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Chapman's American Drawing-Book

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CHAPMAN'S
AMERICAN DRAWING-BOOK.

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NEW YORK
J. S. REDFIELD, CLINTON HALL.
BOSTON: B. B. MUSSEY & CO. — CINCINNATI: L. A. & W. P. JAMES.

1847

Approved according to Act of Congress, in the year 1847, by J. S. CHAPMAN, Clerk of the Court of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York.

THE Publisher has the gratification of presenting the following letters of approval, from gentlemen distinguished in the Fine Arts, Literature, and the promotion of Education—to whom this Work was submitted previous to publication. The unanimous approbation that it has received, has warranted the issue of a large *second edition*, now in press.

From A. B. Durand, Esq., President of the National Academy of Design.

NEW YORK, April, 1847.

I have examined Mr. Chapman's American Drawing-Book, and am convinced that it is the best work of its class that I have ever seen. Clear and simple in its method, it adapts itself to every degree of capacity, and insures most satisfactory results to all. It is admirably calculated, by introduction into our common schools, easily to incorporate the knowledge of this interesting Art into the most ordinary education; and thus not only refine the taste, and increase the resources of rational enjoyment among all classes, but practically to develop the almost unlimited usefulness of Drawing, in its application to the various productions of the manufacturer and the mechanic.

Mr. Chapman has indeed rendered a great service to the country, in the production of this work.

To J. S. REDFIELD.

A. B. DURAND.

From C. C. Ingham, Esq., Vice-President of the National Academy.

SIR: I have with much interest examined the "American Drawing-Book," and have no hesitation in saying, that I think it the best and most scientific work of the kind I have seen, and that it will do more to encourage the cultivation of the Art of Drawing than any other work.

Your most obedient,

CHARLES C. INGHAM.

To J. S. REDFIELD.

From Professor Morse.

NEW YORK, April 27, 1847.

DEAR SIR: I have examined your "American Drawing-Book," and am much pleased with it. I think it efficiently supplies a want in the elementary education of our youth. The time will come when ignorance of Drawing will be considered almost in the same light as ignorance of Writing. The need of a knowledge of the former is as great, in most of the common and substantial pursuits of life, as that of the latter; and every attempt to indoctrinate the young mind in a practice so essential to insure success in mechanical and manufacturing, as well as scientific occupations, deserves, and I have no doubt will receive, public encouragement. I cordially recommend your work, and wish you the success which your skill, your taste, and your perseverance, so richly merit.

Truly, your friend and servant,

SAMUEL F. B. MORSE.

To JOHN G. CHAPMAN, Esq., N. A.

From Thomas S. Cummings, Esq., Professor of the Arts of Design in the New York University, &c., &c.

NEW YORK, April 26, 1847.

SIR: I have examined the First Part or Number of "Chapman's American Drawing-Book," submitted to me, and, with much pleasure, give it my unqualified approval. On the elementary principles of Lines, it is more full and thorough than any work that has fallen under my observation, and can not but prove a valuable aid to the youthful student in the Arts of Design.

I am, sir, your respectful, obedient servant,

Mr. J. S. REDFIELD.

THOMAS S. CUMMINGS.

From W. C. Bryant, Esq.

NEW YORK, April 28, 1847.

SIR: I have looked over, with great pleasure, the first Number of "Chapman's American Drawing-Book," which you have just published. The execution of the work, in every respect, has struck me with an agreeable surprise. The method appears to me admirable; the directions are clear, ample, and, I think, extremely judicious; while the engraved illustrations are as beautiful in design and execution, as they are calculated to be useful to the learner. It is the best book on Drawing I ever saw; and I have heard artists, whose opinion is of infinitely more value than mine, say the same thing. I think the public will owe Mr. Chapman a great obligation for employing his fine talents in the production of a book which promises to be of so much general utility.

J. S. REDFIELD, Esq.

Respectfully, yours,

W. C. BRYANT.

From F. W. Edmonds, Esq.

DEAR SIR: I have examined with care the "American Drawing-Book," by J. G. Chapman, and take great pleasure in recommending it to schools and academics, as one of the best works ever published in this branch of the arts. The common fault of all teachers and writers on this subject, is the impression that the learner is conversant with certain elementary principles which it is not necessary for them to dwell upon. In his work this difficulty is obviated: the student is supposed to know nothing on the subject; and he is taken by the hand, on the very threshold of the Art, and conducted through, by regular steps, to the end. I trust it will meet, as I think it deserves, with universal encouragement.

Mr. J. S. REDFIELD.

Yours, &c.,

F. W. EDMONDS.

From Prosper M. Wetmore, Esq., President of the American Art-Union.

MY DEAR SIR: I have examined, with very great pleasure, the specimen Number of your proposed work on the Art of Drawing. It seems to me that you have most happily urged and illustrated the advantages and facilities of acquiring one of the most delightful among the social accomplishments.

I can not permit myself to doubt that a work, so admirable in design and execution, will receive the support of the judicious and discerning, especially of those who have the charge of educating youth. You are entitled to the thanks of every lover of the Fine Arts, for the ability and taste with which you have presented this interesting subject to the public attention.

I am, my dear sir, very truly, yours,

To J. G. CHAPMAN, Esq.

PROSPER M. WETMORE.

From Dr. A. Anderson, Engraver on Wood.

I consider the "American Drawing-Book," by Mr. Chapman, the best work for the practical understanding of the Art of Design with which I am acquainted. Such a work has been long wanted; and I know, from experience, the importance of the knowledge it affords, not only to the engraver in wood, but to printers, and all others who are engaged in illustrating books.

The best design of the artist can never be placed before the public fairly until both engravers and printers are made familiar with the principles of Drawing.

To J. S. REDFIELD.

ALEXANDER ANDERSON.

From J. A. Adams, Esq., Engraver on Wood.

I have examined the first Part of Mr. Chapman's Drawing-Book with much interest, because I have long known the requirement of just such a work, by the public in general, and, above all others, by engravers in wood.

I can truly say, that the benefit of such a work would have saved me many a year of toil spent in misapplied labor to obtain the knowledge conveyed by it in a few pages. I think Mr. Chapman has identified himself with a new era in popular education, that must result from the publication of his "American Drawing-Book."

J. S. REDFIELD, Esq.

Yours, &c.,

J. A. ADAMS.

From Gouverneur Kemble, Esq.

SIR: I have examined Mr. Chapman's Drawing Book, that you were kind enough to send me, which appears admirably adapted to our common schools. To our young mechanics it will be invaluable, and, indeed, the older ones may profit by it. The idea of extending a knowledge of Design to all classes of the community, which has hitherto been considered the prerogative of the rich only, can not but receive the approbation of every liberal mind; and Mr. Chapman deserves great praise for rendering apparently easy that which we have been accustomed to think so difficult. I wish you all success in the undertaking.

Yours, truly,

GOUV. KEMBLE, West Point Foundry.

To J. S. REDFIELD.

From Rensselaer Bentley, Esq.

NEW YORK, May 3, 1847.

DEAR SIR: I have examined the first Number of the "American Drawing-Book," by J. G. Chapman, and am well pleased with the execution of the work. The Art of Drawing, in my opinion, should constitute a branch of instruction, not only in the higher institutions of learning, but in our common schools also. It is a subject which has been too much neglected by those who have charge of the young. The present attempt to call the attention of the public more particularly to this *delightful art*, will undoubtedly be crowned with success.

Judging from the present Number, and from the well known skill and taste of the author, I have full confidence in the merit of the work, and would cheerfully commend it to the patronage of the public, and especially those who may wish to make the Art of Drawing, Painting, or Engraving, their particular study.

Mr. J. S. REDFIELD.

Yours, &c.,

RENSSELAER BENTLEY.

From Edward Hazen, A. M.

NEW YORK, May 3, 1847.

The education of the schools is too abstract, and is not well adapted to man as a practical being. I am therefore always pleased at the appearance of any work calculated to improve our system, by rendering it more practical. In Drawing, mind and hand go together, as they should do in every other study, where it is possible.

I regard the publication of Mr. Chapman's Drawing-Book as an era in education, as it renders it possible for all to learn to draw, with as much certainty and elegance as they now learn to write.

Yours, &c.,

EDWARD HAZEN.

To J. S. REDFIELD.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IN answer to the numerous inquiries which have been received, by mail and otherwise, in reference to the delay in the issue of the second Number of the American Drawing-Book, the publisher takes this method to assure the public, that this delay has been unavoidable, without a departure from that degree of excellence in its production to which he has determined to adhere in its publication.

The care and attention which the author has bestowed upon every line of the work, render it imperatively necessary, that a corresponding care and attention should be given to every branch of the mechanical department. Many of the wood-cuts in the present number, may be fairly considered equal to anything that has been done on wood, either in this country or in Europe. In all the details of the work, no pains or expense has been spared, and from the unqualified approval it has received from the public, and its extensive introduction into academies and schools, a second edition of the first number has been recently printed to meet the demand.

In point of cheapness, the issue of the work has been considered a daring experiment. But resting on its merits to secure an extensive circulation, it has been given to the public without doubt or hesitation, and its reception has equalled the highest expectation. The subsequent Numbers will be issued with all the despatch consistent with a due regard to its perfection.

The Second Number completes that portion of the work, which may be considered strictly Elementary, and forms, in connexion with the first, a complete Elementary Drawing-Book, adapted particularly for Schools; for which purpose the two are bound together.

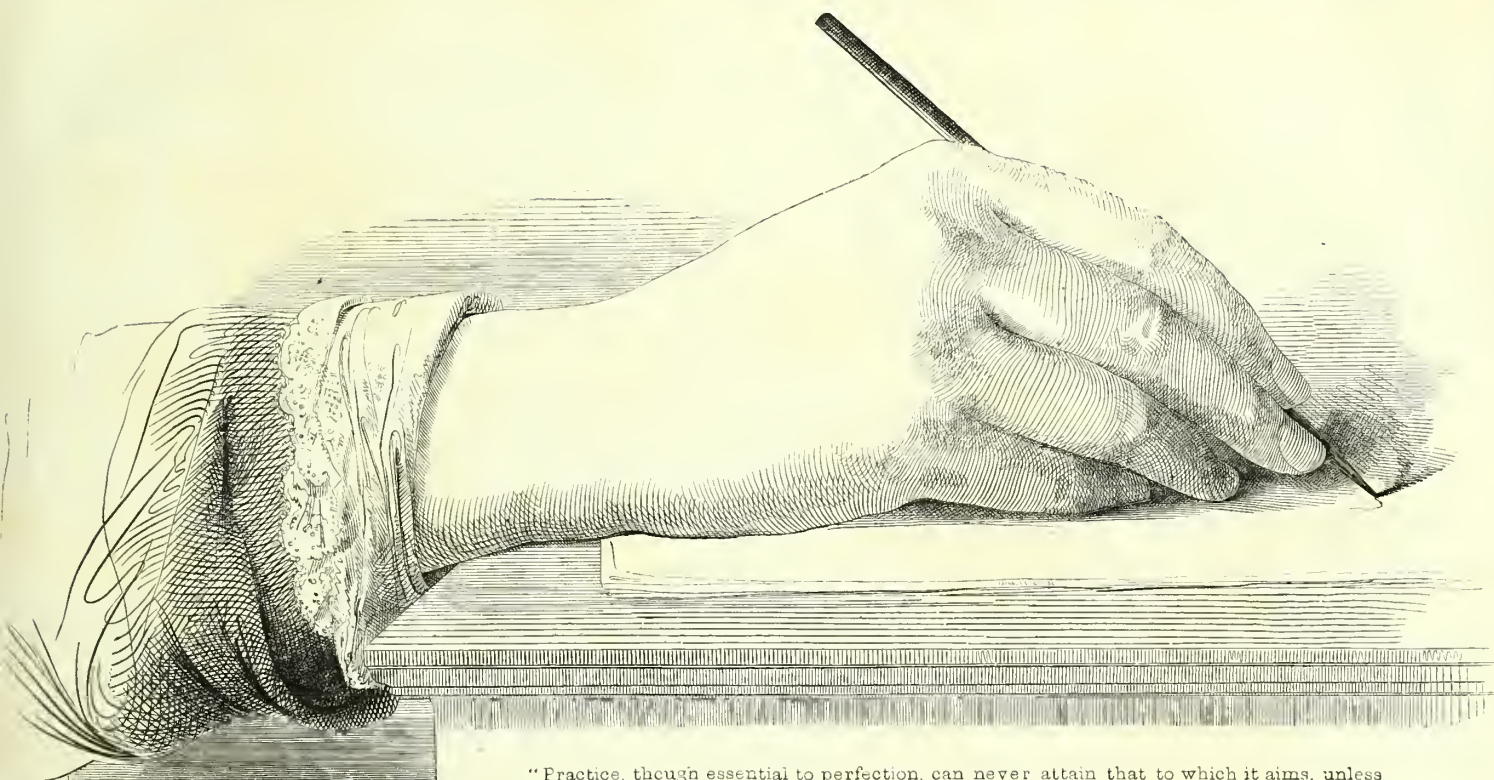


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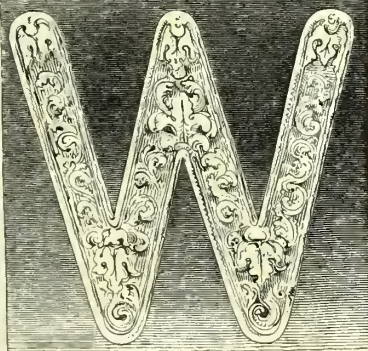
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CHAPTER III.

RUDIMENTS OF DRAWING.—THE HUMAN FIGURE.



"Practice, though essential to perfection, can never attain that to which it aims, unless it works under the direction of principle."—SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS



WITH some the method of learning to draw, thus far developed, may have proved long and even tedious; while to others it may have been too rapid, and their advancement, in its practical application, may not have equalled their expectations or wishes. The former should not be disheartened because their hand and conception have not kept pace with their teaching, nor the latter deceive themselves by hurrying forward too rapidly,—or fail to understand, thoroughly, and to apply practically, every principle laid down. The purpose of the **AMERICAN DRAWING-BOOK** is not to teach the methods of drawing trees, houses, faces, figures, or flowers, by separate recipe, nor to direct the learner by short-cuts to the attainment of proficiency in any one branch singly; but, to place before him the broad principles of Design, a knowledge of which, with the power of its practical application, will qualify for the exercise of all, or any one branch, that the taste or inclination of the possessor may lead him to pursue; and the course of study

advised is sincerely believed to be the surest and most direct to the attainment of that object. It is no experiment, but one that has been well tested and proved, claiming no novelty, beyond its adaptation to the wants and purposes of our time and country, divesting the art of all mystery, and placing it within the reach and comprehension of every one.

72. Some who have, perhaps, filled their minds with high aspirations, may look with disdain upon the simple beginning placed before them, "as matters for children," and turn over leaf by leaf in search of something to strike their fancy, and yet, they may not be able to draw two straight lines, nor two crooked ones either, to a given purpose, with the accuracy of many an urchin on the school-bench, who has only started when they considered themselves already far on the way. Let such reflect seriously upon this self-deception, and let them be assured, that the higher their aspirations, the more they will require the aid of such elementary knowledge to realize them. It is a short task, that will well repay the labor bestowed, even to those most richly endowed with the gift of genius; for by such aid will they most surely develop that genius, and reach the goal of their highest ambition.

73. Before entering upon the study of the whole figure, some degree of attention should be bestowed upon the delineation of the hand and foot; both of which present difficulties to the beginner, and from these very difficulties, are well calculated to strengthen that general capacity which should be his aim, and which is an essential qualification in a draughtsman; more irregular and less balanced in their parts and proportions than the head, the pupil is compelled to rely more upon his eye and judgment in ascertaining the modulations of their form and outline, the proportions of the parts, and their relation to one another. But, if he has carefully studied and practised one of the first and most simple examples placed before him (32), he possesses the understanding of a principle from which he will derive much assistance. If he has not hurried forward too rapidly, and has bestowed proper attention upon what has been already urged, in reference to the delineation of the individual features of the head, he will soon find the difficulties encountered, in his first attempts in drawing the hand or foot, gradually lessened, as he becomes familiar with the application to them, as to every other object, of one of the first and leading principles of design (21). If he is not already, he will soon be convinced that the time and study this knowledge has cost him have been well bestowed, and that he has done better, and advanced more surely, than if he had filled his port-folio with what might seem higher attempts; but, from which he would have derived but little permanent advantage.

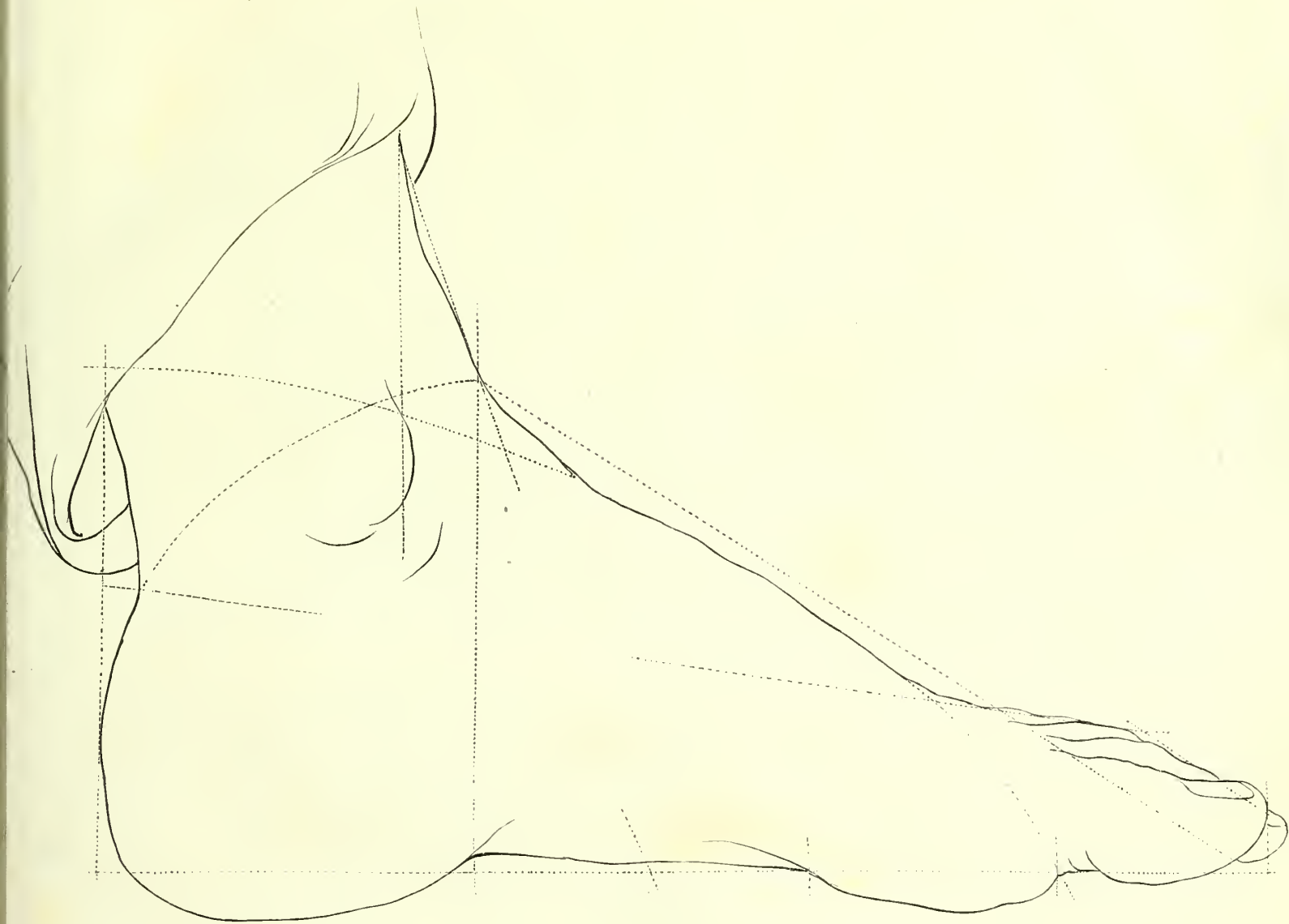
74. The ambition to have "something to show" is apt to mislead from a proper and systematic course. Much of this evil may be attributed to the misguided anxiety of parents and friends, as well as teachers, who often allow their judgment to be overcome, either to indulge the whim of a parent or pupil, or to gain a reputation as rapid instructors. They even here deceive themselves by taking the very longest course they could adopt. Such teachers do far more to impede than forward the cause of education in design. Even if rapid advancement be the object, a few hours devoted to the elucidation, to the understanding of the pupil, of the first principles of drawing, will advance him more certainly, and rapidly, than weeks and months wasted in groping a devious way through ill-drawn fancy castles, distorted heads and figures, trees and bridges, and the endless variety of "easy lessons" which are too often placed before him—the great secret of their being "easy to do" often consisting in their being so decidedly bad that he can hardly make anything worse.

75. It should not be understood that the pupil, during the prosecution of the study of Drawing, should be excluded from the privilege of attempting to draw anything that strikes his fancy or excites his admiration, more than we would deny the privilege of speech to a child while he is learning his grammar. Let him try the road-side cottage, the rustic bridge, the house-dog, or any other object with which he is familiar, either in nature, drawings, or prints, and always let him do the best he can. The very difficulties he will encounter, the wants he will be made to feel, will have a strong and happy tendency to give additional impulse to his studies, besides the cultivation and development of that love for art which might otherwise be blighted by too rigid application to its study. It is in this *study* that his efforts should be prescribed to a systematic course of education, that will ultimately lead to the possession of that happy faculty which will overcome all difficulties, and enable him to draw, with equal ease and facility, any object in nature, or of the mind's creation.

76. THE FOOT is by no means so facile in its movements as the hand, nor capable of such great variety of attitude and action; hence it is easier to draw, and, therefore, more properly, should be placed first before the pupil. He will now have occasion for the exercise and practical application of the principles laid down in the primary instructions he has received; and should he find the difficulties he encounters try him beyond his strength, he can not do better, before he proceeds farther, than to make a careful revision of the ground he may have passed over too hurriedly, or without bestowing sufficient study and practice upon these primary exercises.



77. However admirable and perfect may be the antique statues in their proportions and details, and however desirable it may be to place before the pupil the choicest models for the exercise of his skill, it is enough for his present purposes to look to the familiar objects which are within his reach. A boy's foot can be found without seeking it in an academy; and, if it has not been already distorted by the shoemaker, affords a model well worth his study and best effort. First, let him try the example here placed before him, and then, doubtless, he may find a young friend not unwilling to submit to serve as his model; and, if he has done all that has been required of him, and carefully exercises himself in these few examples, he will possess the capacity of drawing a foot, and presently a hand, from nature, with ease and accuracy;—and more: if he can draw a Head, a Hand, and a Foot, he can draw the Figure, or any other



familiar object; not, perhaps, with the precision and touch of a master, but he can achieve enough to insure the possession of a safe and certain groundwork of useful practical knowledge and facility of Design.

78. The first thing to be done, in drawing the above example, is carefully to examine and study the original, and to ascertain its proportions, as nearly as you can, without measuring. Then cautiously set about its outline, which should be accurately, but delicately defined, before any attempt is made to express the shadows or tints, which are in comparison with it of secondary importance, especially at this stage of your progress. Be not in a hurry to make pictures; learn to draw correctly, and the pictures you make, by-and-by, will be all the better for it.



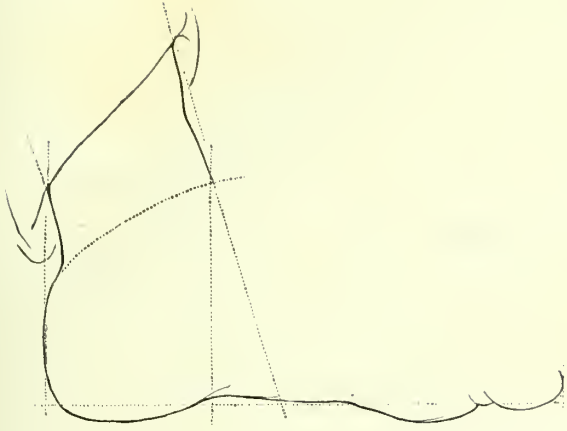
that confusion of lines, and indecision, almost inseparable from diminished drawings, and which, in spite of every precaution, are more or less characteristic of the efforts of all beginners. Self-deception, which is apt to result from the practice of drawing in small, should be carefully guarded against. The quality of prettiness, which, often, is no more than littleness in art, may disguise errors, which drawing in large develops; but it performs a faithless service—one highly prejudicial to the advancement of the student, and calculated to mislead: for the evidence of his errors is the safest guard against their recurrence.



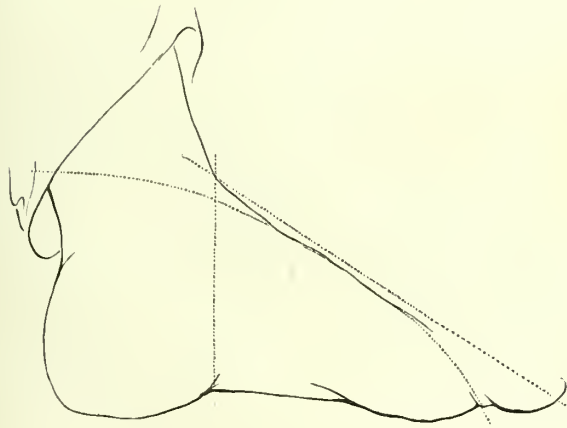
it must be done with precision. Observe that the outline above the heel disappears at a point immediately perpendicular to the extremity of the heel—remark the peculiarity of the curve of that portion of the outline—connect it with that of the sole of the foot—do it cautiously and carefully, and, if correctly, you have not only certain starting points, but one half of your outline already done. Do not suffer yourself to be deceived, when you have only produced an outline to look *something like the original*; that is not enough: it should correspond to it *exactly*.

79. ^(I.) Lest the principles, upon which the outline on the last page is produced, should not be sufficiently understood by the pupil, let us enter into a more concise explanation; and, for the sake of economizing space, by a reduction of it, which will answer all purposes. As he reads, he can refer to the larger outline. It should be borne in mind, that all the examples, and, indeed, everything else the learner attempts to draw, should be, as nearly as possible, the size of the original; thereby avoiding

(II.) It is of the first importance to secure certain starting points, as well as a scale of proportion for the parts. Having decided on the length, from the heel to the end of the great toe, next ascertain the direction of the outline defining the sole of the foot. Remark (or mark, in your first trials) the points of the principal indentations, or features; and, surely, if you can draw the profile of a face with any degree of accuracy, but little difficulty will be encountered in drawing the simple curved line before you. But simple and easy as it may be,



(III.) You will observe that the point where the instep unites with the leg is directly perpendicular to the termination of the outline of the heel, where it unites with that of the hollow of the foot. The direction of the outward line of the leg would, if continued, strike a point about the middle of that of the hollow of the foot. The intersection of these imaginary lines gives you this important point, which you can further verify, by extending the curve of the heel, upward, to their intersection. Assure yourself, by close observation, how far the lines in the original correspond with those before you; and then proceed with the completion of your outline, observing, throughout, the utmost caution, and endeavor to obviate the necessity of correction, by avoiding the occurrence of error.



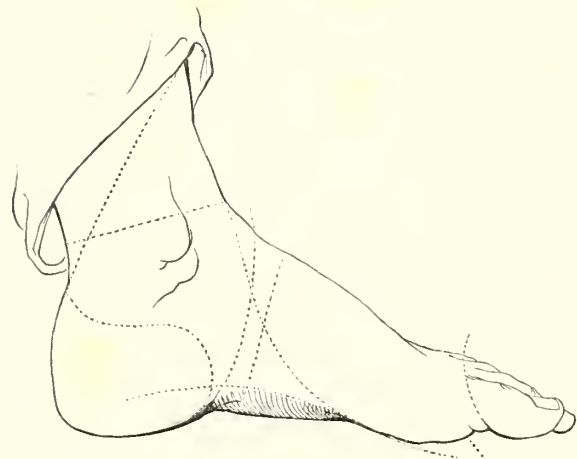
(IV.) Ascertain the direction of the line of the instep by a straight line, as indicated, and then verify its sweep by a continuation of it at one or both extremities. This method of the imaginary extension of lines, when once made familiar, will be found of great assistance to the draughtsman; and it is more readily acquired than may be at first imagined. It serves not only the attainment of accuracy, and lessens his labor, but insures harmony of the parts and details with one another.

It also tends to habituate the eye to the observation of the true character and forms of objects, divesting them, as it were, of those minor details, which often obtrude themselves, and lead the eye and hand astray from the first broad and general impression or conception—which is of primary importance, and should be carefully secured at once, and never lost sight of. Herein lies one of the great secrets of the ease and freedom in the expression of an idea, that give such a charm to the sketches of the experienced artist—by which he conveys his impressions in a few lines, apparently dashed off at random, but often far more to the purpose, and more expressive, than the more labored effort of the less gifted or less educated in art.



secure to yourself the capacity of expressing them with ease and freedom, by the surest means.

(VI.) Compare the parts and proportions of the original with your copy. Observe that the



(V.) Having thus far progressed with your outline, but little more remains to be done, than to ascertain the direction of the lines by which you are to express the toes, and to complete the whole, in like manner, and upon the same principles, that have thus far guided you. Carefully examine it throughout, before you proceed to indicate the tints or shadows, which should be deferred until the utmost accuracy of outline is first attained; for, you may rest assured, that, by such a course, you will

width or thickness across the ankle is about equal to that of the instep, and length of the heel, etc. Test the judgment of your eye first, and measure only to satisfy yourself of its accuracy. By such a course, you will soon have little requirement for rule or compass (23). By an imaginary continuation of the curvatures of your outline, study their movement, relation, and bearing, on each other. One single outline, thus studied and executed, will advance the pupil many a certain step, and render easy the few remaining examples that will be pre-

sented to him in the course of these elementary instructions.

80. Presuming that the learner has not slighted what has been urged upon his attention, but that he has bestowed all the care, study, and practice, upon this example, that may be requisite; that he has, therefore, succeeded in producing, if not by one, by repeated efforts, a correct outline, he is fully prepared to encounter those that follow, with little other aid than his own strength and intelligence. If he has failed, let him be again reminded to retrace his steps. Let him depend upon it, he has lost or overlooked something, or perhaps many things, on the way, that he will need, even more hereafter than now, and without which, he will never become an accomplished draughtsman. Let him now, in good time, look to his deficiencies, and seek their correction. It is a mistake to suppose that, to acquire a

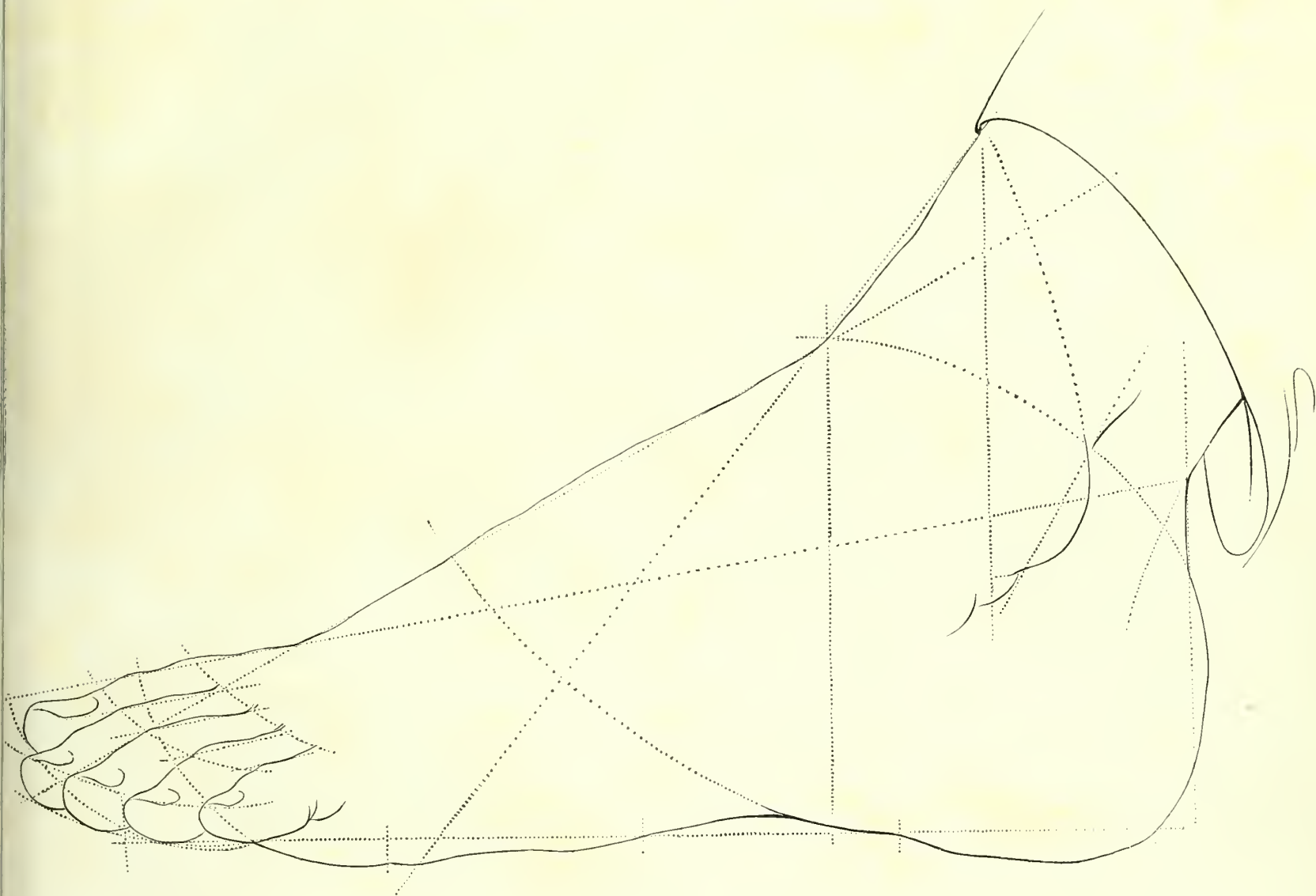
knowledge and facility of drawing, quires must be consumed, a multiplicity of examples labored through, and portfolios filled. Although few examples may suffice for the elucidation of the first general principles of drawing, they should be dwelt upon and studied, until well and thoroughly understood; and the capacity of hand should be made, by practice, to keep pace with the understanding.

81. To know how a thing should be done, is not enough in art: we should know how to do it. One can no more learn to swim, without going into the water, than learn to draw without practice; while blind practice, unsupported by a degree of theoretical knowledge, is liable to mislead, almost as directly, from the right way. The knowledge of how a thing should be done, and the capacity to do it, will, if kept, as far as possible, in equal balance, secure certain results. They should keep pace together, mutually supporting and assisting in the attainment of the one great purpose. If one should gain advantage, either by reason of its own acquired strength, or weakness of the other, the weaker capacity should have time to regain its lost ground, which, in its turn, by that very effort, may get the start; but let them never lose sight of one another. Books and treatises on art, therefore, which are not based upon practical knowledge of its ways and means, have often a most mischievous tendency, and go far to the dissemination of false ideas, which should be cautiously received, especially by the student. It may be well enough for a writer, who possesses not the power of expressing one line of art, to indulge the exuberance of his fancy or caprice, by dashing forth his transcendent ideas with regard to it; but, they should only be received for what they are worth—and precious little will their worth be found, in most cases, to those whose business is production—the attainment of practical results. Not but that everything that can be said, in reference to art, is deserving the attention of its followers, yet the judgment should be prepared, in some degree, at least, before it can arrive at just conclusions, or be capable of exercising proper discrimination, in separating vague and impracticable theories from those that are well digested and useful. It is easy for the learned geographer to trace the route, to distant lands, over tempestuous seas; but he can no more navigate the bark to them, than the merchant who sends her forth. It is easy to say, and even feel, that a picture, a statue, or any other work of art, should be thus, or thus—should be perfection, that remote idea of perfection in itself imperfect, and founded, too often, on false or capricious notions; but, he who has no experience of the way to reach it, can never make it plain enough to others, to substitute his dreamy fancy of its direction, for long-established and well-tried landmarks, whose value to the student has been proved by the faithful guidance they have afforded to the great masters of art, who have reached its highest perfection, yet attained. Let us, therefore, judge of the mode of



culture by its fruit, nor discard the old, beaten, well-known path, until we can find a better—one, at least, that some traveller has pursued with success.

82. After what has been said, in relation to the method of drawing the outline of the previous example, it would be paying but a poor compliment to the intelligence of the pupil, to enter into a repetition of it, in reference to the above. It may be proper to remark, however, that the general principle, rather than any arbitrary process, of forming comparisons in relation to the parts, or of ascertaining and expressing the true direction of the lines, their movement, form, and connexion, most particularly require his attention, and should be the main object of his study and practice. The outline of the sole of the foot has been taken as a basis, or starting point, because



its direction and quantities were more easily defined; but it does not follow, that it should be taken thus in all instances, as there are many positions of the foot, in which it may be secondary, and more dependent on other leading points and lines. Proper judgment, therefore, should be exercised, in the selection of the line, or lines, most expressive of the general action and character of the object to be represented. This important beginning once made, farther details must naturally assume their just positions and connexion to the whole, as well as to one another—besides, serving in the process as correctives. If, for instance, the length of the foot should be too long, or too short, the moment the points indicating the true length of the heel and toes are decided upon, the length of the hollow of the foot, between the two, will be evidently too long or too short. A primary error is thus detected, by comparison with the other parts, in time for

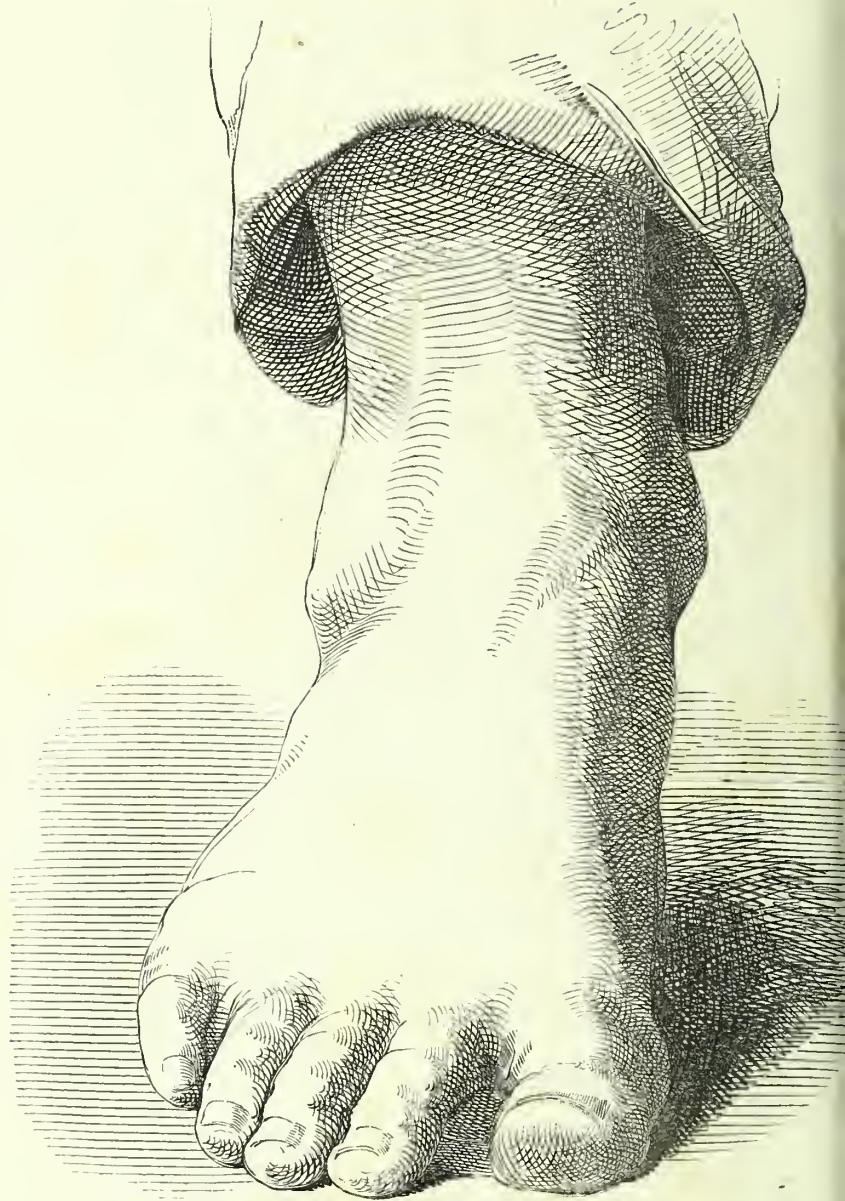
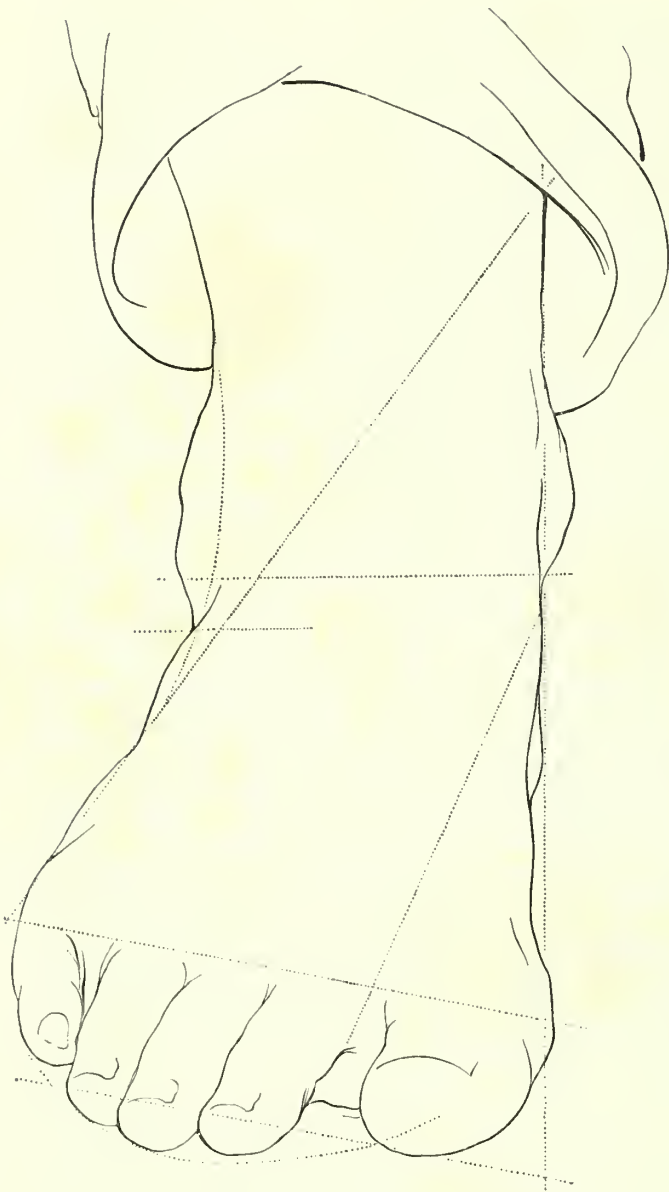
correction ; and so on—the draughtsman is enabled, by balancing all the parts and proportions with one another, and studying their relations to the whole, to adjust and express his outline with an accuracy and certainty, that can never be acquired without some such systematic method of execution, which, if cultivated in time, will soon become a habit. This method presents, among many other advantages, one that will be found highly important, in reducing or enlarging an object ; for, having once generalized the whole, according to the scale of reduction or enlargement desired, the just proportions of the parts, and minor details, are readily attained, and made to harmonize with the whole, in accordance with such scale of reduction or enlargement. By thus progressing, in the drawing of an outline, from generals to particulars, much greater ease, as well as certainty of accuracy, is the result, than by an opposite course ; for, by beginning with details, and the lesser parts, we are apt to be led astray from the general and characteristic lines and quantities of the object of imitation.

83. Lest what has been previously said on this subject (61) should not be sufficiently understood, and appear contradictory to that which is now urged, it may be well to remark, that, while it is recommended to the pupil to make himself proficient, first, in the drawing of minor objects, it is not meant, thereby, that he should begin the drawing of a head, by drawing the features singly, before he generalizes the whole, and ascertains their true positions. In drawing the most simple object, there is a *general* character to be preserved, and particular component parts, or details, making up that whole : and all must perfectly harmonize together. The same principle applies to the delineation of a single mouth, an eye, a nose, a face, a head, a foot, a hand, a limb, a figure, a group, and a picture. Each should be considered in itself a whole, made up of subordinate parts, from the most simple detail, and line by which it is expressed, to the most elaborate work of art. Thus will the eye and hand become strengthened, by progressive study and practice, and the capacity advanced by degrees, almost imperceptibly, under the safe guidance of the one, like, universal principle.

84. The first conception, and consequently the first impression, to the mind of the artist, of his picture, is of its general character ; and it is produced by gradually descending, in its execution, to the parts and details—each in their turn of subordinate and relative importance. This must also be its first impression on the mind of the beholder : he, too, is led to descend, in its contemplation, from generals to particulars. The rules of production and just appreciation, naturally assimilating to one another, no elaboration of details can compensate for an unfavorable first and general impression, nor the toil and labor, bestowed upon them, meet their

reward, unless kept in proper relation, harmony, and subordinate service, to the whole. The principle is the same, whether the drawing, or picture, be the representation of the most simple object, drawn by a tyro in art, or the most elaborate composition, by the most accomplished artist. Let it be clearly and expressly understood, therefore, by the pupil. He should first learn to draw simple and single parts; then objects and figures; then pictures; and consider each a whole with its parts—that whole assuming the relation of a component part to a greater whole—and thus progressively advance his capacity of observation and execution: never losing sight of the broad principles, upon which he has started, and upon which he must still rely, in the highest efforts to which he may be tempted hereafter. The proper understanding and appreciation of these principles, will direct the judgment aright in estimating the value of detail in particulars, in the expression of a general idea, and conveying its desired impression. For, although, a drawing of an oak-leaf, if the mere representation of an oak *leaf* be the object, should be exact and true, in all its markings and peculiarities, it does not follow, that, in drawing the *tree*, we should draw every leaf of it; the importance of minor details being, to a certain degree, lost in the general effect of the whole. And yet, he who can not draw the one, will never succeed in producing a correct resemblance of the other. The leaf is the easiest, and, if properly studied, develops as clearly the principles of design, by which the tree may be expressed; and, therefore, should be placed first before the pupil. In its application to the higher departments of art, this leading principle is still more impressive; but, at this period of the student's advancement, it would be out of place, to enter as minutely into the subject as may be done hereafter, when his discrimination and capacity may be more matured, and his mind better prepared for its comprehension.

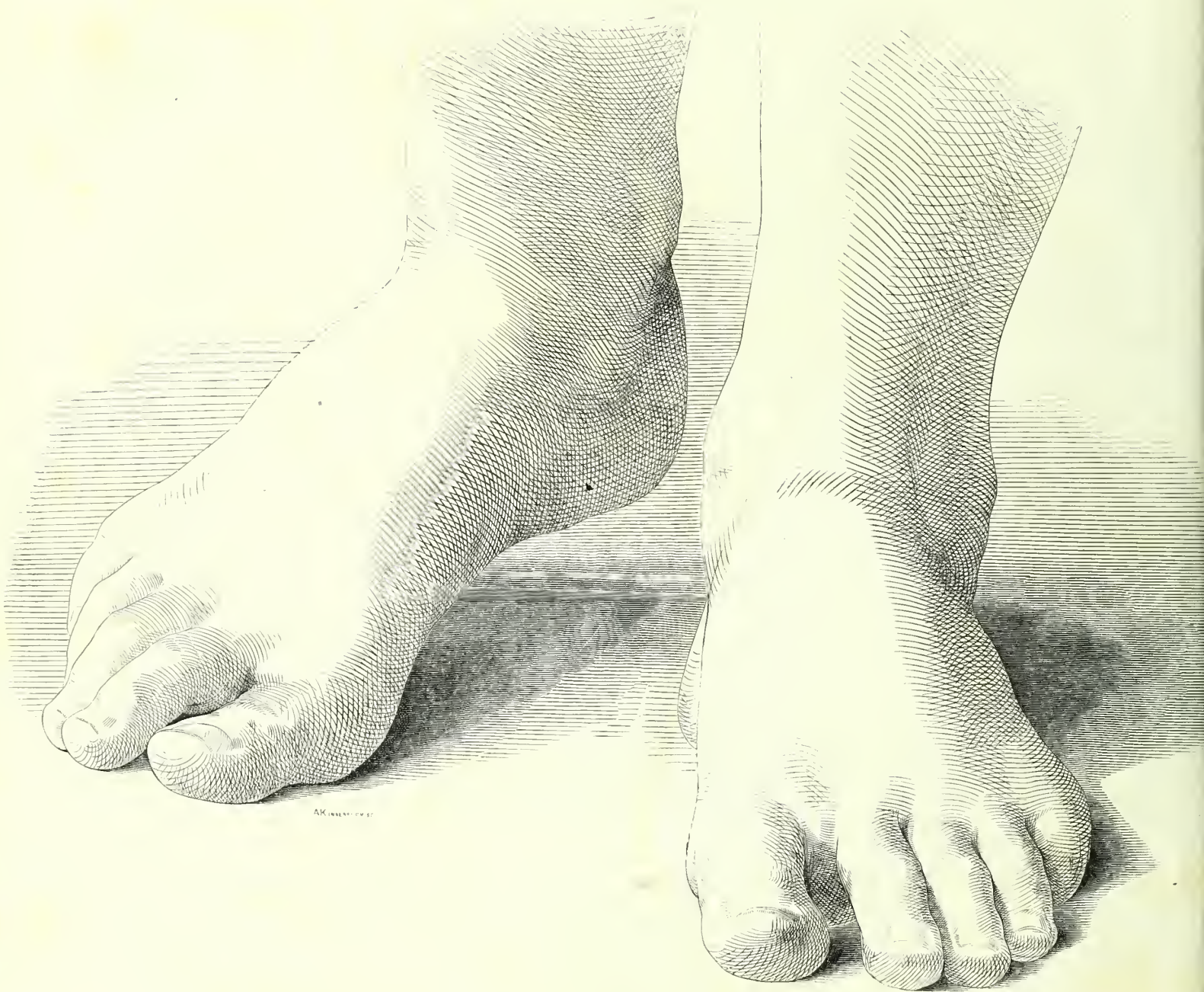
85. A well-formed foot is rarely met with, in our day, from the lamentable distortion it is doomed to endure, by the fashion of our shoes and boots. Instead of being allowed the same freedom as the fingers, to exercise the purposes for which nature intended them, the toes are cramped together, and of little more value, than if they were all in one—their joints enlarged, stiffened, and distorted,—forced and packed together; often overlapping one another in sad confusion, and wantonly placed beyond the power of service. As for the little toe, and its neighbor, in a shoe-deformed foot, they are usually thrust out of the way altogether, as if considered supernumerary and useless, while all the work is thrown upon the great toe, although that, too, is scarcely allowed working-room, in its prison-house of leather. It is therefore hopeless to look to a foot, that has grown under the restraint of leather, for perfection of form; and hence, the feet of children, although less marked, in their external anatomical



development, present the best models for the study and exercise of the pupil in drawing. It is unfortunate, that so few fine specimens of the hand and foot have remained to us, from the antique, from the fact, that these extremities have been more liable to injury and loss, from the casualties and neglect to which they have been subject, during the long night of ages of ruin and desolation through which they have passed; but we have enough to show how well the ancient artists understood and appreciated the beauty and perfection of these members. If possible, the pupil should always have by him one or two good specimens from the antique—and they can be readily procured in plaster—to correct his judgment, and impress upon him the true and perfect form of the foot; for he will rarely meet with it, in nature, and yet these very standards of perfection are derived from nature.

86. An example on the next page, drawn from the antique, shows now rarely, if ever, is found in one living model, whose feet have endured the restraint of shoes, the combination there seen, of beautiful form and proportion, ease and elasticity of motion, as well as admirable expression of adaptation, and power for use and purpose throughout. And how have they been produced? By no magical touch. Although the work of genius, genius could have done nothing, unless aided by knowledge, observation, and practical experience: and this is the business of the student, and must form his constant pursuit—for there is no end to the pursuit of excellence in art. The spirit and capacity for investigation are gradually advanced, as the perception and taste become quickened and purified. An unsatisfied thirst for knowledge for ever leads to the great fountain-head of all art—the study of nature; and no sure system of education in art can be devised, diverging from this well-tried course. To possess this capacity for just selection and combination, we must become familiar with nature as she is. By study and comparison, the eye must be made sensitive, and, by practice, the hand must be made obedient. We must become practically familiar with the power of art, in the imitation of nature, before we can select with proper judgment, and combine with knowledge, her diffused beauties. It is this high attainment that marks the best works of the ancient masters; and, while they enchant all with their marvellous beauty, the most learned pronounce them faultless—true to nature: and yet, in nature, we look in vain to find similar happy combinations. But to pursue this subject farther, at this time, would be to lose sight of the purposes of these elementary instructions, which are intended to lay a secure foundation; glancing, occasionally, at the more finished structure, by way of encouragement and incentive, to those who may not be sufficiently impressed with the importance of so broad a basis, and who might otherwise weary in the good work.

87. Without entering into farther detail, with regard to the following examples, they are placed before the student, with the hope that enough has been said already, to render the principles of drawing easy of comprehension and practical application. One thing can not be too often repeated, or too urgently impressed upon him—the importance of a correct outline. An early-acquired and premature facility, in expressing tints, “in working up a drawing,” as it is termed, has led many astray from the first purpose of art—truth and accuracy—which a piece of chalk or charcoal, in a skilful hand, will express more certainly, on a rough wall or board, than the most delicate touch, or the most exquisite materials, can ever accomplish, unless guided by sound elementary knowledge of the great first principles of art. It should be remembered, too, that shadows and tints have an outline to be preserved, and accurately expressed, in accordance with the effect produced on the object of imitation; less strongly marked, in most

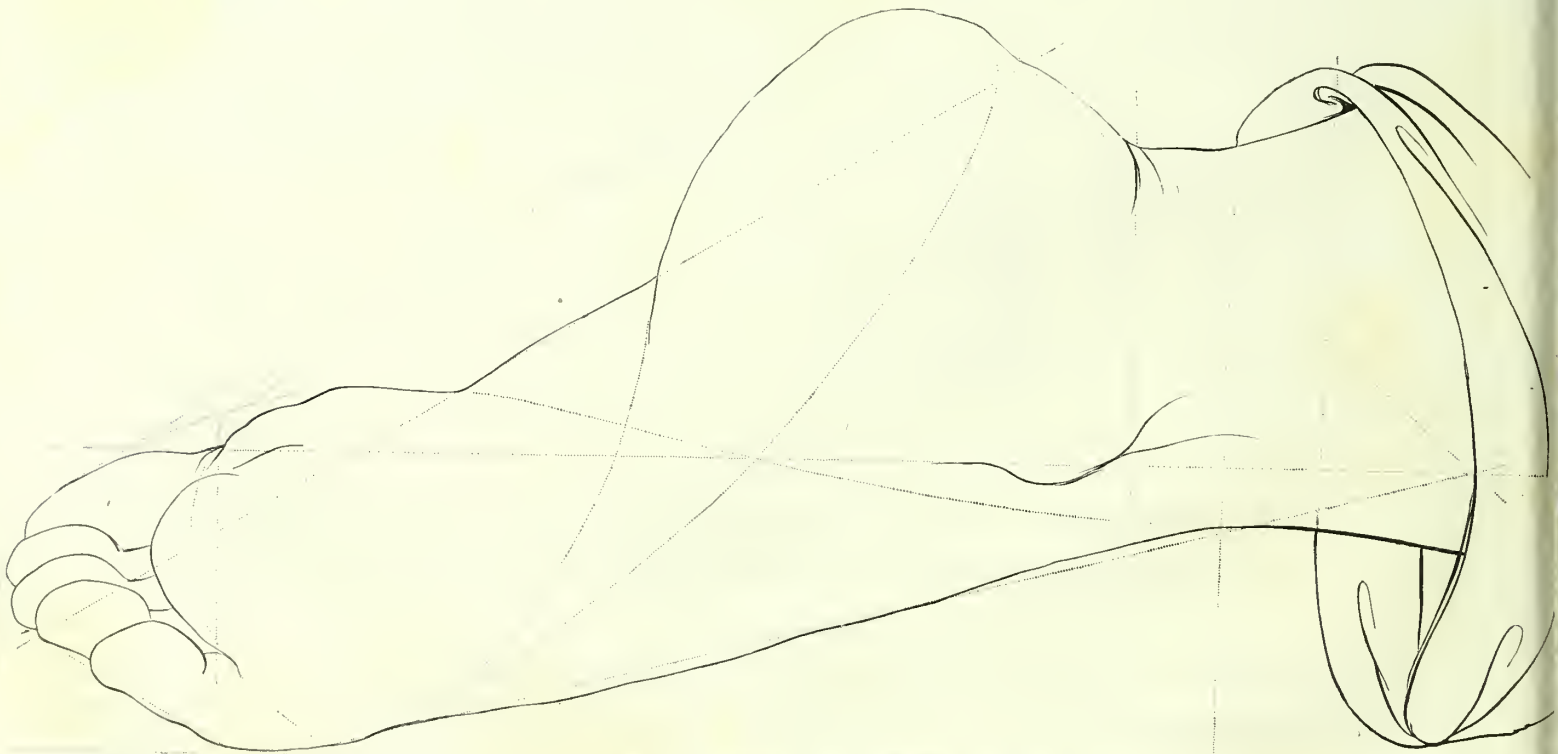
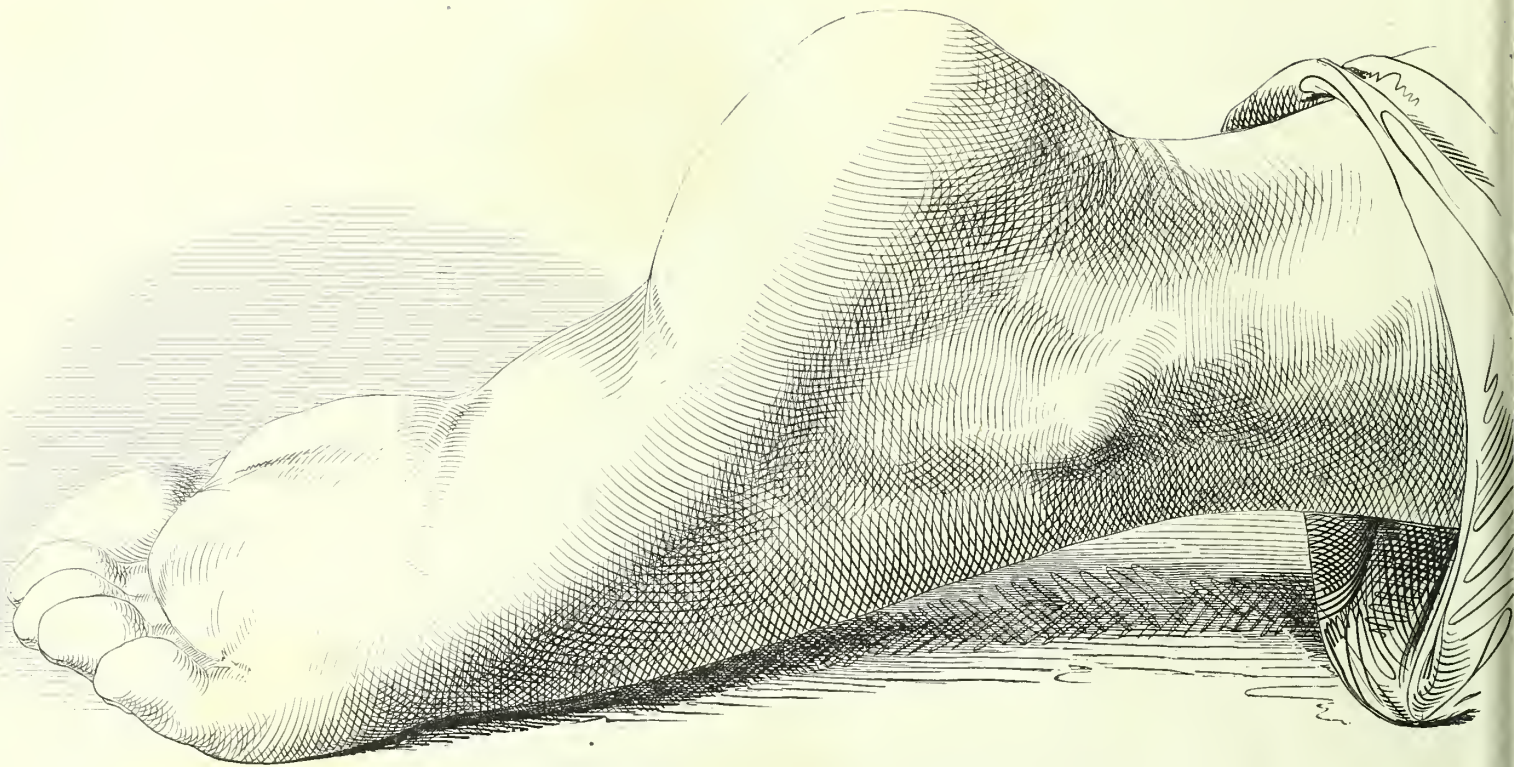


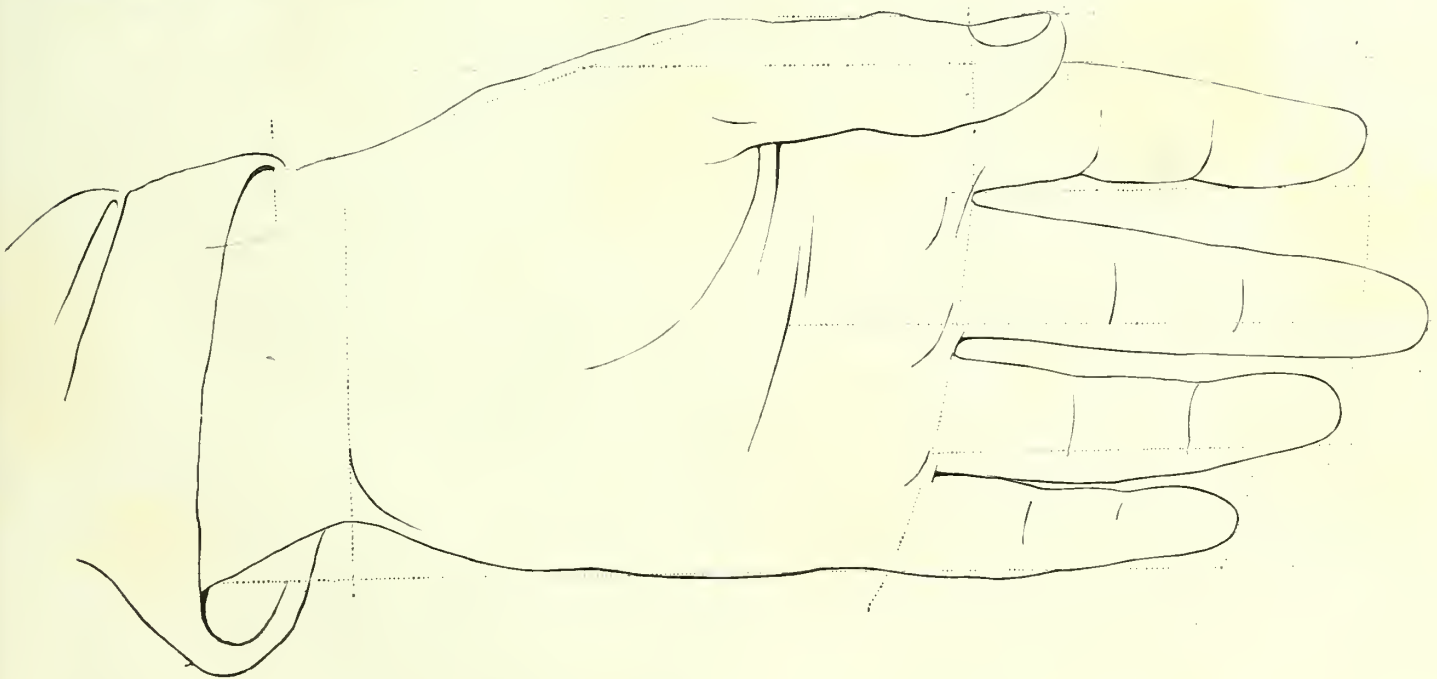
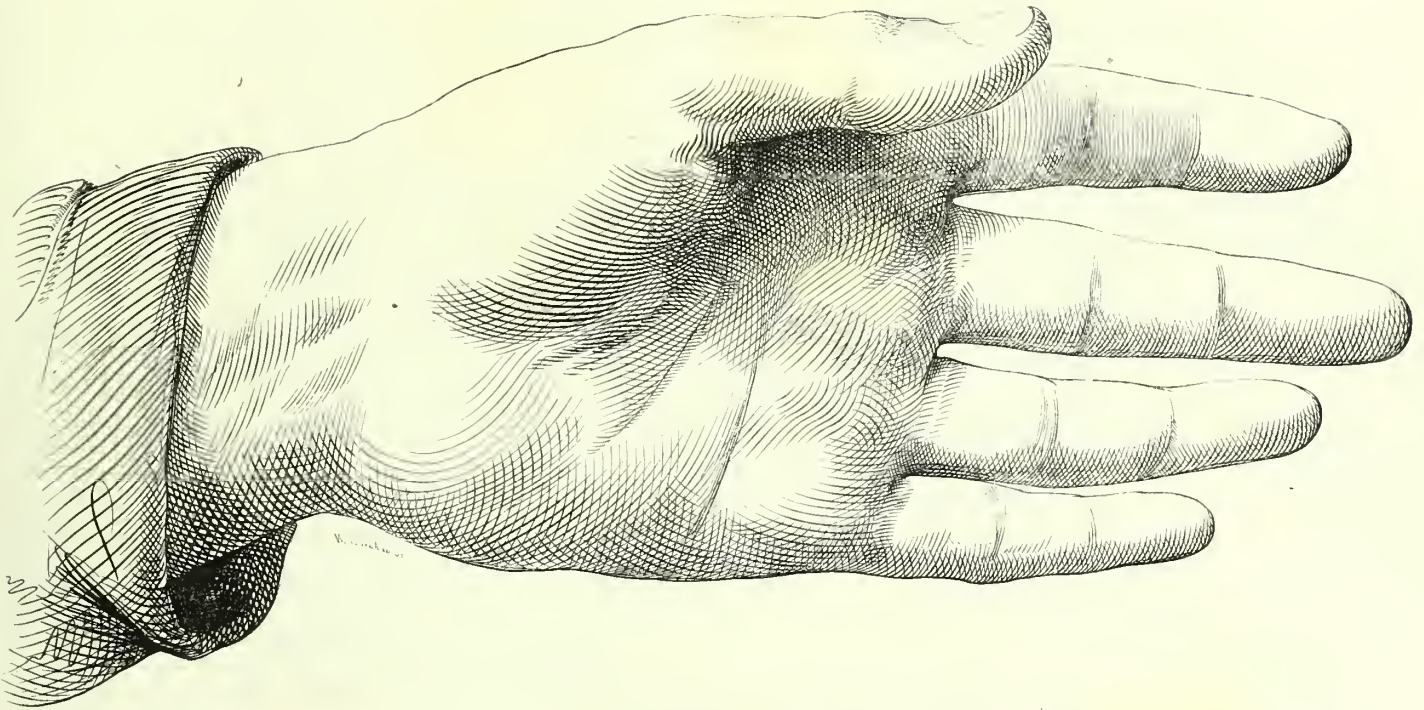
cases, it is true, but it is there. By the aid of shadows is developed the true form of the model; and to parts more or less advanced or depressed, are thereby given a location, as decided and certain as if seen in profile. So truly can they be expressed, on a flat surface, that a sculptor can model a bust, from a picture, and the eye may be so completely deceived, by their close representation, as scarcely to distinguish the reality from its counterfeit. It is, therefore, as essentially necessary to preserve the forms, masses, and proportions, of shadows, as of the more



substantial parts of the object of imitation ; and the surest way to acquire facility in expressing them, is to proceed in precisely the same manner with them, as with other details and accessories.

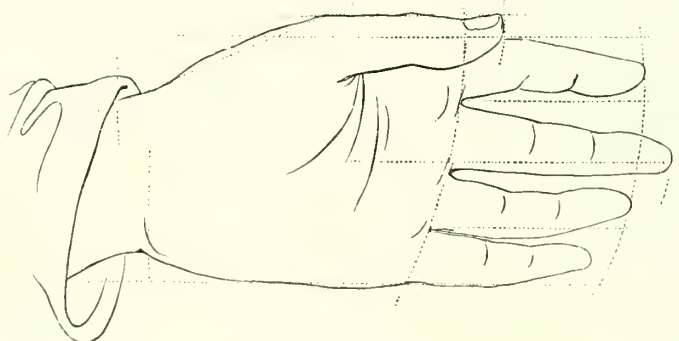
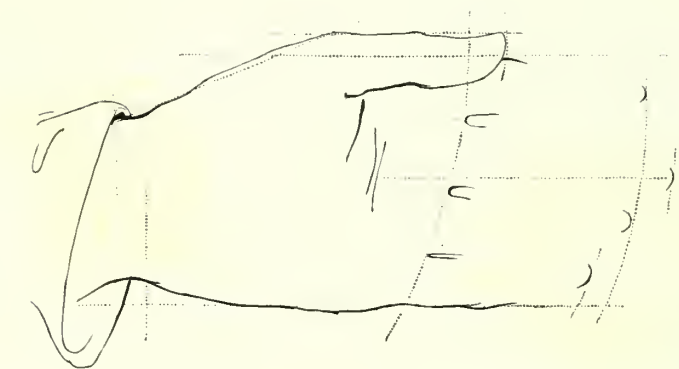
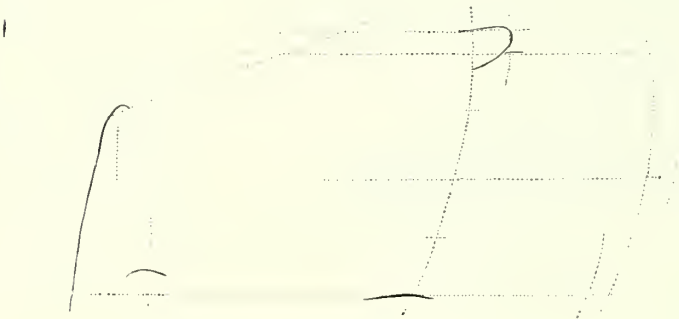
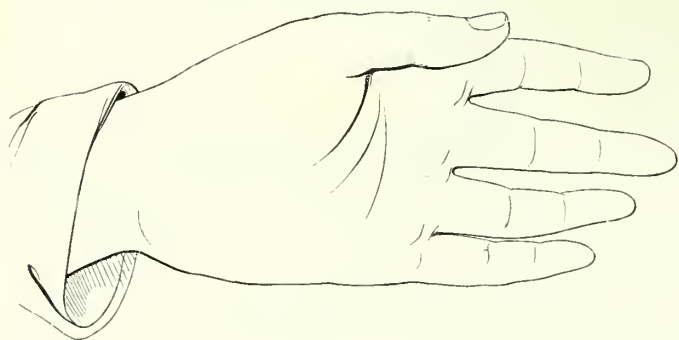
88. THE HAND, although more difficult to draw than the foot, not only on account of its peculiar structure, but the great variety of action and position, of which it is capable, presents greater facility of study to the draughtsman, is better understood, and more familiar to our obser-



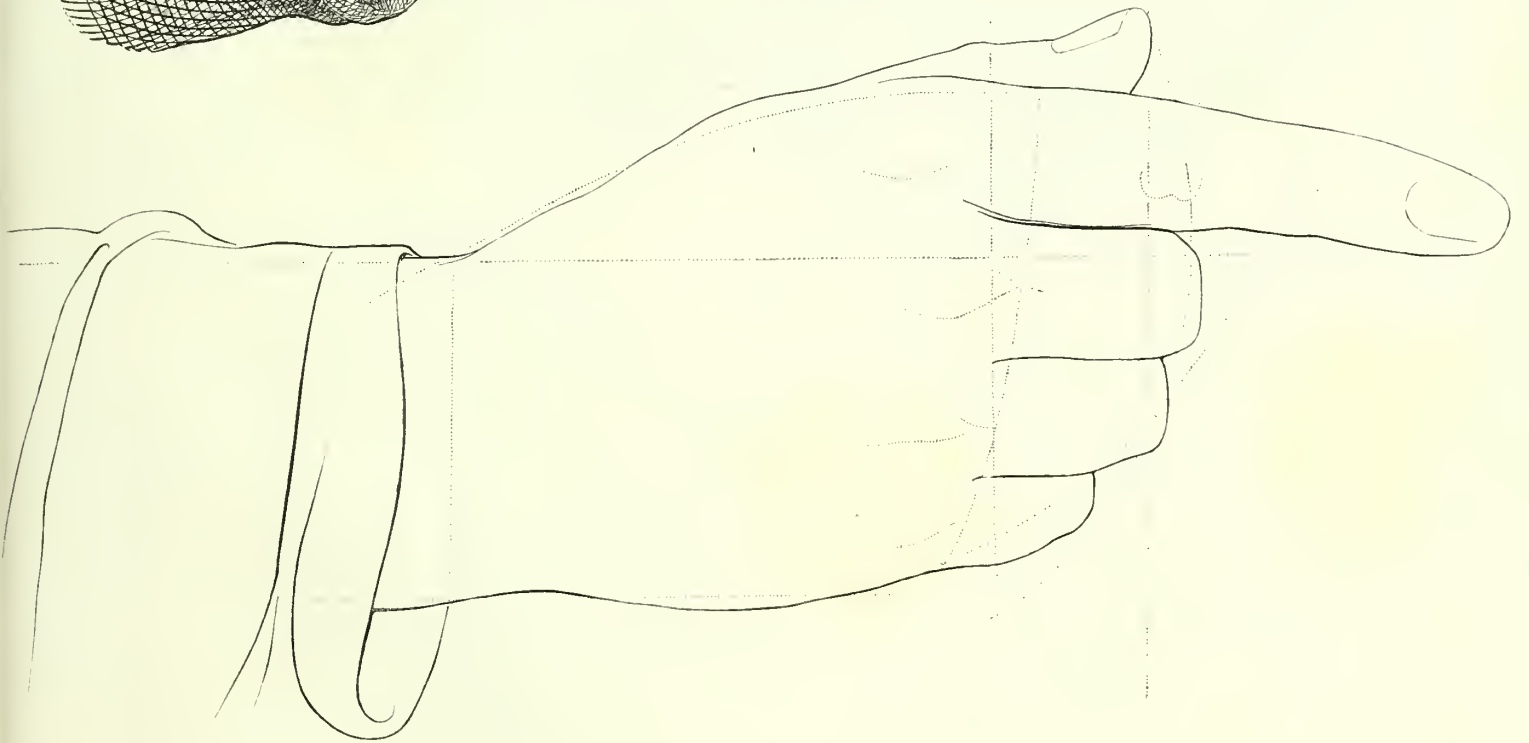
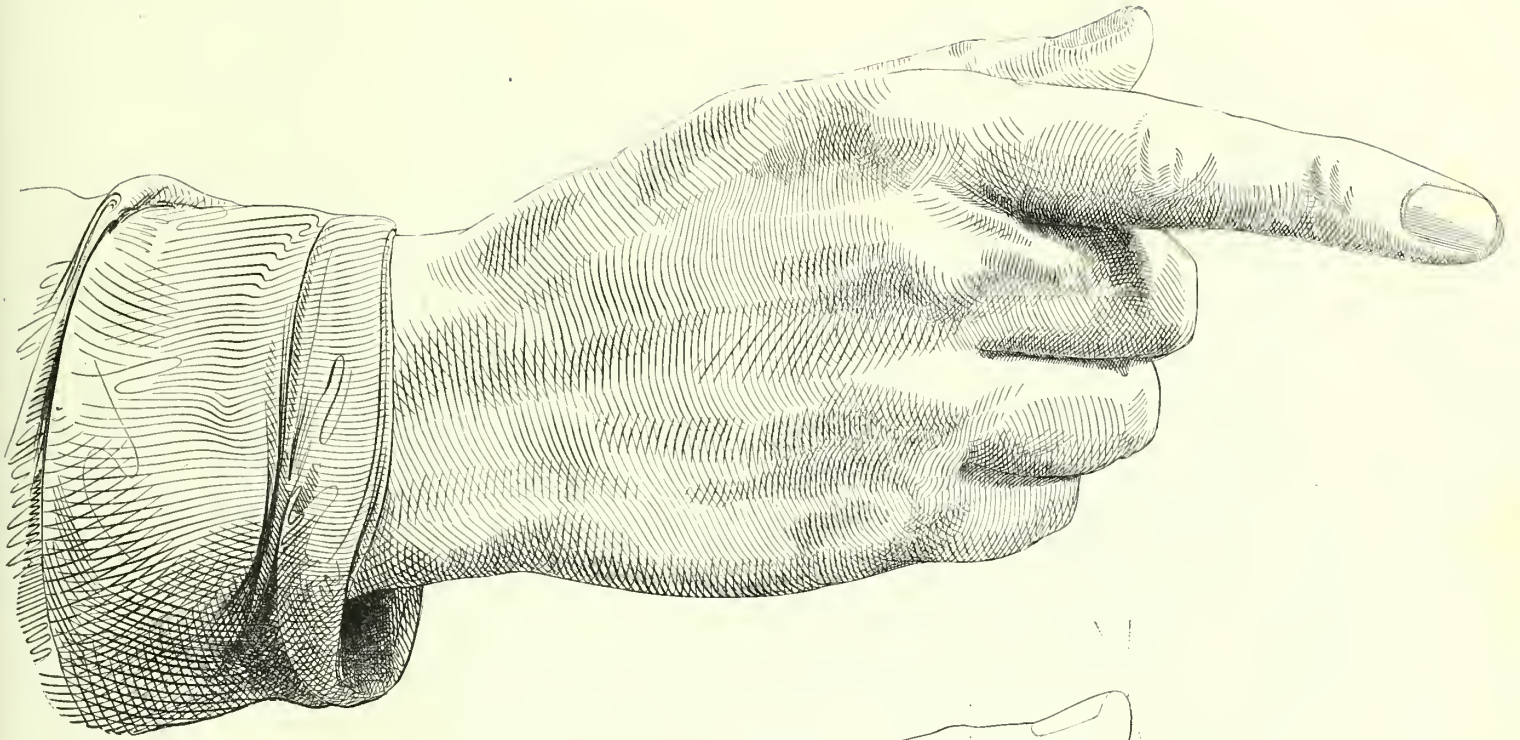


vation. What has been said, with regard to the difficulty of finding, in nature, beautiful and well-formed feet, does not apply to the hands, for they are often to be met with, of the most exquisite form and just proportions; and there are no objects in nature, the study of which is better calculated to strengthen the general capacity of the student, in the art of drawing. If he can draw a hand, with ease and accuracy, he can draw anything. Let him, therefore, set about the work with earnestness, for success will place him in a position, from which he can look with

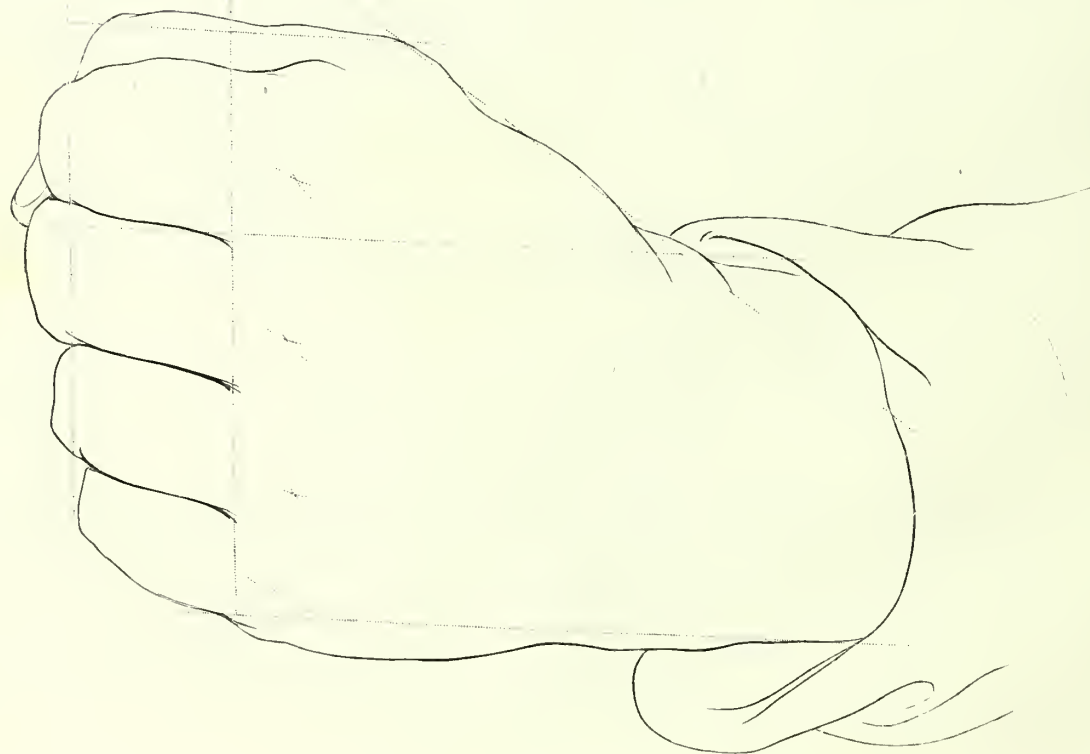
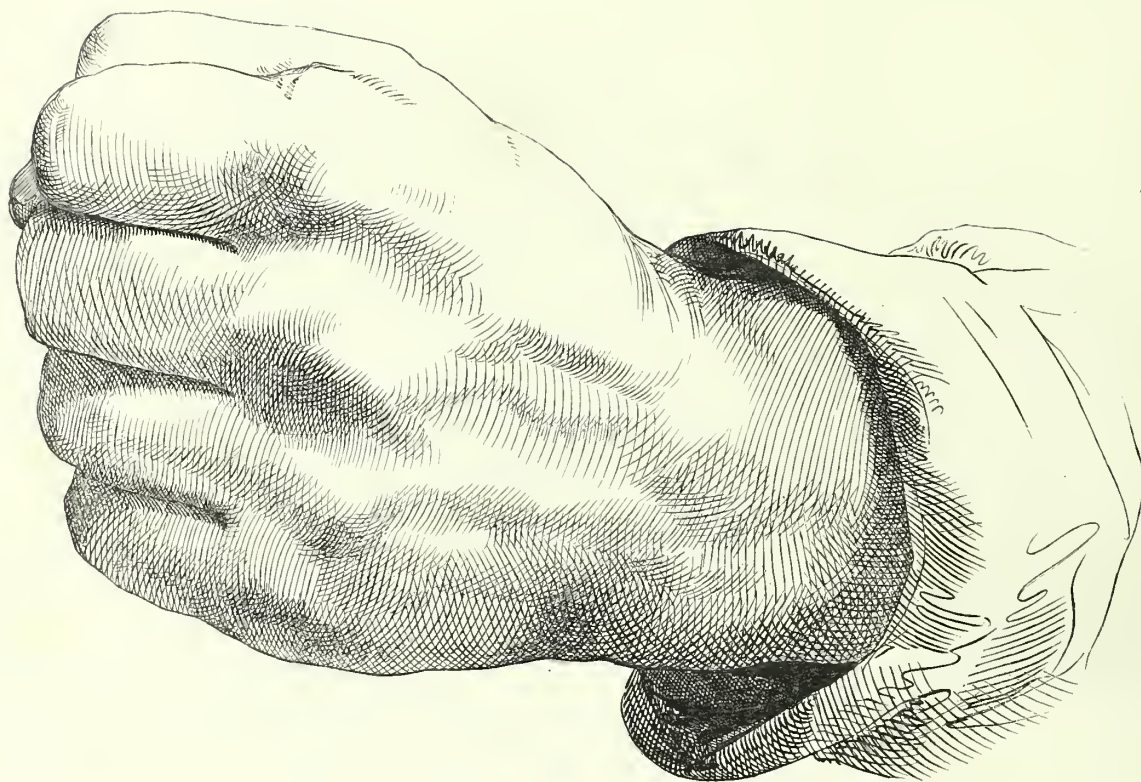
pleasure on the labor by which it has been attained, and forward to the assured consummation of his most ardent aspirations.

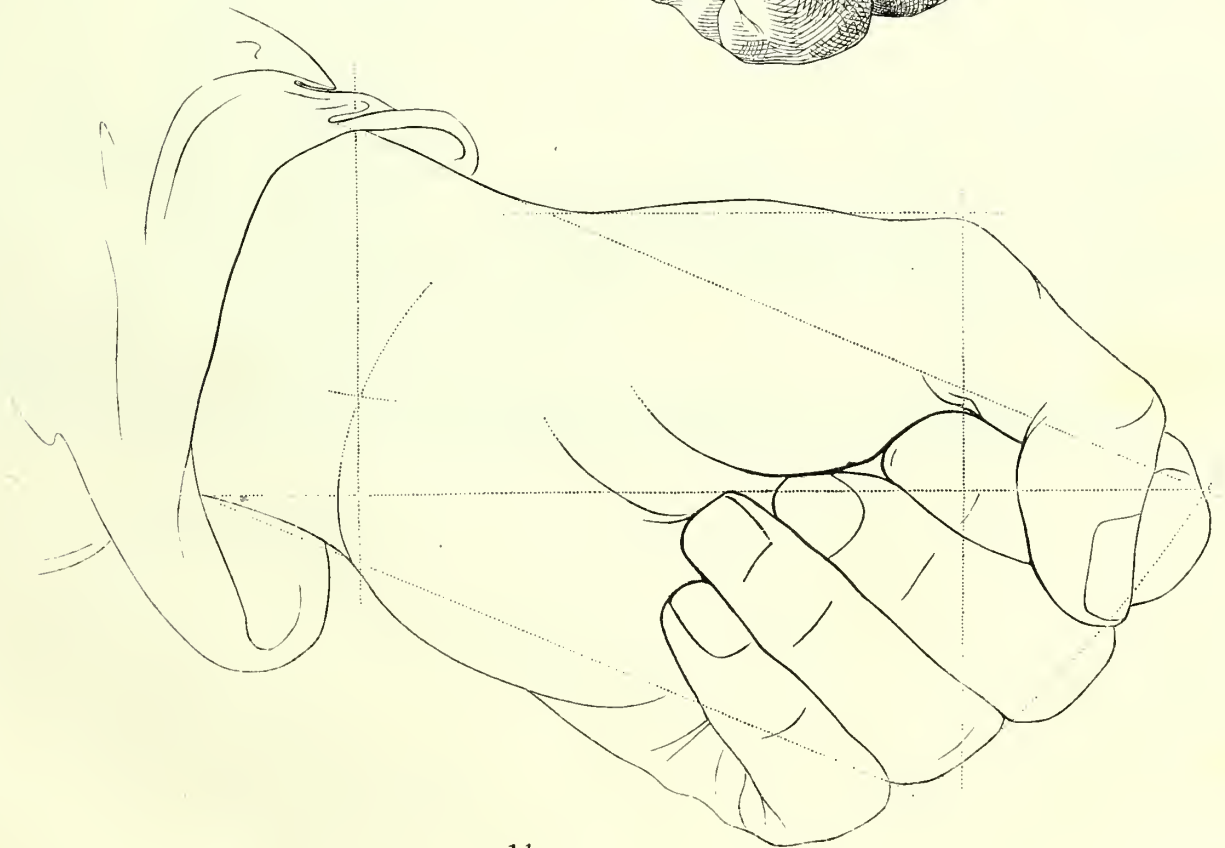
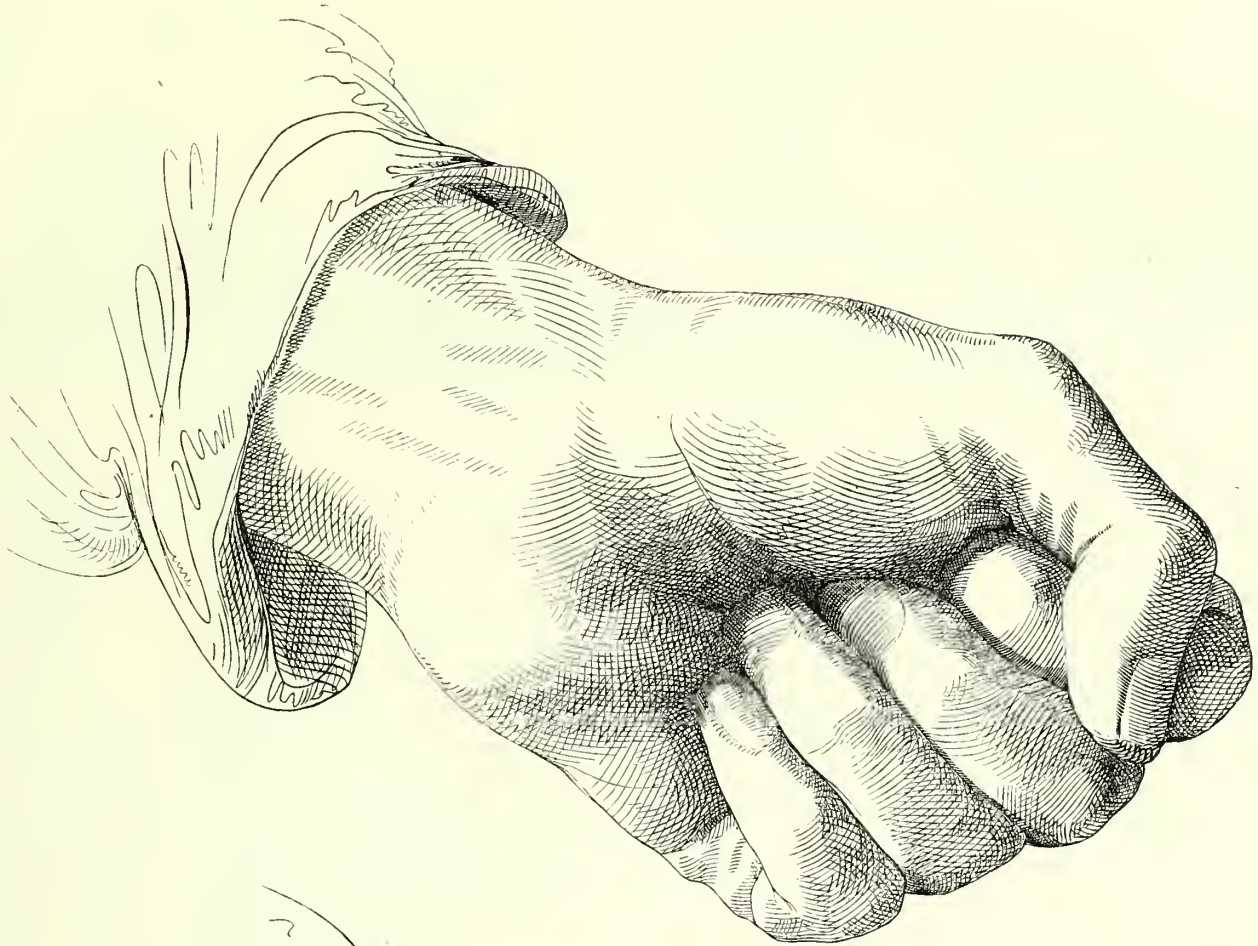


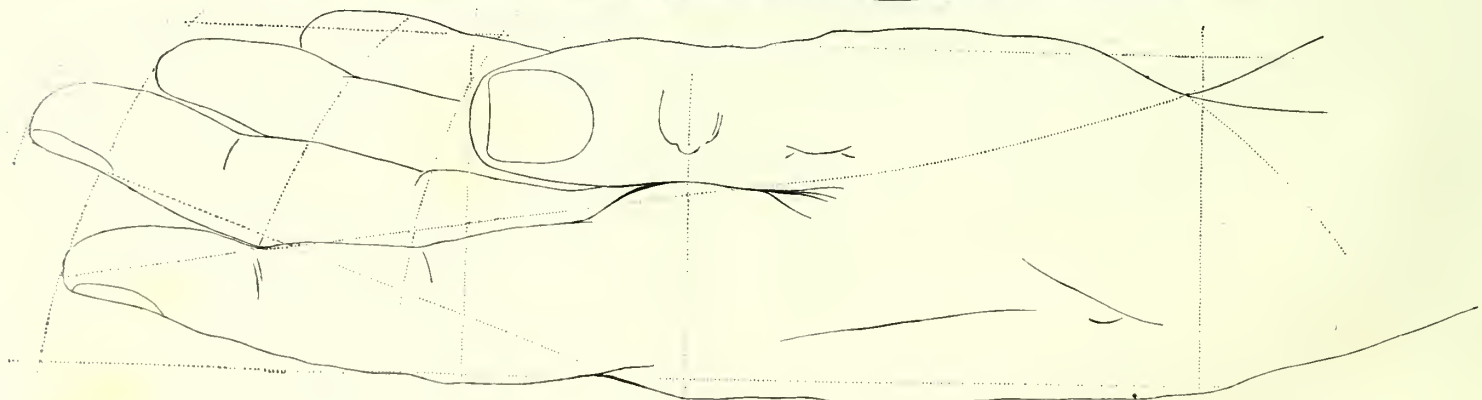
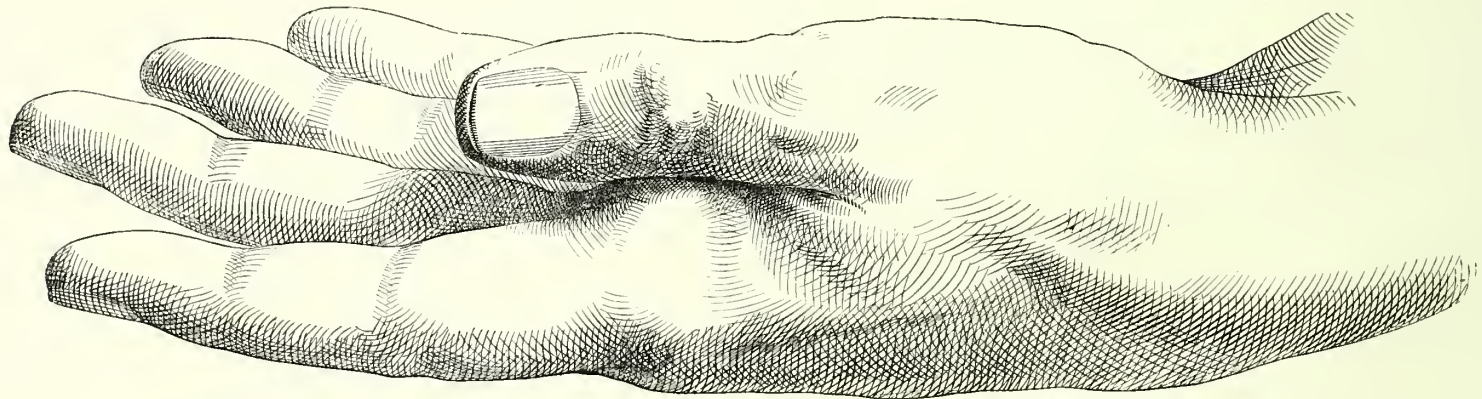
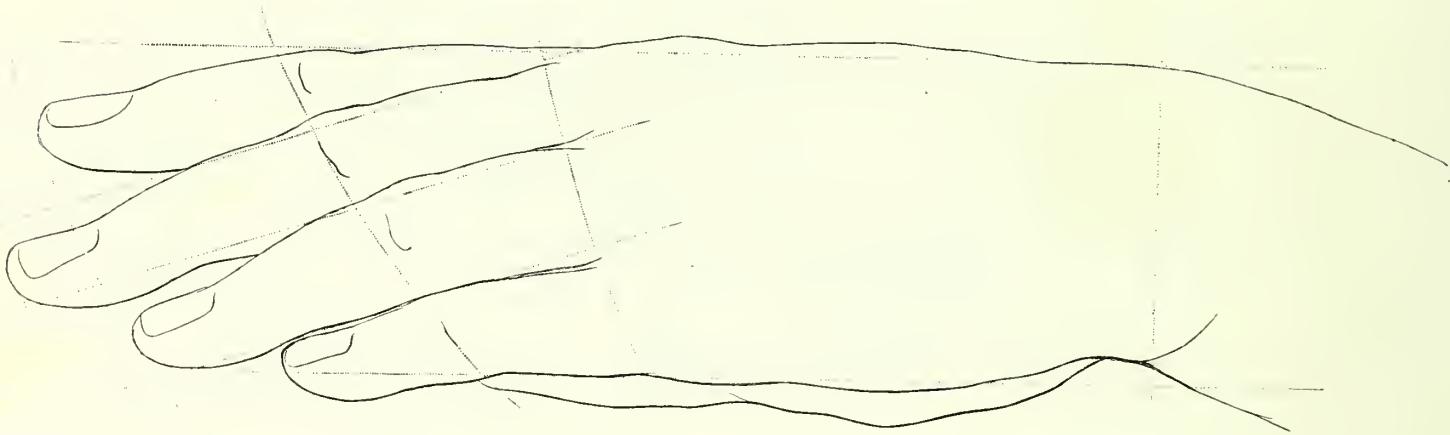
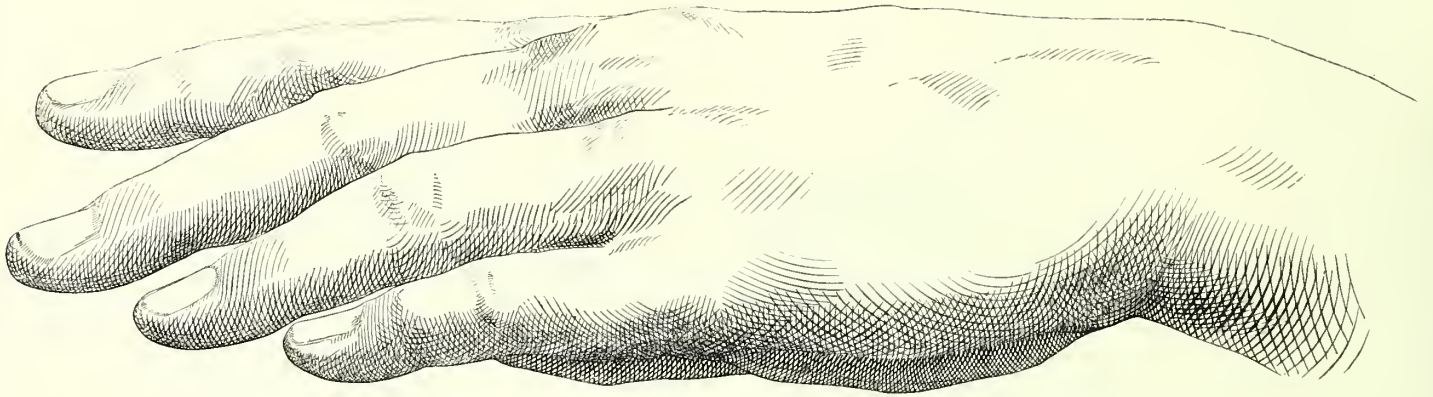
89. If the importance of first securing the general form of the head and foot has been already felt, it will be evident, with greater force, in drawing the hand, especially when the fingers are extended. Let us, therefore, have recourse to a reduction of the outline of this first example of the hand, to explain more fully the method or process by which it can be most readily obtained. When once the general form of the principal and most massive portion of the hand, extending from the wrist to the beginning of the fingers, is ascertained, and indicated with accuracy, next decide upon the length, expansion, and relative position, of the fingers, as a group, and then proceed with each, in its turn of relative importance, continually comparing and verifying your conclusions, as you advance, by the method already explained; never losing sight of the general character of the whole, and keeping the parts in perfect harmony of action with it. This example may be found even more difficult than those that follow; but it is well for the pupil to have his strength tested, and if he has earnestly, and successfully, followed the line of study marked out for him, thus far, he may be safely said to be even now within sight of the more pleasant ways of art, with assurance of strength and capacity to enter upon the broad and boundless field that lies before him. A little farther, and the elementary work is done, and another, and higher, is begun. But, before the one is

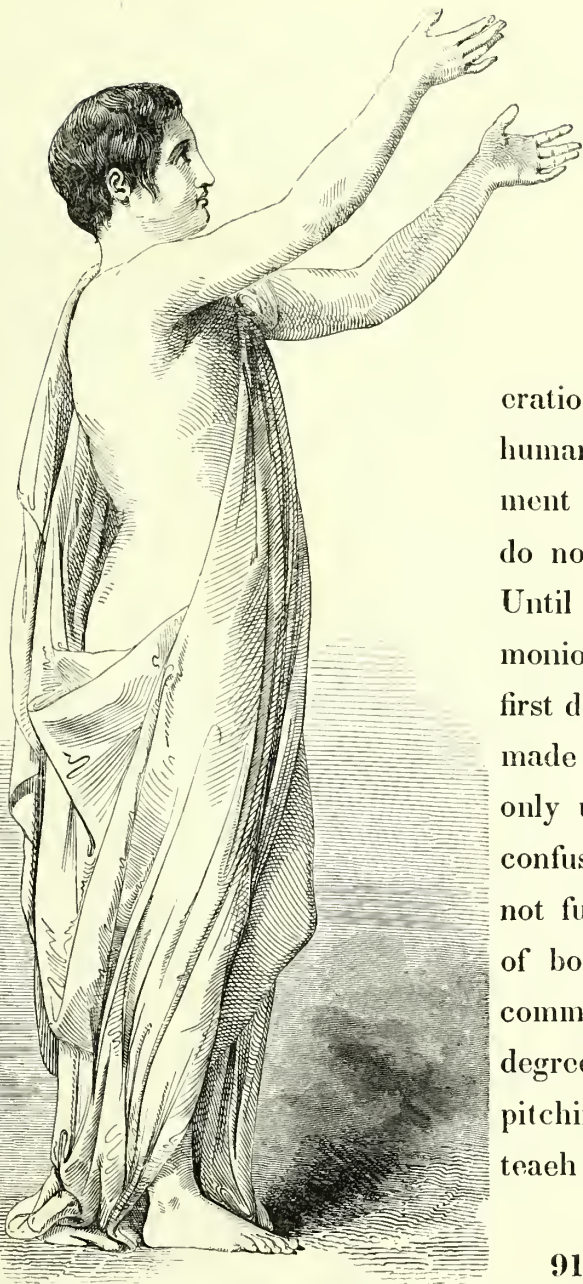


accomplished, or the pupil prepared to enter upon the other, he must be fully impressed with the practical application of the general principles of design, which it has been the purpose of these pages to inculcate, not only with reference to the examples placed before him, but to all other objects. He must not only possess a perfect comprehension of the method, but practically assure himself of its value, by repeated and careful trials.



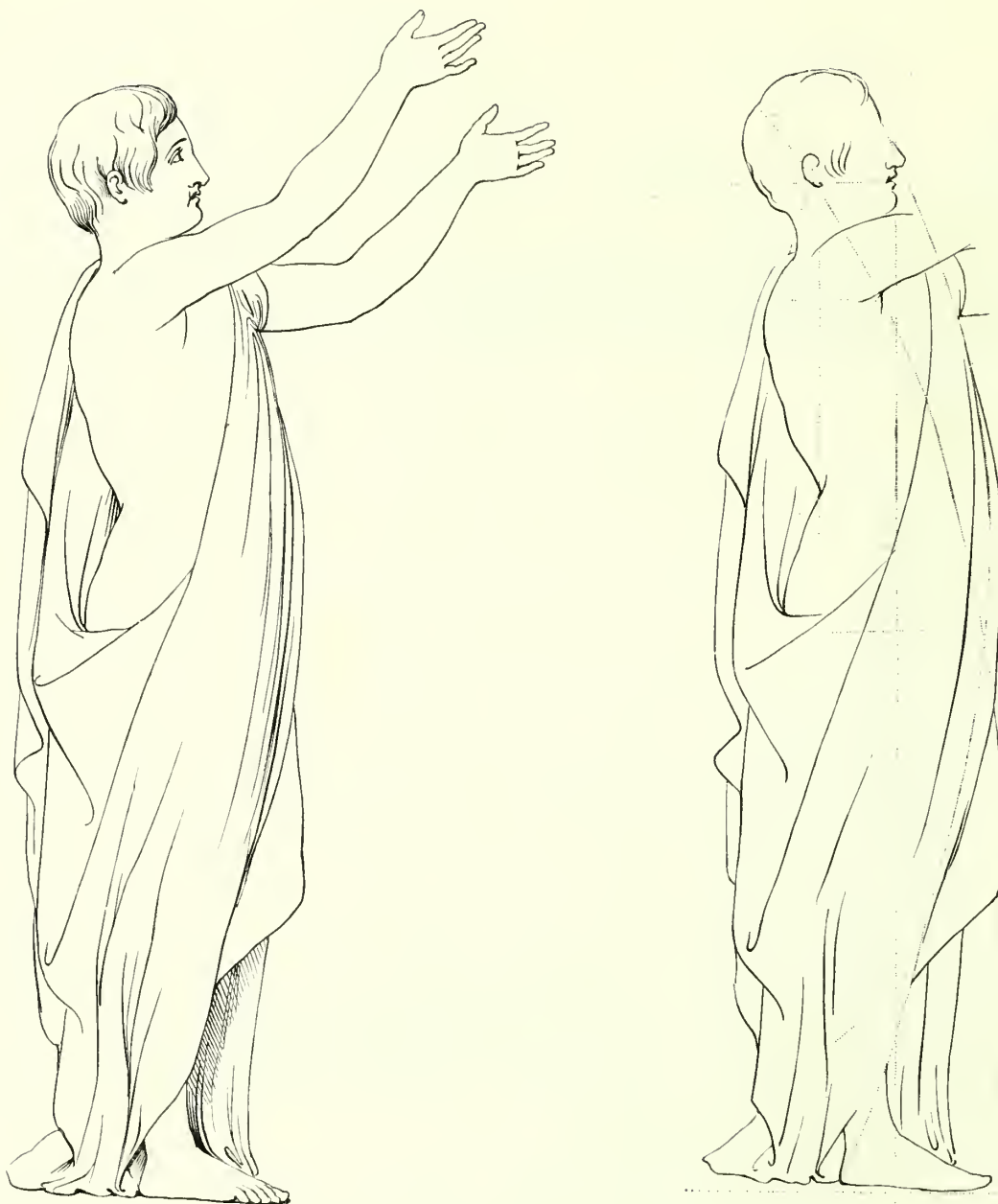






90. After having required the devotion of so much time and study to the delineation of the head, hand, and foot, the figure, as a whole, might appear of sufficient relative importance to demand a larger space than will be devoted to it, at this time. It should be remembered, that these elementary instructions are inductive and preparatory to that more concise consideration and study of the anatomical construction of the human frame, essential to those who aspire to the attainment of excellence in the higher branches of art, which do not strictly belong to the mere rudiments of drawing. Until the mind and hand have been schooled to act harmoniously together, until the broad principles of design are first developed to the understanding of the pupil, and he is made to feel wants beyond those of the beginner, it is not only useless, but even prejudicial to his advancement, to confuse his mind with theories and treatises, which he can not fully understand, nor practically apply. To talk to him of bones and muscles, before he has attained sufficient command of hand and eye to draw, with at least some degree of facility, more simple forms and objects, is like pitching one, headlong, into a deep and rapid current, to teach him to swim.

91. If the interest of the student has been excited, and his attention bestowed upon what has been already said, and so earnestly urged upon him, and he has mastered the examples of the head, hand, and foot, already given, he will experience but little difficulty in drawing any form or figure that he may attempt. When it is said that he possesses the capacity to draw a figure, it should not be understood, thereby, that he is capable of that careful elaboration, or minute exactness, in lines or details, that is only acquired by long practice, and repeated acts; but, he will be able to express the general form, proportions, and action, of his model: he will be able, thence, to



descend to the parts and details: he will be able to do this upon fixed and certain principles, which, if properly understood, appreciated, and applied, will never mislead him.

92. Let the pupil now attempt to draw the outline of this first example of the full figure, without having recourse to measurement, and without reference to other rules of proportion, than such as may be suggested by the careful observation of the figure before him, and by precisely the same method by which he has drawn the head, hand, and foot, separately. He will see, at a glance, that a perpendicular line, drawn from the upper lip, would intersect the point where the



instep joins the leg ; and, having decided upon the height of the figure, he has already a certain basis, and starting points. Next, observe well the relation of the parts, proportions, and character of the general contour of the figure to this imaginary perpendicular line. The drapery takes one continued sweep, slightly modulated, by the form of the figure, from the heel to the left shoulder ; which line, if farther extended, would touch the outline of the forehead, intersecting the assumed perpendicular line on the nostril : this gives, also, the direction of the head. The lines of the back and shoulders, those of the left leg, and the more massive portions of the figure, are, in like manner, to be ascertained, drawn, and verified (FIG. II.). The hands and arms,

the most difficult parts of the figure, are yet to be drawn. It will be perceived, that the lower point of the union of the right hand (FIG. III.) with the wrist, is on a level with the top of the head; and that the corresponding point of the left hand is on a level with the nostril. The distance of the hands from the head are next to be ascertained; which may be done by comparison with the parts and proportions already decided upon, and by the imaginary extension of such certain lines, already drawn, as may most readily direct to the desired purpose. For example: if the outline of the hip were extended upward, it would strike the outline of the right arm at the elbow, and continue with it to the wrist—which has been already decided upon, as being on a level with the top of the head. Thus the position of the right hand is ascertained; which may be farther verified, by the method of comparison, and studying its relation to other parts. The true position of the right hand, once secured, those of the left hand, the arms, etc., may be easily obtained; and, having completed the *general* contour of the figure, but little difficulty will be encountered in the delineation of the parts and details. The position of the head having been already ascertained, draw the features in harmony with it (56); and thus proceed with the hands, feet, and other details. If the first example given of the hand (89), has been fully understood, and what has been said with reference to it has been practically applied, but little difficulty will be found in drawing the arms, etc., of this figure. Remember to compare and measure, by the eye, every part, proportion, and line, of the object before you (FIG. IV); and do not forget, that beneath the drapery there are limbs, whose action, and just positions, are to be preserved (62).

93. Let it be presumed that the pupil has succeeded, probably not without repeated efforts, in producing a fair drawing of this figure: its lines, its proportions, the bearing and relation of its parts and details to one another, are strongly impressed upon his mind. While these impressions are still vivid, close the book, and try how true your memory may be; how far it can be trusted, by drawing the figure by its aid—for this is another and most important application of the method, which has been urged, from the beginning, as one of universal practical application. When made familiar to the draughtsman, by practice, he is enabled to seize, at once, the leading character of an object, however restless it may be, or transient his opportunity of observation; to fix it upon his memory, without drawing a line at the moment, and to reproduce it at will. It is by this matured capacity that he is able to catch the fleeting expression of a face, or the action of a figure, and to represent them with a degree of accuracy, as wonderful to the uninitiated as serviceable to him; for it gives him a power, in observing and recording the changing beauties of nature, which is denied to those who can only draw the inert model before them.



94. Without crowding the limited space allotted to these elementary instructions, with more numerous examples of the figure, than will be found scattered throughout the chapters devoted to them, and directing the pupil to the study of nature, and such good specimens in prints, drawings, or pictures, as may be within his reach, it may be expedient to give him, in conclusion, some general ideas of the proportions of the human figure; which are not intended to be used as recipes for "building up figures," but to aid in the observation and delineation of nature.

95. THE PROPORTIONS OF THE HUMAN FIGURE have been a subject of much consideration, and volumes have been compiled, by artists and others, in relation thereto. Although generally agreeing, in the most important points, there is still so much difference of opinion, with regard to details, that it would tend rather to confuse, than elucidate the subject, to the mind of the student, to place before him the various opinions and rules that have been published from time to time. Should his pursuit of art be extended to its higher walks, he will, in that great school of art—the study of nature—aided by the best and most approved productions, learn to form just conclusions, and, weighing the value of conflicting opinions, deduct for himself such rules and principles of proportion as may, in his mature judgment, form the best and truest standard of excellence and beauty.

96. The scale of proportions, most generally received, is that of Gerard de Lairesse; and they will be found ample for the present purposes of the student. It will rarely happen, that he has occasion to draw a figure perfectly erect, and with all the limbs seen, without some degree of foreshortening; due allowance, therefore, must be made for these circumstantial variations.

Taking SEVEN AND A HALF HEADS, as the average proportion in the height of a well-formed man, and dividing each head into FOUR PARTS, will necessarily give THIRTY PARTS to the whole figure. THREE PARTS make up the length of the visage (56)—consequently, TEN FACES will be the measure of the Figure: and thus its proportions, by that scale:—

- 1 FACE from the crown of the head to the nostrils.
- 1 from the nostrils to the extremity of the throat, or hollow between the collar-bones.
- 1 from that point to the bottom of the breast.
- 2 to the bottom of the trunk, which is one half the whole height, or centre of the figure.
- 2 to the upper part of the knee.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ or $1\frac{1}{2}$ half parts, is contained in the knee.
- 2 from the lower part of the knee to the inner ankle.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ or $1\frac{1}{2}$ parts, thence to the sole of the foot:—making
- 10 faces to the figure.

The QUARTER DIVISIONS of the figure are at—

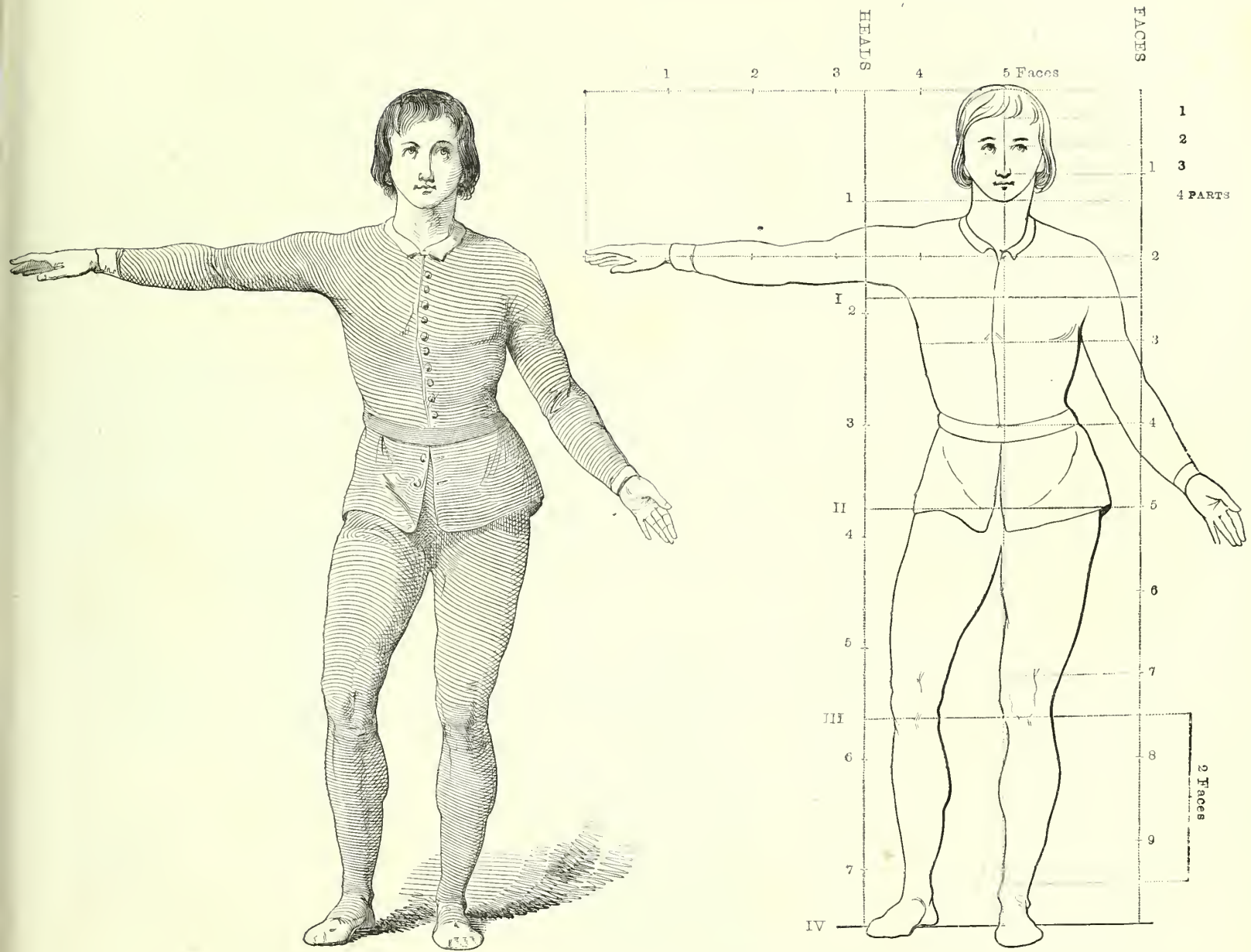
I. The armpits.

III. The knees.

II. The bottom of the trunk.

IV. The sole of the foot.

When a well-formed man extends his arms to their utmost stretch, the measure, from their extremities, equals his height.



The foot is generally considered as equal to one sixth part of the height of the figure ; but this measure is excessive.

The longest toe is equal to the length of the nose.

The hand is the length of the face.

Twice the breadth of the hand gives its length.

The breadth of the hand is equal that of the foot.

The thumb is one nose in length.

These measures may suffice for imparting a general idea of the proportionate dimensions of figures ; at least, they will be found sufficient for the pupil at this time.

97. In conclusion, by reference to some of the most celebrated of the antique statues, it will be seen how nearly one average height of the figure, and proportion of the head to it, has been observed. The Farnese Hercules is, in height, supposing the figure erect, seven heads, three parts, and seven minutes (twelve minutes are allowed to a part); the Antinous of the Vatican, seven heads and two parts; the Laocoon, seven heads, two parts, and three minutes; the Dying Gladiator of the Capitol, eight heads; the Apollo Belvidere, seven heads, three parts, and six minutes; the Venus de Medici, seven heads and three parts; and the Grecian Shepherdess, at Naples, seven heads, three parts, and six minutes.

98. It should be borne in mind, that the proportions of the figure vary in almost every individual; and from infancy to manhood, they undergo most marked changes. Taking the size of the head, as a scale of measurement: the whole length of a child, two months old, will be found rarely to exceed four times the height of his head;—at one year, four and a half heads;—at three years, five and a quarter;—at five years, scarcely six;—at ten years, six and a half;—from fourteen to sixteen, about seven;—and thence, to manhood, seven and a half, and sometimes eight.



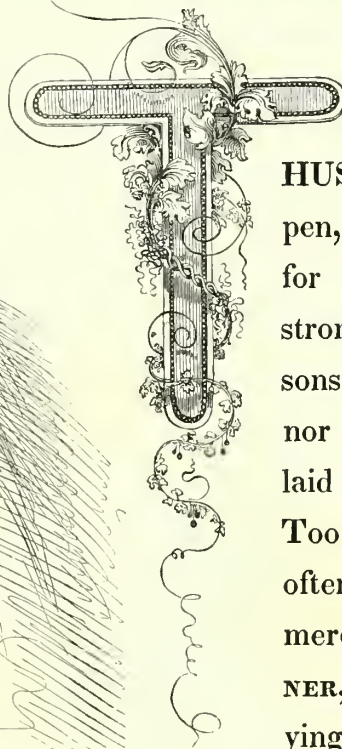
CHAPTER IV.

THE RUDIMENTS OF DRAWING.

OF MANNER OR METHOD—THE ART OF WRITING, IN CONNEXION WITH DRAWING—GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS, ETC.—CONCLUSION.



"Rules are to be considered as fences, placed only where trespass is expected."—REYNOLDS.



HUS far, the use of the pen, as an instrument for drawing, has been strongly urged, for reasons already explained; nor should it ever be laid aside or neglected. Too great importance is often attached to the mere imitation of MANNER, particularly in copying from the works of

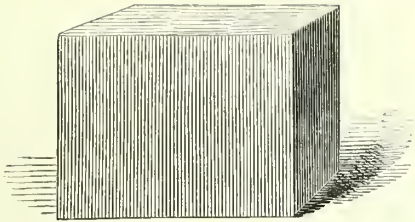
others; and if more thought and pains were bestowed upon the principles of design, and less upon the imitation of the touch or peculiarities of individual artists, there would be more leaders, and fewer servile followers, who, in emulating and imitating the means, lose sight of the great ends of art.

99. The test of excellence, in a method or manner, is its approach to precision, and distinctness of expression, by which an object, or thought, is most clearly represented. He that has a clear perception of the one, or the other, if assisted by proper education, will not be long in finding a manner or method of conveying it, in his own way, far better than by any he can borrow of another. It is often painful to see the toil bestowed upon a drawing, on which weeks and months have been worn away, in efforts to attain the peculiar touch of an example set before the pupil, without one thought of the sentiment, general character, or expression, of the original: to which the work, method, or manner, was only considered secondary by its author—as if, to write like Shakespeare, meant no more than to copy his handwriting.

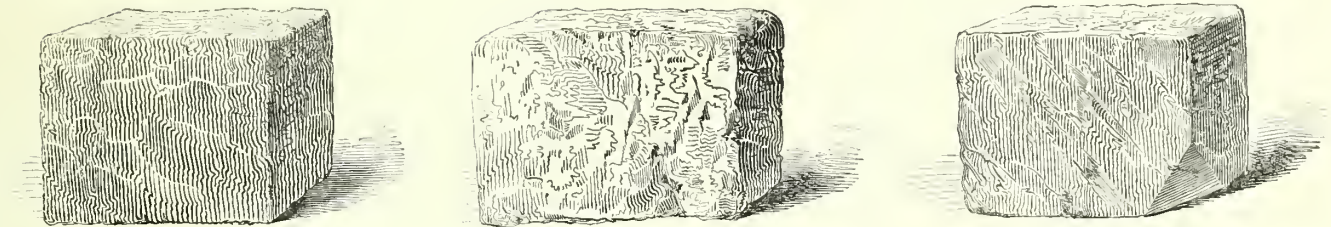
100. Should the pupil now desire to try the pencil or crayon, he may do so, with profit and propriety; and he will find the use he has made of the pen has given his hand a degree of precision of touch, that he should never suffer it to lose in the use of other instruments, that are apt to lead to carelessness, because their work can be readily erased, or errors committed, readily disguised. In schools, as well as in private instruction, Indian rubber, stale bread, and all other devices for erasure, should, as far as possible, be kept out of the way; and thus errors will be avoided, by the absence of the ready means of other correction than a renewed effort, the preservation of their evidence, and consequent remembrance, and care, to prevent their recurrence in future attempts.

101. Although it might be better to leave the pupil to the selection of his own method, or manner, of expressing that which he desires to represent, after he has perfected its general outline, and to direct his attention to such a variety of drawings, by different artists, as may be within his reach—rather than those by any one individual hand—yet, a few hints on the subject may be found serviceable to him.

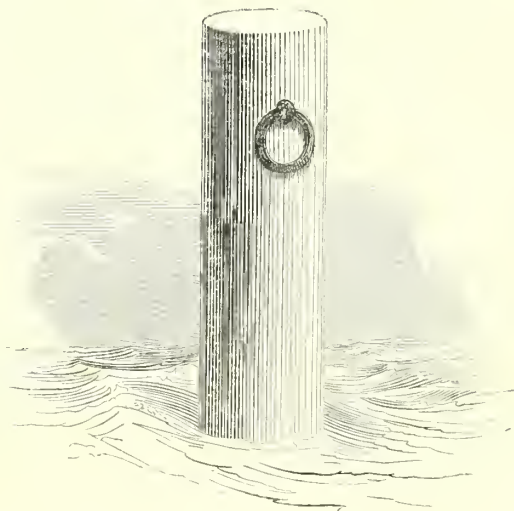
102. The instructions which have been given, in reference to the use of the pen, are equally applicable to the pencil, crayon, or chalk. The practice of the primary lessons, on straight and curved lines, will be found to have been essentially useful, in acquiring that command of hand, without which, proficiency in drawing is of no easy attainment. As in nature, objects take every variety of form and direction, so should the lines or touches, used in their delineation, have equal freedom in their direction, and always adapted to the purpose, and as expressive as possible, of the true form and character of the original. This may, at first, appear difficult; but, by observation, study, and practice, it may be soon acquired.



Suppose, for example, we desire to represent a square block, with a smooth, even surface: the greater degree of evenness and regularity that we can preserve in the lines, the nearer we will approach its faithful resemblance; and if, on the other hand, its surface be broken, or uneven, we must have recourse to lines, by which that character can be most readily expressed.



To represent a rude stake, water-worn and scraggy, far different lines are requisite, than if the object of imitation were a smooth and well-rounded post.





It would be in vain to attempt the representation of the effect of a brisk breeze, and a dead calm, upon the water, by lines similar in character; or, by the same touch, to express the woolly

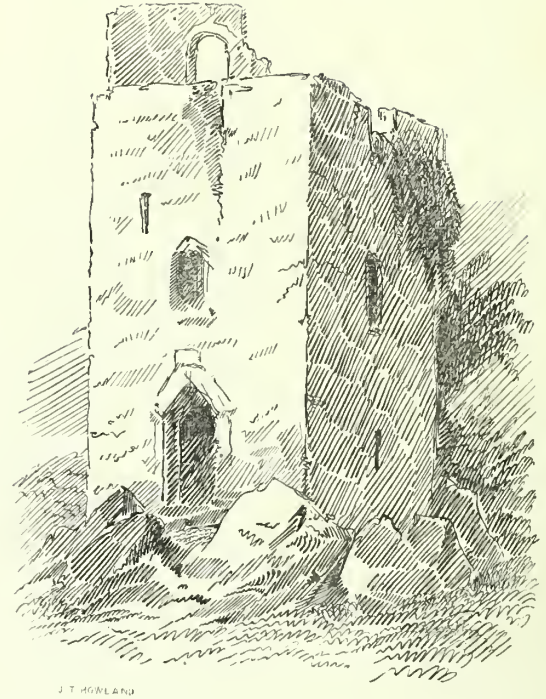




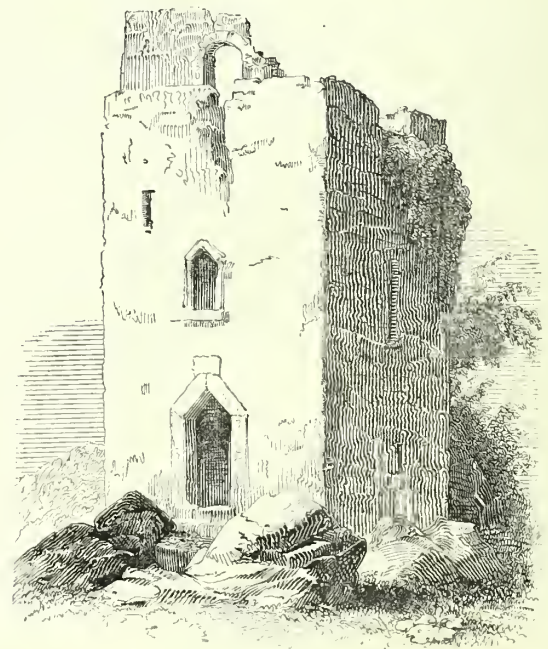
and rounded form of a sheep, and the hairy covering, and more abrupt lines and action, of a goat.



103. The imitation, by beginners, of off-hand sketches, or memoranda, by practised artists, however spirited, and often effective, should be discouraged. They are, frequently, little more than the short-hand notes of a writer — intelligible to him, but only conveying, to others, faint and uncertain ideas—dashed off in a moment of haste, or under circumstances that would preclude



the possibility of doing more at the time, intended for the private use of the artist alone, and serving to preserve the recollection of the subject upon his mind, for future elaboration. To him, such sketches are invaluable; but, for the use of others, something more is required. A



drawing and a sketch are two different things. Although one must learn to draw, before he can sketch, the capacity for one is dependent upon the other.

104. What can a beginner learn, by the imitation of such a sketch as the following?—and yet, it is a fac-simile, the size of the original, of Wilkie's first sketch or idea, of his picture of the Rabbit on the Wall. To the eye and understanding of the artist, every line may have had purpose and meaning; but, beyond the interest it excites, as the germ of a finished work of art, it is, in a measure, valueless: and as an object of imitation for the student, it certainly presents but little, from which he can derive advantage. Even in sketches more defined and intelligible, where often are found, combined, a degree of grace and sentiment, rivalling more finished productions, there is still a freedom of line, and manner, belonging to an experienced hand—one well schooled and practised in



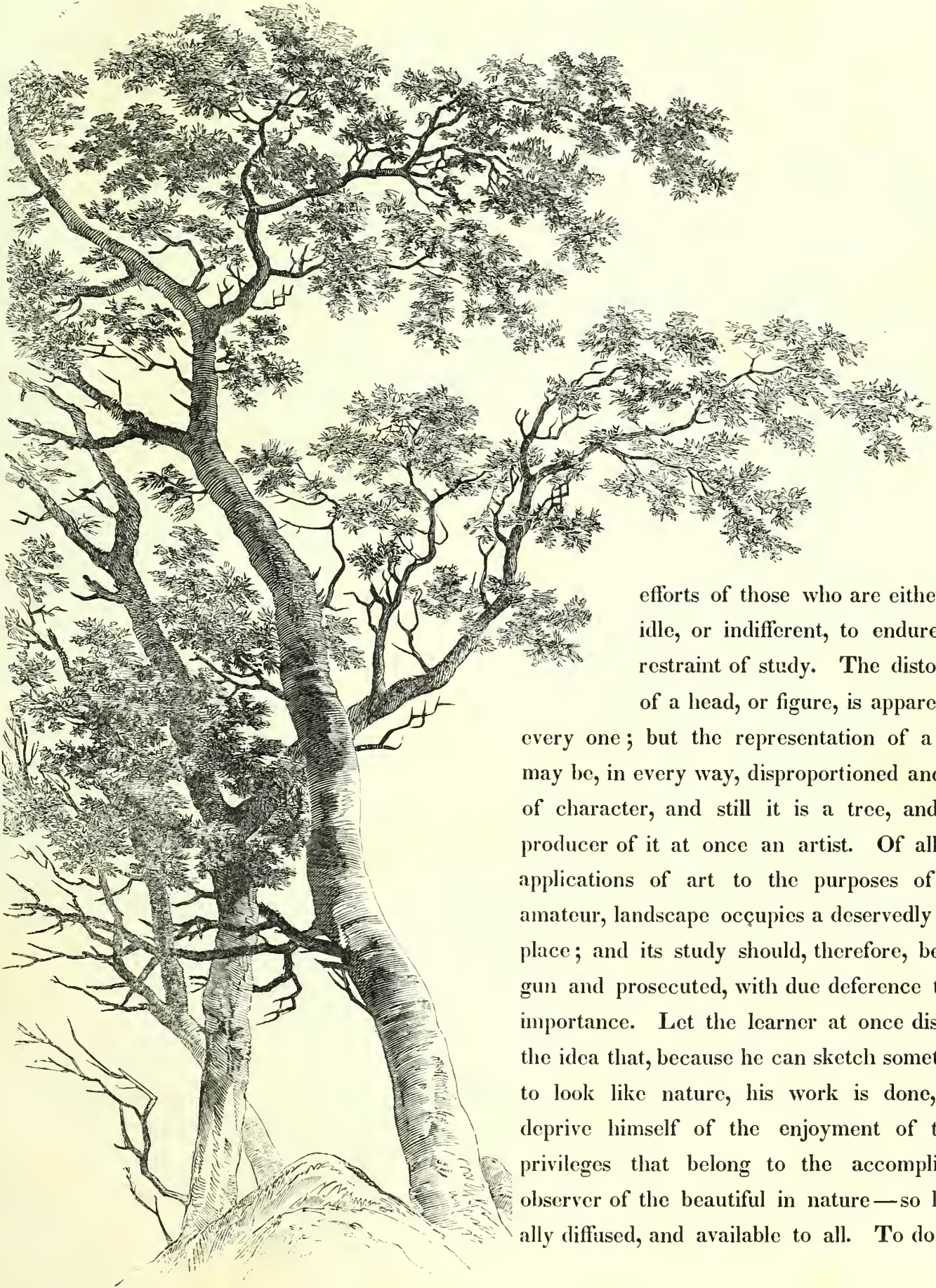
design—and evidence of disregard to mere manner, or method of expression, which none but a master in art dare attempt. This very freedom, and capacity of reaching, at once, the higher attributes of art, by means so simple, yet certain, is attainable only by first learning to draw with accuracy and precision; by a perfect understanding of the use and power of lines, as well as practical ability in their direction. Many a mere beginner could produce more regular lines, and, in the common perversion of the term, a more “finished” drawing, than that of a *Mother and Child*, presented on the next page, from a pen-and-ink sketch by Guercino; yet, such a sketch could only be produced by one who could do more. Its excellence does not alone consist in its manner, or mechanical execution, which we might imitate for ever, without advancing one step to the ability of originating one comparable to it, in point of grace, character, and expression, unless we possessed, like Guercino, well-grounded knowledge, feeling, and capacity, far beyond the mere counterfeiting of another's hand. With an understanding of the principles of design, familiarity with nature, and a sense to appreciate the beautiful; with the possession of that command of hand, the importance of which has been so earnestly urged upon the pupil, and the means of its attainment placed before him; with careful observation and practice, he will soon acquire a facility of expressing himself, which, growing into a habit, will establish a *manner* for himself, far more serviceable, and better, than the imitation of that of another, however excellent or effective it may be.

105. Not that the pupil should consider the works of others unworthy his study and emulation; but he should learn, rather, to value the higher attributes of a work of art, above the less important peculiarities of the artist's hand, which are often the result of change of purpose, or

accidental circumstances, or carelessness in the production of a sketch. Many a beautiful idea has been suggested by a few random lines; even by an accidental blot, or stain, upon the paper, which the sensitive eye, and fertile imagination, of the artist have detected, and his ready hand developed with a few touches, that defy imitation. Often, in sketches, the artist may appear to have dashed forth, in bold explorations, in search of happy combinations of line, effect, and expression, upon which the beginner should venture with caution, and never from mere affectation. Let him study the spirit and motive of good sketches, whenever he can meet with them; but, let him learn to draw, before he begins to sketch.



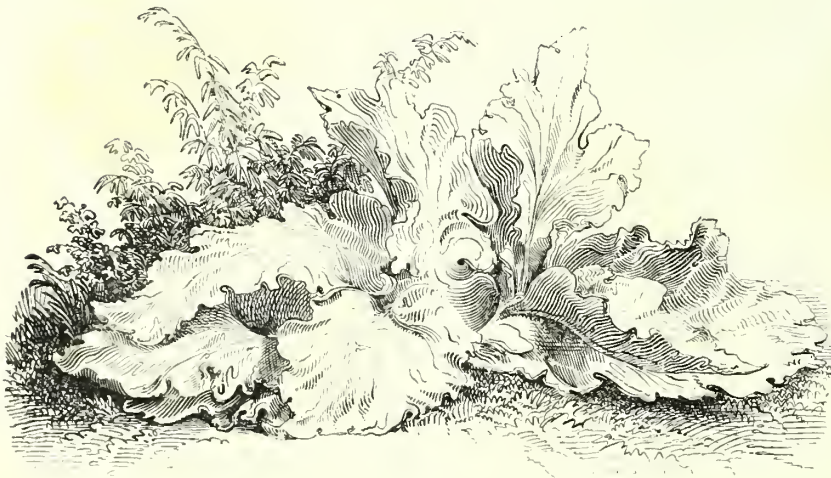
106. While on the subject of *manner*, it may be expected that something should be said with reference to trees and foliage; but all the rules and recipes, that ever were promulgated, can not teach one to draw the most simple weed, without a feeling and capacity for the imitation of form. Landscape is too often regarded as a sort of safety-valve, to let off the exuberant



efforts of those who are either too idle, or indifferent, to endure the restraint of study. The distortion of a head, or figure, is apparent to every one; but the representation of a tree may be, in every way, disproportioned and out of character, and still it is a tree, and the producer of it at once an artist. Of all the applications of art to the purposes of the amateur, landscape occupies a deservedly high place; and its study should, therefore, be begun and prosecuted, with due deference to its importance. Let the learner at once discard the idea that, because he can sketch something to look like nature, his work is done, nor deprive himself of the enjoyment of those privileges that belong to the accomplished observer of the beautiful in nature—so liberally diffused, and available to all. To do this,

there is but one course to be followed. Nature beckons to him, and invitingly spreads forth her varied charms, to tempt him to her sunny fields—at once his teacher, and bountiful provider of all that he requires.

107. How must I draw an oak—how an elm—and how shall I touch a hemlock-tree?—are questions that weary the ear of the drawing-master with their continued repetition; and his reputation frequently is endangered, most unjustly, if he can not only tell them, but teach them how to do it, too, in one short half hour; and yet they themselves, perhaps, do not know the tree, when they see it in nature, much less, when it is represented in a drawing: and if they do, it is more by the shape of the leaf than the general form and character of the tree itself. Let this sort of quackery have no place with those who pursue the study of art with sincerity. Let them learn the first and leading principles of Design; let the eye be quickened to the keen perception and just consideration of form, and the hand ready and certain in its delineation; and then let them go forth, sketch-book in hand, into the fair fields that nature has provided, in her Free School of Art. One group of weeds, by the road-side, or along the murmuring brook, will teach



them more wholesome lessons of the “way to draw them,” than all the books that ever were published on the subject. Then, and not till then, will the drawings and manner of others, in the delineation of such objects, be intelligible and useful to them: for, how can they judge of the truth of its representation, when they know nothing of the reality. Drawing is not to be taught like tambour-stitch and crotchet.

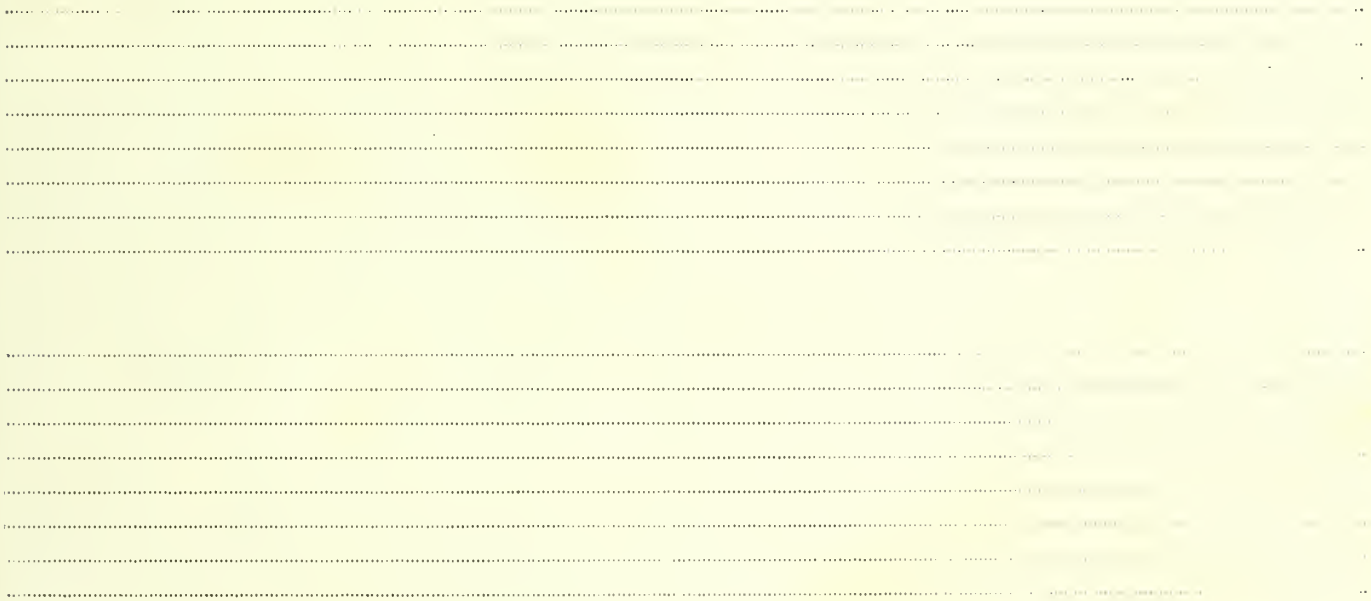


108. It is not only difficult, but impossible, to adapt any work of instruction to the various capacities and character of mind, upon which it is to operate, or, to devise any one system that will be applicable to every individual case; but, with the exercise of proper judgment, on the part of teachers and pupils, the elementary principles, which it has been the object of this work to present, in as plain and intelligible a manner as possible, will be found available to all. Children, and those who do not show aptness in comprehending the principles, and their practical application, should dwell on each lesson, and repeat it over and over again—always with care. One step, surely made, if it be but the drawing of a simple straight line, or curve, the next is half accomplished; and thus, progressively, should they be advanced. It is based upon no fanciful theory, that “any one who can learn to write can learn to draw;” but a truism, which the author pledges himself to establish, beyond a question, if aided by the intelligence and co-operation of American teachers, and those who have charge of the education of youth. It is within the means and capacity of all teachers, to instruct their pupils in the rudiments of drawing; and that, too, by an actual saving of labor to themselves, if the improvement of those under their charge has aught to do in the account. The least-pretending country schoolmaster would indignantly repel the insinuation that he did not know how himself, and could not teach his boys and girls, to write—and owns, without the slightest idea of deteriorating from his capacity as a public instructor, that he knows nothing of drawing; and yet, in his daily practice, he blindly teaches to draw, every time he sets a copy, and criticises the imitations thereof made by his scholars.

109. The author may be here pardoned a personal indulgence, in reverting to his own school-boy days, if on no other score than that of expressing his grateful recollection of his writing-master. In the thoughtlessness of boyhood, and the unconsciousness of the extent of the benefit then bestowed, his very name has been obliterated from his memory; but too often, in later years, has the influence of his lessons been felt to suffer his grateful recollection to pass away. He came to our village-school, unheralded and unknown—if I mistake not, on foot—a silent, sad, and unassuming man, who, for a pittance, offered to instruct a class in writing. He showed no unmeaning, flourished specimens, but wrote a line upon our teacher’s desk, with an ease, and grace, and precision, that gained his engagement. Whether it was his gentleness of manners, his kind encouragement, the winning of his ways, or the magic influence of his system of instruction, writing became at once a delight, rather than a task; for we all set to work, with an earnestness that made us forgetful of the hour of playtime and recreation. He stayed but a few weeks and went as he came, bearing with him many a boy’s heartfelt blessing and farewell. He could

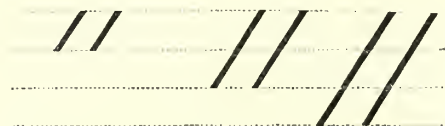
not draw, perhaps, in the common acceptation of the term; and yet he taught, by a method well worth the imitation of teachers, the first principles of drawing: and thus it was:—

110. In the first place, the old-fashioned “copper-plates,” over which we had toiled so long, in comparatively profitless labor, were laid aside, and each scholar was supplied with a quire of fair, smooth letter-paper; for it was a maxim with him, that “young workmen should have good tools.” We were then taught to rule it in lines, and only on one side, thus:—

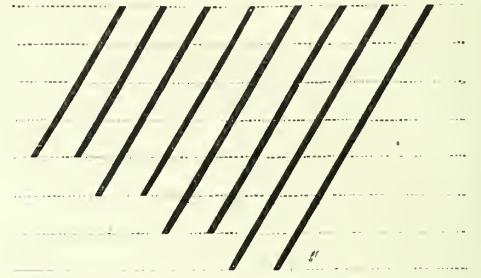


Those that were awkward were helped by him. Neatness was strongly inculcated, and considered as essential—a blot or a smudge, and all was to be done over again; and thus the habit was, from necessity, soon acquired and maintained. Soiled, inky fingers, and blotted copy-books, were seen no more; and, what can not be said of all school-boys, we went to our work with clean hands, at least. Steel-pens were not then in use; and he taught us to trim our goose-quill, to regulate its nib to large hand and small, how to prevent its tricks of spattering and blotting, exactly how far to dip it in the ink, and how carefully to lay it aside, well wiped, for another day. He had no arbitrary method of holding the pen, as if all hands, and the length and action of all fingers, were alike, but simply showed us what we had to do, and left to the natural action of the hand to find its most easy command of the pen.

The paper ruled in pencil, we began our first lesson—to draw a straight line, with a firm, decided hand: first, the distance between two, then three, and four ruled lines;



observing to press the pen at top and bottom, so as to expand the nib, and produce the proper degree of angularity in the terminations; holding it with even pressure, to maintain an equal width throughout the line. It was a difficult, and seemed almost a hopeless effort, at first; but after a page or two, carefully practised, there was not a boy in school who could not do it—and well. Then the lines were gradually extended to eight spaces. We had not reached the end of this lesson, before each one assumed, unconsciously, an easy manner of holding the pen; for, as the lines were to be continued without stopping, or removing the pen from the paper, the whole hand and wrist were necessarily brought into action; and a habit, almost universal with beginners, of writing by the action of the fingers alone, was at once corrected.



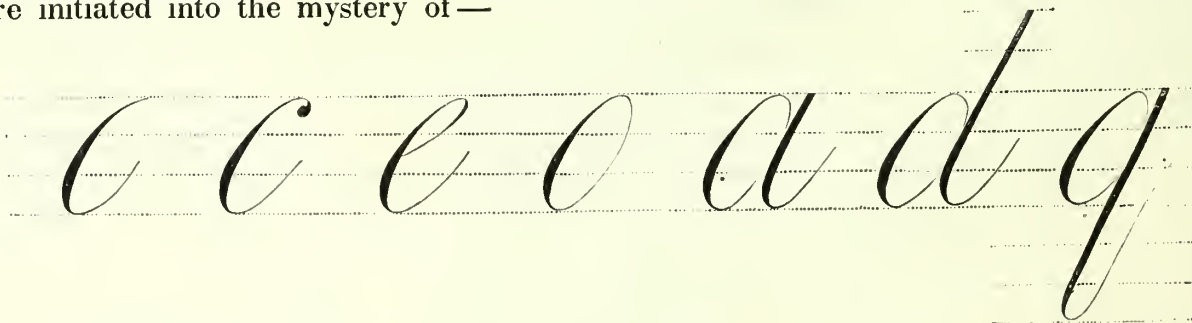
Next came the curves, and the nature of their form and delineation was explained: the gradual expansion of the line, as it approached and receded from the middle space, in which it became a straight line; the easy flow of the curve at top and bottom, and its exact repetition. He would examine, with a critical eye, our failures, show us every minute defect, equally dilate upon the slightest approach to success, and cheer, with words of encouragement, the most awkward.



We were now practised in the combinations; then a perfect letter was achieved; and, soon, such *ms* and *ns* were made as never before had been seen upon our writing-bench.

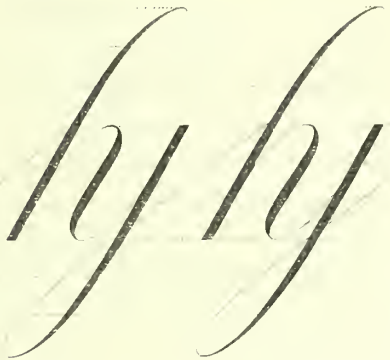


Something had been done; and we were indulged with a page or two of practice, before we were initiated into the mystery of—

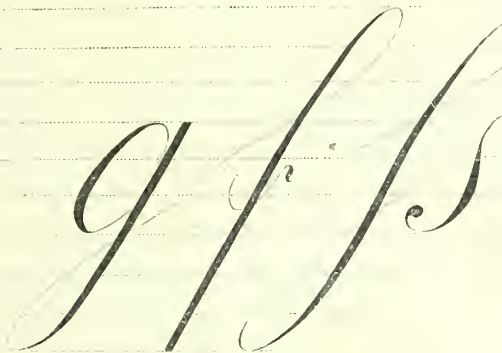


At the first trial of the tail of a *g*, a serious difficulty was encountered, especially by those who had not divested themselves of the old habit of dependence on the motion of the fingers alone:

for, now the whole hand, wrist, and arm, were brought into action; but two or three copies,

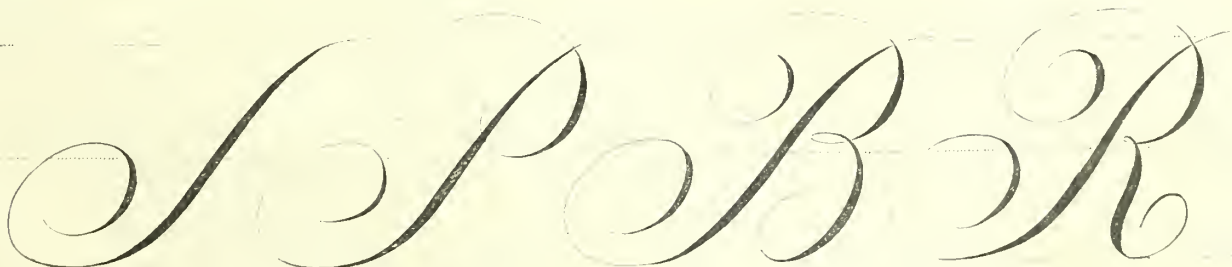
thus  , practised with care, and under his critical direction,

soon enabled us, in a great measure, to surmount it; and then we were well prepared

for  , etc. Every letter was to be formed with a slow,

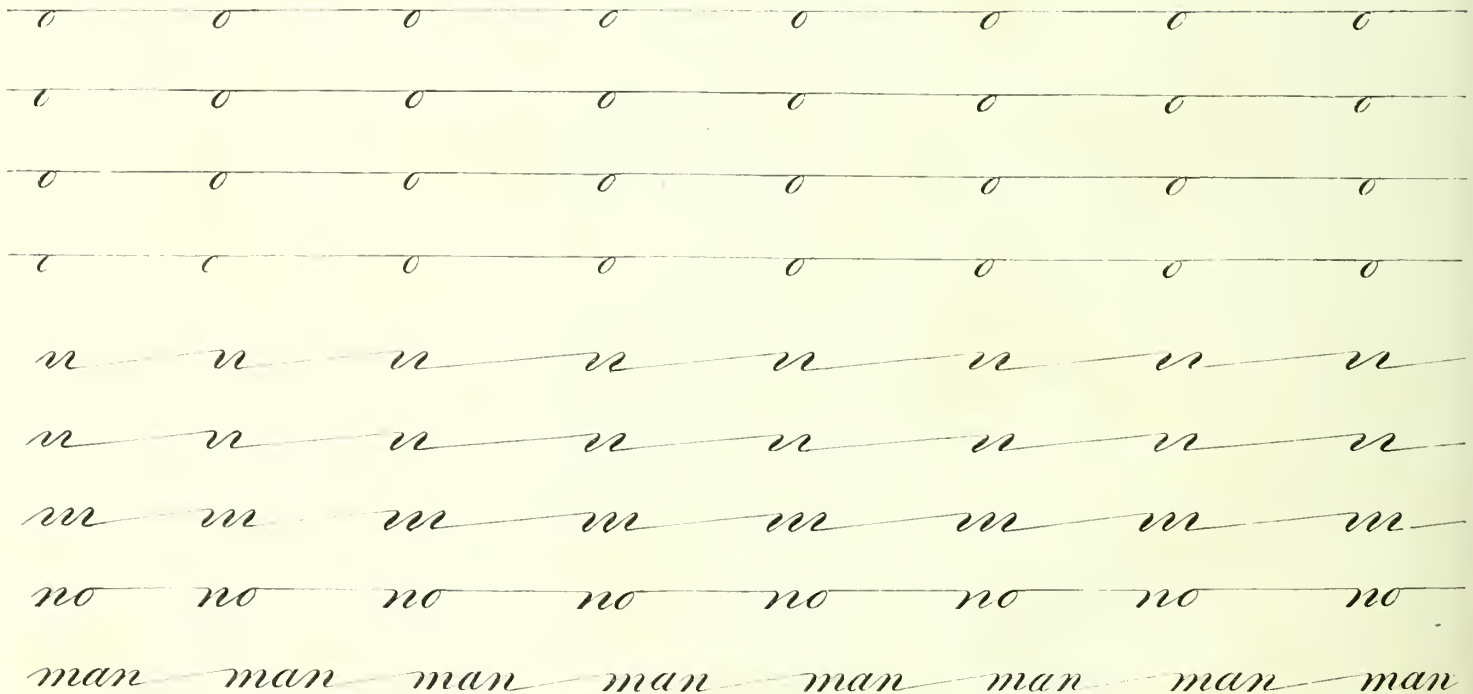
steady movement of the hand; its peculiarity of form to be studied, as well as the application of portions of each letter to the formation of others. We were taught, first, to know how each letter should be made; and then practised to make it, by beginning with its parts, and combining them into a whole. From the most simple, we were gradually advanced to the most difficult. Nothing was passed over, or slighted; and when the small alphabet was mastered, we were considered prepared for capitals and small hand.

The instructions we received, with regard to the formation of capital letters, were strictly drawing them. Every line and curve was to be studied, and their application and combination understood, and practically exemplified, upon like principles.



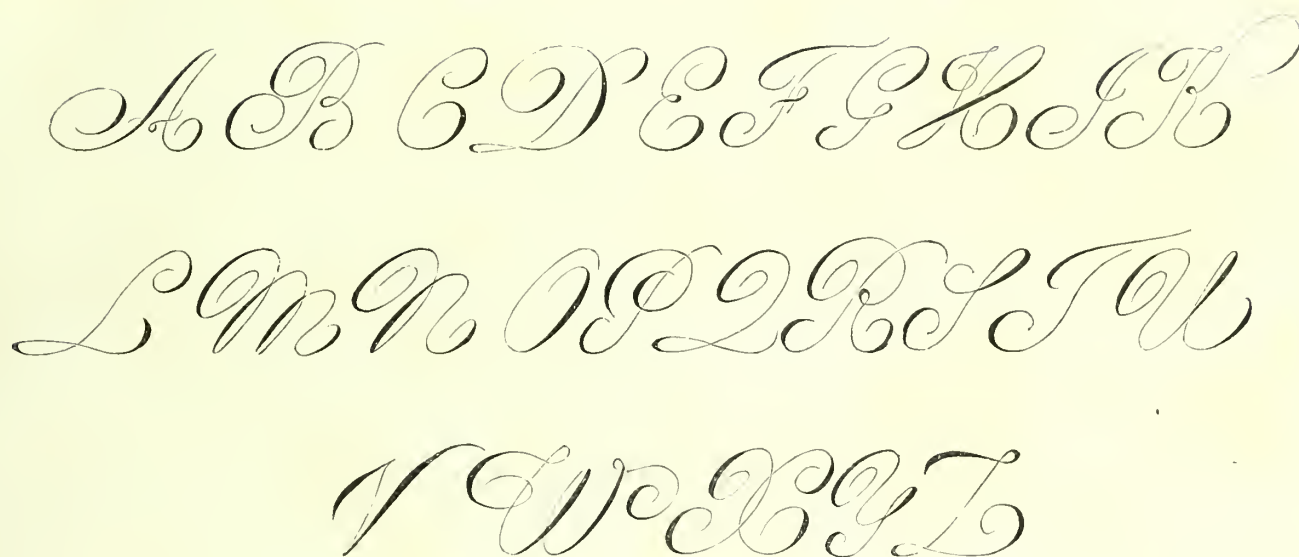


The ruled paper was now laid aside, and we began our lessons in small-hand. I well remember the feeling of helplessness with which I regarded the fair, unruled sheet before me—like a child standing alone, for the first time, and venturing on its first step. The trial came—it was to draw right lines across the page, without guide or ruler; a hard task, that few were equal to, but still we did wonders. From straight lines we progressed to the connexion of letters; and



thence, to simple words and sentences, not only written in a straight and even line, across the page, but repeated others, equidistant from each other, with a degree of ease and accuracy that would have done no discredit to older hands. If the men, who were then boys, now require ruled paper, or write in random, wandering lines, it has been the fault of after-years.

Another most admirable method, of exercising the hand, should not be forgotten. It was, to practise the drawing of the letters backward; by which the faint lines were necessarily reversed. We had often seen such letters and copies, in our "copper-plates," but never imagined they were to be done by any other method than by "painting them up."



Then, again, we were made to draw the letters with a single faint line; a practice well calculated to give ease and delicacy of touch, as well as certainty of hand: for he who depends upon the nib of his pen as a rest, will never be able to obtain command of it, or write, or draw, with ease and freedom.

Long after our writing-master had left us, and the fruits of his instruction were ripened, under the care of others, such continued to be sportive, as well as profitable exercises among us, on the slate and blackboard: and more than one complaint came against us, for our chalk-and-charcoal illustrations on the neighboring fences. Had there been, then and there, one to give a proper direction to this impulse, thus awakened by the instruction of our writing-master, to design, more than one would now hold his memory in grateful recollection.

Such a system of instruction develops the art of writing; and such is the art of writing, in its relation to the art of drawing. The teacher, or pupil, who can, with his pen, produce the most simple curve, and repeat it at pleasure, can draw. If he can not draw, the *art* of writing is to him a mystery as hidden. Let not the teacher, therefore, who undertakes to instruct in writing, say, "I can not draw." The time will come, when he will blush as soon, to own a want of capacity in one art as the other.

111. In schools, where a teacher of drawing is not employed, and even where there is one, the improvement of scholars, in both writing and drawing, may be promoted, in a very great degree, and with little or no additional labor to the teacher, by taking one half, or even two thirds of the time, usually devoted to writing, and applying it to drawing. The result will be found in no way to impede the improvement of the writing-classes; but, on the contrary, greatly facilitate

their advancement in that branch of education.* The copy-books, accessory to this work, will here be found of much use : for, by their aid, any teacher can induct his pupils in the knowledge and application of the first principles of drawing. He should require his scholars to practise each lesson with care and attention, and to become familiar, and, to a certain degree, perfect, in each, progressively ; and the beginning once made, there is no fear that either he, or they, will have cause to regret the effort, or fail to prosecute the study farther. According to the advancement of his pupils, will he be able to judge of their capacity for higher attempts. In learning to draw, as in the acquirement of every other branch of education, the first steps are often the most important ; and care, in the outset, may save much disappointment, and insure success. The method of instruction advised for schools, is equally applicable to home-education, or to those whose more mature years and judgment qualify them, in a measure, to become their own teachers.

112. The study of art is, in itself, so pleasing, that but little more is required of teachers than the initiation of pupils in its rudiments, upon such sound principles that they may continue its pursuit, aided only by observation, reference to nature, and good productions of art, and such standard works on the subject, as their wants may require. They will find, even before they have mastered the very first rudiments, and in their very first attempts to draw from nature, the absolute necessity of a knowledge of the first principles of perspective ; and, if in earnest in the business, they will not fail at once to seek such knowledge : and it will be far better for them to supply the want when its necessity is felt, than if they were to undertake its attainment in advance. Again : when they attempt to draw the figure, they will be made sensible of the importance of a certain degree of knowledge of its anatomical structure ; and thus, at every step, no matter how far they may extend the pursuit, they will feel, for ever, progressive wants, which must be progressively supplied. For all, however, there must be a secure groundwork ; and that is a knowledge of the first principles of the imitative art. Once initiated, and made to feel the capacity of art, and the power they possess, its cultivation will not be a task, but constant and increasing delight. This must be done by small beginnings, by securing success, by not attempting too much, by a knowledge and capacity of its application to practical results, gradually acquired—

* The author has the gratification of finding this fact fully corroborated by the experience of an eminent teacher of New York, the Rev. W. MORRIS, rector of Trinity school, who, from actual experiment, has placed the matter in a light that can not fail to interest both parents and teachers. He divided his writing-class, without regard to any superior natural talent, or aptness, in his scholars, and allowed "one half the class to write every day in the week, as boys usually do in school, and the other half wrote and drew on alternate days. The result produced an average of five to one good writers, in favor of the drawing-class." A similar experiment any teacher can make, and it is well worth the serious attention of all.

a better and surer system of rapid instruction than any other that can be devised. One simple straight, or curved line, drawn with accuracy, and the beginning is made; and a habit of observation of forms, and their imitation, is induced, which gradually leads from small to greater efforts. Wants are felt at every step; and their supply is naturally sought by like means that have given strength to reach the point already attained. The eye, the mind, and hand, keep pace with each other, in the march of improvement; and the increase of knowledge and capacity impels to higher attainments and insures results, which never can be reached by a course of superficial instruction, having only for its object the production of a drawing or picture—the joint labor of master and scholar—of which the former has, too often, far more than his share.

113. What can a pupil have learned, to advantage, who can do nothing without his drawing-master by his side? And to what useful purpose can the little knowledge he may have thus acquired, in his lessons, be applied in after-life? It has been by such systems of superficial instruction, that drawing has been abused, and reduced in its consideration as a useful art; and, to say the truth, it is useless enough, when thus perverted from its high and valuable purposes. Such systems are worse than useless: they are evils, which go far to retard the cultivation of true taste, not only in art itself, but all those refinements which centre in it; and the sooner a reformation in our schools is begun, the sooner will a more healthful influence be seen and felt in society. We are not to look solely to teachers, for a remedy of the evil: for, unfortunately in this, as in everything else, the market will be, necessarily, supplied according to the nature of the demand; and, unless parents and pupils can be made sensible of the importance of a proper system of instruction, and of the advantages to be derived therefrom, teachers battle against windmills, and will get for their pains the reward of the knight of La Mancha, in their most sincere and honest exertions. The work of reformation is no untried experiment. Abroad, the diffusion of judicious education in design, largely and freely distributed throughout all classes of society, has proved, not only how easily it can be done, but with what favorable results; and it is time an effort should be made in America, at least to keep pace with, if not to lead, in the march of the onward century in which we live. Surely, we will not admit the existence of national incapacity. From a land abounding with the beautiful; with genius, wealth, enterprise, and freedom, much may be expected, and much may be achieved: and should be, in this, as in all that tends to elevate its national character and importance.

114. Whatever the experience of the world may be, with regard to the necessity of coercion, and of forcing the youthful mind, by physical persecution, into the reception of knowledge, that

of art may safely claim to be an exception. All the powers of the earth can not force a love for art upon the mind, any more than they can “make the bird sing;” and without a love for it, its pursuit is hopeless. With some, the first impulses of their childhood have given evidence of its existence; with others, it has been developed by accidental associations, or other causes; and, with many, it has been buried for ever, for want of proper cultivation. Care should be taken, therefore, to temper the course of study, as far as possible, to the inclinations, as well as capacity, of the pupil; who, it often happens, when a difficult lesson is placed before him, or failure has been the result of his labor, either by attempting too much, or for want of proper preparatory knowledge, desires to try something less difficult—and he should be indulged: for it is far safer for him to retrace his steps, than advance too rapidly. If, in its application to other branches of education, the operation of such a system of instruction, so forcibly exemplified in the study of art, were more strongly impressed upon the minds of teachers; if the tree of knowledge were planted in more pleasant places, and the pathways to it divested of many of the thorns that lacerate the youthful mind and body, as both are driven forward, by which the learner is made, too often, to despise the end for which he labors, as heartily as the means of its attainment are hateful to him, blue-Monday would soon be stricken from the school-boy’s calendar.

115. We know that, in the pursuit of art, if properly directed, there is an attendant enjoyment, constant and enduring, as boundless in its resources. We know that men have lived through almost a century of ardent devotion to it, and died still true to their first love; their lives presenting one continued, progressive attachment and devotion to its cultivation. If the world but knew the enjoyments of the devoted follower of art, they would be more eager to share them with him. To him—

“No rock is barren, and no wild is waste;
No shape uncouth, or savage, but in place,
Excites an interest, or assumes a grace.

* * * * *

The dome-crown’d city, or the cottage plain,
The rough cragg’d mountain, or tumultuous main;
The temple rich in trophied pride array’d,
Or mould’ring in the melancholy shade;
The spoils of tempest, or the wrecks of time,
The earth abundant, or the heaven sublime:
All, to the Painter, purest joys impart,
Delight his eye, and stimulate his Art.”

* * * * *

The most fruitful source of regret, and almost the only alloy to the enjoyments of the true artist, is the consciousness of want of power to reach that remote perfection, which ever recedes, as his strengthened perception capacitates him to follow it as his guiding-star: which shone as

brightly, to the young imagination of Michael Angelo, and doubtless seemed nearer to him, in the days of his boyish efforts, than when, an old man, he sat musing, alone, among the ruins of the Coliseum, and replied to the Cardinal Farnese, who expressed surprise to find him there: "I yet go to school, that I may learn something." Then he had made his name famous throughout the world. Within sight, the towering dome of St. Peter's stood forth against the bright sky of his native Italy, the imperishable monument of his genius. The frescoes of the Sistine chapel, the wonder and admiration of that and succeeding ages, had been achieved. Almost at the close of a lengthened life, not unmixed with many trials and disappointments, still the love and devotion to his art burned as warm



within him, as when, buoyant with youthful hope and energy, he left his parental home, at Caprese, to enter the school of Gherlandaio—to learn to draw. It was this that had sustained him, and made him what he was; and, it must be thus that excellence in art is to be wooed and won. It is this that must be cultivated, and kept alive for ever, in its pursuit: and it can be done—nay, more—even where its existence may appear to be doubtful, and almost hopeless, it may be developed by proper culture. It is an attribute bestowed on all, in degrees of capacity for its cultivation, as in all other gifts with which the Creator has endowed the perfection of his works, immortal man, and should, no more than they, be neglected.

116. In concluding the elementary portion of this work, it is hoped that the effort to place before the American public a popular system of instruction in the first principles of design, however incomplete it may be, may have a tendency, not only to awaken an interest in the subject, but to show, at the same time, how easy it is to learn to draw. Let those who desire to acquire this beau-

tiful and valuable art, but give proper attention to the principles and practice recommended, not by a few hasty trials, but by carefully following the routine of advancement, from a simple straight line, to the point now reached; and all that they have yet to do, will be both plain and easily acquired. As a primary and elementary work on drawing, our task is done; and it will not be in vain, should it reach, in a degree, however small, the wants of a people always susceptible of conviction, and ready to promote the advancement of the arts of refinement. The art of drawing claims more than this: for it is essential as a part of common education. It belongs to the artisan, even more than those who live in the easy enjoyment of fortune: with the one, it may be classed as a luxury, or source of recreation; to the other, it is a necessity.

Let this useful and beautiful art, therefore, no longer be considered as a mystery, confined to a gifted few, but take its place with its sister arts, in our systems of general education. The young and tender capacity is early prepared for it; its first impulses are harmonious with it; and, while it may be made to shed gladness and sunshine upon the hours of coercion to the school-bench; when the mind is for ever wandering from the primer to the bright fields, and scenes, and objects, of childhood's joys, its pursuit leads not from, but in the direction of, all other knowledge, assists in its acquirement, tends to strengthen the mind, and purify the taste, and bestows a capacity for intellectual pleasure, apart from its practical utility, that should give it place among the first requisites in common, as well as finished education.



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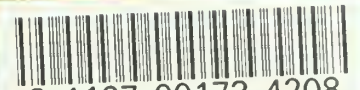
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