are beyond the power of representation.

Difficulties crowd so fast upon our hero, that at the age of twenty-five, which he seems to have attained in the fifth plate, we find him driven to the necessity of marrying a woman, whom he detests, for her fortune. The *composition* here is good; and yet we have a disagreeable regularity in the climax of the three figures, the maid, the bride, and the bridegroom.—The *light* is not ill distributed. The principal figure too is *graceful*; and there is strong *expression* in the seeming tranquillity of his features. He hides his contempt of the object before him as well as he can; and yet he cannot do it. She too has as much meaning as can appear through the deformity of her features. The clergyman's face we are well acquainted with, and also his wig; though we cannot pretend to say, where we have seen either. The clerk too is an admirable fellow.

—The

—The *perspective* is well understood ; but the church is too small ; and the wooden post, which seems to have no use, divides the picture disagreeably.—The creed lost, the commandments broken, and the poor's-box obstructed by a cobweb, are all excellent strokes of humour.

The fortune, which our adventurer has just received, enables him to make one push more at the gaming table. He is exhibited, in the sixth print, venting curses on his folly for having lost his last stake.—This is on the whole, perhaps, the best print of the set. The horrid scene it describes, was never more inimitably drawn. The *composition* is artful, and natural. If the shape of the whole be not quite pleasing, the figures are so well grouped, and with so much ease and variety, that you cannot take offence.—In point of light, it is more culpable. There is not shade enough among the figures to balance the glare. If the neck-cloth, and weepers of the gentleman in mourning had been removed, and his hands thrown into shade, even that alone would have improved the effect.—The *expression*, in almost

almost every figure, is admirable; and the whole is a strong representation of the human mind in a storm. Three stages of that species of madness, which attends gaming, are here described. On the first shock, all is inward dismay. The ruined gamester is represented leaning against a wall, with his arms across, lost in an agony of horror. Perhaps never passion was described with so much force. In a short time this horrible gloom bursts into a storm of fury: he tears in pieces what comes next him; and kneeling down, imprecates curses on himself. He next attacks others; every one in his turn whom he imagines to have been instrumental in his ruin.—The eager joy of the winning gamesters, the attention of the usurer, the vehemence of the watchman, and the profound revery of the highwayman, are all admirably marked. There is great coolness too expressed in the little we see of the fat gentleman at the end of the table. The figure opposing the mad-man is bad: it has a drunken appearance; and drunkenness is not the vice of a gaming table.—The principal figure is *ill drawn*. The *perspective* is formal; and the *execution* but indifferent: in heightening his expression HOGARTH has lost his spirit.

The seventh plate, which gives us the view of a jail, has very little in it. Many of the circumstances, which may well be supposed to increase the misery of a confined debtor, are well contrived; but the fruitful genius of HOGARTH, I should think, might have treated the subject in a more copious manner. The episode of the fainting woman might have given way to many circumstances more proper to the occasion. This is the same woman, whom the rake discards in the first print; by whom he is rescued in the fourth; who is present at his marriage; who follows him into jail; and, lastly, to Bedlam. The thought is rather unnatural, and the moral certainly culpable.—The *composition* is bad. The group of the woman fainting, is a round heavy mass: and the other group is ill shaped. The *light* could not be worse managed; and, as the groups are contrived, could hardly be improved.—In the principal figure there is great *expression*; and the fainting scene is well described.—A scheme to pay off the national debt, by a man who cannot pay his own; and the attempt of a silly rake, to retrieve his affairs

fairs by a work of genius, are admirable strokes of humour.

The eighth plate brings the fortunes of the rake to a conclusion. It is a very expressive representation of the most horrid scene which human nature can exhibit.—The *composition* is not bad. The group, in which the lunatic is chained, is well managed; and if it had been carried a little farther towards the middle of the picture, and the two women (who seem very oddly introduced) had been removed, both the composition, and the distribution of light had been good.—The *drawing* of the principal figure is a more accurate piece of anatomy than we commonly find in the works of this master. The *expression* of the figure is rather unmeaning; and very inferior to the strong characters of all the other lunatics. The fertile genius of the artist has introduced as many of the causes of madness, as he could well have collected; but there is some tautology. There are two religionists, and two astronomers. Yet there is variety in each; and strong *expression* in all the characters. The self-satisfaction, and conviction, of him who

has discovered the longitude; the mock majesty of the monarch; the moody melancholy of the lover; and the superstitious horror of the popish devotée, are all admirable.—The *perspective* is simple and proper.

I should add, that these remarks are made upon the first edition of this work. When the plates were much worn, they were altered in many parts. They have gained by the alterations, in point of *design*; but have lost in point of *expression*.

C H A P. V.

CAUTIONS IN COLLECTING PRINTS.

THE collector of prints may be first cautioned against indulging a desire of becoming possessed of *all* the works of any master. There are no masters whose works in the *gross* deserve notice. No man is equal to himself in all his compositions. I have known a collector of REMBRANDT ready to give any price for two or three prints which he wanted to complete his collection; though it had been to REMBRANDT'S credit, if those prints had been suppressed. There is no doubt, but if one third of the works of this master should be tried by the rules of just criticism, they would

appear of little value. The great prince *Eugene*, it is said, was a collector of this kind; and piqued himself upon having in his possession, *all the works of all the masters*. His collection was bulky, and cost fourscore thousand pounds; but when sifted, could not, at that time of day, be worth so many hundreds.

The collector of prints may secondly be cautioned against a superstitious veneration for names. A true judge leaves the *master* out of the question, and examines only the *work*. But, with a little genius, nothing sways like a name. It carries a wonderful force; covers glaring faults, and creates imaginary beauties. That species of criticism is certainly just, which examines the different manners of different masters, with a view to discover in how many ways a good effect may be produced, and which produces the best. But to be curious in finding out a master, in order *there* to rest the judgment, is a kind of criticism very paltry, and illiberal. It is judging of the work by the master, instead of judging of the master by the work. Hence it is, that such vile prints as

the *Woman in the cauldron*, and *Mount Parnassus*, obtain credit among connoisseurs. If you ask wherein their beauty consists? you are informed, they are engraved by MARK ANTONIO: and if that do not satisfy you, you are farther assured, they are after RAPHAEL. This absurd taste raised an honest indignation in that ingenious artist PICART: who having shewn the world, by his excellent imitations, how ridiculous it is to pay a blind veneration to *names*; tells us, that he had compared some of the engravings of the ancient masters with the original pictures; and found them very bad copies. He speaks of the stiffness, which in general runs through them——of the hair of children, which resembles pot-hooks—and of the ignorance of those engravers in anatomy, drawing, and the distribution of light.

Nearly allied to this folly, is that of making the public taste our standard. It is a most uncertain criterion. Fashion prevails in every thing. While it is confined to dress, or the idle ceremonies of a visit, the affair is trivial: but when fashion becomes a dictator in arts,

the matter is more serious. Yet so it is; we seldom permit ourselves to judge of beauty by the rules of art: but follow the catch-word of fashion; and applaud, and censure from the voice of others. Hence it happens, that sometimes the works of one master, and sometimes of another, have the prevailing run. REMBRANDT has long been the fashionable master. Little distinction is made: if the prints are REMBRANDT'S, they must be good. In two or three years, perhaps, the date of REMBRANDT may be over: you may buy his works at easy rates; and the public will have acquired some other favourite. For the truth of these observations, I might appeal to the dealers in old prints; all of whom know the uncertain value of the commodity they vend. Hence it is, that such noble productions, as the works of P. TESTA, are in such little esteem, that the whole collection of this master, though it consists of near twenty capital prints, beside many small ones, may be bought for less than is sometimes given for a single print of REMBRANDT. The true connoisseur leaves the voice of fashion entirely out of the question: he has a better standard of beauty—the merit
of

of each master, which he will find frequently at variance with common opinion.

A fourth caution, which may be of use in collecting prints, is, not to rate their value by their *scarceness*. Scarceness will make a *valuable* print *more* valuable: but to make scarceness the standard of a print's value, is to mistake an accident for merit. This folly is founded in vanity; and arises from a desire of possessing what nobody else can possess. The want of *real* merit is made up by *imaginary*; and the object is intended to be *kept*, not *looked at*. Yet, absurd as this false taste is, nothing is more common; and a trifling genius may be found, who will give ten guineas for HOLLAR'S shells, which, valued according to their merit (and much merit they certainly have), are not worth more than twice as many shillings.—Instances in abundance might be collected of the prevalence of this folly. LE CLERC, in his print of *Alexander's triumph*, had given a profile of that prince. The print was shewn to the duke of Orleans; who was pleased with it on the whole, but justly enough objected to
the

the side-face. The obsequious artist erased it, and engraved a full one. A few impressions had been taken from the plate in its first state; which fell among the curious for ten times the price of the impressions taken after the face was altered.—CALLOT, once pleased with a little plate of his own etching, made a hole in it; through which he drew a ribbon, and wore it at his button. The impressions after the hole was made, are very scarce, and amazingly valuable.—In a print of the holy family, from VANDYKE; St. John was represented laying his hand upon the virgin's shoulder. Before the print was published, the artist shewed it among his critical friends, some of whom thought the action of St. John too familiar. The painter was convinced, and removed the hand. But he was mistaken, when he thought he added value to his print by the alteration. The few impressions, which got abroad, with the hand upon the shoulder, would buy up all the rest, three times over, in any auction in London.—Many of REMBRANDT's prints receive infinite value from little accidental alterations of this kind. A few impressions were taken from one plate, before
a dog

a dog was introduced ; from another, before a white-horse tail was turned into a black one ; from a third, before a sign-post was inserted at an ale-house door : and all the scarce prints from these plates, though altered for the better, are the prints of value : the rest are common and cheap.—I shall conclude these instances with a story of a late celebrated collector of pictures. He was shewing his collection with great satisfaction ; and after expatiating on many noble works by GUIDO, MARRATTI, and other masters, he turned suddenly to the gentleman, whom he attended, and, “ Now, Sir, said he, I’ll shew you a real curiosity : there is a WOVERMAN, without a horse in it.”—The circumstance, it is true, was uncommon ; but was unluckily that very circumstance, which made the picture of little value.

Let the collector of prints be cautioned, fifthly, to beware of buying copies for originals. Most of the works of the capital masters have been copied ; and many of them so well, that if a person be not versed in prints, he may easily be deceived. Were the copies really as good

good as the originals, the name would signify nothing: but, like translations, they necessarily fall short of the spirit of the original: and contract a stiffness from the fear of erring. When seen apart, they look well; but when compared with the originals, the difference easily appears. Thus CALLOT's *beggars* have been so well copied, that the difference between the originals and the copies would not immediately strike you; but when you compare them, it is obvious. There is a plain want of freedom; the characters are less strongly marked; and the extremities are less accurately touched. — It is a difficult matter to give rules to assist in distinguishing the copy from the original. In most cases the engraver's name, or his mark (which should be well known), will be a sufficient direction. These the copyist is seldom hardy enough to forge. But in anonymous prints it is matter of more difficulty. All that can be done, is to attend carefully to the *freedom* of the *manner*, in the *extremities* especially, in which the copyist is more liable to fail. When you are pretty well acquainted with the *manner* of a master, you cannot well be deceived. When you are not, your best way is to be directed by those who are.

The

The last caution I shall give the collector of prints, is, to take care he purchase not bad impressions.—There are three things which make an impression bad.—The first is, its being *ill taken off*. Some prints seem to have received the force of the roller at intervals. The impression is double; and gives that glimmering appearance, which illudes the eye.—A second thing, which makes an impression bad, is a *worn plate*. There is great difference between the first and the last impression of the same plate. The *effect* is wholly lost in a faint impression; and you have nothing left but a vapid design without spirit, and without force. In mezzotinto especially a strong impression is desirable. For the spirit of a mezzotinto quickly evaporates; without which it is the most insipid of all prints. In engraving and etching there will be always here and there a dark touch, which long preserves an appearance of spirit: but mezzotinto is a flat surface; and when it begins to wear, it wears *all over*. Very many of the works of all the great masters, which are commonly hawked about at auctions, or sold in shops, are in this wretched

state.

state. It is difficult to meet with a good impression. The SALVATORS, REMBRANDTS, and WATERLOS, which we meet with now, except here and there, in some choice collection, are seldom better than mere reverses. You see the form of the print; but the elegant, and masterly touches are gone; backgrounds and foregrounds are jumbled together by the confusion of all distance; and you have rather the shadow of a print left, than the print itself. —The last thing which makes a bad impression, is *retouching a worn plate*. Sometimes this is performed by the master himself; and then the spirit of the impression may be still preserved. But most commonly the retouching part is done by some bungler, into whose hands the plate has fallen; and then it is very bad. In a *worn plate*, at least what you have is good: you have the remains of something excellent; and if you are versed in the works of the master, your imagination may be agreeably exercised in making out what is lost. But when the plate has gone through the hands of a bungler, who has worked it over with his harsh scratches, the idea of the master is lost; and you have nothing left, but strong, unmeaning lines on a faint ground; which is a most disagreeable contrast. Such prints,

prints, and many such there are, though offered us under the name of REMBRANDT, or WALTERLO, are of little value. Those masters would not have owned such works.—Yet, as we are often obliged to take up with such impressions, as we can get; it is better to chuse a *faint* impression, than a *retouched* one.

THE END.

(The text in this block is mirrored and appears to be bleed-through from the reverse side of the page. It is largely illegible due to the low contrast and orientation.)

THE END

I N D E X.

<i>APPENDAGES</i> , what	—	Page 4
<i>Ananias</i> ; cartoon of, criticized	—	9, 10
<i>Aqua-fortis</i> , its manner of biting the copper		32
<i>Aldgrave</i>	— — —	45
<i>Andreani, Andrea</i>	— —	49
<i>Antonio, Mark</i>	— —	50
<i>Augustin of Venice</i>	— —	50
<i>Anthony, St.</i> temptation of	—	55
<i>Austin, St.</i> a motto from him	—	72
<i>Alexander</i> , triumph of: by Le Clerc		79
<i>Auden Aerd</i>	— — —	80
<i>Augurs</i> , by Goupy	— —	118
<i>Alva</i> , duke of: by Rubens	—	139
<i>Bassan</i> criticized	— —	4, 103
<i>Beautiful gate</i> ; cartoon of, criticized		7, 27
<i>Baptism of John</i> : by Muller	—	46
<i>Bloemart, Abraham</i>	—	46, 104, 127
<i>Barrochi, Frederic</i>	— —	51
<i>Beggars</i> , Callot's	— —	55
<i>Bartholomew, St.</i> by Spaniolet	—	63
<i>Bella, Stephen de la</i>	—	64, 98
<i>Bolswert</i>	— —	66, 107
N		<i>Bible</i> ,

<i>Bible, history of:</i> by Luiken, 67. By Sadler, Page 103			
<i>Bega, Cornelius</i>	—	—	73
<i>Bellange</i>	—	—	74
<i>Baur, William</i>	—	—	76
<i>Bartoli, Peter</i>	—	—	79
<i>Bas, Le</i>	—	—	81
<i>Bischof</i>	—	—	81
<i>Becket</i>	—	—	86
<i>Baptiste's head, by White</i>		—	87
<i>Bentivolius, Guido: his head by Morin</i>			89
<i>Bedford, earl of: his head by Houbraken</i>			91
<i>Bergbem</i>	—	—	93
<i>Bloteling</i>	—	—	100
<i>Barlow</i>	—	—	100
<i>Bears devouring a deer: by Ridinger</i>			102
<i>Boars, a print of: by Ridinger</i>		—	102
<i>Both</i>	—	—	116
<i>Contrast: its effect</i>	—	—	7
<i>Claude</i>	—	—	26
<i>Circumcision, by Goltzius</i>		—	46
<i>Cæsar, triumph of, at Hampton Court</i>			47
<i>Carracci, Augustin</i>	—	—	53
<i>Cantarini</i>	—	—	54
<i>Callot</i>	—	—	54
<i>Chiswick: a picture there of Salvator's, criticized,</i>			56
<i>Cross, descent from: by Villamena</i>		—	64
<i>Castiglione</i>	—	—	69
			<i>Christ,</i>

<i>Christ, life of:</i> by Parrocelle	—	Page	74
<i>Coytel</i>	—	—	77
<i>Caylus, Count</i>	—	—	78
<i>Clerc, Le</i>	—	—	79
<i>Cromwell, Elizabeth:</i> her head by Smith			88
<i>Collier, Mrs.:</i> her portrait by Faber			91
<i>Guyß</i>	—	—	99
<i>Charles I.</i> by Vandyke	—		139
<i>Coeverden,</i> deluge of: by R. le Hooghe			150
<i>Coties,</i> cautioned against	—		171

<i>Design</i> defined, and illustrated	—		2
<i>Disposition</i> defined, and illustrated	—		5
<i>Drawing</i> defined, and illustrated	—		15
<i>Distant magnitude</i> expressed better in a painting than in a print	—		26
<i>Durer, Albert</i>	—	—	43
<i>Dorigny, Michael</i>	—	—	65
<i>Dorigny, Nicholas</i>	—	—	83
<i>Dyke, Van</i>	—	—	85
<i>Drevet</i>	—	—	90
<i>Dankerts</i>	—	—	94
<i>Diana hunting:</i> by Goupy	—		118

<i>Expression</i> explained, and illustrated			16
<i>Execution</i> explained, and illustrated			21
<i>Engraving</i> considered	—		32, &c.
	N 2		<i>Etching</i>

<i>Etching</i> considered	—	Page 32, &c.	
<i>Elshamer, Adam</i>	—	—	55
<i>Egypt, flight into</i> : by Count Gaude			56
<i>Ertinger</i>	—	—	66
<i>Ecce Homo</i> : by Coypel, 77. By Van Dyke,			86
<i>Esof</i> : by Barlow	—	—	99
<i>Eugene, prince</i> : his collection of prints			165
<i>Flemish school</i> : its character	—		48
<i>Fair</i> : Callot's	—	—	54
<i>Fage, La</i>	—	—	65
<i>Febre, V. le</i>	—	—	74
<i>Freii, Jac.</i>	—	—	80
<i>Faber</i>	—	—	91
<i>Fry</i>	—	—	92
<i>Fyt, J.</i>	—	—	98
<i>Flamen</i>	—	—	101
<i>Fables</i> : by Ridinger		—	102
<i>Grace</i> defined, and illustrated		—	16
<i>Ground</i> in mezzotinto		—	38
<i>Goltzius</i>	—	—	45
<i>Guido</i>	—	—	53
<i>Gaude, count</i>	—	—	55
<i>Galestruzzi</i>	—	—	71
<i>Gillot, Claude</i>	—	—	75
<i>Gribelin, Sim.</i>	—	—	80

Gibbon :

<i>Gibbon</i> : his head by Smith	—	Page 88
<i>Genoel</i>	—	116
<i>Goupy</i>	—	118
<i>Group</i> : the form of one criticized		6
<i>Harmony</i> in painting illustrated	—	11
<i>Hell-scene</i> : by A. Durer	—	43
<i>Hisben</i>	—	45
<i>Hundred-guildres-print</i>	—	60
<i>Hooghe, Roman le</i>	—	67
<i>Hooper</i> : his head by White	—	87
<i>Houbraken</i>	—	91
<i>Hamden</i> : his head by Houbraken		91
<i>Hondius, 95.</i> His hunted wolf	—	95
<i>Hollar, 104.</i> His works	105, 106,	107
<i>Huntings</i> : by Rubens, 96. By Ridinger		102
<i>Hagar</i> : by Goupy	—	118
<i>Hogarth, 116.</i> His rake's progress criticized,		125
<i>Journeyings, patriarchal</i> : by C. Macee		69
<i>Impostures innocentes</i> : by Picart	—	77
<i>Joseph in Egypt</i> : by Bischof	—	81
<i>Jardin, Du, 95.</i> One of his etchings criticized,		145
<i>John, St.</i> a print of, by Van Dyke		170
<i>Impressions</i>	—	172
<i>Keeping</i> defined, and illustrated	—	10

<i>Lystra, sacrifice at</i> , cartoon of, criticized, Page 8,	17
<i>Light</i> , distribution of, criticized	— 22
<i>Lucas Van Leiden</i>	— 45
<i>Lot</i> : by Aldgrave	— 45
<i>Lazarus</i> : by Bloemart	— 47
<i>Luiken</i>	— — 67
<i>Laireffe, Gerard</i>	— 68
<i>Lanfrank</i> : his gallery	— 79
<i>Lievens, J.</i>	— — 84
<i>Lely, Peter</i>	— — 86
<i>Leigh, Anthony</i> : his head by Smith	88
<i>Lutma, J.</i>	— — 89, III
<i>Laer, Peter de</i>	— — 99
<i>Lorraine, Claude</i>	— 113
<i>Latrones</i> : by Goupy	— 118

<i>Michael Angelo</i> : his idea of form in grouping	9
<i>Mannerist</i> : what is meant by the word	21
<i>Mezzotinto</i> considered	— 36
<i>Muller</i>	— — 46
<i>Mantegna, Andrea</i>	— 48
<i>Miseries of War</i> : Callot's	— 54
<i>Moyse, Vocation de</i> : by La Fage	— 66
<i>Macee</i>	— — 69
<i>Muilen, Vander</i>	— 70
<i>Mellan</i>	— — 72

Marot

<i>Marot</i>	—	—	Page 82
<i>Magdalene, Mary</i> : her head by Smith			88
<i>Mellan</i>	—	—	88
<i>Morin, J.</i>	—	—	89
<i>Marmion, Edm.</i>		—	89
<i>Moyreau</i>	—	—	97
<i>Montague, duke of</i>		—	110
<i>Neulant</i>	—	—	108
<i>Names</i> : their influence		—	168
<i>Ostade</i>	—	—	72
<i>Ovid</i> : illustrated by W. Baur		—	76
<i>Overbeck</i>	—	—	115
<i>Oxford-heads</i> : by Hogarth		—	124
<i>Paul preaching at Athens</i> , the cartoon of, criticized	—	—	5, 7
<i>Perspective</i> defined, and illustrated			23
<i>Polished bodies</i> expressed better in a picture than in a print		—	29
<i>Pewter</i> : engraving on		—	36
<i>Pens</i>	—	—	45
<i>Parmigiano</i>	—	—	48
<i>Palma</i>	—	—	49
<i>Paria, Francis</i>	—	—	49
<i>Picart</i> : his character of M. Antonio			51
			<i>Pont</i>

<i>Pont-Neuf</i> : by de la Bella	—	Page 64
<i>Pontius</i>	—	66
<i>Parrocelle, Joseph</i>	—	73
<i>Picart</i>	—	77
<i>Pond, Arthur</i>	—	78
<i>Perrier, Francis</i>	—	82
<i>Parr's head</i> by White	—	87
<i>Piazzetta</i>	—	88
<i>Pope, Mr. his head</i> by Richardson	—	90
<i>Potter, Paul</i>	—	100
<i>Poussin, Gaspar</i>	—	104
<i>Perelle</i>	—	113
<i>Porfenna</i> : by Goupy	—	118
<i>Piranesi</i>	—	118
<i>Prentice, idle</i> : by Hogarth	—	121
<i>Physicians-arms</i> : by Hogarth	—	124
<i>Playhouse, corner of</i>	—	125
<i>Polycrates, death of</i> : by Salvator Rosa	—	131
<i>Pether</i> : his print of a Jewish rabbi	—	141
<i>Parnassus, Mount</i> : by M. Antonio	—	166

<i>Rupert, prince</i> : character of his mezzotintos	—	37
<i>Roman-school</i> : its character	—	47
<i>Rosa, Salvator</i>	—	56, 131
<i>Robbers, Salvator Rosa's</i>	—	58
<i>Rembrandt</i>	—	58, 79, 100, 104, 165
<i>Rosary, mysteries of</i> : by Sciaminoffi	—	66
<i>Roettiers, Fr.</i>	—	83

<i>Rigaud</i>	—	—	Page 90
<i>Richardson</i>	—	—	90
<i>Richmond, duke of: his head by Houbraken</i>			91
<i>Reubens</i>	—	—	96
<i>Rosa of Tivoli</i>	—	—	97
<i>Ridinger</i>	—	—	101
<i>Rousseau, James</i>		—	110
<i>Ricci, Marco</i>	—	—	116
<i>Rake's progress</i>	—	—	125
<i>Salutation: by Barrochi</i>		—	51
<i>Spaniolet</i>	—	—	63, 124
<i>Silenus and Bacchus: by Spaniolet</i>			63
<i>Sciaminoffi</i>	—	—	66
<i>Schut, Cornelius</i>	—	—	76
<i>Simons</i>	—	—	86
<i>Sturges: his head by White</i>		—	87
<i>Smith</i>	—	—	87
<i>Scalken: his head by Smith</i>		—	88
<i>Salisbury, countess of: her head by Smith</i>			91
<i>Schomberg: his head by Houbraken</i>			91
		by Smith	—
			139
<i>Stoop, Peter</i>	—	—	99
<i>Sadler</i>	—	—	103
<i>Sunderland, earl of</i>		—	108
<i>Swanevelt</i>	—	—	109
<i>Sylvestre, Israel</i>	—	—	112
<i>Silenus, triumph of: by Peter Testa</i>			134
<i>Scarceness, no test of merit</i>		—	169
		O	<i>Titian:</i>

<i>Titian</i> : his illustration of massing light, <i>Page</i>	14	
<i>Transparency</i> expressed better in a painting,		
than in a print	—	28
<i>Tempesta, Anthony</i>	—	52, 98
<i>Testa, Peter</i>	—	60, 134
<i>Tiepolo</i>	—	70
<i>Tulden, Van</i>	—	73
<i>Truth delivered by Time from Envy</i> : by Pouffin,		78
<i>Tobit</i> : by Goupy	—	118
<i>Virgil</i> : a passage of his criticized	—	27
<i>Vasari</i> : his opinion of A. Durer	—	44
<i>Vouet, Simon</i>	—	63
<i>Villamena</i>	—	64
<i>Venius, Otbo</i>	—	71
<i>Ulysses, voyage of</i> : by Tulden	—	73
<i>Vesper</i> , by Parrocelle	—	74
<i>Uliet, Van</i>	—	84
<i>Vertue</i>	—	90
<i>Visscher, J.</i>	—	94, 97
<i>Veau, Le</i>	—	117
<i>Vandiest</i>	—	118
<i>Whole</i> in painting : how constituted		1
<i>Watteau</i>	—	75
<i>Worlidge</i>	—	85
	11	<i>White,</i>

<i>White</i> , the engraver	—	—	Page 86
<i>White</i> , the mezzotinto-scraper	—	—	86
<i>Wing</i> : his head by <i>White</i>	—	—	87
<i>Wyke</i> : a mezzotinto from him by <i>Smith</i>	—	—	88
<i>Wolfgang</i>	—	—	89
<i>Woverman</i> , 142. Story of	—	—	171
<i>Wolves-heads</i> : by <i>Ridinger</i>	—	—	102
<i>Waggon</i> : a print from <i>Rubens</i>	—	—	108
<i>Waterlo</i> , 108. His <i>Tobias</i>	—	—	147
<i>Woman in the cauldron</i> : by <i>M. Antonio</i>	—	—	166
<i>Zuingg</i>	—	—	117
<i>Zeeman</i>	—	—	117



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