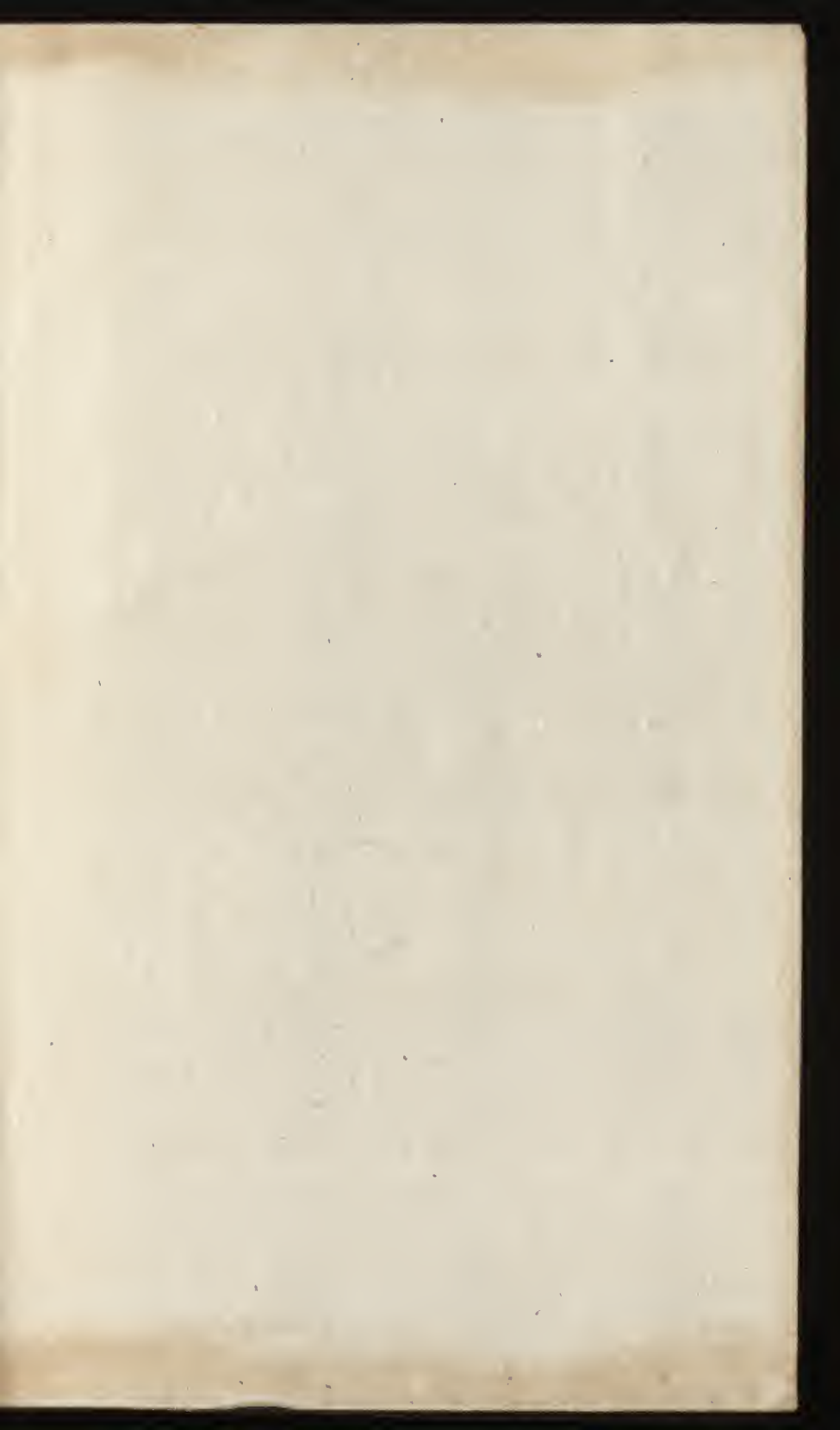


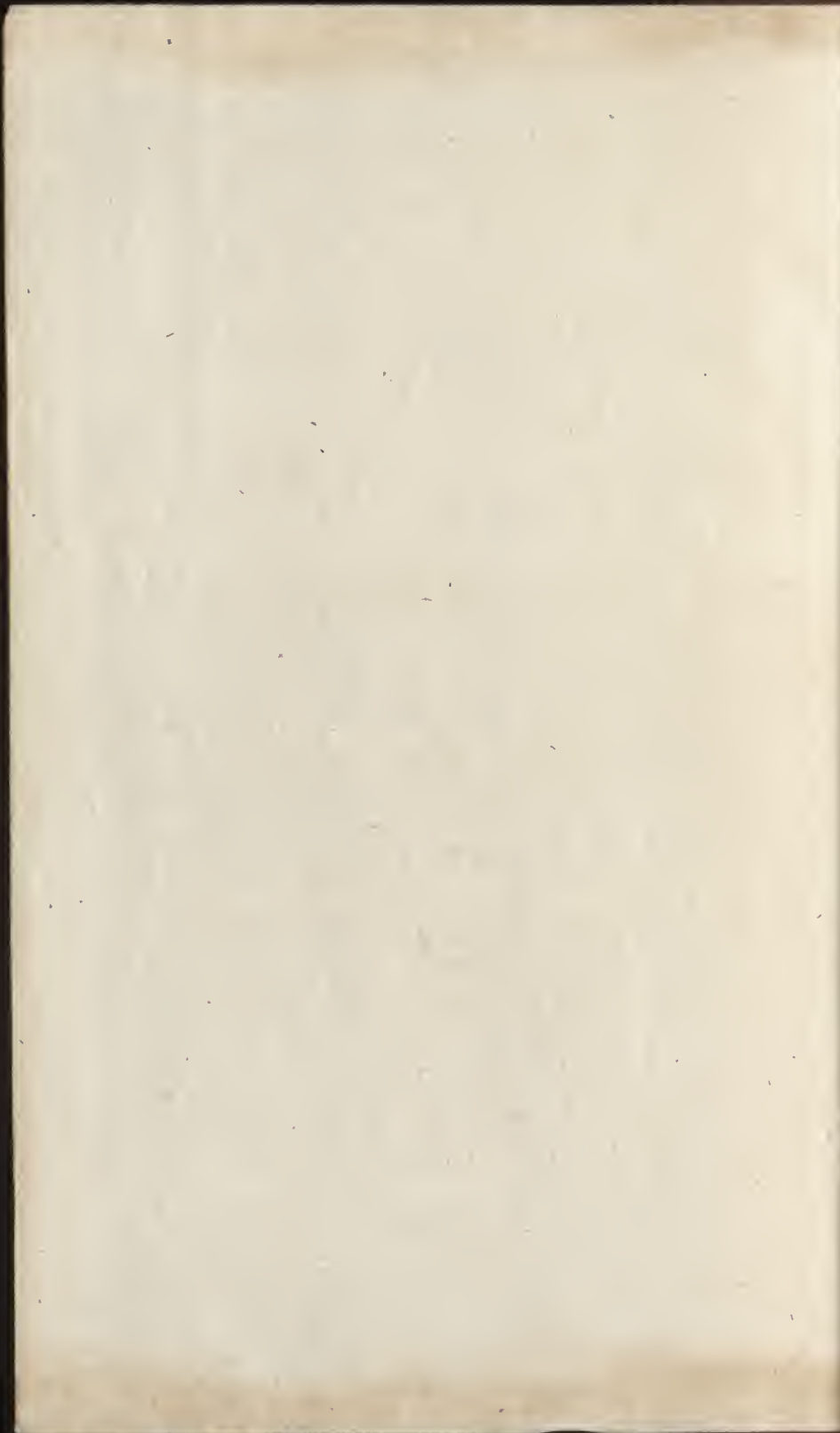
~~John West~~

from his wife Alice!

1st May 1844.







ESSAYS
ON
THE PICTURESQUE.

VOL. III.

1875

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

ESSAYS

ON

THE PICTURESQUE,

AS COMPARED WITH

THE SUBLIME AND THE BEAUTIFUL;

AND, ON

THE USE OF STUDYING PICTURES,

FOR THE PURPOSE OF

IMPROVING REAL LANDSCAPE.

BY UVEDALE PRICE, Esq.

QUAM MULTA VIDENT PICTORES IN UMBRIS, ET IN
EMINENTIA, QUE NOS NON VIDEMUS!

Cicero.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

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A

LETTER

TO

UVEDALE PRICE, Esq.

1875

1875

A

LETTER, &c.

SIR,

|| AM much obliged by your attention, in having directed your bookfeller to fend me an early copy of your ingenious work. It has been my companion during a long journey, and has furnished me with entertainment, fimilar to that which I have occasionally had the honour to experience, from your animated conversation on the subject. In the general principles and theory of the art, which you have considered with fo much attention, I flatter myself that we agree; and that our difference of opinion relates only to the propriety, or, perhaps, possibility, of reducing them to practice.

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I am

I am obliged both to Mr. Knight, and to yourself, for mentioning my name as an exception* to the tasteless herd of Mr. Brown's followers. But while you are pleased to allow me some of the qualities necessary to my profession, you suppose me deficient in others, and therefore strongly recommend the study of "what the higher
 " artists have done, both in their pictures
 " and drawings:" a branch of knowledge which I have always considered to be not less essential to my profession than hydraulics or surveying; and without which I should never have presumed to arrogate to myself, the title of "*Landscape Gardener*," which you observe is, "*a title of no small pretension.*"

* Should the new system of improving, "by neglect and accident," ever prevail so far as to render this beautiful kingdom one huge picturesque forest, I doubt whether such mention of my name may not be attributed to the same delicate motives which you so ingeniously assign in excuse for Mr. Mason's praise of Brown.

It is difficult to define GOOD TASTE in any of the polite arts; and amongst the respective professors of them, I am sorry to observe that it is seldom allowed in a rival; while those who are not professors, but, being free from the business or dissipation of life, have found leisure to excel in any one of these arts, generally find time also to cultivate the others; and because there really does exist some affinity betwixt them, they are apt to suppose it still greater.*

During the pleasant hours we passed together amidst the romantic scenery of the Wye, I do remember my acknowledging that an enthusiasm for the picturesque, had

* Thus *Music* and *Poetry* are often coupled together, although very few instances occur in which they are made to assimilate; because the melody of an air is seldom adapted either to the rhyme or measure of the verse. In like manner, *Poetry* and *Painting* are often joined; but the canvas rarely embodies those figurative personages to advantage, which the poet's enthusiasm presents to the reader's imagination.

originally

originally led me to fancy greater affinity betwixt *Painting* and *Gardening*, than I found to exist after more mature consideration, and more practical experience; because, *in whatever relates to man, propriety and convenience are not less objects of good taste, than picturesque effect*; and a beautiful garden scene is not more defective because it would not look well on canvas, than a didactic poem because it neither furnishes a subject for the painter or the musician. There are a thousand scenes in nature to delight the eye, besides those which may be copied as pictures; and indeed one of the keenest observers of picturesque scenery (Mr. Gilpin), has often regretted that few are capable of being so represented, without considerable license and alteration.

If therefore the painter's landscape be indispensable to the perfection of gardening,

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ing, it would surely be far better to paint it on canvas at the end of an avenue, as they do in Holland, than to sacrifice the health, cheerfulness, and comfort of a country residence, to the wild but pleasing scenery of a painter's imagination.

There is no exercise so pleasing to the inquisitive mind, as that of deducing theories and systems from favourite opinions: I was therefore peculiarly interested and gratified by your ingenious distinction betwixt the beautiful and the picturesque; but I cannot admit the propriety of its application to landscape gardening; because beauty, and not "picturesqueness," is the chief object of modern improvement: for although some nurserymen, or labourers in the kitchen garden, may have badly copied Mr. Brown's manner, yet the unprejudiced eye will discover innumerable beauties in the works
of

of that great self-taught master: and since you have so judiciously marked the distinction betwixt the *beautiful* and the *picturesque*, they will perhaps discover, that, where the habitation and convenience of man can be improved by *beauty*, "*picturesqueness*" may be transferred to the ragged gipsy, with whom "the wild ass, the Pomeranian dog, and shaggy goat" are more in harmony, than "the sleek-coated horse," or the dappled deer,* which have never till lately been discovered, when "in groups, to be meagre and spotty."

Amidst the severity of your satire on Mr. Brown and his followers, I cannot be ignorant that many pages are directly pointed at my opinions; although with more delicacy than your friend Mr. Knight

* The continual moving and lively agitation observable in herds of deer, is one of the circumstances which painting cannot represent; but it is not less an object of beauty and cheerfulness in park scenery.

has shewn, in the attempt to make me an object of ridicule, by misquoting my unpublished MSS.

It is the misfortune of every liberal art to find amongst its professors some men of uncouth manners; and since my profession has more frequently been practised by mere day labourers, and persons of no education, it is the more difficult to give it that rank amongst the polite arts, which I conceive it ought to hold. Yet it is now become my duty to support its respectability, since you attack the very existence of that profession, at the head of which, both you and Mr. Knight have the goodness to say that I am deservedly placed.

Your new theory of deducing *landscape gardening* from *painting* is so plausible, that, like many other philosophic theories, it may captivate and mislead, unless duly examined by the test of experience and practice.

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

So far I have endeavoured to defend Mr. Brown with respect to the general principle of improvement. But it is necessary

cessary to enter something farther into the detail of his practice of what has been ludicrously called *clumping* and *belting*. No man of taste can hesitate betwixt the natural group of trees, composed of various growths, and that formal patch of firs which too often disfigure a lawn, under the name of a clump: but the most certain method of producing a group of five or six trees, is to plant fifty or sixty within the same fence; and this Mr. Brown frequently advised, with a mixture of firs to protect and shelter the young trees during their infancy; but, unfortunately, the neglect or bad taste of his employers would occasionally suffer the firs to remain long after they had completed their office as nurses; while others have actually planted *firs only* in such clumps, totally misconceiving Mr. Brown's original intention. Nor is it uncommon to see these black patches surrounded

rounded by a painted rail, a quick hedge, or even a stone wall, instead of that temporary fence which is always an object of necessity, and not of choice.

If a large expanse of lawn happens unfortunately to have no single trees or groups to diversify its surface, it is sometimes necessary to plant them; and if the size and quantity of these clumps or masses bear proportion to the extent of lawn, or shape of the ground, they are surely less offensive than a multitude of starving single trees, surrounded by heavy cradle fences, which are often dotted over the whole surface of a park. I will grant, that where a few old trees can be preserved of former hedge-rows, the clump is seldom necessary, except in a flat country where the surface of the lawn may be varied by thick masses, whose effect cannot be produced by single trees. The clump therefore is never to be

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be considered as an object of present beauty, but as a more certain expedient for producing future beauties, than young trees, which very seldom grow when exposed singly to the wind and sun.

I shall now proceed to defend my predecessor's *belt*, on the same principle of expedience. Although I perfectly agree, that, in certain situations, it has been executed in a manner to be tiresome in itself, and highly injurious to the general scenery; yet there are many places in which no method could be more fortunately devised, than a belt or boundary of plantation to encompass the park or lawn. It is often too long, and always too narrow, but from my own experience I am convinced, that notwithstanding the obstinacy and presumption of which Mr. Brown is accused, he had equal difficulties to surmount from the profusion, and the parsimony of his employers,

employers, or he would never have consented to those meagre girdles of plantation which are extended for many miles in length, although not above twenty or thirty yards in breadth.

Let me briefly trace the origin, intention, and uses of a belt. The comfort and pleasure of a country residence requires, that some ground, in proportion to the size of the house, should be separated from the adjoining ploughed fields; this inclosure, call it park, or lawn, or pleasure ground, must have the air of being appropriated to the peculiar use and pleasure of the proprietor. The love of seclusion and safety is not less natural to man than that of liberty, and I conceive it would be almost as painful to live in a house without the power of shutting any door, as in one with all the doors locked: the mind is equally displeas'd with the excess of liberty,

berty, or of restraint, when either is too apparent. From hence proceeds the necessity of inclosing a park, and also of hiding the boundary by which it is inclosed; and a plantation being the most natural means of hiding a park pale, nothing can be more obvious than a drive or walk in such a plantation. If this belt be made of one uniform breadth, with a drive as uniformly serpentine through the middle of it, I am ready to allow that the way can only be interesting to him who wishes to examine the growth of his young trees; to every one else it must be tedious, and its dullness will increase in proportion to its length. On the contrary, if the plantation be judiciously made of various breadth, if its outline be adapted to the natural shape of the ground, and if the drive be conducted irregularly through its course, sometimes totally within the dark shade, sometimes skirting

skirting so near its edge as to show the different scenes betwixt the trees, and sometimes quitting the wood entirely to enjoy the unconfined view of distant prospects,—it will surely be allowed that such a plantation is the best possible means of connecting and displaying the various pleasing points of view, at a distance from each other, within the limits of the park;—and the only just objection that can be urged, is—where such points do not occur often enough, and where the length of a drive is substituted for its variety.

This Letter, which has been written, at various opportunities, during my journey into Derbyshire, has insensibly grown to a bulk which I little expected when I began it; I shall therefore cause a few copies to be printed, to serve as a general defence of an art, which, I trust, will not be totally suppressed, although you so earnestly

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neftly recommend every gentleman to become his own landscape gardener. With equal propriety might every gentleman become his own architect, or even his own phyfician: in fhort, there is nothing that a man of abilities may not do for himfelf, if he will dedicate his whole attention to that fubject only. But the life of man is not fufficient to excel in all things; and as “ a little knowledge is a dangerous thing,” fo the profefors of every art, as well as that of medicine, will often find that the moft difficult cafes are thofe, where the patient has begun by *quacking himfelf*.

The general rules of art are to be acquired by ftudy, but the manner of applying them can only be learned by practice; yet there are certain good plans which, like certain good medicines, may be proper in almoft every cafe; it was therefore no greater impeachment of Mr. Brown’s tafte

to anticipate his belt in a naked country, than it would be to a physician to guess, before he saw the patient, that he would prescribe James's powders in a fever.

In the volume of my works now in the press, I have endeavoured to trace the difference betwixt *painting* and *gardening*, as well as to make a distinction betwixt a *landscape* and a *prospect*; supposing the former to be the proper subject for a painter, while the latter is that in which every body delights; and, in spite of the fastidiousness of connoisseurship, we must allow something to the general voice of mankind. I am led to this remark from observing the effect of picturesque scenery on the visitors of Matlock Bath (where this part of my Letter has been written.) In the valley a thousand delightful subjects present themselves to the painter, yet the visitors of this place are seldom satisfied till they

they have climbed the neighbouring hills, to take a bird's-eye view of the whole spot, which no painting can represent:—the love of prospect seems a natural propensity, an inherent passion of the human mind, if I may use so strong an expression.

This consideration confirms my opinion that *painting* and *gardening* are nearly connected, but not so intimately related as you imagine; they are not sister arts proceeding from the same stock, but rather congenial natures, brought together like man and wife; while therefore you exult in the office of mediator betwixt these two “imaginary personages,” you should recollect the danger of interfering in their occasional differences, and especially how you advise them both to wear the same article of dress.

I shall conclude this long Letter by an

allusion to a work, which it is impossible for you to admire more than I do. Mr. Burke, in his *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful*, observes, that habit will make a man prefer the taste of tobacco to that of sugar; yet the world will never be brought to say that sugar is not sweet. In like manner both Mr. Knight and you are in the habits of admiring fine pictures, and both live amidst bold and picturesque scenery: this may have rendered you insensible to the beauty of those milder scenes that have charms for common observers. I will not arraign your taste, or call it vitiated, but your palate certainly requires a degree of "irritation" rarely to be expected in garden scenery; and, I trust, the good sense and good taste of this country will never be led to despise the comfort of a gravel walk, the delicious fragrance of a shrubbery, the soul expanding

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ing delight of a wide extended prospect,* or a view down a steep hill, because they are all subjects incapable of being painted.

Notwithstanding the occasional asperity of your remarks on my opinions, and the unprovoked fall of Mr. Knight's wit, I esteem it a very pleasant circumstance of my life to have been personally known to you both, and to have witnessed your good taste in many situations. I shall beg leave, therefore, to subscribe myself, with much regard and esteem,

SIR,

Your most obedient

Humble servant,

H. REPTON.

Hare-strect, near Romford,

July 1, 1794.

* An extensive *prospect* is here mentioned as one of the subjects that may be delightful, although not picturesque.—But I have repeatedly given my opinion, that however desirable a prospect may be from a tower or belvidere, it is seldom advisable from the windows of a constant residence.

P. S. One of the etchings in Mr. Knight's poem has been represented as copied from a work of mine; an idea which I believe Mr. Knight never intended to suggest: the same thing may possibly happen with respect to the place mentioned by you at page 200, and the other "two places on a very large scale (page 215,) as laid out by a professed improver of high reputation." Now this being the title under which I frequently feel myself alluded to from our occasional conversations, I trust to your candour to explain, in a future edition, that these places are not works of mine.

A
LETTER

TO

H. REPTON, Esq.

ON THE APPLICATION OF

THE PRACTICE AS WELL AS THE PRINCIPLES

OF

Landscape-Painting to Landscape-Gardening:

INTENDED AS

A SUPPLEMENT

TO THE

“ESSAY ON THE PICTURESQUE.”

BY

UVEDALE PRICE, Esq.



A
LETTER, &c.

SIR,

THOUGH upon some accounts I might have wished that the printed Letter you have address'd to me, had been a private one; yet upon the whole I cannot be sorry that you have made it public. I am thereby enabled freely and openly to discuss the points of difference between us; to enforce some principles, and enlarge upon others, on which I had touch'd but slightly. On the other hand, had it been a private Letter, those points might have been more amicably discuss'd; explanations

tions and corrections might have taken place, which, had you afterwards thought it right to appeal to the public, might have so changed the nature of the appeal, as to make an answer from me less necessary, or at least less controversial.

Had such a Letter been addressed to me by a mere theorist in improvement, I should have been much less solicitous (however high his reputation) to answer his objections in detail; for were I ever so completely to vanquish such an antagonist, it might still be said, that the *practical* improver only, and one whose practice was extensive, could point out the most essential defects in my book as far as it related to improvements: for that whatever principles could not be applied practically, and yet were intended to be so applied, were worse than useless; they were likely to mislead. It is therefore no little satisfaction

tion to me, that I am now probably acquainted with the chief bent of the arguments against my principles of improvements, and in favour of Mr. Brown's practice; for no person is likely to be so well prepared with those arguments as yourself.

I do not consider this Letter merely as an answer to your's, but as a Supplement (and perhaps a very necessary one) to my Essay; and I will own, that without the assistance your Letter has afforded me, without the hints you there have given me, and the modes of defence and attack which you have suggested, I could not so well have made it.

You have, however, in the course of that Letter produced several opinions as mine, none of which, as far as I can judge, are warranted by what I have written; some directly contrary to the whole tenor
of

of my work. These I must necessarily point out; and there cannot be a greater advantage in any controversy, than to be able to shew clearly that your opponent has mis-stated your opinions, and then ridiculed and argued against his own mis-statements. Had you thought proper to communicate your Letter to me before it was printed (though I do not mean to insinuate that I had any right to expect it) you would easily have been convinced of those mis-statements by references to my book: this would have saved me from the unpleasant task of pointing them out to the public; a task which it is difficult to perform without some retort, and appearance of asperity: it would also have saved you from, what I am sure you will very sensibly feel, the mortification of being convicted either of want of candour, or of common attention, where, for your own
fake,

fake, the closest attention, and the utmost fairness and accuracy were required. It is true, I should thereby have lost a very great advantage in case of a controversy; but I should by no means regret it, being much more desirous of union than of triumph.

From the time I had first the pleasure of being acquainted with you, I wished to be your ally, not your opponent: I flattered myself, that, having considered the same subject in different lights, and by means of a different course of study, we might have been of reciprocal use to each other. I felt great hopes that you might employ your talents (which I thought would naturally lead you that way) in making experiments in landscape-gardening on the principles of landscape-painting, and of the art of painting in general. Your reputation would have justified you in
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making those experiments, and they in return (if performed for some time under your own eye,) would, I am convinced, have encreased that reputation in no slight degree. You have however chosen to take, what I may well call the opposite side—to stand forth the defender of Mr. Brown; a circumstance which, I assure you, is sincerely lamented by many of your friends and well-wishers, among whom I may, with great truth, reckon myself: they were desirous that you should stand on your own merits, leaving yourself free to avoid whatever, on more mature reflection, might appear defective in any system.

I shall now proceed to answer the different parts of your Letter; and must begin by thanking you for your civility in speaking so favourably of my book. I am much pleased to find that you agree with me in the general principles of the art; that is a
great

great point gained: the propriety or possibility of reducing them to practice may be an object of future, and, I trust, of amicable discussion. The trial as yet has never fairly been made; if it should be, I am persuaded it will be found, that the affinity between the principles of painting and of improving is much closer than you seem willing to allow; and that the application of those principles, particularly with respect to water, will produce varieties and effects, which will shame the cold monotony of Mr. Brown's works.

The "new system of improvement" you have taken the trouble of forming for me, together with the sarcastic title you have given it, accord but ill with the approbation you had just before bestowed, and that in so flattering a manner, on my general principles. As little does the consequence of that system accord with my ideas of improve-

improvement; for there is so great a pleasure arising from fine verdure, from neatness, from the marks of habitation, of ease, and opulence, that rather than see this beautiful kingdom one huge, though picturesque, forest, I should almost hesitate (had I the choice) whether I might not even prefer its being *finished* by Mr. Brown; and that, for a lover of pictures, and whose palate, as you afterwards observe, requires a degree of irritation, is going a great length.*

It seems to me that your principal aim through the whole of this Letter, is to

* An anecdote I heard some years ago of Mr. Quin, and which I believe is not so much hackneyed as many others, seems to me not inapplicable. When grown old, and quite broken down, he one day crawled out to sun himself on the South Parade. A conceited young fellow skipping up to him, cried out, "Mr. Quin! I am sorry to see you look so old and infirm; now what would you give to be as young, and as active, and as full of spirits as I am!" Quin looked at him very sternly; "Young man," said he, "I would bid very high indeed—I think I could be content to be as foolish."

shew,

shew, that by an attention to pictures, and to the method of study pursued by painters, only wild and unpolished ideas are acquired. I cannot but wonder, that a person whose talents for drawing might have led him to form a more just opinion on the subject, should have conceived that the study of an art, which has been employed in tracing whatever is most beautiful and elegant, as well as what is wild and romantic, should convert its admirers into so many Cherokees, and make them lose all relish but for what is savage and uncultivated. I will beg you to reflect on what some of the highest artists have done both in their pictures and drawings, and on the character of their productions; you must be sensible that the mixture of gay and highly cultivated nature, with the most splendid and finished works of art in Claude Lorrain—the studied and uniform grandeur of the landscapes of N. Pouffin,

the style of his compositions, sometimes approaching to formality, but from that very circumstance deriving a solemn dignity,—are both of them (and many other examples might be given) as distinct from the wildness of mere forest scenery, as they are from the tameness of Mr. Brown's performances. Many painters, it is true, did principally study the wild and unpolished parts of nature; and from this circumstance, and from my having mentioned in my Essay the effects of neglect and accident, together with the use which all painters *had* made, and improvers *might* make of those effects, you have formed a *system* for me; and have called it “*the new system of improving by neglect and accident.*” You will, perhaps, be surpris'd if I should shew, in the course of this Letter, that you have been trying to ridicule (and very undeservedly) your own practice, while you thought you were laughing at mine.

mine. Had you considered what I have written, with the attention which every man ought to give to what he means to criticise, and candidly taken the spirit of it, you must have felt that I never could propose so preposterous a plan as you appear to have formed for me; that I never could mean that the improver should abandon all design, and leave every thing to chance (the idea you clearly intend to convey by "the new system of improving " by neglect and accident,") but that by studying the effects which *had* been produced by them, he should learn *how* to design; that is, how to produce similar effects, with as great a degree of certainty as the case will admit of, for still a great deal must, and ought to be, left to accident.*

This

* I was struck with a passage I read lately in Helvetius, which illustrates this idea, by shewing its application to a higher purpose. "Le hazard a, et il aura donc toujours part a notre education, et surtout a celle des hommes de genie.

EA

This may appear like a contradiction ; but it must be remembered, that what would be absurd in many other arts (as for instance, in architecture) is proper in your's, where vegetation is the chief instrument in your operations. Trees and plants of every kind (considered as materials for landscape) should have room to spread in various degrees, and in various directions, and then accident will produce unthought-of varieties and beauties, without injuring the general design: but if they are allowed to spread in one direction only, you in a great measure prevent the operation of accident; and thence the sameness and heaviness of the outsides of clumps, and of all close plantations. The

En veut on augmenter le nombre dans une nation? *Qu'on observe les moyens dont se sert le hazard pour inspirer aux hommes le desir de s'illustrer. Cette observation faite, qu'on les place a dessein, et frequemment dans les memes positions ou le hazard les place rarement. C'est le seul moyen de les multiplier.*" Helvetius de l'Homme, chap. 8.

old

old gardeners of the Dutch school *totally* prevented its operation, and imitated architecture; and thence the still greater formality and stiffness of vegetable walls, and of all that is called topiary work. It has been said in defence of Mr. Brown, that allowing the clump to be bad, yet still it is better than an obelisk or pyramid of lime, or yew: this defence would be good, had such pyramids and obelisks, and all the ornaments of a Dutch garden, been stuck upon the sides and summits of hills, and all the most conspicuous points of a whole district; the clump would then have taken the place of more glaring pieces of formality, and therefore would comparatively have been an improvement: but as the case stands, while Mr. Brown was removing old pieces of formality, he was establishing new ones of a more extensive and mischievous consequence. Besides, those old formalities were acknowledged

as such, and confined to the garden only; but these new ones have no limits, and are not only cried up as specimens of pure, genuine nature, but of nature refined and embellished; from which the painter, as well as the gardener, may learn to correct and enlarge his ideas and his practice.

As I have attributed much of the defect in Mr. Brown's system to his not having attended to the effects which *had* been produced by accident, and to his having, in a great degree, prevented its *future* operation in his own works—as this is in my opinion a point of no little consequence, though (as you have shewn) extremely open to misrepresentation; and as it is a point on which I have touched but slightly in my Essay, I will beg leave to dwell upon it a little longer.

Every man will allow that painters and improvers ought to study nature, and nature in contradistinction to art. Are then
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all parts of nature to be studied indiscriminately? No one will make such an assertion. But whence do these various combinations arise, of trees so happily grouped and connected with ground, buildings, and water; of open lawns, of closer glades, and skirtings, in planting and forming which no art has been employed? As it cannot be from design, it must be from accident. Of these lucky accidents painters have made the greatest use; wherever they meet with them they eagerly trace them in their sketch-book; these they study, arrange, and combine in a thousand different ways; these are the stores whence their greater compositions are afterwards formed. But of these accidents (if we may judge from their works) improvers have as yet made but little use.

Again, wherever art interferes, the effect of these beautiful and striking acci-

dents is generally spoiled to the painter's eye; for the prevailing taste for clearing either indiscriminately, or in distinct clumps and patches, destroys their connection, their playful variety, and intricacy. Neglect, therefore, as well as accident, is necessary to furnish these examples of nature in her most picturesque state; that is (according to the common use of the word) the state in which painters do, and improvers ought to study and imitate her; but, in the latter case particularly, with such modifications as the character of the scenery may require. Accident and neglect are therefore two principal causes of those beauties (and they often deserve that name in its strictest sense) which painters, lovers of painting, and many whose natural judgment has not been vitiated by false ideas of refinement, admire: and whoever means to study nature, must principally attend to the effects
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of neglect and accident. But, as Mr. Burke well observes, “ there is in mankind an unfortunate propensity to make themselves, their views, and their works, the measure of excellence in every thing whatsoever.”

Left you should think my arguments for such a course of study not sufficiently convincing, I can produce an authority for it, which you cannot well dispute; I mean your own practice. I learned from your own mouth, and with much satisfaction, that you had gone repeatedly into Epping Forest for the purpose of studying. Of studying what? not the effects of art or design—not of nature indiscriminately; but peculiar effects, peculiar dispositions of trees, thickets, glades, lawns, openings, and skirtings of various form and character, which you might afterwards transfer with a higher degree of polish, but without injuring their loose and varied

varied shapes, to more ornamented scenes. You were therefore studying the effect of neglect and accident, and it is a study, which, joined to that of the selections which painters have made of those effects, every professor of your art should perpetually renew; not merely in forests, but universally wherever they occur. He should, by the study of pictures, accustom his eye to catch them, and to fix them in his memory as sources of natural, unaffected variety; or he will certainly fall into the wretched sameness of him, whom you have dignified with the title of “that great self-taught master,” and whose works (if he was self-taught) fully justify the Italian proverb.*

I cannot quit the short note of your’s, which has occasioned so large a comment,

* Chi s’infegna ha un pazzo per maestro. Vide Essay on the Picturesque, page 4.

without

without observing, that it seems to be meant as a sort of corrective both of the praises you have given and received. With regard to myself, I can freely say that I spoke of your talents as I thought of them, and I praised them, because it is always pleasant to give praise where it is due.

I did take the liberty of recommending to you the study of what the higher artists have done, both in their pictures and their drawings; for I will frankly own, that from all the conversations which have passed between us, I had (perhaps rashly) conceived, that you were not very conversant in them: I cannot recollect, amidst all the romantic scenes we viewed together, your having made any of those allusions to the works of various masters, which might naturally have occurred to a person who had studied, or even observed them with common attention. I did there-
fore

fore take the liberty of recommending what I thought would be of the greatest use in your profession, but am extremely glad to hear that you had anticipated my advice; that you had studied the great masters, and that you allow (a concession of no slight importance) that it is a branch of knowledge essential to the profession.

That there is a certain affinity between all the polite arts, has been universally acknowledged, from Aristotle and Cicero down to the present time; and it seems to me that good taste, and good judgment, consist in finding out in what circumstances, and in what degree, that affinity holds good, and may be practically applied. General assertions are easily made, and as they carry no conviction, they require no answer; whether those who are *not* professors, are likely to suppose greater affinity
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between the arts than those who are, I really cannot tell; but I am pretty certain that this oblique compliment to the latter, at the expence of us Dilettanti, will not bring over the professors of painting to admire clumps, belts, &c. and that they will at least be of opinion, that there is greater affinity between landscape painting, and landscape gardening, than appears in Mr. Brown's works.

I shall always remember with pleasure the hours we spent together on the Wye, and the perfect good-humour and cheerfulness of the whole party; but I could not help observing at the time, (and with much concern,) how lightly you treated the idea of taking any hints from any part of a natural river, towards forming an artificial one. You tell me, however, that an enthusiasm for the picturesque, had originally led you to fancy greater affinity
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between painting and gardening, than you found to exist after mature deliberation, and practical experience. As I cannot guess how far that enthusiasm may originally have carried you, so neither can I guess in what degree mature deliberation, and practical experience, may have altered your ideas: your profession, it is true (as it has hitherto been exercised) may be considered as a certain preventive against any such enthusiasm, and as a most radical cure for it, should the infection have taken place; but I still must hope that your's, though lowered, has by no means been extinguished by it.

Though your principal aim throughout the whole of your Letter has been to counteract my endeavours, and to weaken as much as possible the connection between painting and landscape gardening, yet your own mode of proceeding affords the
strongest

strongest proof of the closeness of that connection. Consider only what your process is, when you are consulted about the improvements of a place. One of the first things you do is to make representations of the principal points, in the state in which you find them; and other representations of the state in which you hope they will be hereafter. In reality, you make the best *pictures* you can, with the materials you find there; and also with those fresh ones you mean to employ, and to which time must give effect. Consider the whole progress and aim of your operation, and compare it with that of the painter.

According to my notions, were a landscape painter employed to correct the defects of a scene that the owner wished to improve (an employment which, without degrading his profession, would ennoble
your's)

your's) he would begin by examining the forms and tints of all the objects, and their connection, by the principles of his art; if he found the trees too crouded, and too heavy, he would vary and lighten their masses in his drawing; if too scattered, connect them; where parts were bare, he would place such masses or groups as he thought would best suit the composition. If the house were of a harsh colour, he would make it of a more harmonizing tint; if the form of it were flat and without any relief, or too much in one lump, or (in the opposite extreme) with its parts too much disjoined, he would give to the whole more lightness, more massiveness, more variety, or unity, as the case might require: If there were a river, or a piece of water, he would make such alterations in the shape and the accompaniments, as might have the happiest effect from the principal

principal

principal stations. This I conceive would nearly be the painter's aim and method of proceeding: in what points then do that aim, and that method, differ from your's? If in none, what closer affinity can there be between any two arts than between painting and landscape gardening? so close indeed is their affinity in those most material points, disposition and general effect, that they ought to be, and I hope will be, perfectly incorporated.

In all this, *convenience* and *propriety* are not the objects of consideration: not that either of them is to be neglected, but that they are objects of another kind; objects of good sense, and good judgment, rather than of that more refined and delicate sense and judgment, called taste. Any glaring offence against either of them is disgusting, but the strictest observance of them will give a man but little reputation

for taste, unless the general effect of the *picture* be good. In these pictures, you, as an improver, display your skill in uniting what is present, and what is future, into compositions, and in arranging the forms and tints as they will best accord: they give the first impression of your talents, and they are in a great degree to be your guides in the execution. It is true, you are not a Claude, a Gaspar, a Pouffin, or a Titian, but you do as much as your powers will enable you to do, which I by no means intend to undervalue, when I place them at an immense distance from such masters; as likewise from others I could name, who, by a successful study of their works, have transfused the spirit of them into their own. I am persuaded you have not the vanity to compare your forms and dispositions of objects (and I speak not of effects) to theirs; and that you must be
sensible,

fenfible, that were the minds of artifts fuch as thofe I have mentioned, turned to the practical part, the fame feeling and experience which guided them to the happieft choices in their pictures, would equally guide them in nature. How, indeed, fhould it be otherwife? Such men would quickly fee how groups might beft be improved by cutting down, by pruning, or by planting; they would difcover the whole connection of the different landfapes, and make the beft ufe of the materials they found in real nature, juft as they would in transferring them on the canvas. The more you ftudy their works, and the lucky accidents of nature, the more you will bring your pictures and your places to refemble the variety and connection of their forms, and the union of their tints; and practice will always fuggelt fuch foftenings as fituation may

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require, and such sacrifices as convenience and propriety may demand.

I must here observe, that through the whole of your Letter you have very studiously and dextrously endeavoured to confine your reader's ideas to mere garden scenes, and what is near the house, though you certainly would not wish your own practice to be so limited: you have also endeavoured to persuade them, that I think every thing should be sacrificed to picturesque effect. I had foreseen the probability of such misrepresentation, but thought it the less necessary for me to guard against it, because the observations I have made in my Essay relate almost entirely to the *grounds*, and not to what may properly be called the garden.* Still, however, I will beg leave to refer you and your readers to page 37, in which it is mentioned, that

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 366.

near the house picturesque beauty must in many cases be sacrificed to neatness, &c.; also to page 325, in which the characteristic beauty of lawns is mentioned; also to page 192, where the delights of spring, its flowers and blossoms, are described; all which, with many other passages, I think will shew that I am by no means bigotted to the picturesque, or insensible to the charms of beauty, though I have tried to discriminate the two characters. I must, indeed, take the liberty of referring you to the whole book; for it strikes me, as I will fairly own, that if you did read it through, it must have been in a very cursory manner, with a view of observing what was hostile to such parts of modern gardening as you adhered to, and what were the parts of my opposite principles most open to attack: but as to the general chain of reasoning, (such as it is) and the

connection and dependance of one principle on another, I am very clear that you either did not attend to them, or had totally discarded them from your memory before you wrote your Letter.

You have observed, that a beautiful garden scene is not more defective because it would not look well upon canvas, than a didactic poem, because it did not furnish a subject to the painter, &c. You will forgive me if I do not think this a very happy illustration. The principal object of a *didactic* poem is to instruct, to be useful; the ornaments are subordinate. It therefore bears a much nearer resemblance to what is called a *ferme ornee* than to a garden; and nothing, in my opinion, would more happily illustrate the various degrees and styles of ornament which might accord with what is useful, than the various characters of such poems. A didactic
work

work in *prose*, is a *mere* farm; it pretends only to be useful: though in such works, as in mere farms, interesting and amusing parts will often present themselves even to those who are not interested in the general subject; and the more agreeably so, as they are not intended. Many didactic poems are *sermoni propiora*: they differ from mere prose only by a certain arrangement, and a few poetical ornaments; either the ground-work of the poem itself, or the genius of the poet not leading him to higher effusions. These answer very much to an ornamented farm in a country where the soil is good and well cultivated, but where there are no great natural beauties. On the other hand, there are didactic poems, where the most striking imagery is mixed with the instructive parts, and so happily, that the ornaments seem to arise out of the subject, and sink as naturally

into it again ; but rarely appear (as they almost always do in improved places) like patches of ornament, that catch the vulgar, and offend the judicious eye. Of this description are the two most renowned of all didactic poems, those of Lucretius and Virgil ; and they are the best illustrations of the manner in which the useful and the ornamental, in places of great natural beauties, should be combined together.

Those who wish for as great a degree of elegance and high polish as is compatible with grandeur and energy, will imitate Virgil ; but, like him, they will avoid all flat effeminate smoothness. Like him, they will leave those masterly touches which give a spirit to the rest, though they will give to the whole of their scenery a more general appearance of polish, than those who take Lucretius for their model. In him certainly the contrast between
what

what answers to the picturesque, the sublime, and the beautiful, that is, between the rough, and seemingly neglected parts—the forcible and majestic images he at other times presents—and the extreme softness and voluptuousness of his beautiful passages—is much more striking than in Virgil; and therefore by many his style has been preferred to that of his more equal, but less original rival. Both, however, are far removed from coarse and slovenly negligence, and from insipid smoothness. But though neither these, nor any other didactic poems have the least analogy to a garden scene, yet there is enough of modern poetry that will perfectly suit many modern pleasure-grounds. Who is there that has not read, or tried to read, under the name of poems, a number of smooth, flowing verses, equally void of imagery and instruction?

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As your Letter is addressed to me in consequence of my book, I could wish to know from what part of it you have collected, that, in my opinion, the painter's landscape is indispensable to the perfection of gardening? I must own, at the same time, that I do not perfectly understand what idea you annex to that term, though I conclude you mean by it in general a landscape with rough and broken parts: still, however, there is something extremely vague in the term of the *painter's landscape*, as also in that of *gardening*. In its enlarged sense and practice, gardening may extend over miles of country; and painters' landscapes differ from each other as much as the scenes they represent: a Salvator Rosa, or a Mola, for instance, differ as much from a Claude, as a garden, from a piece of rough pasture. Wouvermans, and many of the Dutch masters, often

often introduced parts of gardens into their landscapes; Rubens sometimes, and Watteau very frequently, painted garden scenes only; in Claude, orange-trees and flower-pots are mixed with his buildings: hardly any thing in nature is so polished, so formal, so flat, nay so ugly, as not to have been sometimes made into a landscape, and by some painter of reputation. To ask, therefore, whether the painter's landscape is indispensable to gardening, is to ask whether all that is rugged and savage, all that is highly cultivated and embellished, all that is solemn and majestic, all that is light and fantastic—in short, whether all the different characters of art and nature are indispensable to the perfection of gardening. Now, if instead of *the painter's landscape*, you had put *a study of the principles of painting*, as in candour you ought to have done, the whole
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would have been perfectly intelligible, the whole fairly stated according to the author's words and obvious meaning: and you yourself allow *that* study to be essential to your profession.

I must here observe, that as with regard to improvements, you have wished to confine your reader's ideas to mere garden scenes, so with respect to painting, you have directed them towards the rudest styles of landscapes; in order to separate the two arts as widely as possible, and weaken their affinity. You must be sensible, however, that all landscapes are not rough; that for instance, Adrian Vander-velde, and Wovermans, are often too smooth; and I forbear mentioning history, or portrait painters, such as Carlo Dolce, &c. being less strictly to the present object. As landscapes may be considered

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as copies of the *general* effects of vegetation, and of the soil it springs from; so may flower-painting, as an imitation of the *near*, and *distinct* effects of the most beautiful parts of it; and you will own, that nature herself is hardly more soft and delicate in her most delicate productions, than the copies of them by Van Huyslum. To the greatest delicacy and exactness he also joined the choice of forms, the effects of light and shadow, and harmony of tints; in short, he knew the principles of his art. Take then the most dressed and polished of all garden scenes, and what may be supposed least to interest a painter—a mere flower-garden, surrounded with shrubs and exotic trees. If we suppose that two such flower-gardens were shewn to such a painter—that in the one, the grouping of the shrubs, the flowers, and their ornamental accompaniments — their general effect,

effect, harmony, and connection—the variety of their forms, and their light and shadow, were such as his judgment approved; while in the other, every thing was comparatively scattered, discordant and in patches, and had neither the same variety nor connection—would he not be a better judge of the *degree* of superiority of the one over the other, and of the *causes* of that superiority, than a person who had not studied his art? would not his criticisms, and his directions, be more likely to improve such scenes, than those of a gardener? and were he to paint them, is it not probable that the one he preferred would be the more beautiful, both in reality, and on the canvas? The question, therefore, is not, whether the Caracci, Francesco Bolognese, or S. Rosa, would study landscapes in a flower-garden, but which of two scenes of the same character,

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ter, (whatever it were, from the Alps to a parterre,) had most of those qualities that accord with the general principles of their art. Considered in this light, I am persuaded that if instead of Van Huyffum, S. Rosa himself had been shewn two such flower-gardens, the same general principles would have made his and the Dutch painter's judgment agree. If this would be the case in a mere flower-garden, the more the scene was extended and diversified, the more it would get out of the province of the gardener, and into that of the painter.

But you are so alarmed, lest any of your friends and employers should be infected with an enthusiasm for the picturesque (which you seem to consider as nearly synonymous with the art of painting), that you have not only endeavoured to seduce them by the allurements of beauty as a separate quality, but have also addressed yourself to
 their

their fears. You have alarmed your valedudinarian and hypochondriacal patients for their spirits and constitution, by telling them, that the consequence of having that mysterious bug-bear, the painter's landscape, in their places, "is a sacrifice of the health, cheerfulness, and comfort of a country residence." Do you really think that rocks and cascades (when a gentleman is so unfortunate as to have them within the circuit of his walks, or even near his mansion) are more agreeable than grass and stagnant water? or is a made river, with its formal sweeps and naked edges, more cheerful and enlivening than a rapid stream—

Che rompe il corso fra minuti sassi?

Is a sandy or gravelly lane, with broken ground and wild vegetation, less healthy or varied than a gravel walk between banks smoothly turfed?

I be-

I believe there are many people who imagine that dirt, rubbish, and filth, are essential to the picturesque; and that a true connoisseur can judge of objects of that character by their smell, as an antiquarian is supposed to know by the taste, whether a medal has the true ancient ærugo. It must be allowed, that filthy objects are often picturesque, but not because they are filthy; on the contrary, such ideas always must take off from pleasure of any kind. All dirt, mud, and filth, as such, are simply ugly;* so is mere rubbish: thistles and docks may have a rich effect in the fore-ground of a wild scene, but ground covered with docks, thistles, or nettles, is merely ugly; so is ground that has been disturbed and thrown about, though time and vegetation may add picturesque circumstances to ugliness

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 211.

and deformity;* and though painters are fond of what is called broken ground, yet, when improperly introduced, it offends the painter's, no less than the gardener's eye. All land that is boggy, rusty, or which in any way has the appearance of being wet, is equally adverse to the picturesque and the beautiful; and that in forests many such parts are found, is no argument that they are picturesque; but, perhaps, besides your anxiety to preserve your friends from that dangerous enthusiasm which you yourself were once seized with, the desire of introducing that ingenious expedient of the picture at the end of the avenue, may have been no slight additional motive for attacking the painter's landscape.

You have observed (what I have often heard remarked,) that there are a thousand

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 214.

scenes in nature to delight the eye, besides those that may be copied as pictures. This appears to me a very common, but very fallacious argument against the affinity between painting and improving: all such scenes, with hardly any exception, *may* be copied as pictures, and those which make the best pictures will probably be the most beautiful and pleasing scenes; but then the comparison must not be made between a lawn or a pleasure-ground, and a piece of forest scenery; but between two lawns, or two pleasure-grounds: for the effect of all high polish on the character of scenery, as on that of the human mind, is to diminish variety and energy; and it is hardly necessary to say, of what consequence those two qualities are in painting. You yourself are often employed in copying, not only such polished scenes as are generally pleasing, though less suited to the canvas,

but also such as have little to delight either the common, or the picturesque eye: by copying them, their beauties (if they have any) and their defects are made more apparent, as well as the additions and corrections which may be made. In making those additions and corrections, what is your principal aim? Certainly, I believe, to make the best compositions, the best *pictures* you can: *convenience* and *propriety* are to be the checks, the correctives; they are to prevent you from sacrificing too much to what might please the painter only; but subject to that check, your aim (as I said before) is to make pictures, and to make them in their general principle, as nearly approaching as possible to painter's landscapes; for I think you will acknowledge, that those scenes (of whatever kind) which have most of a whole—of union, connection, and harmony; that

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is, have most of the requisites of a picture, are most to be admired. You will also acknowledge, that where any of those requisites are wanting, you wish them to be there.

Mr. Gilpin's regret (if I understand him right) is, that there are so few perfect compositions in nature; so few where, either in the fore-ground—the disposition of the trees—the forms of the hills—the manner in which the distance comes in between the nearer objects, &c. a great painter would not see defects; or at least something that might clearly be changed to advantage. But what does this regret prove? Surely, that we should highly value such compositions where they exist, or where they most nearly approach to perfection, and that we should endeavour to form them as far as our powers, and the style of the scenery will allow; in

short, that we should not attend merely to a confined notion of beauty as a separate quality, but to a more enlarged and general idea of it.

Before I published my Essay, I was told by a friend who had read it in MS. that the admirers of Mr. Brown's system would certainly take advantage of my distinction, profess themselves satisfied with beauty alone, and ready to give up the picturesque: notwithstanding my friend's prophecy, I can scarcely hope that they will give *me* such an advantage. In the first place, before they give up all pretension to one object of improvement, it would be prudent to establish their title to the other; and I hope, in the course of this Letter, to exhibit some glaring proofs how great their imprudence would be in that point of view. In the next place, I suppose it will be allowed, that there are (in every sense

sense of the words) highly *picturesque* scenes near many gentlemen's houses in this kingdom, and that it also will be allowed, that to destroy the peculiar character of any scene is not the way to improve it: hence it naturally follows, that to enable either the owner himself, or the professor, to make any real improvements in such scenes, it is necessary, not only that they should not despise or renounce, but that they should study, and obtain a thorough knowledge of the character to which it belongs. Should therefore the Brownists in general renounce the picturesque, they certainly ought to do what I hardly expect—renounce improving all such scenes: and with regard to the professors, should they only renounce the character, and all study of it, they will at least give fair warning; and those who, after such a declaration, should employ them, would have no right to complain of the

mischief they might do.* Still, however, Mr. Brown, and those whom you have very justly, though severely, called “the taste-
 “less herd of his followers,” have been universally and professedly, smoothers, flavers, clearers, levellers, and dealers in distinct serpentine lines and edges; they have also been satisfied with the equivocal name of *improvers*, and from them a declaration of such a nature would be less surprising; but that you, a *landscape-gardener*, and the first, I believe, that has assumed that title—that you should set out by giving up (or what nearly amounts to it) the picturesque, and by endeavouring to weaken the affinity between painting and landscape-gardening, is what I am equally grieved and surpris’d at.

Before I say any thing farther on the use of the picturesque in landscape-gardening, I must beg leave to call the reader’s

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 38.

attention

attention to a few points in this controversy. I wish it to be remembered, that, according to the distinction I have made, (and which you have paid me the compliment of calling judicious) the picturesque, by being discriminated from the beautiful and the sublime, has a separate character, and not a mere reference to the art of painting. The picturesque, therefore, in that sense, as composed of rough and abrupt objects, is in many cases not applicable to modern gardening; but the principles of painting are always so. This is, in my opinion, a very material difference, and one which I have tried to explain and establish throughout my book; yet it seems to me, that either from design or inattention, you have not made the distinction.

In the next place (as I observed before) the term of *gardening* is extremely apt to mislead. What would be proper in a park,

park, or sheep-walk, would be equally improper very near the house, or in sight of the windows. Now I have observed, that upon all occasions where you renounce the picturesque, or wish to make your readers renounce it, you act like troops, or vessels, that retire under the guns of a battery; you always keep close to the mansion; you talk of the *habitation and convenience of man*, of a *garden scene*, &c. One might therefore suppose that all the talents of a landscape-gardener were to be displayed within a few hundred yards of the house, where (as I observed towards the beginning of my *Essay**) the picturesque must often be sacrificed to neatness, and to things of comfort, as gravel walks with regular borders, &c.

In the third place I must beg it to be remembered, that I have taken no small pains to shew, that, though a distinct cha-

* *Essay on the Picturesque*, page 37.

racter,

rafter, the picturesque is generally mixed with the beautiful, and that it is for want of observing how nature has blended them that improvers have fallen into so much tameness and insipidity.* Now you have, throughout your Letter, considered the picturesque as to be applied in its roughest state; as a harsh discord without being prepared, or resolved—a dose of crude antimony without any corrective—all by way of deterring your patients from mixing such sharp, stimulating ingredients with the soft emollients of Mr. Brown. It is also curious to observe, how you have avoided mentioning whatever might lead the imagination towards picturesque scenes, lest your readers should be seduced by the bare recital of them: you therefore, after having, by a sort of proxy, made choice of *unmixed* beauty (and what that beauty is shall afterwards be considered) have re-

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 125.

marked

marked that picturesqueness may be transferred—not to rocks, deep glens, and caverns; to cascades, to rivers dashing among stones, to wild forest glades, and thickets—but to the ragged gipsy; with whom [not with the rocks, cascades, &c.] you observe that the wild ass, the Pomeranian dog, the shaggy goat, are more in harmony than the sleek-coated horse, &c. The natural thing was to shew that these wild *animals* were in harmony with wild *scenery*; no—for fear of alluding to what might endanger the cause, they are made in harmony with the *gipsy*; not with those *landscapes* in which both they and the gipsy would be the most proper *figures*.

You have, in this place, somewhat sarcastically alluded to an observation in my Essay, namely, “that the effect of deer in groups is apt to be meagre and spotty.”* This observation (which I be-

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 63.

lieve is not a new one) I have no reason to think unfounded. Animals which, like deer, are of a slender make, whose slenderness is not disguised by fleecy or shaggy coats, and whose coats (like those of many deer) are mottled, must surely be more apt to be meagre and spotty when in groups, than such as are of a fuller make and appearance, and of a more uniform and harmonizing tint. The effect in trees would be obvious: thin trees, thinly clothed with foliage, and that foliage of a variety of tints, you must allow would at least be *apt* to be meagre and spotty in groups; and I went no further. The observation in my Essay does not stand alone, as might possibly be supposed from your allusion; it was put there to shew the distinct qualities of deer and sheep, considered as animals suited to pictures; it was to shew, what was very much to my purpose, and
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what I am very glad here again to inculcate, that an object may be highly suited to the painter without being on that account picturesque in my sense of the word; nay, so far from it, that it may, and often does suit him from some quality directly opposite to those which I have assigned to that character;* as for instance, from uniformity of shape and of tint. From that uniformity often proceeds what both in colour, and in light and shadow, is called *breadth*, which quality of breadth (as I have shewn in my Essay.†) will often render an object, in itself neither grand, beautiful, nor picturesque, extremely suited to the painter. This principle is in some degree exemplified in the sheep and the deer, which last, I think, must be allowed to be comparatively meagre and spotty,

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 61.

† Ibid. 165.

and especially the dappled kind, which indeed I had not mentioned, but of which you, like a generous adversary, have given me the advantage.

Claude, who often introduced deer into his pictures, avoided those of the mottled kind, and made his of one uniform, quiet tint: he would equally have avoided the Nova Scotia breed of sheep, and all pied animals; for no painter was more attentive to general harmony. Berchem, who aimed at great brilliancy, both in touch and colour, painted cattle with their various marks; and his pictures (though excellent in other respects) are remarkable for their spottiness, and the want of that fullness of form and repose, for which Claude's are so distinguished.

Though you have not directly, and in your own name renounced the picturesque, yet no man who did not wish it

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to be renounced, would speak of transferring it to goats and gypsies. But do you really think it has little to do (in whatever sense you take it) with landscape gardening? Suppose, for instance, that in a place you were improving, there were a river, in one part of which the banks consisted of soft and fresh meadow and pasture, either level, or gently sloping to the water; the natural turf extending to the brink, unless where the current had slightly worn it away, or where a low fringe of wood, or flourishing trees overhung it, and broke the continuation of its outline. That in other parts the banks were of a rude and picturesque character; high and abrupt, with rugged old trees projecting from them, and extending their twisted limbs over the stream; that the ground had crumbled away from among their shaggy roots, and had left them, and
bits

bits of rock, or rude stones, arching over the coves beneath them; that both these banks, if not within view of the windows, were within the circuit of the home walk: Would you, by way of making the two parts of the same character, and the whole more strictly *beautiful*, destroy these rough projecting trees, the rude stones, the broken ground with its accompaniments, and all their varied reflections in the water? Were you to hint that such a thing were possible, you must abdicate the first part of your title. You might say, however, that *being* there you would not *destroy* them. But could you with a wish make the whole soft and beautiful—could you make it so without the expence of new work, and the rawness of its effect, and at once give it the fringe and mellowness of the other part; would you do it? would you give up the variety and contrast of the two characters, and the relief

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they would give to each other? would you not rather preserve to each its distinct style, and be careful how you introduced too much softness and smoothness into the ruder scene? would you not consider how to make the most, both of the effect of contrast, and of connection; by sometimes going abruptly from one scene to the other, and by sometimes gradually softening the picturesque into the beautiful, and insensibly blending the one with the other? would you not do the same by any other scenery of the same kind? Were a wild entangled dingle, with rocks, and a headlong torrent, near the house; would you not be cautious how you deprived it in too great a degree, of its rude, and even entangled look? and would you not, while you facilitated the communication, avoid the appearance of doing so, and the constant parade of a walk; would you not think yourself lucky, if from a dressed part of the pleasure-

ture-ground—from out of a flower-garden—you could suddenly burft into a fcene of this kind?—Should' you tell me that near the houfe, and where the walks extended, you would wifh all this to be fmooth and undulating, and every mark of roughnefs and abruptnefs deftroyed—I would freely fay, that no profefled improver ought ever to be admitted, except where a profefled improver had been before; and where the Cofacks had been rifing, the Pandours might be allowed to plunder.

Thefe, however, are fcenes in which the picturefque ftrongly prevails; but there are a number of others, where the whole is in a high and prevailing degree beautiful, but where there are touches of the other character which give fpirit to its foftnefs; and this is what in many parts of my Effay I have endeavoured to point out. For inftance, in the moft fimplly *beautiful* river the cur-

rent will partially undermine the banks, and in places discover the soil, the roots of trees, or beds of rocks; there will be places where cattle come down to the water, and where stones and broken gravel will be left on the shore; there will be various interruptions to softness and smoothness, which instead of destroying, or weakening, enhance their charms: but if you renounce the picturesque, and make choice of unmixed beauty *only*, all these must either be destroyed, or in a great measure concealed: and after all, we should never forget that the beautiful is no more the immediate result of smoothness, undulation, and serpentine lines, than the picturesque is of roughness, abruptness, and sudden variation; and that beauty, the most free from any thing rough, is still very different from what Mr. Brown intended for beauty, as I hope to shew more fully towards the end of this Letter.

Perhaps

Perhaps you will tell me I have mistaken your meaning; that by beauty you do not mean to confine yourself to what is merely smooth and undulating, nor to to exclude many of those natural circumstances which though rough and abrupt, yet when not too prevalent, accord with, and add to the general effect; which effect is beauty. Should you say so, you will say precisely what I have said throughout my book: but in that case what is the dispute about? You agree with me in my distinction between the two characters; they must be either mixed or unmixed: if you take beauty alone, separated from the picturesque, you must not admit of any thing rough or abrupt with what is smooth and undulating, (except where nature has indivisibly mixed them together, or where they are softened and disguised by other circumstances) else it is not *unmixed* beauty according to our notions. If you

once admit of a mixture of the picturesque, the whole question will be about the *degree* of mixture, which must of course depend on the general character of the place, that of the particular spot, and its situation. But then all you have said about beauty in contradistinction to picturesqueness, as far as I can judge, has no object; for who ever thought (unless in some very particular cases) of introducing picturesqueness *exclusive* of beauty into garden scenes, or near the mansion?

No one indeed can doubt, that the beautiful ought chiefly to be attended to near the house: yet there are situations, where the prevailing character of beauty, (that is, a greater proportion of softness than of abruptness,) would not so well accord with the style of the place, but where that false beauty of Mr. Brown would totally destroy it. The strongest instance I ever met with of the
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truth of this position, was an alteration proposed by a professed improver at Powis Castle. One of the most striking points in that noble place, is a view through an arch-way after passing through an inward court. The mountains which divide Shropshire from Montgomeryshire, (and which from the grandeur of their character, if not from their height, well deserve that name,) appear almost in the center of it; beyond the arch-way projects a rock, a sort of abrupt promontory, shooting forward from that on which the castle is built: on this is a terras surrounded by an old massive balustrade, such as the massiveness of the castle required: steps of the same character descend from it to the bottom of the rock, great part of which is mantled with ivy, some of whose luxuriant shoots twine round the balusters. The effect which this projecting terras has in throwing off the mountains,—the richness of the fore-ground made by its ivied balustrade,

trade,—its light and shadow,—the perfect union of its character with the mountains and the castle,—can hardly be conceived by those who have not seen it. The professor proposed to blow up this rock and all its accompaniments with gunpowder, in order to make the whole ground smooth, and gently falling from the castle; in short, to place this ancient irregular fabrick, on a regular green slope. The noble owner, both from his own natural judgment and feeling, and from the advice of Mr. Knight, to whom he mentioned the proposal, not only rejected it, but has repaired all that was broken and defaced in this terras; and has preserved, in its true character, what would have been equally regretted by the painter, by the antiquary, and by every man of natural judgment and reflection.

Too many instances might probably be produced, where such sacrilege has not been
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prevented; and nothing can shew in so strong a light, the dangerous tendency of recommending a narrow exclusive attention to beauty as a separate quality, even where “ the habitation and convenience of man “ are to be improved,” instead of a liberal and enlarged attention to beauty in its more general sense, to character, and to the *genius loci*. It also shews the danger of throwing contempt on the study of the picturesque, and of the principles of painting; for had this professor acquired the least knowledge of either, he could not have made such a proposal. You, who might well have guarded both present and future professors from such blind undistinguishing attachment to *system*, have rather sanctioned it by your precepts, though I trust you would not by your practice.

I remember your being consulted about the improvements at Ferney Hall, a small
place

place in the neighbourhood of Mr. Knight, the most striking feature of which is a rocky dell near the house. I was extremely pleased to hear that you had asked Mr. Knight's advice with regard to the management of that part, acknowledging that you had not been so conversant as himself in that style of scenery.

This instance of your diffidence, and of your wish to draw knowledge from others, not merely to impress them with an idea of your own, was what first made me desirous of being known to you. The character I heard of your drawings added to that desire; and as I was persuaded that the same diffidence, and readiness to listen to advice, would lead you to correct any defects they might have, I felt great hopes that the art of landscape-gardening would be fixed on better principles than it had hitherto been; for I little imagined that you would strive to
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lessen the consequence of that art, to which you are indebted for your superiority in your own.

Those drawings of your's which were shewn to me, (when considered as those of an improver, and not of a professed artist) manifested talents which made me wish to know their author. You will forgive me, however, if I mention in my own justification, and by no means with an intention of hurting you, that they still (according to my conceptions) pointed out reasons for recommending to you what I did, and do strongly recommend—a study of the higher artists; for it is a study which never should be remitted, either by the painter, or the improver. In the same note* I also mentioned what I thought a very necessary caution to all professors of your art; not less so than to those of painting: I mean the danger of

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 351.

becoming

becoming mannerists. The improver particularly, without the study of the higher artists joined to that of varied nature, is sure to get into a habit of common-place forms; of rounds and ovals, and distinct clump-like masses. These, by general effects of breadth and tinting, he may disguise in his drawings, and thus his own eyes, and those of his employers will learn to acquiesce in them, nay, to be partial to such forms; and it should always be remembered, that Kent, a painter by profession, (a bad one it is true,) had been so accustomed to consider objects as an improver, that at last he could only copy the little beeches he had planted.

I am sorry you should suppose that many pages in my Essay are pointed against your opinions; I can say with great truth, that there is scarcely one whole page pointed at them. I have, indeed, canvassed with great
 freedom

freedom all opinions that appeared to me erroneous, without enquiring who might have adopted them; and if I have unintentionally wounded you through Mr. Brown, I am, on every account, sincerely grieved that you stood within the line of fire.

The respectability of your profession, I never meant to call in question, though I will frankly own, that, from what I have said, there was sufficient reason for your standing forth in its defence: I was anxious, on the contrary, that it should have a respectability which it hitherto had not deserved, by being founded on more just, more enlarged, and more liberal principles. It was partly with that view (and I hope I may say so without presumption) that I wished to cultivate your acquaintance; and I should not have courted the professor, had I wished to lower the profession. You are the first of that profession whose acquaintance I ever did desire, for you
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are the first I ever thought likely to do honour to it, by honouring and cultivating a higher art, and by considering that as the true road to fame and excellence in your own.

There is only one way in which I can account for the desire you have so strongly manifested throughout this Letter, of lowering the art of painting: you find yourself at the head of your own art; but with no mean talents for one branch of the art of painting, you in that, are far from having the same pre-eminence. You therefore seem to me to have used your endeavours, not only to shew that there is much less affinity between the two arts than I have supposed, but to degrade the art itself, and to exalt your own upon its ruins; for nothing surely but such a *jalousie de métier*, could have induced you to have made any sort of allusion, any kind of parallel, between the uncontroled
 opinions

opinions of savages, and an art, the principles of which had been investigated with such care, and its practice enlarged and refined by a succession of so many illustrious men. To make this illustration the more plausible, you have opposed gardening [not landscape-gardening] to the painter's studies of *wild* nature. But wherefore of *wild* nature exclusively, when, as I observed before, the studies of many of them are taken from the most highly embellished nature? I am willing to suppose, that you mean no more by *wild* nature, than simple nature—nature untouched by art; and *that*, perhaps, would have been a more accurate and candid manner of stating it; but then *simple* nature would have raised ideas of a variety of soft and delightful scenes, whereas *wild* is often used for what is rude and savage, and you might not be sorry to give that bias to the minds of your readers. As this wildness
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and rudeness of painters landscapes, is constantly brought as an argument against the affinity between painting, and even *landscape* gardening, it will be of great use towards clearing up this disputed point, to examine in what this wildness consists—how far it extends—what parts of such wild nature, when arranged by the painter, may be imitated by the gardener, even in dressed scenes, and what may not. In order to do it in the fairest manner possible, I will put out of the question Claude Lorrain, and all who studied highly ornamented nature, and will take such painters as Mola and Gaspar Pouffin. Examine the forms of their trees—their groups—the general disposition of them—the connection—the manner in which the distance is introduced between them—and in which they accompany buildings and water. I believe you will own that all this would, in many of their pictures,

pictures, not ill accord with any kind of scenery, and that many of these forms have much real beauty, as well as picturesque effect; that they have a variety of highly pleasing outlines, flowing, and blending into each other, and giving a softness* to the water they accompany; very different both from the *abruptness* of clumps, and from the naked *hardness* of artificial rivers. If this be true, much the greater and more conspicuous part of a mere painter's landscape, might, without impropriety, be allied with, nay, even make a part of a dressed scene. What part then of such pictures would be out of character in highly polished scenery? It is in an *extended* sense the fore-ground, or what might be termed the ground-plan of the picture; this often consists of rough and broken ground, and of other rude objects

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 109.

that give play, variety, and effect of light and shadow, as well as variety and richness of tint; should it be possible, however, that in certain cases the variety and effect of a painter's fore-ground could, without rudeness, be imitated in a garden scene, I imagine you would think it no small advantage.

But are all unimproved scenes in nature rude? are there not in the most picturesque districts—are there not in forests—lawns and openings of the softest turf, divided from the general scenery by an intricate skreen of thorns and hollies, mixed with larger trees, and enriched with tufts of natural flowers, which have altogether not only a beautiful, but even a dressed appearance? What is the difference between such a piece of wild nature, and one of Mr. Brown's garden scenes in which he has best succeeded? In his, the ground is mowed; it is more exactly, and therefore
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more stiffly levelled, and has not the same undulation, or (to borrow an expression from Mr. Burke) “that change of surface, “ continual yet hardly perceptible at any “ point, which forms one of the great constituents of beauty.” Instead of those tufts, thickets, and groups, whose playful outline and disposition create that *beautiful* intricacy which leads the eye a kind of wanton chase, his are clumps regularly dug, and consequently with a hard outline. Instead of that varied surface, where the mixture of broken tints gives such value to the more uniform green, and such delight to the painter’s eye—the unvaried colour and surface of dug ground, abruptly succeed to the no less unvaried surface and colour of mowed grass. Instead of the easy bends of a path, there are the regular and consequently more formal and

edgy sweeps of a gravel walk. He has indeed the advantage in diversity of plants, in gaiety and brilliancy of colours; an advantage, however, which has its danger, and which is liable to great abuse. But let the same kind of scene (and there must be thousands of them) be placed in a warmer climate—in the southern part of North America. There such groups and thickets would be composed of the various oaks or maples; of tulip trees, or acacias mixed with magnolias, cedars, kalmeas, rhododendrons, andromedas, &c.; the wild vines, and Virginia creeper climbing up the larger trees, and loosely hanging from their boughs: Would the making all those tufts and groups separate, and clump-like, and digging round them—would levelling the whole ground, and mowing what flowers the sheep had spared—would the
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making of a gravel walk across or around the whole opening improve the *beauty* of such a scene? for the convenience of walking, and the look of neatness, and habitation, are separate considerations. Can any one doubt that there are in wild, that is, unimproved nature, scenes more soft, more beautiful, than any thing which modern gardening has produced? Nay, that the peculiar beauties of such scenes have been ill imitated, and the true principles of those beauties ill understood? In the same proportion that natural groups and thickets are intricate yet beautiful, clumps are abrupt, without being picturesque; for the line of digging is hard, and renders the round, the oval, or whatever be the shape, distinct and formal. It clearly appears to me, that all these are defects, and they may be avoided, in a great degree, by endeavouring to follow, not to improve by counteracting, the

happy accidents of nature; and that the stiff manner of levelling the ground, (though perhaps an object of greater difficulty,) might be corrected from the same model. I wish, however, not to be misunderstood, as if I condemned levelling, digging, mowing, and gravel walks: where, in a part meant to be pleasure-ground, the surface is rough and uneven, it must of course be levelled and made smooth; where plants will not otherwise grow luxuriantly, the ground (for some time at least) must be dug; where sheep are not admitted, it must be mowed; and a gravel walk, besides the great comfort and convenience, has a look of neatness and high keeping that is extremely pleasing, though upon a different principle from the natural path. What I mean to shew is, that there are scenes in wild, unimproved nature, *of the same kind* as those in which modern gardening

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ing most excels—scenes produced by accident, not design—more soft, more truly beautiful in every respect, than the imitations of them.* they are also beautiful on the principles of painting, not of gardening, though those principles ought to be, and I hope will be, the same. I will here just slightly mention, what I may perhaps enlarge upon some future time, that in the old Italian gardens, where architecture and gardening were mixed together, effects were produced, to which nothing *of the same kind* could be found in unembellished nature.

As you have tried to degrade the painter's studies, by comparing them with the opinion of savages; so you have striven to

* I believe, however, that those who have been used to consider Mr. Brown's works as perfection, think a little like the Chevalier Taylor, the famous oculist: he used to say, that there was as much difference between an eye that he had brushed, and an unimproved eye, as between a rough diamond, and a brilliant.

exalt modern gardening, by comparing it to our glorious constitution. That the English constitution is the happy medium between the liberty of savages, and the restraint of despotic government, I do not merely acknowledge—I feel it with pride and exultation; but that pride and exultation would sink into shame and despondency, should the parallel you have made, ever become just: should the freedom, energy, and variety of our minds, give place to tameness and monotony; should our opinions be prescribed to us, and, like our places, be moulded into one form. A much apter and more instructive parallel might have been drawn between our constitution, and the art you have so much wronged. That art, like the old feudal government, meagre, hard, and gothic in its beginning, was mellowed and softened by long experience and successive trials; and not less improved

improved in spirit and energy. Such was the progress of our constitution, such is its character; such also was the progress of painting, such the character of its highest productions, at its brightest period. The later artists from Carlo Marat, lost that firmness, variety, and energy, and became mannered, cold, and insipid. Such indeed is the natural progress of human arts and institutions: the progress from oppression to anarchy, (of which we have seen such an awful example) is not more natural, than from the ease of freedom and security, to indolence and apathy: let England beware; let her guard no less against the one, than against the other extreme; they generate each other in succession, for apathy invites oppression, and oppression is the parent of anarchy.

Having said thus much with respect to your general defence of Mr. Brown's system

tem of improvement, and your illustration of its excellence, I will next consider your defence of the detail of his practice. If, as you say, no man of taste can hesitate between the natural group of trees composed of various growths, and a formal patch of firs (and, I will venture to add, of any other trees) which, as you well observe, “too often disfigure a lawn under “the name of a clump”—why not strive to imitate those natural groups, by attending to the principle on which they please? The strong argument against Mr. Brown, and that which I stated in my Essay,* is, that in the course of a long practice, and therefore with many opportunities of seeing their effects, he never made a clump like a natural group, though he did make many natural groups like clumps; I therefore may fairly conclude that he preferred

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 359.

the latter: and as he never (as far as I have observed,) connected one group with another, but always detached them as much as possible, I may also infer that he studied distinctness, not connection.

Now, unless I am totally wrong in all my notions, CONNECTION is the leading principle of your art, and it is the principle that has been, of all others, the most flagrantly and systematically violated. It is by means of this *system* of making every thing distinct and separate, that Mr. Brown has been enabled to do such rapid and extensive mischief; and thence it is that he is so much more an object of the painter's indignation than his strait-lined predecessors. He was a mere gardener, but he chose to be a landscape-gardener, without knowing the first principles of a landscape: the consequences have been such as might be expected; for as nothing is so easily, so quickly destroyed as connection,

nection, so nothing is restored with greater difficulty, or by a more tedious process.

Two of the principal defects in the composition of landscapes, whether real or painted, are the opposite extremes of objects being too crowded, or too scattered: your censure, therefore, of single trees dotted over the whole surface of a park, or any other ground, is perfectly just. Such scattered trees are rendered much more disgusting by heavy cradle fences, and, unless in very good soils, they also (as you observe) are generally starving. I can speak very strongly as to the bad consequence of this practice in every point of view, from its having been in too great a degree my own; and it is by no means the only instance in which I could offer my own former practice (for I do not persevere in what I think wrong) as a warning to others.

There cannot be a doubt, that the most
certain

certain expedient for producing future beauty, is to prepare and fence the ground, and to set more plants than are meant to remain; for the young plants must neither be stunted, browsed, nor starved. But where those masses (as is usually the case) are formed of trees of equal growths, and left close together in one thick lump, the *variety* they give to *any* ground scarcely deserves that name. The remedy I proposed* (after stating the defects of the usual method) was to mix a large proportion of the lower growths in every plantation; this, in my opinion, would not only prevent their flat, heavy, uniform appearance, but would also furnish means for varying and softening the abrupt lines of their outside boundaries, and correcting that solitary, insulated look which they still would have. The method of doing it which I should recommend, would be to

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 309.

take

take trees, both of the larger and smaller growths, from the plantation itself, (after they are grown strong enough to resist animals) and to transplant them on the outside of the fence; where a stiff formal outline is apt to remain, even when the fence itself has been taken away. As these plants would be to be carried so short a way, though large, they might be removed with safety; and would want no fence, but merely to be staked till they had taken root. Their effect would also be immediate; they would at once break, vary, and soften the hard line of the clump by partially concealing it, which trees alone would not effect; but by such a mixture of thorns, hollies, &c. with forest trees, the most painter-like groups and thickets might be formed.

This seems to me the true use of planting trees and bushes detached from the larger masses; and thus much it may be sufficient

sufficient to add to what I had before said in my Essay, with respect to those solitary lumps of various sizes;* whose principle indeed is the very opposite to that of connection, and by which at this moment the greatest part of the parks and grounds of improved places throughout the kingdom, are disjoined from the surrounding landscape. It requires no acquaintance with the principles of painting, to make any uniformly thick plantation, from a clump, to a large wood; but to vary and to connect those plantations with others, and with the more detached trees and groups—to compose and arrange the different parts of the different landscapes of a whole place, without injuring the unity of that whole, certainly does demand an acquaintance, and no slight one, with those principles: the first is the province of the

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 291.

mere

mere gardener, the latter of the landscape-gardener only.

As to the belt, I thought it had been quite extinct, and never likely to revive; but under your protection it may perhaps again crawl about the ground,

“ And like a wounded snake, drag its slow length along.”

As “ I have scotched the snake, not killed it,” I must renew the attack. You very truly observe, “ that the love of seclusion and safety is no less natural than that of liberty, and that the mind is equally displeas'd with excess of liberty, or of restraint, when either are too apparent.” But why is this address'd to me? to me, who have in the strongest manner censur'd the passion for *mere* extent*—for the removal of boundaries without any other object—for extent that is to be admir'd, like virtue, for its own sake—to be appa-

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 298.

rent,

rent, and measured with the eye as well as with the chain. No one can doubt the necessity of enclosing a park, or a pleasure-ground, and of hiding (at least in a great measure) that enclosure; the only question is about the mode of hiding it.

There are two different ways in which the owner's vanity (a very powerful and common agent) may operate on this occasion, according to the extent of the ground enclosed.

If it should be small, he will most sincerely wish that it should not be known where the boundary goes; though he may not take the proper method of concealment.

If, on the contrary, the extent should be very great, the owner may as sincerely wish to *mark* that extent, by distinctly marking the *course* of the boundary; though he would be equally desirous of concealing the *fence itself*.

But if the owner happen to be a lover of painting, and to have neither the dread of discovering a small, nor the ambition of displaying a large extent, he will wish the concealments in any case to be such as will accord with the rest of the landscape; nor will he be shocked if now and then part of the wall, or the pales should appear.

The person who has a *small* extent, will wish to have a screen of uniform thickness, as an impenetrable disguise; not considering that the *uniformity* of the disguise betrays it, and that the stranger soon guesses what is behind.

Then, again, the vanity of him who has enclosed an immense compass, will be pleased that it should be marked out distinctly by a uniformly high plantation; so that all the neighbours round may not only have to relate how many miles the whole circuit extends, but may be able to shew the exact
line

line of it to the wondering stranger, and to make him trace it with his eye.

If to these motives of vanity in the possessor, we add the motives of self-interest in the professor, it will be easy to account for the introduction and continuance of belts. The invention of them (a term never more misused than in the present instance) is beyond all others obvious, and the thing being once established, it saves all reflection on the style and character of the part it is to pass through; then it might be both laid out and executed, not only by a common gardener, but by a common labourer, without the professor's having ever seen the place; for it is only to measure a certain number of yards from the fence to the outside of the plantation, and to stuff it with trees, leaving a certain space for the drive. It is therefore highly the interest of every professor, who is more desirous of gain than reputation, to

work by *general receipts*; such as clumps, belts, and serpentine canals with uniformly levelled banks, so long as their employers are kind enough to be satisfied with them; and I will own, that should my Essay have the influence, which, as a very zealous author, I must wish, though I do not expect it to have, many an honest professor of improvement must, for want of education, seek his bread in some other way.

You allow that the drive through such belts is tedious, and that the dulness encreases with its length: their insides are therefore condemned. What then is the effect of their outsides with respect to the general landscape? which, after all, ought to have some weight with the landscape-gardener. They present one conspicuous, uniform, unvaried screen; meagre and drawn up, and differing in character from all that is on either side of it; in reality, a gigantic *hedge*, that
wants

wants to be hidden, as much, or more than the fence it hides. Observe the difference of those accidental screens to many of the old parks, where thickets of thorns and hollies, groups, and single trees are continued quite to the wall, or the pales; and where, till you see the boundary, (which, however, from its mosses and ivy is at least a very picturesque object) you might suppose yourself near the center, not at the extremity of the park. These surely are the screens which ought to be imitated by landscape-gardeners, for they accord with the rest of the scenery, and at every step form landscapes; and where perfect concealment is the object, they are best calculated to produce it without discovering the intention. Still, however, if the owner says, I do not care about landscape and variety, I like uniformity and continued shade, he is quite in the right to please himself, though it may be dull

to others; it answers his purpose, and a very good one; but let not two such distinct ideas, as convenience and beauty, be confounded.

The belt you have so accurately described, “ of one uniform breadth, with a drive as
 “ uniform, serpentine through the middle
 “ of it,” is, I believe, what, with little difference, has been most generally made; and it answers perfectly to its name. But such a plantation as you afterwards have proposed, of
 “ various breadths, and its outline adapted to
 “ the natural shape of the ground,” is hardly a belt, or at least is not Mr. Brown’s belt, and I criticised what had been, not what might be, made. I am very ready to acknowledge the great superiority of such a belt; a superiority which encreases, as it grows more unlike the thing it is named from: but still you must excuse me if I suggest (not indeed by way of strict argument)

ment) that you have shewn the dulness of any belt in a way which will have much more effect than any thing I have written, by presenting a much more lively image of its tiresome monotony. You, the defender of belts, can so little bear the *ideal* confinement, even of your own highly improved belt, that after skirting near the edges, and looking wistfully out of it, at last finding an opening, you fairly escape from it entirely, “to enjoy the unconfined view of distant prospects:” an example that, I believe, would be followed by most persons in the same situation.

It is true, that I have very earnestly and generally recommended it to gentlemen who have places, that they should qualify themselves for becoming their own landscape-gardeners, by one of the most pleasing and liberal of all studies; that of the principles of painting, the works of painters and

of nature.* This you think (perhaps with too much partiality towards professed improvers) might tend to suppress—not the profession—but the *art* itself. I cannot help thinking, that so far from suppressing or injuring either, it would, on the contrary, be of great advantage to both. As to suppressing the art, you must recollect that there was a time when there were professors of eloquence; there are none now: is the art suppressed? Would the great orators of this day—who rival those of Greece and Rome—would they have had more variety, energy, and effect, had some professor taught them the routine of eloquence, its tropes and figures, and endeavoured to mould their minds to his conceptions?

Of all the arts, none is more adapted to men of liberal education, who pass much of their time at their own country-seats, than

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 375.

landscape-

landscape-gardening. They must be continually among landscapes, (for there are few districts, unless *very much improved*, that do not furnish something for the painter,) and with the least attention to pictures and to composition, the principles of landscape-gardening would insensibly press themselves upon their minds; and in most points the practice is far from difficult. Not so with architecture, though a study highly becoming every man of taste and property, and intimately connected with gardening: models of architecture are thinly spread; the occasions of imitating them are rare, and the practical part requires a very different degree of accuracy. There are also many arts whose theory is curious and interesting, but in which the method of acquiring practical knowledge is tedious, or disgusting. Such is medicine; a science which often illustrates the art of gardening more happily than one
might

might suppose. No man voluntarily frequents hospitals and sick rooms, as he does woods and rivers, and all the parts of landscape; yet every man would do well to know enough of the general effect of drugs, and of their particular effect on his habit, to guard against the hasty decision of, perhaps, an able physician, but who has neither the same opportunities of studying the constitution of his patient, nor the same motives for studying it. This will be very readily applied to the other art.

All quackery, I allow to be bad, in either of the arts, and much should in both be left to nature; but he who quacks himself, has an extreme interest in his patient, and will be afraid of violent remedies; not so the bold empiric, who undertakes to improve a place, or a constitution. As you have started the idea of this illustration, I will carry it on a little farther. Many places, like many
con-

constitutions, want but little to be done to them, and an honest and able professor in either art, will do but little. Ignorance, on the other hand, is always rash and meddling; and the design of my work is to guard against the rashness and active ignorance of quacks. But were the mass of professors in your art to mix theory with practice; were they to study the works of painters, and to compare them with nature; were they to do so with as much diligence, as the eminent professors of medicine study the works of former physicians of every age and country, and compare their doctrines and experiments with the varying characters of diseases in real subjects—the respectability of the profession would be effectually established, and we should consult the professors of either art with equal confidence in their skill.

Whatever effect my recommendation may produce, believe me your profession is
in

in no danger. Should the professors of it in general (as indeed must be the case) improve in proportion to the taste and knowledge of their employers, *that* encreased taste, and the knowledge of theory joined to practice, will secure them employment, even among those who are the most capable of directing their own works; for whenever just and new ideas are to be acquired from a professor, every affluent man who has extensive plans of improvement, will certainly (unless prevented by conceit, or avarice) be desirous of consulting him. But in any case there will always remain a sufficient number of rich and helpless persons, who must endeavour to purchase what they have not themselves. It is not to such men (who must always be directed,) that I have addressed my advice; yet still they are not uninterested in its success: for, as I before observed, the taste and knowledge of the general mass of professors, will naturally encrease

encrease in proportion to that of the general
 mafs of their employers, and confequently
 thofe who are unable to act themfelves, will
 at leaft be directed by more fkilful guides.

After all, fhould any perverfe, ignorant,
 and *deſperate amateurs* (as they have hu-
 mourouſly been named) take one part of
 my advice only; and, contrary to its ſpirit
 and obvious meaning, boldly act for them-
 ſelves without any previous ſtudy or re-
 flexion—they ſtill would feldom occaſion
 ſuch extenſive and irreparable miſchief as
 the regular ſyſtem of clearing and levelling;
 and as they probably would have no imita-
 tors, their improvements would be confined
 to one ſpot, and one point of time. Their
 extravagancies alſo, though miſchievous,
 might be amuſing; and, like other wanton,
 licentious effects of freedom, as pumping,
 ducking, tarring and feathering, have a mix-
 ture of the barbarous and the ludicrous—

at

at once shock and divert you. Even the revengeful and studied cruelty of savages, horrid as it is, yet still is less odious and disgusting than the cold, settled, regular *system* of oppression and torture of the inquisition.

The method of applying general rules, (as you have remarked) can only be learnt by practice; but I should much doubt whether there be any plan, or any medicine “proper almost in every case.” I have read indeed of a *panacea*, but I believe it to be as rare as a plan of improvement of the same accommodating nature: certainly the character will neither suit Mr. Brown’s plan, nor James’s powder; and it would, in my idea, be no small impeachment to a physician, could it be foretold, before he had seen his patient, that he would prescribe that excellent medicine, whatever the disorder, or the sort of fever might be; for that is the true parallel with Mr. Brown’s anticipated plan,
which

which was not to be executed (as you have supposed) in a naked country. But indeed a physician who, like Mr. Brown, had but *one* plan of operations, must treat all disorders, Sangrado-like, in the same manner.

Those who affect to despise all prospects, as beneath the notice of lovers of painting, deserve the title you have indirectly bestowed upon them (and perhaps designed for me) of fastidious connoisseurs. I must observe on this occasion, that there is a wide difference between despising prospects oneself; and rallying those who despise every thing else—the mere prospect-hunters. I must also observe, that my attack was not directly made upon the exclusive love of prospects, though a very fair subject for raillery. It was levelled against the passion for whitening objects—the passion for distinctness; and the prospect-hunter was brought in to illustrate the effects of that passion.

passion.* If I do despise prospects, I am constantly acting against my inclination by climbing up, not only high hills, but towers and churches; certainly not for the painter's landscape. In my own place I have three distinct prospects, — bird's-eye views seen from high hills—of which I am not a little proud, and to which I carry all my guests of every description. If they like nothing else in the place, I do not converse with them on pictures, or landscape-gardening; but if they have the affectation I have sometimes been witness to, that of holding all prospects in contempt as unworthy the attention of a man of true taste, I do not feel very eager to converse with them on any subject.

A prospect of mere extent, if that extent be very great, has, without any striking features, a powerful effect on the mind. If to extent you add a richly wooded and cul-

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 179.

tivated

tivated country, with a varied boundary of hills or mountains; and to that again, effects of water and buildings, it is enchantment. If from a high summit you look from mountain to mountain, across their craggy breaks, and down unto their recesses, it is awful and sublime. Yet neither such grand nor such beautiful prospects as those which I have just described, nor yet many others of intermediate styles and degrees, are in general proper subjects for pictures. This I imagine to arise, not from the height whence they are viewed, but from another cause which equally operates on all views; namely, the want of any objects of importance either in the fore-ground, or the middle distance. Apply this to any view, even to such as are taken from a low station, and where the extent is limited: If it want those nearer objects, it will seldom suit the painter in point of composition; though, from the resources of

his art, (by means of broken tints—of breadth and effect of light and shade,—by his management of the sky, &c.) he may contrive in representing such a view, to disguise, or compensate its original defect. With regard to prospects, they are for the most part taken from the highest and openest part of a hill, where there is the least obstruction, and consequently where there is seldom either fore-ground, or second distance. On that account they do not make good landscapes; and on that circumstance, as I conceive, is founded the principal distinction, not merely between a landscape and a prospect, but generally between what is, and is not proper for a picture in point of composition. Any view that is unbroken, unvaried, undivided by any objects in the nearer parts, whether it be from a mountain or a plain, is, generally speaking, ill suited to the painter.

Consider

Consider for a moment what would be the effect in any good composition of the *limited* kind, either real or painted, were all the near objects swept away, and only the distant ones left. Try the same experiment on any admired composition of a great master, in which an extensive distance is introduced: let all that in any way intercepts, breaks, divides, and accompanies that distance—all that throws it off, and marks the gradations—all the strong masses, the powerful tones of colour, the distinct and forcible touches that contrast with its soft fading tints,—let all be removed—it becomes a mere prospect, and nothing else. Again, (to prove, as they do in arithmetic, subtraction by addition) let the objects taken from such a picture, be added to a mere prospect; it becomes a composition, a painter's landscape.

With respect to the point of sight being taken high, *that* has frequently a very grand effect,

effect; and that Titian thought so, is plain from the numerous prints after his compositions; in many of which, as it may be proved by the height of the horizontal line, he has supposed himself on a considerable eminence. Where beauty is the painter's object (as was the case with Claude) it is certainly more judicious to place the horizontal line lower, which he accordingly does.

All this seems to point out, that though prospects are not in general such compositions as painters select, yet that both the separate parts, and the general effect of each prospect—its masses—its boundaries—its composition as a piece of distance, are to be judged of, like any other scene, on the principles of painting. I therefore can have no doubt, if two such painters as Claude and Titian were obliged to paint two mere *prospects*, that the prospect which Claude chose for his picture, would be the most generally
pleasing

pleasing among the pleasing ones ; and that which Titian chose, the most striking among the sublime. In fact, the same distance, the grandeur of whose boundary, whose aerial perspective, whose gradual diminution of tints we so much admire in a prospect, forms a very principal part of many of Titian's, Claude's, and other painters' landscapes ; they only frame and accompany it.

There is, however, an obvious reason why *mere* prospects, however exquisitely painted, cannot have the effect of those in nature. They are not *real*, and therefore do not excite the curiosity which reality does, both as to the particular spots, and the circumstances attending them : as to the real geography of what is really spread out before us, and the many doubts, enquiries, and observations it suggests to the curious traveller, and also to the painter in his own line ; who from such eminences can best remark, what districts promise the most interesting scenery. These

are the circumstances which make the love of prospects a natural propensity, independently of their beauty; it was therefore unnecessary to apologize for making use of too strong an expression, when you called curiosity an inherent passion of the human mind. That passion will very naturally account for the visitors at Matlock having done what you, and I, and every one in the same situation, would probably have done; but why this consideration should have confirmed you in your opinion, that painting and gardening are less intimately related than you at first conceived them to be, it is difficult to guess.

These two arts, according to a very usual figure, I had called *sisters*; but I can have no objection to adopting your idea, and calling them husband and wife; for the union is still closer. You have not, indeed, assigned to your new-married couple their respective sexes, but I can have no doubt about them.

Land-

Landscape-gardening is clearly the lady, and I must say that you have taken a very unfair advantage of your intimacy with her. You have tried to make her elope; and you have proceeded, as seducers generally do, not only by flattering her on her own peculiar charms and accomplishments, but by endeavouring to degrade her husband in her eyes: one of the most powerful, but not the most honourable means of seduction. He that acts so, more than interferes between husband and wife; not he who with equal love and regard for both, sincerely tries to promote a lasting union. Whose aim it is to raise, not lower them in each other's esteem; but at the same time to convince the wife that she can never appear so amiable, or so respectable, as when closely united to her husband; and I may add in this case, to such a husband.

When I came to the illustration which you have taken from Mr. Burke, and which,

in his Essay, is perfectly just and in its place, I was curious to see what use you would make of it; and I was greatly surprized to find how you had applied it: I hardly believed it at first, and some of my friends had the same hesitation, till they had read it a second time. A *landscape-gardener*, who is also an artist, can find no apter way of illustrating the habit of admiring fine pictures and bold picturesque scenery, than by the habit of chewing tobacco! You suppose such admiration may have the same kind of effect on *mental* taste, as the use of such a nauseous herb has on the *sense* of tasting—that of making it insensible to the beauty of milder scenes. You, therefore, by a kind of negative affirmation, insinuate that my taste is vitiated; not feeling that a habit of observation and selection, (even supposing it in a great measure directed towards the higher styles of painting and of scenery,) acts very differently on the faculties of the mind,

mind, from what a strong and perverse taste does on the palate; and that, far from deadening the organs, it makes them more alive to every fine sensation, in every style. Sir Joshua Reynolds's enthusiasm for M. Angelo, and high admiration of Titian's landscapes, did not make him less delighted with Correggio and Claude, with Watteau and Teniers; and he who felt all the savage grandeur of Salvator's scenery, equally enjoyed the view from his house on Richmond terras.

Whoever reads your Letter without having read my book, must probably conclude that I am a sort of tyger, who pass my life in a jungle, with no more idea of the softer beauties of nature than that animal. I fear I am not less exposed to an imputation of a very different kind; and I should not be surprized, were some wrong-headed friend of Mr. Gilpin to represent me as a man so in love with smoothness, as to have no relish
for

for what is rough, abrupt, and picturesque. He might very plausibly say, that, not contented with opposing Mr. Gilpin, my enthusiasm for beauty and its distinct qualities, had led me much farther; that I had gone beyond Mr. Burke, and, as if his arguments and illustrations on that subject were not sufficient, had added whole chapters of my own. He might treat me as a false friend, and ask whether a man can be a true lover of the picturesque, who allows, that near the house it ought to be sacrificed to neatness and convenience—who talks of the characteristic beauties of a lawn, of its smoothness and verdure; who dwells with rapture on the softer beauties of nature—on the fragrance and colours of flowers—on the profusion of blossoms, and all the charms of spring.

I might thus be convicted of having no taste or feeling for any thing, unless (as is
sometimes

sometimes supposed to happen) the one person should expel the other.

I now come to the examples you have given, of different subjects which I am supposed to despise myself, and to wish others to despise, *because* they are incapable of being painted. Before I make any remarks on the examples themselves, I will beg leave to ask you, whether you seriously think that any person was ever so absurd as to declare, or even to think, that objects of sight which were incapable of being painted, were *therefore* to be despised. Should you discover any person who had declared *that*, (or any thing which nearly approaches it,) to be his opinion—treat him as Dogberry desired to be treated—set him down as an ass—but no more think of arguing with him than with Dogberry, or his representative. If it be merely a phantom you have raised, in order to combat it, I must say your talents might have been more worthily employed. It is
never

never reckoned very creditable to display one's wit on a butt who cannot retort; and those poor fatherless opinions, which nobody owns, and nobody defends, must be considered in that light: the victories obtained over them both, are also much alike in point of glory and difficulty.

As to the examples themselves, I imagine that a gravel walk and a shrubbery, not only may, but often have been painted, though they will not make good pictures. So have wide extended prospects, and there is one mere bird's-eye view in Claude's *Liber Veritatis*. It might be thought uncandid to suppose, that you mean to reproach the art of painting with not being able to express the *fragrance* of a shrubbery, though your words will bear that construction: such a construction might also be supported by a note in the former part of your Letter*. You there observe (what a less keen observer might have

* Page 8.

discovered)

discovered) “ that the *continual* moving, and lively agitation observable in herds of deer, is one of the circumstances which painting cannot represent, *but* that it is not less an object of beauty and cheerfulness in park scenery.” The same observation might have been made with equal truth and novelty on the warbling of birds, and its cheerful effect in garden scenery; for actual audible sound is not *more* incapable of being painted, than actual continued motion; and real sensible fragrance is just upon the same footing.

After all, for what purpose is this circumstance mentioned? is it to establish the superiority of nature over painting? I am very far from denying it. That of landscape-gardening over landscape-painting? there has been no question about their respective superiority. But if there had, how does it affect that question? does the landscape-gardener claim any merit in the grouping of deer, as he does in that of trees? does he
dispose

dispose and drill them, and direct their continual motion and lively action? Were there occasion, it might be shewn, on the contrary, that in this respect the art of painting is much superior. The painter does catch and record momentary action; it is the pride and the difficulty of his art: The improver can only prepare the scene in general; and leave it to chance how the figures may be disposed. This circumstance of continued motion, has, in my opinion, as little to do with the affinity between painting and gardening, as with their respective superiority. What does it then prove? what I am sorry to say there are but too many proofs of already—a desire of pointing out, on every occasion, what might in any way be thought to depreciate that art, which you have unfortunately chosen to consider as a rival one.

The only example you have given of a mere object of sight, incapable, at any moment, of being painted, is a view down a
steep

steep hill. That is, (if I comprehend it) the *immediate and uninterrupted progress* of the descent; for the *general* effect of looking down from a height on lower objects, has been perpetually expressed in painting. This deficiency of the art (such as it is) has been frequently cited as an argument against the affinity between painting and landscape gardening; but in what manner it applies, I have not been able to discover. If it could be proved, that in the eye of a lover of painting, what was incapable of being expressed upon canvas, was *therefore* incapable of giving pleasure, the argument would be unanswerable; it otherwise hardly deserves an answer. As lovers of painting (unless I am strangely mistaken) never judge by so absurd a rule, but by the general principles of the art, the only question will be, whether those general principles can be applied to a view down a steep hill, *though* it be incapable of
being

being actually represented. Can it be doubted, whether the style of the immediate fore-ground and every part of it—the disposition and character of the trees quite down to the roots—the effects of light and shadow—the harmony of the colours—the whole of the composition, may not be judged of in that, just as in any other landscape? And let me ask you, whether you would not think a painter tolerably affected, who, if his opinion were desired of all those particulars, were to answer, that he could not judge of them at all, nor of any scene in *that direction*, for it was incapable of being painted. Had I not so often heard this circumstance mentioned, and with great triumph, by the adversaries of painting, I should be ashamed of having said so much about an impossibility, that seems to have no more to do with the application of the principles of painting to objects of sight, or with the affinity between
 painting

painting and gardening, than the impossibility of painting real sounds, real smells, or real motion.*

When

* I did not intend to have said any thing more on the subject of this deficiency, but it has since been taken up, and connected with a doctrine, which, if true, would certainly give weight to the argument that has been drawn from it. This doctrine is, that the chief, or rather the only way in which the art of painting can be useful to that of gardening, is by making representations of the parts to be improved; and thence it is inferred, that where such representations (from whatever cause) cannot be made, the painter has no other method of explaining his ideas, or giving directions, so that, according to the words of Mr. Mason, "the instructor leaves his pupil in the lurch, "where assistance is most required;" that is, (for no other deficiency is mentioned) where it is required to form a judgment of the disposition and effect of objects as they appear to the spectator when he is looking down a steep hill. In order to shew that the doctrine just mentioned is mine, Mr. Mason has made use of a very easy, but neither a very candid, nor ingenious method of perverting an author's meaning—that of adding some words of his own to part of a sentence of mine. I had said, that "the landscapes of great painters are the only models that approach to perfection;"* he has left out the rest of the sentence, which explained and limited my meaning, and has added "for designers of real scenery to work by."† I shall make no further comment on such a style of criticism, but shall proceed to say a few more words on this deficiency in the art of painting.

The greatest opposers of the alliance between that art, and

* Essay on the Picturesque, p. 8 of the first edit. p. 9 of the second.

† Essay on Design in Gardening, by Mr. G. Mason, page 189.

When I reflect upon the whole of your Letter, I cannot help being struck with the very singular contrast between your professions at the beginning of it, and the whole tenor of it afterwards. You set out by agreeing with me in the general principles of your art, which general principles, according to my doctrine, are precisely those

the art of gardening, would probably allow, that the owner of a place might listen with attention and interest to the remarks of a painter, on the manner in which many groups of trees might be broken, or united; or in which parts of the distance might be let in, or shut out; on the picturesque effect which projecting trees, roots, stones, and broken ground, with a torrent forcing its way among them, had on the eye when viewed from below. On all these points he might think his hints and observations very just; but should they afterwards get to the top of the same bank, and look *down* the course of the torrent, and should the painter *then* attempt to expatiate on the same effects reversed—the owner, according to Mr. Mason, might stop him short, and tell him,---You must leave this to me, and my gardener, for you know you cannot represent this view in a picture, exactly as it appears to us looking at it from the brink of the precipice; and *therefore* you can have no idea yourself, and can give me no idea, how it should be improved, or what should, or should not, be done. If the painter thought it worth his while to answer such a reasoner, he would not be at a loss for arguments, but he probably would do as I shall now—not say another word on the subject.

of painting: you also allow, that the study of what the higher artists have done (in other words, the study of those principles in their works) is essential to your profession. After such an exordium, I hoped and expected, that you would briefly have given a general idea (which, in your great work, you might explain more at large): in what points this study would be useful, and in what it could not be applied, with the reasons deduced from practical experience. This (if you entered upon the subject at all) would have been a liberal and candid manner of treating it, which, without obliging you to go into a long detail, might have enlightened your readers: but, in the very next page, you seem to dread the force of the concessions you had made, and begin your attack on the affinity between gardening and painting; the study of which last, you had just considered as so essential. In the succeeding page, the attack proceeds with

more violence. The painter's landscape, instead of being studied for the purpose of improving the landscapes of the place, is to be hung up, *a la Hollandoise*, at the end of the avenue; it is made use of as a sort of *scape-goat*, on which all the picturesque sins of the place are to be discharged, and by means of which, the rest of the grounds may be freed from all painter-like effects, and the possessor secured from colds, agues, and the blue devils. Soon afterwards, the uncontrouled opinions of savages are brought in to illustrate the studies of painters; an acquaintance with which (and no slight one) you acknowledge not only to be essential to your art, but that without it, you should never have presumed to arrogate to yourself the title of Landscape-Gardener. The attack upon painting is then suspended during several pages, the offensive war being changed to a defensive one, in support of your ally Mr. Brown. But in the 18th page
you

you open your battery again, with an illustration still more degrading to the art than that of the savages: I need not put our readers in mind of it; they will immediately recollect the comparison between the love of pictures, and of tobacco. You close the whole argument (in which, after the two first pages, not a syllable is said in favour of an art to which you are so much indebted) with an account of its deficiencies, in not being able to represent a gravel walk, a fragrant shrubbery, an extensive prospect, or a view down a steep hill; to which catalogue may be added continual motion.

I must say, that, according to your representation of the art of painting, its powers and effects, you, as an improver, have totally thrown away your time in studying what the higher artists have done in their pictures and drawings; and still more so, if it be considered, that the picturesque is to be banished

nished from improved places. If you take the term picturesque in a very usual sense, as signifying *painter-like*, that is, *as giving an idea of such combinations of form, colour, and light and shadow, or of any one of them, as strike artists, though they may not please a common observer*, (and which therefore might not be ill distinguished by some such word as painter-like) the banishing of such effects must make the study of the higher artists totally useless. If again you take picturesque in my stricter, but far from contradictory sense of it—as describing what is rough and abrupt, with sudden deviations—the banishing of all such objects, will render the above-mentioned study of almost as little use; for even in the works of those painters who have most studied the beautiful, you will have difficulty in finding many instances of it totally detached from the picturesque.

As,

As, according to my notions, your art very much depends on mixing in proper degrees, and according to circumstances, the two characters, and in some cases on preserving them nearly unmixed—and as some confusion is likely to arise from the term beautiful being made use of both in a general and a confined sense, I will here add a few remarks to what I have said in my Essay, which may help to clear up a subject, whose chief difficulties (like those of many others) have arisen from the uncertain and licentious use of words.

It seems to me, that the term *beautiful*, in its most general and extended acceptance, is applied to all that allures, attracts, or pleases the eye in every style. It is applied to rocks, precipices, rugged old trees, torrents, &c. as well as to shrubs, flowers, meadows, and gentle streams, and that in the most indiscriminate manner; to gay and

brilliant colours, however discordant, for they are highly attractive; and for the same reason to peculiar and striking, though unconnected and incongruous forms.

Its general acceptation among painters and lovers of painting, is, I believe, no less extended, but with this difference—that they apply the principles of painting to these various styles, and call beautiful, in its extended sense, whatever has a connection and union of form, colour, and light and shadow.

'Tis still one principle thro' all extends,
And leads thro' different ways to different ends.
Whate'er its essence, or whate'er its name,
Whate'er its modes, 'tis still in all the same:
'Tis just congruity of parts combin'd,
To please the sense, and satisfy the mind.*

This union, this harmony, this connection, this breadth, this congruity of parts, may be considered as one principle, and it seems to be the grand principle necessary to all

* The Landscape, p. 2. v. 35.

styles;

styles; and therefore what possesses it, though purely sublime, or purely picturesque, is called by that title of highest and most favoured excellence, *Beauty*, as well as what is more strictly beautiful. On this account, objections have been made to my distinction, and even that of Mr. Burke, as too narrow and confined; but I believe the dispute is, as usual, about names.

Beauty is, in one sense, a collective idea, and includes the sublime as well as the picturesque: In the other, it is confined to particular qualities, which distinguish it from the two other characters, just as *their* particular qualities distinguish them also from *it*, and from each other. Virtue, in the same manner, is sometimes a collective idea of many qualities; sometimes, as with respect to women, confined to the single one of chastity; or, as anciently, with respect to men, to that of courage: in short, to
 what

what was most esteemed in either sex. Virtue therefore seems to be in a moral and metaphysical light, precisely what beauty is with regard to sensible objects; and no one, I imagine, who understands modern, or ancient languages, will venture to assert, that *because* there is a collective idea of virtue, therefore there is no confined idea annexed to the word. The qualities of union, harmony, connection, &c. are not peculiar to the beautiful as distinct from the sublime, or the picturesque; they are qualities common to them all; they are general, not discriminating qualities; they are necessary to give effect to the distinct and peculiar qualities of each of those characters, but do not therefore destroy, or confound them.

For instance, a number of broken rocks, and rugged old trees, with a stony torrent dashing among them, are all *ingredients* of
the

the picturesque—of the sublime—or of both. These, perhaps, may be so unhappily mixed together, as to produce little or no effect; but should they be ever so happily united, either in nature or painting, will they *therefore* become beautiful in the confined sense? In like manner, smooth undulating ground, fresh verdure and foliage, tender blossoms and flowers, are all ingredients of the beautiful. These also may be so ill combined (and of examples there is no scarcity) as to have but little effect; yet should these *alone* be ever so happily united, will they therefore become sublime, or picturesque in the confined sense? or, I may almost say, in any sense?

As these are very material points in this discussion, I will request your indulgence, and that of my other readers, for what always has need of it—description of scenery. I will endeavour (though well aware what

I risque

I rifque in the undertaking) to exprefs a certain combination of natural objects, which, as nearly as the cafe will allow, may anfwer to my idea of *unmixed* beauty; and likewise to point out the difference between that, and a fcene merely picturesque, as alfo the difference between both of them, and a fcene of Mr. Brown's.

It muft be remembered, however, that many of the moft ftrictly beautiful objects in nature, have a mixture of roughnefs in fome parts, which of courfe cannot be feparated from them, and which mixture, as I remarked in my Effay,* fhould ferve as a leffon to improvers, not to aim at fuch a feperation in their general fyftem. I muft therefore premife, that the fimplly beautiful fcene I fhall attempt to describe, is by no means intended to recommend an affected felection of fuch objects as have moft of the

* Effay on the Picturesque, page 125 and 128.

feperate

separate qualities of beauty; but to shew, that even *with* such an affected selection, and with as studied an exclusion of whatever has any of the separate qualities of the picturesque,* a scene might be formed, to which, I trust, the painter would not have the same objection as to one of Mr. Brown's; though he might not call it picturesque, or chuse it for the subject of a landscape.

I easily conceive, that a person who is very much struck with a scene that exhibits the varied, and strongly marked effects of broken ground; of sudden projections, and deep hollows; of old twisted trees, with furrowed bark; of water tumbling in a deep-worn channel over rocks and rude stones, and half lost among shaggy roots, decaying stumps, and withered fern; and who views the whole in some favourable moment of light and shadow,—may very naturally call that whole *beautiful*; for he gives to what so much

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 61.

pleases

pleases him, the epithet which conveys the highest commendation.

But suppose that, at the extremity of such a scene, he were to enter a glade, or a small valley of the softest turf and finest verdure; the ground on each side swelling gently into knolls, with other glades and recesses stealing in between them; the whole adorned with trees of the smoothest and tenderest bark, and most elegant forms, mixed with tufts of various evergreens and flowering shrubs: all these growing as luxuriantly as in garden mould, yet disposed in as loose and artless groups as those in forests; whilst a natural pathway led the eye amidst these intricacies, and towards the other glades and recesses. Suppose a clear and gentle stream to flow through this retirement, on a bed of the purest gravel or pebbles; its bank sometimes smooth and level, sometimes indented and varied in height and form, and in parts even
abrupt,

abrupt, and the foil appearing; but all rudeness concealed by tufts of flowers, trailing plants, and others of low growth, hanging over the clear water; the broken tints of the foil seen only through their boughs as through a veil, and just giving a warmth and variety to the reflexions. Imagine that soon after, this brook (according to that beautiful image in Milton)

..... spread
 Into a liquid plain, then stood unmov'd,
 Pure as the expanse of heaven:

that over this lake, in some parts, trees of the most pleasing form and foliage extended their branches, while the vine, the honey-suckle, and other climbers, hung from them in loose festoons, almost into the water: that in other parts the trees retired farther back, and the turf came quite to the brink, and almost level with its surface: that further on, the bank swelled more suddenly, and
 was

was partially fringed and crowned with such plants as are most admired for beauty of leaves and flowers; and that amidst them, smooth stones of different forms and sizes, but their surface sometimes varied and softened by the rich velvet of mosses, mixed their mellow and brilliant tints with those of the flowers, and the general hue of vegetation; while the whole was rendered more soft and enchanting by the clear mirror that reflected them.

After having viewed such a scene, let him return at once to the former one; would he then give it the same epithet he did before? I think he would sensibly feel, that the character of each was as distinct as their causes, and that a scene composed almost entirely of objects, rough, rugged, abrupt, and angular, with various marks of age and decay, and without one fresh and tender colour, could never be classed with another scene,

delight; in a word, from its beauty :* but let it be viewed under the influence of a warm setting sun, or the mild glow of twilight, and then each scene will have the accompaniment that most suits, and heightens its character.

Having thus separated the two characters, try what would be the effect of uniting them. Smooth part of the banks in the rough scene—mix luxuriant trees, flowering plants, and fresh foliage with the gnarled and half decaying oaks—add still-water and reflexions to the noisy torrent—and you will feel how beauty will advance, as picturesqueness retires. Again, break the banks in the other scene, and make those breaks more visibly abrupt—place some of the rough oaks, among the smoother and fresher trees—take away the shrubs—and let the water dash among rude stones—and

* Essay on the Picturesque, chap. 6. part 1.

you can have no doubt that you would lose in beauty, what you would gain in picturefqueness.

But should Mr. Brown come, and level the banks in both scenes to one smooth edge, clump the trees, dam up all the water, and make every thing distinct, hard, and unconnected—the beautiful and the picturefque would equally difappear, and the infipid and the formal alone remain.

I fhall here wish to enlarge upon fome few points, in which, I believe, the defign and purport of my Effay have by many people been totally misconceived: at the fame time I know how difficult it is to guard againft, or to correct fuch falfe ideas; particularly when they are cherifhed by thofe, who, perhaps, have been too ready to adopt them. In matters of greater confequence, wherever party runs high, he who expreffes warmly his love of freedom, and

hatred of despotism—however carefully he may distinguish freedom from licentiousness, and despotism from limited monarchy—must never hope for candour: he will be treated by zealots, as a friend to anarchy and confusion, as an enemy to all order and regularity, as one who would wish to see mankind in what is called a state of nature. In the same manner, from speaking warmly of certain wild unpolished scenes, I have been represented as a person, who, had I the power, would destroy all the comforts of a place; all gravel walks and shrubberies (in which case it would at least be proper to begin with my own) would allow no mowing, but wet every body in high grass,—tear their clothes with brambles and briars,—and send them up to their knees through dirty lanes between two cart-ruts. Though I expected a good deal of this kind of misconception, yet it seemed to me quite unnecessary to

re-

recommend those comforts which every body was fond of, and with great reason; especially as I was not treating of the garden, but of the grounds. My point was to shew, that there were many striking circumstances in nature, which were either neglected, or destroyed, from a narrow exclusive attachment to high polish; and also from extending that polish too far, and with too little attention to beauty in its more general and enlarged sense.

As, notwithstanding these misconceptions, my book has been more favourably received than I had any reason to expect, I will enter into some little detail (not very amusing I fear) on the subject of those comforts; and it is a subject, which cannot be more properly discussed than in a letter addressed to you.

In this climate, particularly, gravel walks are indispensible; and neatness and symme-

try require, that in the most dressed parts they should be of uniform breadths, and consequently between two regular borders. On that account, however useful and even ornamental, they cannot have the playful variety of a path; which, in my idea, is owing, not merely to the variety of its curves, but to the lines of those curves being softened into the untrodden grass, and the transitions insensibly made: for thence proceed, what Hogarth calls the waving lines that lead the eye a kind of wanton chace, and to which distinctness puts an immediate end. Were a gardener, for instance, to copy, as nearly as possible, *all* the waving lines of a path, and to make them as distinct as those of a gravel walk, nothing could be more absurd and unnatural.

The whole of this principle is admirably exemplified in the remark of Annibal Carracci, on the different styles of painting (not drawing)

drawing) of Raphael and Correggio. He was so struck with these insensible transitions in the works of Correggio, that, in a letter to his cousin Ludovico, he said, "That St. Paul of Raphael, which I formerly looked upon as a miracle, now seems to me a thing of wood; so hard it is, and so cutting." It must be remembered also, that this was the judgment, not of a mere colourist, but of one whose style of drawing was remarkable for its firmness and precision. If, therefore, such a painter may be supposed to have just ideas on the subject, a pathway (for no object is trifling which clearly shews the principle) has more of the requisites of beauty, than any walk with distinct edges. Still, however, the gravel walk, from its symmetry, its neatness, and its dressed appearance, accords much more with what is soft and beautiful, than with what is rude and picturesque. For example, were the simply beautiful scene which I have

just described, close to a gentleman's house, he would very naturally make a regular gravel walk through it, and he would do very right; for convenience, neatness, and a dressed appearance, are in such cases among the first considerations. But then, according to the doctrine I have endeavoured to establish, such a walk would not improve the *beauty* of the scene, though it would give it, what, on another principle, is highly pleasing: On the contrary, however well it might be managed, however artfully carried among the trees and shrubs, and partially concealed and broken by them, still the lines of it would stiffly cut across every thing, and never, like those of the pathway, play as it were into the other objects, and insensibly steal among them. It was on that account I observed, that near the house picturesque beauty (for in that early part of my Essay I had made no objection to the term) must often be

sacrificed

sacrificed to neatness; but that it was a *sacrifice*, and one which should not wantonly be made.* Now, I believe, there are a number of persons who, were they rich enough, would have regular gravel walks in every part of their whole place; and should they make them in such a scene as I have been mentioning, at a distance from the house, I should think it a *wanton* sacrifice; for a dry path without borders would answer every purpose of convenience, without taking off from the retired character of the place. In a *rude* scene, the sacrifice would be much greater, for symmetry and regularity are particularly adverse to the picturesque.†

With regard to a natural path, either through a meadow, or across more intricate ground, it is, I believe, very generally popular; a bye-road, from an idea of ruts and

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 37.

† page 64.

mire,

mire, very naturally much less so; though the principal distinction between both of them, and whatever has a regular border, is the same. There are, however, bye-roads in dry foils, upon a level surface, and where there are few heavy carriages, that to me have a remarkably cheerful look; and so far are they from giving an idea of any thing slovenly, that the manner in which the foil (whether sand or gravel) and the grass are pressed and blended together, has rather the appearance of an operation of great nicety and attention. I should think, therefore, that in all scenery at some distance from the house, (particularly of the wilder kind) such roads and paths would answer every purpose of comfort and convenience, without formality: they might be dug out, and stoned just like any other gravel walk or road, only have no distinct borders; and what would be a great additional motive, they would give
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an idea that the *general* foil was dry : whereas the *borders* always seem to indicate that the gravel extends no farther, and was brought there on purpose.

All the same principles hold good with respect to mowing. It is a very common observation, that sheep are the best gardeners, and it is a very just one : the operation of the scythe, like that of the spade, is always distinct and uniform ; whereas the bite of sheep has the same kind of effect on the general face of the grass, that the constant tread of animals produces on the borders of paths and roads : it leaves slight inequalities, (in a way which the scythe cannot imitate) even on the most closely bitten turf, and on the sides of banks many tufts of flowers untouched ; all which gives play and variety to the surface. A pleasure-ground can hardly be too nicely mowed, but some of the circumstances of a sheep-walk might well be imitated

imitated in particular parts of it, and especially on banks, or what are called garden slopes. These, when bare, and close shaven, have a remarkably cold, naked, and *hard* appearance:* dug clumps on their sides give them a blistered look, and destroy that play of outline and easy transition, which never should be neglected; but were holes made in them of different sizes, from that of a clump to a single plant, and where the soil itself was not excellent, filled with rich mould, and no longer dug, when the plants had taken root—not only the lower shrubs, but tufts of flowers might be so dispersed (yet still connected, and with room to mow between them) that every part of the bank would have the play and variety of wild, and the polish of dressed nature.

The whole that has been said on the subject of distinct lines, applies in a much

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 108.

stronger

stronger manner to the boundaries of water. One great reason for having borders to a gravel walk is, that the operations of hoeing and weeding, (so necessary to high keeping,) may be regularly and exactly carried on: but water needs no operation of that kind. The very purpose of a walk makes it inconvenient to have many boughs extended beyond its edge: but they may extend over water without any inconvenience; and there, besides their breaking the too long continuance of a line, they furnish objects of reflexion: a very material difference between that and a walk. In dressed walks and roads, though the curves of paths, and of bye-roads, might give hints for correcting their too great sameness, yet the sweeps must in a great degree be regular; and a number of inlets would be ridiculous and inconvenient where you are to walk: but in the banks of water, coves and inlets, with their abruptnesses and irregularities, may be
partially

partially concealed and disguised; and, if not too frequent, will produce great variety, without any unpleasant break in the outline.

To return from this minute detail, to general distinctions and principles; all the reflexions I have made, since I published my Essay, have confirmed me in my opinion, that whatever be the name applied to objects, the beautiful, and the picturesque, must remain 'as separate as their respective qualities; as separate as rough and smooth, as abrupt and gradual. But though it is necessary that the improver should know their distinct natures, just as the painter must know his distinct colours before he mixes them, yet it is not on their *constant* separation, as you have proposed, but on blending them as circumstances may point out, that your art must greatly depend: still more however on the thorough knowledge and the application of those higher principles of union,

union, connection, &c. by means of which, all the characters of visible nature are, as it were, incorporated, into one general title of excellence.

The joint compliment you have paid to my friend and me, I can for my own part return with great sincerity; and, on this occasion, I dare say I may answer for Mr. Knight. I fear, however, that as you complain of the occasional asperity of my supposed remarks on your opinions, you will not think me grown milder in this open and continued controversy; for in the course of pointing out and explaining the tendency of many indirect attacks and insinuations, which at first sight might not be obvious, some degree of sharpness in my answer would naturally arise: but he who writes a formal challenge, must not expect a billet-doux in return. I may also observe, that every man (whatever the game may be)

has

has his particular manner of playing; an allusion, which may not unaptly be applied to writing. I have been told by some of my friends, that my play is sharp; I believe it may be so; but were I to endeavour to alter it, I could not play at all. I trust, however, that my friends will vouch for me, that whatever sharpness there may be in my style, there is no rancour in my heart.

On reading over what I have written, I could not but lament that there should be any controversy between us. Controversy at best is but a rough game, and in some points not unlike the ancient tournaments; where friends and acquaintance, merely for a trial of skill, and love of victory, with all civility and courtesy tilted at each others breasts—tried to unhorse each other—grew more eager and animated—drew their swords—struck where the armour was weakest, and where the steel would bite to the quick—and all
without

without animosity. As these doughty combatants of the days of yore, after many a hard blow given and received, met together in perfect cordiality at the famous round tables; so I hope we often shall meet at the tables of our common friends. And as they, forgetting the smarts of their mutual wounds, gaily discoursed of the charms of beauty, of feats of arms, of various stratagems of war, of the disposition of troops, the choice of ground, and ambuscades in woods and ravines---so we may talk of the many correspondent dispositions and stratagems in your milder art; of its broken picturesque ravines, of the intricacies and concealments of woods and thickets, and of all its softer, and more generally attractive beauties.

Though I have already, perhaps, dwelt too long on that great principle, Connection, yet I cannot conclude this Letter without mentioning an example of its effects in a more important sphere. Not that its ef-

fects are doubtful, but that it is an example by no means unapplicable to the subject on which I have been writing, and one that, in the present crisis, cannot be too much impressed on our minds.

The mutual connection and dependance of all the different ranks and orders of men in this country; the innumerable, but voluntary ties by which they are bound and united to each other, (so different from what are experienced by the subjects of any other monarchy,) are perhaps the firmest securities of its glory, its strength, and its happiness. Freedom, like the general atmosphere, is diffused through every part, and its steady and settled influence, like that of the atmosphere on a fine evening, gives at once a glowing warmth, and a union to all within its sphere: and although the separation of the different ranks and their gradations, like those of visible objects, is known and ascertained, yet from the beneficial
mixture,

mixture, and frequent intercommunication of high and low, that separation is happily disguised, and does not sensibly operate on the general mind. But should any of these most important links be broken; should any sudden gap, any distinct undisguised line of separation be made, such as between the noble and the roturier, the whole strength of that firm chain (and firm may it stand) would at once be broken.

May the strength of that exalted principle, whose effects I have so much enlarged upon, enable us to cultivate this and every other art of peace in full security, whatever storms threaten us from without; and as it so happily pervades the true spirit of our government and constitution, may it no less prevail in all our plans for embellishing the outward face of this noble kingdom,

..... Till Albion smile
One ample theatre of sylvan grace.*

I will

* This line has, I believe, been often quoted, and always as descriptive of the happy effects of modern gardening on the
the

I will now conclude this long comment on your Letter, and as it is the first, so I hope it will be the last time of my addressing you in this public manner; in every private intercourse and communication, I shall always feel great satisfaction.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient

Humble servant,

UVEDAILE PRICE.

the general face of the country: to me it appears to have exactly the opposite tendency, and for that reason I have made use of it; though I hope it will not be thought that, like Panurge, I am always crying *au rebours*. I by no means, however, conceive that Mr. Mason intended, by *sylvan* grace, to inculcate such a doctrine, as that all parts of an improved place should be wild, in thickets, and free from every appearance of art; but that the general features and outline of the place should be so far sylvan, as not to be disjoined from the surrounding objects. This single word *sylvan*, added to many other instances throughout his poem, is to me a plain indication that Mr. Mason had, in his idea, a much more free, connected, and painter-like style of improvement, than he had seen practised by any of those, whose works he had just recommended to his reader's attention.

A
DIALOGUE

ON
THE DISTINCT CHARACTERS

OF
The Picturesque and the Beautiful.

IN ANSWER

TO THE
OBJECTIONS OF MR. KNIGHT

PREFACED BY
AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY ON BEAUTY;

WITH

REMARKS

ON THE

IDEAS OF SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS AND MR. BURKE,
UPON THAT SUBJECT.

THE HISTORY OF

THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES

THE FIRST

BY

JOHN

INTRODUCTORY

ESSAY.

IT has often occurred to me since I published my Essay on the Picturesque, that, in order to understand thoroughly the distinction I have endeavoured to establish, the reader should previously be acquainted with that which Mr. Burke has so admirably pointed out and illustrated, between the Sublime and Beautiful. At first sight, it may appear presumptuous in me to suppose, that my Essay is likely to be more familiarly known than Mr. Burke's; but a new publication is often more generally read at the time, than an old one of infinitely greater excellence. On that ground, I may, perhaps, be allowed to give a short abridgment of Mr. Burke's system, as far

as it relates to the Sublime and Beautiful in visible objects, with which I am chiefly concerned. Such an account, though perfectly useless to those who have read the original Essay with attention, may give some idea of its general tendency to those who have never read it, and induce them to consult the work itself; and may also serve to recal its leading principles to those who have only given it a cursory reading.

The two great divisions on which Mr. Burke's system is founded, are self-preservation, and society; the ends of one or other of which, he observes, all our passions are calculated to answer. The passions which concern self-preservation, turn mostly on pain and danger, and they are the most powerful of all the passions: whatever, therefore, is fitted in any way to excite the ideas of pain and danger—that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or conversant about terrible objects—is a source of the sublime; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotions the mind is capable of feeling. The passion caused by the great or

sublime in nature, when those causes operate most powerfully, is astonishment; and astonishment is that state of the soul, in which all its motions are suspended with some degree of horror. This is the effect of the sublime in its highest degree: the inferior effects are admiration, reverence, and respect. Mr. Burke then goes through the principal causes of the sublime—obscurity; power; all general privations, as vacuity, darkness, solitude, silence; then considers greatness of dimension; infinity; the artificial infinite, as arising from uniformity and succession; and, lastly, the effects of colour, of light, as well as of its opposite darkness, in producing the sublime. If even the bare enumeration of these causes of our strongest emotions has something striking in it, what must they be, when set forth and illustrated by a writer of the most splendid and poetical imagination, that ever adorned this, or, perhaps, any other, country!

The other head under which Mr. Burke classes the passions, that of Society, he divides into two sorts—the society of the

sexes, which answers the purposes of propagation ; and that more general society which we have with men and with animals, and which we may in some sort be said to have with the inanimate world. The object of the mixed passion, which we call love, is the *beauty* of the *sex*. Men are carried to the sex in general, as it is the sex, and by the common law of nature ; but they are attached to particulars by personal beauty. I call beauty (Mr. Burke then adds,) a *social* quality ; for where women and men, and not only they, but when other animals, give us a sense of joy and pleasure in beholding them, (and there are many that do so) they inspire us with sentiments of tenderness and affection towards their persons : we like to have them near us, and we enter willingly into a kind of relation with them, unless we should have strong reasons to the contrary. This very just and natural distinction between the mixed passion of love which relates to the sex, and that perfectly unmixed love and tenderness which is universally the effect of beauty, must be con-

stantly kept in the reader's mind, when he is considering this part of Mr. Burke's system; according to which, he applies the name of beauty to such qualities as induce in us a sense of tenderness and affection, or some other passion the most nearly resembling these.

Mr. Burke afterwards takes a review of the opinions that have been entertained of Beauty, and points out the impropriety of applying that term to virtue, or any of the severer, or sublimer qualities of the mind; and also shews that it does not consist in proportion, in perfection, or in fitness, or utility: he then examines in what it really consists, and what are its qualities. Of these qualities, I shall merely give the enumeration, and shall do what will be most satisfactory, by copying Mr. Burke's own comparison of them with the qualities of the sublime. "Sublime objects are vast in their dimensions; beautiful ones comparatively small: beauty should be smooth and polished; the great, rugged and negligent: beauty should shun the right-line, yet devi-

ate from it insensibly: the great in many cases loves the right line, and when it deviates, makes a strong deviation: beauty, should not be obscure; the great ought to be dark and gloomy: beauty should be light and delicate; the great ought to be solid, and even massive."

This is the skeleton of Mr. Burke's system of the sublime and beautiful, and of the distinction between the two characters. As far as I have been able to observe, his principles of the sublime are more generally admitted than those of the beautiful; which, if true, may be easily accounted for: we have been used to consider the terrible as a principal source of the sublime in poetry, and therefore were prepared to have that principle extended to the whole compass of visible objects, and to have it founded on the great basis of self-preservation: but with respect to the beautiful, we had not the same preparation; and, as we have been accustomed to apply the term in a very vague and licentious manner, his attempt to restrain the sense within more exact and narrow

bounds, has not, I imagine, been so favourably received. If such were the case in this country, his ideas of the beautiful were less likely to be adopted in France, as the word *beau*, from its being so particularly opposed to *ioli*, almost always, I believe, indicates, that the object is comparatively large; whereas it is one part of Mr. Burke's system, that beautiful objects are comparatively small. Some of his other qualities of beauty have been objected to by his own countrymen; and altogether, as I conceive, his idea of beauty has been thought too confined. Now, as I have introduced a third distinct character, that of the Picturesque, I am more interested than Mr. Burke himself could be, to shew that his idea of the beautiful is not too limited; for, when three separate characters are to be distinguished from each other, each of them must of course be kept within stricter bounds.

In order to examine how far the idea of beauty may be limited, the first enquiry will be, whether in those times when beauty of form was most particularly attended to,

we can trace any idea of the beautiful as separate from all other characters. I think it clearly appears, that, although beauty of the highest kind was attributed to all the superior Goddesses, and that the ancient artists endeavoured to express it in their representations of them, yet the beauty of Venus, if not more perfect, was at least without the smallest tinge of any other character ; whereas Juno, Pallas, Diana, and the other Goddesses had a mixture of awful majesty, of the severity of wisdom, of warlike valour, or of rigid chastity. These, indeed, were *additions* to beauty, but one may properly say, that in this case, *additio probat minorem* : and what particularly strengthens Mr. Burke's system is, that the effects which all such additions produce, are opposite to those of beauty. The effect of beauty, as Mr. Burke has so well pointed out, whether in the human species, in animals, or even in inanimate objects, is love, or some passion the most nearly resembling it ; now, the effect of majesty or severity, even when allied to beauty, is awe—a sensation very

different from love; and thence the poet, who most studied all that belongs to love and beauty, has pronounced, that majesty and love cannot dwell together. If love cannot dwell with majesty, it certainly can as little dwell with that severity which arises from the more manly virtues and habits; especially when accompanied with something approaching to manly strength and vigour of body. Cupid, therefore, tells his mother that he feels a dread of Minerva from her terrible and *masculine* appearance;* and such must always be the effect of any mixture of the sublime with the beautiful; but the goddess of love, is likewise the goddess of perfect unmixed beauty.

In point of beauty, singly considered, the female form has always had the preference; and to that Mr. Burke's principles of beauty most strictly apply; it may only be doubted whether he be right in saying, without any restriction, that beautiful objects are

* Διὰ τὴν μητέρα αὐτῆς, φοβέρα γὰρ ἐστὶ, καὶ χάροισι, καὶ δεινῶς ἀνδρῶν.—Lucian, 19th Dial. of the Gods.

comparatively small. But, on the other hand, there seems to be as little reason for making them comparatively large; for, we must naturally suppose, in the human figure particularly, some just standard of height and proportion; in which case, all who possessed the qualities of beauty, but were above that standard, would, as far as size is concerned, begin to rise into grandeur; and all below it, to sink into prettiness—beauty being the golden mean. It must be owned, however, that, like the French, the more ancient Greeks appear to have considered large stature as almost a requisite of beauty, not only in men, but in women: this, I think, may have arisen from the very high estimation in which strength of body, and, consequently, largeness of stature, was held in those ancient times, when the words which signify beauty, and beautiful, were first made use of; and thence that combined sense of the words may have remained; when, from the high perfection and refinement of the arts, a more just and delicate

notion and representation of beauty, separate from strength and size, had taken place. I may here observe, that the most admired statue of Venus now existing, and the allowed model of female beauty, is rather below the common standard ; a circumstance which, as far as it goes, seems to favour Mr. Burke's idea, that beautiful objects are comparatively small.* But, what-

* There is a passage in Virgil which might be quoted, in opposition to what I have just observed : it is where Æneas describes the appearance of Venus to him, at the moment when he is going to kill Helen—

“ Alma parens confessa Deam, qualisque videri
 “ Cælicolis, et *quanta* solet.”

This, however, seems to refer to the proportion of deities in respect to each other ; for it is clear, from the passage itself, that this was an unusual manner of appearing, and that upon most occasions, her stature was no larger than that of women in general. I may add, too, that it was a moment of great importance : she wished to make an immediate and awful impression on Æneas, and to prevent him from doing a deed very unworthy of a hero, and particularly of her son. She was also to appear on the same theatre with Juno and Pallas ; who, though invisible to mortals in general, may be supposed to have been in their own celestial forms, and their full stature.

ever may be the prevailing opinion on that point, I think it is perfectly clear that his general principles of beauty—that smoothness, gradual variation, delicacy of make, tender colours, and such as insensibly melt into each other—are strictly applicable to female beauty ; so much so, that not one of them can be changed or diminished, without a manifest diminution of that quality.

The manner in which the ancients have represented their male deities, will throw still more light on their ideas of beauty as a separate character. The two most beautiful of their gods, Apollo and Bacchus, enjoy perpetual youth ; that is, they continue in the state in which the male sex is most like to the female ; they are represented without beards ; their limbs smooth and round, and without any marked articulation of the muscles ; in Bacchus, particularly, the turn of the limbs, and the style of face are perfectly female ; and his extreme beauty and feminine appearance are mentioned at the same time by the poets, as connected with each other,

Tu formosissimus alto
 Conspiceris cœlo ; tibi, cum sine cornibus adstat
 Virgineum caput est.*

On the other hand, their awful and terrible deities, Jupiter, Neptune, Pluto, and Mars, are represented in the full strength of manhood, or of more advanced maturity.

It may be said, perhaps, that in the finest statue of Apollo which has been preserved, dignity is intimately connected with beauty; and that the mixture has produced the highest idea of male beauty, of which we have any model. This is perfectly true, and seems to contradict what I have before observed: but, if instead of a few statues saved from the general wreck of ancient sculp-

* There were mystic representations of many deities, totally different from the characters of them in the poets, and from the statues which accord with their descriptions. Not only Bacchus, but even Venus was represented with a beard. Her statue at Paphos, which is said to be the original Venus, was an androgynous figure, with a long beard. With such representations, however, I have no more concern, than with the form of any Egyptian hieroglyphic.

ture, we could at once view and compare with each other all the different masterpieces which existed at the same period, we should probably find the nicest shades of distinction, not only between different deities, but between the different characters of the same deity.* The Belvidere Apollo is in the act of slaying the Python ; he is the destroying, not the creating power—"Severe in youthful beauty;" there may have been other equally perfect statues of him as the god of poetry and music ; he may have been represented in the enthusiasm of those divine arts, or in the softer emotions of love, a passion to which none of the deities was more subject ; and certainly the expression of rapture or tenderness, is more congenial to beauty, than

* There cannot be a stronger instance of such a nice distinction, than that of the three famous statues of Scopas, representing three different names of Cupid—that is, three shades or distinctions of the passion of Love. The names are *Ερως*, *Ιμερος*, *Ποθος*. There probably are no terms that exactly correspond with these, in any other language.

that of anger, however dignified. In such representations of him, his beauty might have born the same relation to that of the statue we possess, as the beauty of the Guidian Venus did to different statues of Juno or Minerva ; that is, would have had less of awful and severe dignity, and more of loveliness. We may be sure, also, that beauty, and not dignity, was the prevailing character of the Apollo. The highest idea of dignity is found only in the father of gods and men, in the Jupiter of Phidias or Lysippus, of Homer or Virgil; whether he be represented in the terrible exercise of his power, as bending his awful brow, and shaking the heavens with his nod ; or with that mild countenance, by which he diffuses serenity through all nature. This seems to shew that dignity, though it may be united with youth, more properly belongs to maturer age ; and that may be one reason why the addition of it takes off, in some

degree, from the genuine character and effect of beauty.*

No one can doubt that youth is the season of beauty : it is then that the lines are most flowing, the frame most delicate ; that the skin has its most perfect smoothness and clearness ; and every part that gradual variation, which, at a more advanced period, gives way to stronger marked lines and angular forms, and ends in wrinkles and decay : the same holds good in all animals, and not less in the vegetable world. On this last point, Mr. Burke has touched more slightly ; and therefore I shall dwell somewhat longer upon it, as I think it will tend to illustrate the whole subject.

Almost all trees, except the pointed tribe

* The following passage shews the opinion of the ancients on this subject. “ *Diligentia ac decor in Polycleto, cui quanquam a plerisque tribuatur palma, tamen, ne nihil detrahatur, deesse pondus putant. Nam ut humanæ formæ decorem addiderit supra verum, ita non explevisse deorum auctoritatem videtur. Quin ætatem quoque graviorem videtur refugisse, nihil ausus præter leves genas.*” Quint. Inst. lib. xii cap. 10.

of firs, display, when in health and vigour, the greatest variety of undulating forms in their general outline : all groups of them do the same ; and large continued masses of them mark the inequalities of the ground they stand upon, however broken and abrupt the ground itself may be, by the same graceful undulations. As this is the general character of all scenery where there is much natural wood in a flourishing state, and as trees and woods form the principal outlines in all pleasing scenery, it surely is a sufficient reason for a strong inherent love of undulating lines in the general face of nature. Such a style of scenery, chiefly prevails in situations free from violent winds, and where the fertility of the soil, corresponds with the ideas impressed by the general aspect : but where the country is rocky and barren, and subject to storms and hurricanes, there the forms of the trees, like those of the rocks on which they grow, are usually abrupt and broken ; and exhibit marks of sudden violence, or premature decay.

The trees in the pictures of Claude, who studied what was soft and beautiful in nature, are almost all of the first kind ; while those of Salvator Rosa, who chose the wildest and most savage views, are as generally of the second : their forms are indeed so sharp and broken, and they are often so destitute of foliage, that a person used only to the full and swelling outlines of rich vegetation, would scarcely know them to be trees. These last, however, have frequently a grand, generally a striking and peculiar character ; but when we call such broken, diseased and decaying forms (and, I may add, the colours that accompany them) beautiful, either in reality or imitation, we clearly speak in direct opposition to nature ; for it is just as unnatural to call an old, decaying, leafless tree beautiful, as to call a withered, bald, old man or woman, by that most ill-applied term.

If, from trees, we go to those vegetable productions which nature seems to have taken most pleasure in adorning, we shall perceive that the same undulation prevails.

Fruit and flowers are allowed to be the most beautiful of vegetable productions: the forms of most kinds of fruit are round, or oval, or at least are composed of swelling curves without any angles; as they ripen, their form and colour gradually attain their perfection; and, no one doubts, that when ripe, that is, when in their most perfect state, they are most beautiful to the eye. In flowers, the *extremities* of the leaves are cut into an infinite diversity of shapes, many of which are strongly angular, and distinguished (as similar leaves in trees are,) by the terms sawed, and jagged; but the *general* form of the most admired among them, presents, a swelling outline: in them nature seems to act upon a small, as she does in trees on a large scale; for those trees, the particular leaves of which are divided into angles, have often as varied undulations in their general outline, as most others of the deciduous sorts.

I may here observe, that there is as much analogy as their different natures may be

conceived to afford, between the respective beauty of young trees in their different degrees of growth, opposed to those which have nearly attained their full size, and that of children of different ages, compared with the form of men and women when it has acquired its full perfection. In the early state of many trees, there are particular circumstances of beauty which they afterwards lose ; such, for instance, as the smoothness of their bark ; but in point of form, the very circumstance of rapid growth, though extremely pleasing in other respects, often produces a comparatively straggling outline ; whereas in full-grown trees, the shoots being less luxuriant and more connected with each other, the whole has a greater fulness of form, a more gradual variation in the general outline, and a richer and more clustering effect in the different parts. Much in the same manner, children, and the unformed youth of both sexes, have generally more delicate skins and complexions, than when their growth is completed ;

but the limbs, during that state of increase, have seldom that fulness, that just symmetry and connection with each other, so necessary to perfect beauty.

I must own it strikes me, that if there be any one position on this subject likely to be generally admitted, it is, *that each production of nature is most beautiful in that particular state, before which her work would have appeared incomplete and unfinished, and after which it would seem to be tending, however gradually, towards decay.* It may, perhaps, be doubted, how far the complete state, whether in animals or vegetables, is the precise moment of beauty; some may think it a little before the perfect expansion, though none after; but in my opinion,

Crude is the bud, and stale the fading flower.

On Venus' breast the full-expanded rose,

Alone with all its sweets, and all its richness glows.

This state of full expansion and completion in the works of nature, may, I think, be admitted as a general criterion; and from observing the qualities which are more com-

monly found in objects during that state, we surely may be said to obtain more just and rational ideas of the qualities and principles of beauty, than from any other source; and those, I believe, Mr. Burke has very accurately pointed out, though not on the ground that I have taken. But although these qualities, more or less, exist in all beautiful objects, and though no object can be beautiful that is totally deprived of them, yet they still are only qualities or ingredients; and beauty is a thing of much too refined and delicate a nature to be made by a receipt, or to be judged of with accuracy, merely by an acquaintance with its general qualities; more especially with respect to form, and, above all, the human form. It required a long series of observations, to enable men to discriminate amidst the general mass of beauty, what was in a pre-eminence, and exquisite degree beautiful: this has been done by men, who, in an age when all the arts were in their highest perfection, in the happiest climate for producing

beautiful forms, and in a country where beauty in either sex had almost divine honours paid to it, made those forms their peculiar study, and who, by means of the noble and durable art of sculpture, have been able to embody their ideas.

Fortunately, some few at least of their finest productions still remain ; and by examining the different antique statues, busts, gems, and coins ; by comparing the ideas which they present with those of the poets, and with those also which are expressed in the works of the great masters of the revived arts of painting and sculpture, and all of them again with the existing forms of nature,—I think it will appear, that there is in the human form a character, which may be pronounced strictly and purely beautiful. By allying beauty with any of the more sublime qualities, the result will be more awful and imposing, but less lovely and engaging ; it may be a Juno, or a Pallas, but no longer a Venus : and, it may not be foreign to my present argument to

mention, that two of the most celebrated statues of Juno and Minerva were colossal, whereas the Guidian Venus of Praxiteles, the most famous of any of the statues of that goddess, was of the natural size.*

But if beauty should not be colossal, so neither should it be diminutive in size or character. There seems to belong to the idea of genuine beauty, a certain mild and graceful dignity, as well as an exact symmetry; and therefore, when in nature the scale is below the common standard, and the character wants that degree of elevation, we are apt to call such objects pretty, rather than beautiful; just as we call them fine, when in the opposite extreme. Again

* Though no great argument can be drawn from the size of statues, which might be varied according to the sculptor's fancy, yet I cannot help mentioning, that Pausanias, in describing a statue of Diana (also by Praxiteles) observes, that its stature exceeded that of the tallest woman. As the large stature of Diana is often remarked by the poets, this difference between the statues of the two goddesses by the same sculptor, seems to shew an attention to the supposed proportion of different deities. Pausanias, lib. x. cap. 37.

when there are any marked irregularities in the features combined with the qualities of beauty, although such combinations have often a wild variety and playfulness, more attractive perhaps than even beauty of a more pure and unmixed kind, yet the difference is manifest, and the addition of the term picturesque to that of beauty, most accurately marks the distinction.

As the same analogy, in a greater or less degree, prevails throughout all the productions of nature and of art, it possibly may not be too much to affirm, that the terms which answer to beauty and beautiful in all languages, however vaguely and licentiously employed in common use, yet, in their strict and proper sense, must have nearly the same meaning : they must refer in general to objects in their most perfect, finished, and flourishing state ; and among them, to those particular combinations of form, which, from attentive and enlightened observation and experience, have been discovered to be more complete in those qua-

lities, which are found to constitute beauty in general.

I must here acknowledge, that the opinion of Sir Joshua Reynolds, in the last of his Letters inserted in the *Idler*, and since published in his works, does not coincide with that of Mr. Burke ; but, on the contrary, differs from it in some essential points. I imagine Sir Joshua's attack (for such it is) was directed against Hogarth's Analysis of Beauty, and in particular against a very vulnerable part of it—the *line* of beauty ; but as Mr. Burke adopted many of Hogarth's principles, though he rejected the idea of any *one* line peculiarly beautiful, he still is exposed to a ridicule, which might not have been levelled against him.

It cannot be supposed, that in these first Essays, written, for a periodical paper, the ideas can be so perfectly digested, as in his later, and more studied productions : still, whatever comes from such a mind as his, especially on subjects connected with his own art, deserves the highest attention ; and although I feel great unwillingness to con-

trovert any opinions of a man, whose memory I so much love and reverence, yet were I to omit doing it, the weight of his authority might very justly be brought against me. As his works are, or at least ought to be, in the hands of every man who has the slightest pretension to taste, it will be only necessary for me to mention those points which I wish to consider.

In this Letter, before he examines Hogarth's ideas of beauty, Sir Joshua gives us his own : these he founds on the great and general ideas inherent in universal nature, which, according to the practice of the Italian painters, are to be distinguished from the accidental blemishes, that are continually varying the surface of her works. This he illustrates by the leaves of a tree, of which, though no two are exactly alike, yet the general form is invariable ; and a naturalist, after comparing many, selects, as the painter does, the most beautiful, that is, the most general form. Nature, he goes on to say, is constantly tending towards that determinate form ; and it will be found that she oftener

produces perfect beauty than deformity, that is, than deformity of any one kind: for instance, the line that forms the ridge of the nose, is beautiful when strait; this is the central form, which is oftener found than either concave, convex, or any irregular form that shall be proposed. As we are, therefore, more accustomed to beauty than deformity, we may conclude that to be the reason why we approve and admire it.

He then observes, that whoever pretends to defend the preference he gives to one form rather than to another,—as of a swan to a dove,—by endeavouring to prove that this more beautiful form proceeds from a particular gradation of magnitude, undulation of a curve, or direction of a line, or whatever other conceit of his imagination he shall fix on as a criterion of form, will be continually contradicting himself, and find that nature will not be subjected to such narrow rules. The most general reason of preference is custom, which, in a certain sense, makes white black, and black white: it

is custom alone, determines our preference of the colour of the Europeans to the Ethiopians; and they, for the same reason prefer their own colour to ours. This he illustrates in a very ingenious manner, by saying, that if one of their painters were to paint the goddess of beauty, nobody will doubt that he would represent her black, with thick lips, flat nose, and woolly hair; and he would act very unnaturally, (adds Sir Joshua,) if he did not; for, by what criterion will any one dispute the propriety of his idea? we indeed say, that the form and colour of the European are preferable to those of the Ethiopian, but I know of no other reason we have for it, but that we are more accustomed to it.

After observing, that neither novelty nor fitness can be said to be causes of beauty (in which he agrees with Mr. Burke) he thus makes a sort of recapitulation: “from what
 “ has been said, it may be inferred that the
 “ works of nature, if we compare one spe-
 “ cies with another, are all equally beauti-
 “ ful; and that preference is given from

“ custom, or some association of ideas ;
 “ and that in creatures of the same species,
 “ beauty is the medium or centre of all its
 “ various forms.”

Such are Sir Joshua Reynolds's opinions on the subject of beauty, and such his criticisms on those of others. With respect to the latter, I imagine that, though by undulation of a curve, and direction of a line, he may only allude to Hogarth's line of beauty, yet by gradation of magnitude he must have meant nearly what Mr. Burke calls gradual variation ; and, indeed, it is most probable that his ridicule is pointed against the whole system of distinct, visible qualities of beauty.

The only way in which one can hope to vanquish such an adversary as Sir Joshua, is to oppose him to himself—his practice to his theory—

Ut nemo Ajacem poterit superare, nisi Ajax.

Certainly no painter has made a more constant and judicious use of the principle of undulating lines, and gradual variation ; and the acknowledged grace and beauty of his

forms are the best proofs of its excellence ; but deprive his pictures, or those of Correggio or Guido, of that principle which pervades them, and you would rob them of the charms to which they owe their greatest reputation. It is true that undulation, gradual variation, &c. like other general principles, have been often absurdly applied, and that they will not in themselves create beauty ; but, it may safely be laid down as a maxim, and it is one to which in this discussion frequent reference may be made—that those qualities, without which a character cannot exist, must be essential to that character.

I may here observe, that, although the method of considering beauty as the central form, and as being produced by attending only to the great general ideas inherent in universal nature, be a grander way of treating the subject ; and though the discriminations of Mr. Burke may, in comparison, appear minute ; yet, after all, each object, or set of objects, according to its characters, must be composed of qualities, the

knowledge of which is necessary to a knowledge of it's distinct characters. Such a method is more easily comprehended, than the more general and abstract one which Sir Joshua proposes ; and when allied with it, is more likely to produce a just estimate of the character altogether, than any other method singly.

Sir Joshua remarks, that custom, though not the cause of beauty, is certainly the cause of our liking it ; and that if we were more used to deformity than beauty, deformity would lose the idea now annexed to it, and take that of beauty. If by being used to deformity,* he meant a supposed case, that the forms of visible objects on this planet were universally what we now call deformed, his position is probably true ; in that case, however, custom would only be another name for nature : but on any other supposition, I rather think, he has given to that second nature custom, a power which

* In this place, I imagine Sir Joshua uses the word deformity in its common acceptation ; in others, he uses it for any deviation from the central form.

only belongs to nature itself; that is, to *universal* custom.

It seems to me, that *partial* custom and habit are more employed in reconciling us to defects and deformities, than in absolutely converting them into beauties; and that, if in some particular cases they do convert them into beauties, (as it is said that those who have the goitres, think that excrescence becoming, and those who want it deformed,) yet such a notion of beauty is confined to the ignorant inhabitants of a few narrow districts. The Ethiopians, indeed, and what are in general called negroes, are much more numerous; and they probably prefer their own form and colour to those of Europeans; but as Sir Joshua remarks, “the black and white nations must, in respect of beauty, be considered as of different kinds, or at least as different species of the same kind.”

As this part of Sir Joshua's Letter has been thought to contain, not only a lively and striking illustration of his own doctrines,

but likewise a refutation of those of Mr. Burke, it is necessary for me to discuss it more particularly, and to examine how far it affects Mr. Burke's system.

It is clear, that as the black and white nations may be considered as different species, an Ethiopian painter would with great propriety represent the goddess of beauty in the manner Sir Joshua has described ; that is, with the characteristic marks of his distinct race : but in other respects it is probable that the painter would select such a model as an European painter would select, if employed to paint an Ethiopian Venus ; her skin black, indeed, but of a clear jetty black—

..... Such as in esteem

Prince Memnon's sister might beseem ;
her limbs round and smooth, and without
any sharp angles or projections ; her eyes
of a clear transparent colour : in short, he
would select a model, with all those quali-
ties of beauty which Mr. Burke has men-
tioned, the peculiar marks of the species
only excepted. I will even go further,

and, notwithstanding the very high authority of Sir Joshua, will venture to propose some reasons, why both the form and the colour of Europeans, may claim a preference to those of the Ethiopians, independently of our being more accustomed to them.

The most striking difference is the colour; and it seems to me that there are so many obvious arguments in favour of the European, that I am surprised the preference should have been attributed to mere habit. Light and colours are the only natural pleasures of vision, all the others being acquired: but black is, in some degree, a privation both of light and colour: and it is associated with the more general privations caused by night and darkness, and all the gloomy ideas that result from them. Variety, gradation, and combination of tints, are among the highest pleasures of vision: black is absolute monotony. In the particular instance of the human countenance, and most of all in that of females, the changes which arise from the softer passions and sensations, are above all others delight-

ful; both from their outward effect in regard to colour, and from the connexion between that appearance, and the inward feelings of the mind: but no Ethiopian poet could say of his mistress,

..... Her pure and eloquent blood
Spoke in her cheeks, and so distinctly wrought,
That you might almost say her body thought.

The well-known answer of a Grecian lady, is not a less high compliment to the same sort of appearance in the male sex: when asked what was the most beautiful colour in nature, she replied, the blush of an ingenuous youth. From that charming suffusion in the human face, which can only take place where the skin is transparent, we borrow an epithet very commonly given to the most beautiful of flowers: an Ethiopian lady may admire the rose's blushing hue (and it is said that the black nations have a sort of passion for the rose), but no such pleasing association can arise in her mind.

In discussing this subject, I think I may fairly be allowed to reason from the analogy

of all we see around us, especially from objects, whether animate or inanimate, of acknowledged beauty. I will first observe, what every one must have remarked, that nature has made use of black in a very small proportion : almost all the objects we see are adorned with colours, or with white, which is the union of them all ; but she avoids black, which is their extinction. In vegetation, she has interspersed upon the general cloathing of green, the ornaments of flowers, and fruit ; and those she has decorated with every delightful variety and combination of colours : less often, however, with absolute black, though from the accompaniment of leaves, a certain proportion of black has a very rich effect ; as we see in the deep purple of grapes, and in other berries either black, or nearly approaching to black. In flowers, black is at least as rare ; and, upon the whole, I think I am fully justified in saying, that the colour of the Europeans, has a much stronger relation to the colours which prevail in the most avowedly beautiful ob-

jects, than that of the Ethiopians, and, consequently has the best founded claim to beauty.

It may be said, (and it is an argument which has been made use of) that, although we call the negro complexion black, from its being many degrees darker than that of the darkest European, yet it is far from being of one uniform blackness: and that its tint, though less varied, has a richness, which, in a painter's eye, may compensate its comparative monotony, and may, therefore, by him be called beautiful. It is true, that some of the greatest colourists have introduced negroes into their pictures, and seem to have painted them, as the Italians express it, *con amore*, and certainly with striking effect; and, I may add, none with more truth, or with a richer tone of colouring, than Sir Joshua Reynolds himself:* but that he did not think such a tint could

* There is a head of a negro painted by him, and now in the possession of Sir George Beaumont, which for character, colouring, and masterly execution, may vie with any head of the same kind, by any master.

accord with beauty, and especially with female beauty; there is the clearest proof in one of his admirable Notes on Du Fresnoy. Sir Joshua is there speaking of the Venetian style of colouring, and that of Titian in particular, as the most excellent, and as eclipsing with its splendour whatever is brought into competition with it; yet, he adds, if female delicacy and beauty be the principal object of the painter's aim, the purity and clearness of the tint of Guido will correspond better, and more contribute to produce it, than even the glowing tint of Titian. Now, if he judged that the hue of Titian's naked figures, whether women or children, which that great colourist had studied with more attention than any other painter, and from models, not of a southern climate, but of the north of Italy—if he judged *that* hue to be too rich and glowing to correspond with the idea of delicate beauty, what would he have thought, if Titian, as a companion to his Florentine Venus, had painted an Ethiopian goddess

of beauty, with Cupids of the same dusky complexion.

From the whole of the Note, it appears clearly to have been the opinion of Sir Joshua, at a time too when his judgment was perfectly matured, that Guido's colouring, the style of which he characterizes by the expression of *silver* tint, as opposed to the *golden* hue of Titian, is a standard for the colouring of flesh, where beauty is the object. That silver tint, represents the colour of the most delicate European skins, in which white predominates; and the golden hue, those on which a richer, but a browner tint has been impressed. Every gradation downwards from that golden, to a deeper, and more dusky hue, is, according to this doctrine, a departure from beauty; and consequently, the complexion of the negro, is at the extremity of the scale, as being the direct opposite to a clear and silvery tint.*

* White, in its greatest purity, being the union of all other colours, ranks as high, and in some instances higher,

With respect to form, the feature which most strongly distinguishes the human countenance, from that of all other animals, is the nose. Man is, I believe, the only animal that has a marked projection in the middle of the face; the noses of other animals being either flat, or not placed in that central position. All projections, universally, in all objects, give character; flatness and insipidity being synonymous: but between those large projections which impress a strongly marked character, and those slight elevations which give scarcely any relief, lies that medium, which in all things has the best claim to beauty. The same principles

than any one of them separately, or than any other union of them: and, for the opposite reason, black, being the absence, or extinction of all colours, ranks below them all. In pearls and diamonds, which are chiefly valuable for the pleasure they give to the sight, pure colourless transparency constitutes the highest excellence: and though it might be presumed, that the rich and the tender colours of rubies, emeralds, &c. would be more attractive, yet the pure colourless lustre of the diamond, has the preference. The same may, perhaps, be said of the most pure and perfect statuary marble.

prevail in the form, as in the size of projections : any sudden depression or elevation, or sudden variation of any kind, is a departure from the medium, or central form, as Sir Joshua has expressed it ; and if that be the sense of his expression, the preference due to the European nose over that of the negroes, will be founded on his own principles.

According to the same principles, the lips of the negroes are less beautiful, than those which are more admired among the Europeans ; for they are further removed from the central form—from the medium between such lips as scarce seem to cover the teeth, and those which appear unnaturally swoln.

The last object of comparison is the hair ; a circumstance of great beauty in itself, and of the highest use in accompanying the face. One very principal beauty in hair, is its loose texture and flexibility ; by means of which it takes, (as vines, and other flexible plants, do in vegetation) a number of graceful and becoming forms, without any assistance

from art : and, like them too, is capable of taking any arrangement that art can invent. Add to this, the great diversity of colours, from the darkest to the lightest in all their gradations ; the glossy surface ; the play of light and shadow which always attends variety of form ; and then contrast all this with the monotony of the black woolly hair of the negro ! its colour, nearly the same in all of them, and the form, without any natural play or variety, and incapable of receiving any from art ! There is, likewise, another circumstance of difference not to be omitted, —that of motion: the poets are particularly fond of describing this light, airy, playful effect of hair, both in man and in animals ;

Luduntque jubæ per colla per armos.

Intonsosque agitare Apollinis aura capillos.

And Tasso, in some measure, makes it the distinguishing mark of beauty—

*Della piu vaga, et cara Virginella,
Che mai spiagasse al vento chioma d'oro.*

The European ladies, in the wantonness and caprice of fashion, have sometimes

chosen to imitate the Ethiopian character of hair ; though according to the French term for such a head-dress, the immediate object of imitation was the head of a sheep : but the Ethiopian ladies could not take their revenge ; they have no tresses which they can either spread loosely on their shoulders, or tye up and arrange in numberless graceful and becoming forms.

I flatter myself, that from what has been said of the characteristic differences between the Ethiopians and the Europeans, it will appear, that the preference which we give to the form and colour of the latter, is not merely the effect of habit and prejudice ; but that it is founded on the best grounds that can be had in such cases,—on the manifest analogy which subsists between those forms and colours, and such as are acknowledged to be beautiful in every other part of nature ; and, likewise, on that very just principle, that the most beautiful forms are those which lie between the extremes, whether of thickness and thinness, flatness and sharpness, or whatever those extremes may be.

The most peculiar circumstance in what we call Grecian beauty, is the strait line of the nose and forehead ; which is thought to be almost as characteristic of the Grecian face, as the flat nose is of the Ethiopian. This certainly is very unfavourable to the doctrine of waving lines, and gradual variation ; for although it might plausibly be said, that one such strait line has a pleasing, as well as a striking effect, when contrasted with the number of flowing lines of which the human face is composed, still, however, in so very principal a feature as the nose, it must be owned that the contrast is of too sudden and marked a kind, to accord with Mr. Burke's system. But, on the other hand, how very strong an argument will it be in favour of that system, if it should appear, that in some of the most exquisite pieces of Grecian art, in which beauty, in its strictest sense, has been the chief object of the artist, the line of the nose and forehead has just that degree of gradual variation, which seems in perfect harmony with

all the other lines of the face. This, I believe, is the case in a number of statues, gems and medals ; and particularly in the statue, which, of all others, is the best example on the present occasion,—that of the Venus de Medicis : and as casts of that statue, and especially of the bust, are very common, it is easy for any person to satisfy himself with respect to the degree of variation.

If this be true, even of one statue of the highest class, that single instance will outweigh millions of examples, drawn from inferior works of art ; more especially if it be considered that the statue in question, represents the Goddess of Love and Beauty. It must, therefore, be at least doubtful, whether the ancients considered the straight line of the nose and forehead as the most beautiful: but whatever may have been their opinion, or the forms of living models in Greece, the reason which Sir Joshua has assigned for the beauty of that line, can hardly be admitted in this country; for

such a line is so far from being the most common, that, we can easily recollect the very few examples we have seen of it.

The more extended position, "that the "most general form of nature is the most "beautiful," must, I imagine, relate to a supposed central form, not to such as actually exist: for, with respect to the human figure, to which he principally refers, we can never cast our eyes round any place of public resort, without perceiving that the proportion of handsome persons of either sex is comparatively small; much more so of those who are really beautiful: but if habit and custom determined our preference, we should certainly prefer mediocrity to beauty, as being infinitely more accustomed to it,

The illustration which he has drawn from the naturalist, is not, I think, perfectly in point. The aim of the naturalist is directed towards the ascertainment of the species; he compares the different leaves, not as the painter compares other objects, for the purpose of discovering whether there be any of

so peculiarly pleasing a form, as to deserve that he should except them from the general mass, but simply to know what is that shape, in which the greatest number most nearly agree. By such observation, the naturalist knows at the first glance, the general form of leaf in any particular species ; if in some of the leaves there should be a slight difference, he still acknowledges them to be of the same species ; but if the variation, either in the shape, or the position of those marks by which he distinguishes it, pass certain bounds, he considers such a leaf as a monstrous, or capricious production of nature. This is neither more nor less than we all do in our own species, from the unavoidable habit of observation ; but this has nothing to do with the research of beauty in either case ; nor does it at all tend to prove, that the most general forms, are the most beautiful.

I therefore cannot avoid suspecting, that Sir Joshua's meaning must be different from what his words seem to express : no man certainly had better opportunities of know-

ing how scarce a thing beauty is, even in this country, where, in comparison with many others, it so much abounds; and how very few, among those who really deserved that title, approached towards that perfection, of which none had a juster or nicer conception than himself; nor was he to be informed, that in most languages the epithet *rare* is constantly applied to beauty; and the opposite one of common, or ordinary, to the faces and figures of women who are totally void of it. If more instances were required in so plain a case, there is a very peculiar one in the Italian language—that of applying the epithet *pellegrina*, or foreign, to beauty; the Italians say *bellezze pellegrine*, *leggiadria singolare et pellegrina*, as if beauty in any high degree was so rare, that they could not look for it within their own well-known limits, but could only hope that it might visit them from some distant, and more fortunate region. If, then, Beauty be as rare as these expressions, and our own experience shew it to be, it can hardly be called the most general

form of nature, or the medium or centre of its various forms, in any other sense than that which I have supposed.

Beauty, then, according to this supposition, may, in respect to form, and particularly the human form, be considered as the centre or medium between the extremes of every kind; but this perfect central form, so far from being common or general, has very rarely been found to exist in any one individual: to discover, to abstract, and separate it from all existing forms, required numberless and repeated trials, observations, and refinements. These were made during a considerable period of time by the Grecian artists: and though they could seldom find that central form in the whole of any one individual, they found it in particular parts sufficiently exact for them to copy from; with such corrections, perhaps, as the abstract ideas they had formed, though without ever losing sight of nature, might suggest.* By putting these most perfect

* Phryne seems to be an exception; as she is said to have been the model of the Cnidian Venus of Praxiteles, and of the Venus Anadyomene of Apelles; nor is it men-

parts together, and connecting them into a whole, by means of the rules of symmetry and proportion, which they had laid down in consequence of repeated trials, and likewise by the guidance of that nicety of taste and judgment, which adds all that rules cannot teach, they created, what has been called *ideal beauty*. In one particular statue, Polycletus so happily exemplified the rules which he himself had committed to writing, that they jointly obtained the name of the *canon*; or the rule and model of the relation which one part of the human figure bears to the other; and of the result of the whole.

Here, then, after long researches, is a distinct central form, to which others may be referred; a form to which nothing could be added, from which nothing could be taken away: this, therefore, with such other works of art, as were wrought according to the same rules, and in the same manner, is the form which the ancients mentioned that those artists made any corrections, in copying that "human form divine," but thought it worthy of representing the goddess, to whose service it had always been dedicated.

spirit, may properly be called "the invariable general form," not "which nature most frequently produces," but which she may be supposed "to intend in her productions." Such real, visible models "of the great and general ideas which are fixed and inherent in universal nature" being once acknowledged, it will naturally follow, that all deviations from them must be reckoned among "those accidental blemishes and excrescencies, which are continually varying the surface of nature's works;" and thence we have a clear conception, of that to which the painter ought to attend, when studying the highest style of the art, and of that which he ought to avoid. The practice of his best guides the ancient artists, plainly shews, that in their opinion, whatever nature's intention may be, she rarely produces a perfect whole, or even perfect parts; and the ancient writers confirm that opinion, by their avowal of the superiority of statues, even when they are speaking of the *parts* of the human body—

Pectoraque, artificum laudatis proxima signis.*

From all that has hitherto been said, the opinions of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Mr. Burke, seem to differ very much on the subject of beauty; yet, I believe, the difference is more in the manner in which they viewed and treated the subject, than in the judgment, which, according to their own principles, they would have given of any work, either of nature or of art. The

* As the art of sculpture, if even invented in the time of Homer, was then in its infancy, he has not made any comparison between his heroes and statues: but, what is curious enough, in order to give an idea of the perfect form of the king of men, he has selected different parts even of the gods—

** Ὀμμάτα καὶ κεφαλῆν ἴκελος Διὶ τρωπικερᾶνῳ,*

** Ἄρει τε ζωνῆν, στερρον δὲ Ποσειδάωνι.*

One might almost imagine, that Shakspeare had thought of this passage in his description of Hamlet's father; only that he had chosen to take the eyes from Jupiter, and transfer them to the god of war.

“Hyperion's curls, the front of Jove himself;

“An eye like Mars to threaten or command;

“A station like the herald Mercury,

“New lighted on a heaven-kissing hill.”

most perfect specimens of the latter, are certainly the fine antique statues; which being wrought upon the principles already mentioned, approach as nearly as possible to what Sir Joshua calls the central form: that is, to general abstract nature, in opposition to particular individual nature. From them the great Italian masters first learned to generalize their ideas, on all that in any way relates to their art; and from them, likewise, they acquired their notions of perfect, ideal beauty: but these two acquirements, though founded on one principle, ought, in my opinion, to be considered in distinct points of view; as from the want of such distinction, beauty and grandeur of character have been strangely confounded.

This will appear in a very clear light, if we reflect, that the abstract method of considering the human form and countenance, extended to all ages and characters; to the ideal heads of aged bards, lawgivers, and philosophers, as well as to the youthful forms of either sex: and therefore beauty, in any

just sense of the word, could not be the constant result of it. That quality must be confined to such statues as represent young and graceful persons; and those, indeed, are the most perfect illustrations of Sir Joshua's ideas of the beautiful.

But, again, as such statues display, in an eminent degree, the qualities which Mr. Burke has assigned to beauty, they are also the most perfect illustrations of his system.* it therefore appears very plainly, that when the models, to which both these eminent judges would certainly have referred their notions of perfect beauty, are analysed, those notions are found to coincide: and the only difference between them is,

* I lately hit upon a passage that I had not remarked before, in which Sir Joshua considers flowing lines as essential to beauty, and as being, in a manner, the characteristic marks of it. The passage is in his 56th Note on *Du Fresnoi*; he there says, "a flowing outline is recommended because beauty (which alone is nature) cannot be produced without it: old age or leanness produces strait lines; corpulency round lines; but in a state of health accompanying youth, the outlines are waving, flowing, and serpentine."

that the one treats of the great general abstract principles of beauty ; the other of its distinct visible qualities. Were there now extant any of the first-rate pictures of the ancient Greek school—the Venus of Apelles, or the Helen of Zeuxis—in perfect preservation, we should probably see, that the delicate blending of the tints, their clearness and purity, would equally tend to establish Sir Joshua's and Mr. Burke's principles of the beautiful in colour.

If, then, it be true, that by adhering to a central form, as displayed in the best antique statues, and by applying to it the qualities of beauty, as stated by Mr. Burke, it would be almost impossible not to produce a beautiful object ; and if, on the other hand, it would be quite impossible to produce one, if that central form, and those qualities, were rejected ; and if this may equally be affirmed, with respect to all other objects in nature, as well as to the human figure—it points out very distinctly, in what beauty does, and does not, consist ; and it shews, that although an Apollo Belvidere,

or a Venus de Medicis, cannot be made by means of rules and qualities, yet they could not be made in opposition to them.

Lastly, if it appear, that those qualities which are supposed to constitute the beautiful, are in all objects chiefly found to exist at that period, when nature has attained, but not passed, a state of perfect completion, we surely have as clear, and as certain principles on this, as on many other subjects, where little doubt is entertained.

Whether our notions of the sublime, are more or less clear and settled than those of beauty, with which it has been so closely brought into comparison, I will not pretend to determine ; there seems, however, to be this difference between them: those objects which call forth our wonder, are rare ; and their rarity is indeed one cause of their effect ; the term sublime, is therefore less frequently misapplied. Those, on the other hand, which create our pleasure, are comparatively common, and familiar ; and as we are apt to give the name of beauty to all objects which give us pleasure, however

different from each other in their qualities, or character, our notions of beauty, and our application of the term, have been proportionably lax and indistinct. To give them a just degree of precision, it therefore was not sufficient to point out what in its strict acceptation is beautiful; it was likewise necessary to account for the pleasure which we receive from numberless objects, neither sublime, nor beautiful, yet well entitled to form a separate class; and this I have endeavoured to do, in my *Essays on the Picturesque*.

A
DIALOGUE
ON
THE DISTINCT CHARACTERS
OF
THE PICTURESQUE
AND
THE BEAUTIFUL,
IN ANSWER TO THE
OBJECTIONS OF MR. KNIGHT.



PREFACE.



THE following Dialogue is written in answer to a Note, which my friend Mr. Knight has inserted in the second edition of *The Landscape*. In that Note he has stated it as his opinion, that the distinction which I have endeavoured to establish between the Beautiful and the Picturesque, is an imaginary one; and has given his reasons for thinking so.

I have thrown my defence into its present form, in hopes that after so much discussion upon the subject, something lighter, and more like amusement, might be furnished by this method. I also thought, that many persons who were not affected or convinced by reasoning

only, might possibly be struck with it when mixed with imagery; when the different objects were placed before them, and successively examined and canvassed by the different speakers in the Dialogue; and when the doubts and questions, which may naturally occur to an unpractised mind, were stated by a character of that description, and thereby more familiarly discussed and explained, than can be done in a regular Essay.

For this purpose, I have supposed two of the characters to be very conversant in all that relates to nature, and painting: that one of them, whom for distinction I have called by the name of Howard, is a partizan of Mr. Knight's; that the other, whom I have called Hamilton, is attached to my opinions; and that the third, of the name of Seymour, has little acquaintance with the art of painting, or with the application of its principles

to that of gardening, or to natural scenery.

By means of the supposed partizan of Mr. Knight's opinions, I have introduced almost the whole of the Note into the body of the Dialogue: but as it appears there in detached parts, just as the arguments might be conceived to occur in the course of the discussion, I thought it right to print it altogether; for it would be very unfair to Mr. Knight, if the reader were not enabled to view the whole chain of his reasoning as he had arranged it himself, and likewise to refer to it whenever he had occasion.

Some of my friends, who had read this Dialogue in manuscript, were inclined to think, that the passages, which were taken from the Note, should be distinguished by inverted commas: but as the Note itself is now prefixed, such a distinction seems less

necessary. There were, indeed, some objections to it : for I have at times been obliged to introduce and connect those passages by words of my own, which therefore could not, without impropriety, have been included within the commas; and yet, being part of the same speech, could not, without awkwardness, have been excluded. I judged, also, that the frequent recurrence of such commas, might distract the reader's attention from what was going forward, and, in any case, take of from the naturalness of the dialogue.

NOTE
ANNEXED TO
THE SECOND EDITION
OF
THE LANDSCAPE,
A
DIDACTIC POEM.
BY R. P. KNIGHT, ESQ.



NOTE

ANNEXED TO

THE SECOND EDITION

OF

THE LANDSCAPE.

IT is now, I believe, generally admitted, that the system of picturesque improvement, employed by the late Mr. Brown and his followers, is the very reverse of picturesque: all subjects for painting instantly disappearing as they advance; whence an ingenious professor, who has long practised under the title of *Landscape Gardener*, has suddenly changed his ground; and taking advantage of a supposed distinction between the picturesque and the beautiful, confessed that his art was never intended to produce landscapes, but some

kind of *neat, simple, and elegant effects*, or non-descript beauties, which have not yet been named or classed. (See Letter to Mr. Price, p. 9.) “*A beautiful garden scene,*” he says, “*is not more defective because it would not look well on canvas, than a didactic poem, because it neither furnishes a subject for the painter or the musician.*” (Ibid. p. 5 and 6.) Certainly not:—for such a poem must be void of imagery and melody; and, therefore, more exactly resembling one of this professor’s improved places than he probably imagined when he made the comparison. It may, indeed, have all the *neatness, simplicity, and elegance of English gardening* (ibid. p. 9.); but it will also have its *vapid and tiresome insipidity*; and, however it may be esteemed by a professor or a critic, who judge every thing by rule and measure, will make no impression on the generality of readers, whose taste is guided by their feelings.

I cannot, however, but think that the distinction, of which this ingenious profes-

sor has thus taken advantage, is an imaginary one, and that the picturesque is merely that kind of beauty which belongs exclusively to the sense of vision; or to the imagination, guided by that sense. It must always be remembered in inquiries of this kind, that the eye, unassisted, perceives nothing but light variously graduated and modified: black objects are those which totally absorb it, and white those which entirely reflect it; and all the intermediate shades and colours are the various degrees in which it is partially absorbed or impeded, and the various modes in which it is reflected and refracted. Smoothness, or harmony of surface, is to the touch what harmony of colour is to the eye; and as the eye has learnt by habit to perceive form as instantaneously as colour, we perpetually apply terms belonging to the sense of touch to objects of sight; and while they relate only to *perception*, we are guilty of no impropriety in so doing; but we should not forget that *perception* and *sensation* are quite different; the one being an

operation of the mind, and the other an impression on the organs : and that therefore, when we speak of the pleasures and pains of each, we ought to keep them quite separate, as belonging to different classes, and governed by different laws.

Where men agree in facts, almost all their disputes concerning inferences arise from a confusion of terms ; no language being sufficiently copious and accurate to afford a distinct expression for every discrimination necessary to be made in a philosophical inquiry, not guided by the certain limits of number and quantity ; and vulgar use having introduced a mixture of literal and metaphorical meanings so perplexing, that people perpetually use words without attaching any precise meaning to them whatever. This is peculiarly the case with the word *beauty*, which is employed sometimes to signify that congruity and proportion of parts, which in composition pleases the understanding ; sometimes those personal charms, which excite animal desires between the sexes ; and

sometimes those harmonious combinations of colours and smells, which make grateful impressions upon the visual or olfactory nerves. It often happens too, in the laxity of common conversation or desultory writing, that the word is used without any pointed application to either, but with a mere general and indistinct reference to what is any ways pleasing.

This confusion has been still more confounded, by its having equally prevailed in all the terms applied to the constituent properties both of beauty and ugliness. We call a still clear piece of water, surrounded by shaven banks, and reflecting white buildings, or other brilliant objects that stand near it, *smooth*, because we *perceive* its surface to be smooth and even, though the impression, which all these harsh and edgy reflections of light produce on the eye, is analogous to that which roughness produces on the touch; and is often so violently irritating, that we cannot bear to look at it for any long time together. In the same manner, we call an

agitated stream, flowing between broken and sedgy banks, and indistinctly reflecting the waving foliage that hangs over it, *rough*; because we know, from habitual observation, that its impression on the eye is produced by uneven surfaces; at the same time that the impression itself is all of softness and harmony; and analogous to what the most grateful and nicely varied smoothness would be to the touch. This is the case with all smooth animals, whose forms being determined by marked outlines, and the surfaces of whose skins producing strong reflections of light, have an effect on the eye corresponding to what irritating roughness has upon the touch; while the coats of animals which are rough and shaggy, by partly absorbing the light, and partly softening it by a mixture of tender shadows, and thus connecting and blending it with that which proceeds from surrounding objects, produce an effect on the eye similar to that which an undulated and gently varied smoothness affords to the touch. The same analogy prevails between

shaven lawns and tufted pastures, dressed parks and shaggy forests, neat buildings and mouldering walls, &c. &c. as far as they affect the senses only. In all, our landscape gardeners seem to work for the touch rather than the sight.

When harmony either in colour or surface becomes absolute unity, it sinks into what, in sound, we call monotony; that is, its impression is so languid and unvaried, that it produces no farther irritation on the organ than what is necessary for mere *perception*; which, though never totally free from either pleasure or pain, is so nearly neutral, that by a continuation it grows tiresome; that is, it leaves the organ to a sensation of mere existence, which seems in itself to be painful.

If colours are so harsh and contrasted, or the surface of a tangible object so pointed or uneven, as to produce a stronger or more varied impression than the organ is adapted to bear, the irritation becomes painful in proportion to its degree, and ultimately tends to its dissolution.

Between these extremes lies that grateful medium of grateful irritation, which produces the sensation of what we call *beauty*; and which in visible objects we call *picturesque beauty*, because painting, by imitating the visible qualities only, discriminates it from the objects of other senses with which it may be combined; and which, if productive of stronger impressions, either of pleasure or disgust, will overpower it; so that a mind not habituated to such discriminations, or (as more commonly expressed,) a person not possessed of a painter's eye, does not discover it till it is separated in the artist's imitation. Rembrandt, Ostade, Teniers, and others of the Dutch painters, have produced the most beautiful pictures, by the most exact imitations of the most ugly and disgusting objects in nature; and yet it is physically impossible that an exact imitation should exhibit qualities not existing in its original; but the case is, that in the originals, animal disgust, and the nauseating repugnance of appetite, drown

and overwhelm every milder pleasure of vision, which a blended variety of mellow and harmonious tints must necessarily produce on the eye, in nature as well as in art, if viewed in both with the same degree of abstracted and impartial attention.

In like manner, properties pleasing to the other senses, often exist in objects disgusting or insipid to the eye, and make so strong an impression, that persons who seek only what is generally pleasing, confound their sensations, and imagine a thing beautiful, because they see in it something which gives them pleasure of another kind. I am not inclined, any more than Mr. Repton, *to despise the comforts of a gravel walk, or the delicious fragrance of a shrubbery*; (see his Letter to Mr. Price, p. 18.) neither am I inclined to despise the convenience of a paved street, or the agreeable scent of distilled lavender; but nevertheless, if the pavier and perfumer were to recommend their works as delicious gratifications for the eye, I might be tempted to treat them both with some de-

gree of ridicule and contempt. Not only the fragrance of shrubs, but the freshness of young grass and green turf, and the coolness of clear water, however their disposition in modern gardens may be adverse to picturesque beauty, and disgusting to the sense of seeing, are things so grateful to the nature of man, that it is impossible to render them wholly disagreeable. Even in painting, where freshness and coolness are happily represented, scenes not distinguished by any beautiful varieties of tints or shadows, please through the medium of the imagination, which instantly conceives the comforts and pleasures which such scenes must afford; but still, in painting, they never reconcile us to any harsh or glaring discords of colour; wherefore I have recommended that art as the best criterion of the mere visible beauties of rural scenery, which are all that I have pretended to criticise.

If, however, an improver of grounds chooses to reject this criterion, and to consider picturesque beauty as not be-

longing to his profession, I have nothing more to do with him; the objects of our pursuit and investigation being entirely different. All that I beg of him is, that if he takes any *professional* title, it may be one really descriptive of his profession, such as that of *walk-maker*, *shrub planter*, *turf cleaner*, or *rural perfumer*; for if *landscapes* are not what he means to produce, that of *landscape gardener* is one not only of *no mean*, but of *no true pretension*.

As for the beauties of congruity, intricacy, lightness, motion, repose, &c. they belong exclusively to the understanding and imagination; and though I have slightly noticed them in the text, a full and accurate investigation of them would not only exceed the limits of a note, but of my whole work. The first great obstruction to it is the ambiguity of language, and the difficulty of finding distinct terms to discriminate distinct ideas. The next is the habit which men are in, of flying for allusions to the inclination of the sexes towards each other; which, being the

strongest of our inclinations, draws all the others into its vortex, and thus becomes the criterion of pleasures, with which it has no further connection than being derived from the same animal functions with the rest. All male animals probably think the females of their own species the most beautiful part of the creation; and in the various and complicated mind of civilized man, this original result of appetite has been so changed and diversified by the various modifications of mental sympathies, social habits, and acquired propensities, that it is impossible to analyze it: it can therefore afford no lights to guide us in exploring the general principles and theory of sensation.

A
DIALOGUE
ON
THE DISTINCT CHARACTERS
OF THE
PICTURESQUE AND THE BEAUTIFUL.

MR. HOWARD and Mr. Hamilton, two gentlemen remarkably fond of pictures, were on their return from a tour they had been making through the north of England. They were just setting out on their walk to a seat in the neighbourhood, where there was a very numerous and well chosen collection of pictures, when a chaise drove to the inn door; and they saw, to their great delight, that the person who got out of it was Mr. Seymour, an intimate friend of their's. After the first rejoicings at meeting so unexpectedly, they told him whither

they were going, and proposed to him to accompany them. You know, said he, how ignorant I am of pictures, and of every thing that relates to them; but, at all events, I shall have great pleasure in walking with you, and shall not be sorry to take a lesson of connoisseurship from two such able masters.

Mr. Hamilton had formerly been a great deal at the house they were going to, and undertook to be their guide: the three friends however conversed so eagerly together, that they missed their way, and got into a wild unfrequented part of the country; when, suddenly, they came to a ruinous hovel on the outskirts of a heathy common. In a dark corner of it, some gypsies were sitting over a half-extinguished fire, which every now and then, as one of them stooped down to blow it, feebly blazed up for an instant, and shewed their sooty faces, and black tangled locks. An old male gypsey stood at the entrance, with a countenance that well expressed his three-fold occupation, of beggar, thief,

and fortune-teller ; and by him a few worn-out asses : one loaded with rusty panniers, the other with old tattered cloaths and furniture. The hovel was propt and overhung by a blighted oak ; its bare roots staring through the crumbling bank on which it stood. A gleam of light from under a dark cloud, glanced on the most prominent parts : the rest was buried in deep shadow : except where the dying embers

“ Taught light to counterfeit a gloom.”

The three friends stood a long while contemplating this singular scene ; but the two lovers of painting could hardly quit it : they talked in raptures of every part ; of the old hovel, the broken ground, the blasted oak, gypsies, asses, panniers, the catching lights, the deep shadows, the rich mellow tints, the grouping, the composition, the effect of the whole ; and the words beautiful, and picturesque, were a hundred times repeated. The uninitiated friend listened with some surprise ; and when their raptures had a little subsided,

he begged them to explain to him how it happened, that many of those things which he himself, and most others he believed, would call ugly, they called beautiful, and *picturesque*—a word, which those who were conversant in painting, might perhaps use in a more precise, or a more extended sense, than was done in common discourse, or writing. Mr. Howard told him that the picturesque, was merely that kind of beauty which belongs exclusively to the sense of vision, or to the imagination guided by that sense. “Then,” said Mr. Seymour, “as far as visible objects are concerned, what is picturesque is beautiful, and vice versâ; in short, they are two words for the same idea. I do not, however, entirely comprehend the meaning of *exclusively*, to the sense of vision.”

“It must always be remembered,” answered the other, “in inquiries of this kind, that the eye, unassisted, perceives nothing but light variously graduated and modified: black objects are those which totally absorb it; and white, those which

entirely reflect it; and all the intermediate shades and colours, are the various degrees in which it is partially absorbed or impeded: smoothness, or harmony of surface, is to the touch, what harmony of colour is to the eye; and as the eye has learnt by habit to perceive form, as instantaneously as colour, we perpetually apply terms belonging to the sense of touch, to objects of sight; and while they relate only to *perception*, we are guilty of no impropriety in so doing; but we should not forget that perception, and sensation, are quite different: the one being an operation of the mind, the other an impression on the organs; and that therefore, when we speak of the pleasures and pains of each, we ought to keep them quite separate, as belonging to different classes, and governed by different laws."

"There can be no doubt," said Mr. Seymour, "of the distinction between perception and sensation; but in speaking of visible objects, I can hardly admit that they are quite different, or that they ought

to be kept quite separate ; because perception, as an operation of the mind, has no existence but through the medium of impressions on the organs of sense : perception, therefore, in the mind, and sensation in the organ, although distinct operations in themselves, are practically inseparable. I am ready, for instance, to allow, that an eye unassisted, sees nothing but light variously modified ; but where will you find such an eye ? We have all learned to distinguish by the sight alone, not only form in general, but, likewise, its different qualities ; such as hardness, softness, roughness, smoothness, &c. and to judge of the distance and gradation of objects : all these ideas, it is true, are originally acquired by the touch ; but from use, they are become as invariably connected with objects of sight, as the very perceptions of the colours themselves. *You* may possibly be able, so to abstract your attention from all these heterogeneous qualities, as to see light and colours only ; but, for my part, I plainly see that old gypsey's wrinkles, as

well as the colour of his skin; I see that his beard is not only grizzle, but rough and stubbed, and, in my mind, very ugly; I see that the hovel is rugged and uneven, as well as brown and dingy; and I cannot get these things out of my mind by any endeavours: in short, what I see and feel to be ugly, I cannot think, or call beautiful, whatever lovers of painting may do."

"It is by a love and study of pictures," replied Mr. Howard, "that this beauty is perceived; because painting, by imitating the visible qualities only, discriminates it from the objects of the other senses with which it may be combined, and which, if productive of stronger impressions either of pleasure or disgust, will overpower it; so that a mind not habituated to such discriminations, or (as more commonly expressed) a person not possessed of a painter's eye, does not discover it till it is separated in the artist's imitation. Rembrandt, Ostade, Teniers, and others of the Dutch painters, have produced the most beautiful pictures by the most exact imitations

of the most ugly and disgusting objects in nature; and yet it is physically impossible, that an exact imitation should exhibit qualities not existing in its original; but the case is, that in the originals, animal disgust and the nauseating repugnance of appetite, drown and overwhelm every milder pleasure of vision, which a blended variety of mellow and harmonious tints must necessarily produce on the eye, in nature as well as in art, if viewed in both with the same degree of abstracted and impartial attention."

"I have listened," said Mr. Seymour, "with much pleasure, for I think there is something very ingenious in this explanation; still, however, I have many doubts and objections. The first is, that when I see that all the *parts* are ugly, I can hardly bring myself to call the whole beautiful, merely on account of those mellow, harmonious tints you mention: much less can I bring myself to call the parts themselves beautiful, or, (what I find is the same thing) picturesque. Were it true indeed,

that we saw nothing but light variously modified, such a way of considering objects would be more just; for then the eye would in such objects really see nothing, but what, in point of harmony, was beautiful: but that pure abstract enjoyment of vision, though possibly reserved in future for some man, who may be born without the sense of feeling, our inveterate habits will not let us partake of. Another circumstance strikes me in your manner of considering objects: you lay great stress, and, I dare say, with reason, on general effect, and general harmony; but do you not, on the other hand, lay too little stress on the particular parts when you talk of beauty? For instance, what you call effect of light and shade, is, I imagine, when the sun shines strongly on some parts, and others are in deep shadow: but suppose those people and animals, and that building were beautiful, according to the common notions of beauty; that old gypsey, a handsome young man; those worn-out beasts of burthen, gay and handsome

horses ; that old hovel, a handsome building : would such a change preclude all effect of light and shadow ? would it preclude all harmony of colours ? and are ugly objects alone adapted to receive a blended variety of mellow and harmonious tints ?

“ I am willing,” continued he, after a short pause, “ to allow a great deal to harmony of colours ; its effect is perceived in a nosegay, or a riband ; but is, therefore, the beauty of particular colours to be totally out of the question, and their harmony solely to be attended to ? and am I obliged to call a number of colours beautiful, because they match well, though each of them, separately considered, is ugly ? It is very possible, for example, that the old gypsey’s tanned skin, the ass and his panniers, the rotten posts and thatch of the hovel, may match each other admirably ; but, for the soul of me, I cannot think of them in the same light, with the fresh and tender colours in the cheeks of young men or women ; with the shapes and

colours of sleek and pampered horses, richly and gayly caparisoned: or with those of porticos or columns of marble, porphyry, lapis lazuli, or even common free-stone; and I can scarcely think that you do. It is very possible, also, that the blasted old oak there—its trunk a mere shell—its bark full of knobs, spots, and stains—its branches broken and twisted, with every mark of injury and decay; may please the painter more than a tree in full vigour and freshness; and I grant that those circumstances do give it a wild and singular appearance, and so far attract attention; but, surely, you cannot be in earnest, when you call such circumstances beautiful?"

Mr. Hamilton had listened in silence to the conversation of his two friends, and, at the same time, had been observing the course of the country, in order to correct his mistake in the road; he now recollected a way across the heathy common, which after taking a last look at the hovel and its inhabitants, they pursued under his guid-

ance. Then turning to Mr. Howard, "there are several things," said he, "that have been thrown out by our uninitiated friend, which you could not well deny in general, nor yet venture to make those discriminations which might naturally have occurred to you; for you know they would tend to sanction a certain distinction, that you have chosen to reject."

"I perceive by this," said Mr. Seymour, "that there are different sects among you modern connoisseurs, as there were among the ancient philosophers; and as an ancient, whose doubts were not perfectly resolved by a Stoic, would apply to an Epicurean or a Peripatetic, so I will now beg to propose some queries to you."

"There is but one point of difference," said Mr. Hamilton, "between Howard and me, and that rather on a matter of curious inquiry, than of real moment; our general principles are the same, and I flatter myself we should pass nearly the same judgment on the merits and defects of any work of art, or on any piece of na-

tural, or improved scenery ; but our friend there has taken a strong antipathy to any distinction or subdivision on this subject."

"For the present," said Mr. Seymour, "I will not enter any further on this point of difference, but will at once begin my queries. Tell me, then, how you account for this strange difference between an eye accustomed to painting, and that of such a person as myself? If those things which Howard calls beautiful, and those which I should call beautiful, are as different as light and darkness, would it not be better to have some term totally unconnected with that of beauty, by which such objects as we have just been looking at, should be characterized? By such means, you would avoid puzzling us vulgar observers with a term, to which we cannot help annexing ideas of what is soft, graceful, elegant, and lovely; and which, therefore, when applied to hovels, rags, and gypsies, contradicts and confounds all our notions and feelings."

“The term you require,” answered Mr. Hamilton, “has already been invented, for, according to my ideas, the word Picturesque, has exactly the meaning you have just described.”

“Then,” said Mr. Seymour, “*you* do not hold picturesque and beautiful to be synonymous.”

“By no means,” said he; “and that is the only difference between Howard and me: in all the effects that arise from the various combinations of form, colour, and light and shadow, we agree; and I am truly sorry that we should disagree on this distinction.”

“No matter,” said Mr. Seymour; “a friendly discussion of this kind, opens the road to truth; and, as I have no prejudice on either side, I shall take much delight in hearing your different opinions and arguments. Tell me, then, what is your idea of the picturesque?”

“That is no easy question,” said Mr. Hamilton, “for to explain my idea of it

in detail, would be to talk a volume; but, in reality, you have yourself explained a very principal distinction between the two characters: the set of objects we have been looking at, struck you with their singularity; but instead of thinking them beautiful, you were disposed to call them ugly: now, I should neither call them beautiful, nor ugly, but picturesque; for they have qualities highly suited to the painter and his art, but which are, in general, less attractive to the bulk of mankind; whereas the qualities of beauty, are universally pleasing and alluring to all observers."

◦ "I must own," said Mr. Seymour, "that it is some relief to me to find, that, according to your doctrine, I am not forced to call an ugly thing beautiful; yet, still, by the help of a middle term, may avoid the offence I must otherwise give to painters. But what most surprises me, and what I wish you to explain, is, that those objects which you and Howard so much admired, and which he called beautiful, not only appeared to me ugly, but very

strikingly so: am I, then, to conclude that the more peculiarly and strikingly ugly an object is, the more charms it has for the painter?"

"You will be surprised," said Mr. Hamilton, "when I tell you, that what you have, perhaps ironically, supposed, is in great measure the case."

Just at this time, a man, with something of a foreign look, passed by them on the heath, whose dress and appearance they could not help staring at. "There," said Mr. Seymour, after he had passed them, "I hope, Hamilton, you are charmed with that figure; I hope he is sufficiently ugly for you: I shall not get his image out of my head for some time; what a singularly formed nose he has, and what a size! what eyebrows! how they, and his black raven hair, hung over his eyes, and what a dark designing look in those eyes! then the slouched hat that he wore on one side, and the sort of cloak he threw across him, as if he were concealing some weapon!"

“Need I now explain,” interrupted Mr. Hamilton, “why an object peculiarly and strikingly ugly, is picturesque? Were this figure, just as you saw him, to be expressed by a painter with exactness and spirit, should you not be struck with it, as you were just now in nature, and from the same reasons? What indeed is the object of an artist, in whatever art? Not merely to represent the soft, the elegant, or the dignified and majestic; his point is to fix the attention; if he cannot by grandeur or beauty, he will try to do it by deformity: and indeed, according to Erasmus, “*quæ naturâ deformia sunt, plus habent et artis et voluptatis in tabulâ.*” It is not ugliness, it is insipidity, however accompanied, that the painter avoids, and with reason; for if it even deprives beauty of its attractions, what must it do when united to ugliness? Do you recollect a person who passed by us, a little before you saw this figure that struck you so much? you must remember the circumstance, for he bowed to me as he passed,

and you asked me his name, but made no further remark, or enquiry. I, who have often seen him, know that he is as ugly, if not uglier, than the other; a squat figure; a complexion like tallow; an unmeaning, pudding face, the marks of the small-pox appearing all over it, like bits of suet through the skin of a real pudding: a nose like a potatoe; and dull, heavy, oyster-like eyes, just suited to his face and person. A figure of this kind, dressed, as he was, in a common coat and waistcoat, and a common sort of wig, excites little or no attention; and if you do happen to look at it, makes you turn away with mere disgust. Such ugliness, therefore, neither painters, nor others, pay any attention to; but the painter, from having observed many strongly marked peculiarities and effects, which, in the human species, though mixed with ugliness, attract in some degree the notice of all beholders, is led to remark similar peculiarities and effects in inanimate, and consequently less interesting objects; while those persons, who have

not considered them in the same point of view, pass by them with indifference."

He had scarcely done speaking, when they had begun to enter a hollow lane on the opposite side of the common; the banks were high and steep; and the soil, being sand mixed with stone, had crumbled away in many places from among the junipers, heath and furze, which, with some thorns, and a few knotty old pollard oaks, and yews, cloathed the sides.

A little way further, but in sight from the entrance, stood a cottage, which was placed in a dip of the bank near the top. Some rudesteps led from it into the lane, and a few paces from the bottom of these steps, the rill which ran on the same side of the lane, had washed away the soil, and formed a small pool under the hollow of the bank: at the edge of the water, some large flat stones, had been placed, on which a woman and a girl were beating clothes; a little boy stood looking on: some other children sat upon the steps, and an old woman was leaning over the wicket of the

cottage porch, while her dog and cat lay basking in the sun before it.

“ I wonder,” said Mr. Seymour, “ why they do not clear the sides of this lane a little, and let in the sun and air; the soil, indeed, is naturally dry, but there are ruts and rough places, over which I have already stumbled two or three times; it is really impossible to walk three together.”

The two others were so occupied with the scene, that they hardly heard what he said, or missed him as he passed on before them: and the whole way up the lane, they met with so many interesting objects, that they were a long while getting to the top of the ascent; where they discovered their companion seated under a spreading tree, and gazing with delight, on what they began to look at with no less rapture. It was one of those views, which only such persons as are insensible, or affectedly fastidious, ever look at, or speak of, without pleasure; though the chief circumstances are familiar to all men, both in reality, and description: it was an extensive view over

a rich country, in which a river sometimes appeared in full splendour, and again was concealed within its woody banks; the whole bounded by distant hills of the most graceful form.

The place where Mr. Seymour sat, was just where the lane ended, and suddenly widened into an open part, whence there was a gentle descent towards the plain; and to the broken and shaggy banks, succeeded a soft turf, interspersed with a few trees rising from amidst tufts of fern, and patches of thorn and juniper. The road continued winding towards the village, which stood about half way down the hill, and looked at once both gay and modest, from the mixture of trees among the houses; the church, with its tower and battlements, crowned the whole. To the right of the road, and of the village, and somewhat lower, was an ancient mansion, the turrets of which appeared above the trees, while the offices, being built in the same style, most happily grouped with the principal building, and with the woods and

thickets of the park. Beyond it, in the more distant country, a handsome stone bridge of several arches seen obliquely, crossed the river, and carried the eye towards a large city—

“ With glittering spires and pinnacles adorn’d.”

“ What can you have been doing so long in that hollow way,” said Mr. Seymour, as he rose from his seat, “ I did not see any gypsies, asses, or broken panniers; but now you are come, do tell me if you ever saw any thing half so enchanting as this view, either in nature, or in painting? I do not know, indeed, whether I ought to call it beautiful, or picturesque; nor do I know whether you connoisseurs, deign to admire, or whether painters deign to represent, what the common herd are pleased with.”

“ You do us and the painters great injustice,” answered Mr. Howard; “ the most celebrated of all the landscape painters, represented such popular scenes as these; not indeed without making such alterations as his art required, and his experience sug-

gested: but in regard to the view before us, it happens that those breaks in the foreground, those separations of the distance by means of trees that rise above the horizon, and all those circumstances of composition, which are more peculiarly attended to by the painter, are here in a great degree, united with those general and popular beauties, that delight all mankind."

"*You*, therefore," said Mr. Seymour, "would call this scene indifferently either beautiful, or picturesque?" "Certainly," answered Mr. Howard? — "And you?" addressing himself to Mr. Hamilton.

"I," said he, "if I were to speak of its general character, should call it beautiful, and not picturesque; because those circumstances which all mankind acknowledge to be beautiful, infinitely prevail. For the same reason, I should call the lane which we have just passed, picturesque; and that it does not suit the general taste, you have given a strong proof, who seem by no means insensible to another style of

scenery: nothing detained you there; every thing detained us."

"Well," said Mr. Seymour, "it is time, likewise, to quit this beautiful spot, (for that is the term I must use when I am highly pleased,) and get on to the house, where you tell me there are many fine pictures, and where I am to receive my first lesson."

They then began to descend towards the village, which, as they approached, presented a pleasing and chearful appearance. The church was placed upon a small eminence, and in the church-yard were some large elms, and two venerable old yews: one of them stood in front, and hung over the road, the top of the tower appearing above it; the other was behind the church, but great part of its boughs advanced beyond the end of the chancel, the window of which was seen sideways against it.

On the opposite side of the road, was the parsonage-house, which exhibited a singular mixture of neatness and irregularity. Something seemed to have been

added by each incumbent, just as a room, a staircase, or a passage was wanting: there were all kinds of projections; of differently shaped windows and chimneys; of rooms in odd corners; of roofs crossing each other in different directions. This curious old fabric was kept in the highest order; part of it was rough-cast; part only white-washed; but the whole of a pleasing quiet colour: vines, roses, jasmynes, and honeysuckles, flourished against the walls, and hung over the old-fashioned porch; a luxuriant Virginia creeper grew quite to the top of a massy stone chimney; and shrubs, and fruit-trees, were very happily disposed, so as, in some degree, to disguise and connect the extreme irregularity of the building.

They were all much pleased with the neatness and comfortable look of this dwelling, and with the whole scenery round it. "If I were not afraid of worrying you," said Mr. Seymour, "I could wish to know what title you would give to this building: where I see so much neatness, cheerfulness

and comfort, I am inclined to call the whole, if not beautiful, at least pretty, and pleasing; and yet it is so strangely irregular, and has so little of any thing like design or symmetry, that I am in doubt whether I may venture to call it any thing but odd."

"You put me in mind of the French," said Mr. Hamilton; "when they are afraid of risking too serious a commendation, they often say, 'mais, c'est assez drole!' and you have taken something of the same cautious method, for fear of shocking me with an improper term. I, of course, imagine, that your question refers to the distinction, about which Howard and I are not agreed; and if you are really desirous that I should read a lecture on the subject with respect to buildings, I never can have a better opportunity."

"Take care," said Mr. Howard, laughing, "how you get entangled among these nice distinctions; there is a sort of pursuit which leads us further from the game--what sportsmen call, *running heel*."

“ I know,” said Mr. Hamilton, “ what I risk with such a keen adversary as you are; and our friend there, preserves a sort of armed neutrality, and will not allow any thing to pass under the pretence of established custom; but the whole of this distinction appears to me so clear and satisfactory, that I cannot help flattering myself with the hope of making it equally so to others: in reality, before Seymour put the question to me, I had been considering this singular old house, and thought it quite a thing made for a lecture; and I will now begin it. You must know then, Seymour, (for I do not address myself to that scoffer at these distinctions) that irregularity is one of the principal causes of the picturesque; and as the general appearance of this building is in a very great degree irregular, so far it is highly picturesque: but, then, another cause, is sudden and abrupt deviation. Do you remember the hovel where the gypsies were? how the roof was sunk in parts; the thatch ragged and uneven; the walls broken, and

bulging out in various directions? you certainly must also recollect the weather-stains and concretions, on the walls and the wood-work; for I very well remember your surprize at hearing the term beautiful applied to them: now, the clean, even colour of this house, if contrasted with the mouldy tints of the hovel, might almost be called beautiful. That hovel was simply picturesque, without any quality that approached to what is beautiful, or to what would be likely to give pleasure to the generality of mankind: this, like many other buildings, has a mixture of both qualities; but their limits happen to be particularly distinct: and if what we have been conversing upon, has made any impression on your mind, I am sure you will see at once, by what means this building would become *merely* picturesque."

"That," said Mr. Seymour, "does not require much consideration; only let it be neglected for a few years, it will be as full of moulds, stains, and broken parts, and as much out of the perpendicular, as any

painter could wish ; and would afford little pleasure to any but painters and connoisseurs. On the other hand, as irregularity, by your account, is so principal a cause of the picturesque, I no less easily can conceive, that if a regular front were put to this old house, it would be as far from being picturesque, as, in the other case, it would be far from being beautiful."

At this time, the clergyman came into the garden, with his daughter ; and being an old acquaintance of Mr. Hamilton's, desired them to walk in. This gave them an opportunity of looking round the whole of the premises, and of asking some questions about the mansion-house, and the grounds.

" You will find the place much altered," said the clergyman to Mr. Hamilton, " since you were here : you may perhaps recollect some fine tall trees in front of the house ; at least you must remember the old terras, and the balustrade with urns and flower-pots on it, and the flight of steps that led down into the lower garden,

where the statues and cypresses were. The trees I am speaking of, were towards the end of that garden, a little to the left; they were cut down two years ago; and I who have known them for these forty years, and often sat under their shade, exceedingly regret them: it may be prejudice; but I declare I do not think the view looks so well, now they are away, though one sees a greater expanse of country. The terras, too, and the old garden—the statues, and all the fine ornaments, are gone; and yet, in my judgment, they suited the stately old mansion: they were, Mr. Hamilton, the “*veterum decora alta parentum;*” and put one in mind of the magnificence of ancient times. The river, too, is very much widened, and as they say improved: you, perhaps, will think me an old-fashioned fellow, and fond of every thing I remember in my youth; but, for my part, I liked it better, when, though smaller, it had its own natural wooded bank, like the little brook behind my house, that you all seemed so much pleas-

ed with. There have been many other alterations, and they are now doing a great deal to different parts of the ground, and have made a new approach; but you cannot miss your way, if you turn to the right at the end of the village, where you will see a stone foot-bridge over the brook, and a cottage, very much covered with ivy, close by it."

"I think," said Mr. Seymour, as they were walking on, "that there is a sort of resemblance between the good old parson's daughter and his house: she is upright, indeed, and so are the walls, but her features have a little of the same irregularity, and her eyes are somewhat inclined to look across each other, like the roofs of the old parsonage: yet a clear skin, clean white teeth, though not very even, and a look of neatness and cheerfulness, in spite of these irregularities, made me look at her with pleasure; and, I really think, if I were of the cloth, I should like very well to take to the living, the house, and its inhabitant. You, Hamilton, I suppose, were thinking, how

age and neglect would operate upon her as upon the house, and how simply picturesque she would become, when her cheeks were a little furrowed and weather-stained, and her teeth had got a slight incrustation."

"No indeed," said the other, "I thought of her much as you did; and I was reflecting how great a conformity there is between our tastes for the sex, and for other objects; though Howard, I know, holds a very different opinion. Here is a house and a woman, without any pretensions to beauty; and yet many might prefer them both, to such as had infinitely more of what they, and the world, would acknowledge to be regularly beautiful: but then, again, deprive the woman, or the house, of those qualities that belong to beauty, though they will not alone confer that distinction, and you will hardly find any man fond enough of the picturesque, to make the sort of proposition you have just been making."

"I must own," said Mr. Howard, "that I do object to this kind of analogy: I do

not like the habit men are in, of flying for allusions to the inclination of the sexes towards each other; for that being the strongest of our inclinations, it draws all others into its vortex, and thus becomes the criterion of pleasures, with which it has no further connection, than being derived from the same animal functions with the rest."

"I agree with you entirely," said Mr. Hamilton, "that in any case, where that inclination was really made the criterion of other pleasures, or other tastes, we should reason on false grounds: I believe, however, you will seldom find any instance of that sort. Do but recollect what women you have known men to be passionately in love with: some short and fat; some tall and skinny; some with a little turn-up nose, a small gimlet eye, a dusky skin, or one covered with freckles: and yet did you ever know one of these lovers so biassed by his particular fancy, as to insist upon it that these were criteria, and universal principles of beauty? or who was

not ready to acknowledge the superior, though, to him, less interesting beauty of other women, whose persons differed in every respect from that of the object of his passion? I have as little found, that the partiality we feel for our own species, has made us think it a standard for beauty in other objects; on the contrary, we are perpetually borrowing images from other animals, for the purpose of conveying a higher idea of beauty, or of character: the eye of the eagle, the dove, the ox, are used to express keenness, mildness, or fulness; the neck of a beautiful woman is compared to that of a swan; and numberless comparisons are drawn from animate and inanimate objects, in order to heighten the idea of human beauty. On the other hand, when a compliment is to be paid to an animal, it is drawn from the more acknowledged source of human superiority; as "the half-reasoning elephant" in Pope; and Rinaldo's famous horse Bajardo, of whom Ariosto says, "Che avea intelletto umano."—But I see we are just arrived

at the gate, and luckily there is a servant coming towards us."

The servant knew Mr. Hamilton, and conducted them into the house; and as they were impatient to see the pictures, they passed at once into the gallery, which contained a great variety of them, and by masters of all the different schools.

"Here," said Mr. Seymour, "we shall have ample room for discussing the subject of the beautiful and the picturesque in painting: I have already had a very good lecture on real objects. Tell me, Howard, do you as little agree to Hamilton's distinctions here, as in nature? do you make rough and smooth, gradual and abrupt—in short, all that he keeps separate—tend to one point, to beauty only? or do you allow of his distinctions in works of art, though not in real objects?"

"I equally deny them in both," said he; "I hold, that between the extremes of monotony either of colour or surface, and such harshness of either as produces a disagreeable sensation, lies that grateful

medium of grateful irritation, which produces the sensation of what we call beauty, and which, in visible objects, is called *picturesque* beauty; because painting, as I observed to you before, by imitating the visible qualities only, discriminates it from the objects of the other senses with which it may be combined, and which, if productive of stronger impressions, either of pleasure or disgust, will overpower it: so that a mind not habituated to such discriminations, or (as more commonly expressed) a person not possessed of a painter's eye, does not discover it till separated in the artist's imitation."

—"This appears to me," said Mr. Seymour, "to be a very just way of accounting for the taste, which lovers of painting acquire for such objects; and I easily conceive how a relish for them in painting, may beget such a relish for them in reality, as may be strong enough to overcome the disgust of many nauseous accompaniments: but I will look round the room, and tell you freely what effect the pictures which happen to strike me, have upon my

unlearned eye, and how far they seem to me to confirm, or contradict your doctrine. I am glad to see that the names of the painters are written on the frames; to you that is, probably, almost useless; but to me, it will be very convenient; for although the mere names of some of the principal painters, like those of the ancient Greek artists, are familiar to me, yet I must own to my shame, that I am almost as little acquainted with their works, as with those of Parrhasius, or Protogenes. I shall begin at once with this large picture opposite to us, which has the name of Rubens upon it; for there is an air of splendour in every part of it, that is very striking. There seems, also, to be a great deal of action and energy; though I cannot say much for the grace or elegance either of his men or women: he really, however, has made amends in his horses; that one particularly, with the flowing white main, is a most beautiful animal, and, I may add, in the highest condition; a great merit in real horses, and, if I may

judge from this specimen, no less so in those that are painted. You know I have a passion for horses, and I am delighted to see them, according to my notions, so finely represented."

"Rubens," said Mr. Howard, "had the same passion; and as he kept a number of horses, which, probably, were very beautiful, and in high order, he painted them truly after nature. I do not wonder at your being struck with that horse, and with the effect of his white main; nothing can be more brilliant than the touches of light upon it, and upon the foam on his mouth: yet you see those touches, and the whole of that mass of white, are in perfect harmony with the rest of the picture. But you must not neglect that other large picture, which makes a companion to this: it is by Paul Veronese, a painter of the Venetian school, from whom Rubens caught that general air you so justly admire."

"There is indeed," said Mr. Seymour, "a most imposing air of splendour and

magnificence throughout the whole of it: I do not perceive, I must own, any thing of interest or expression, in the very numerous company of well dressed persons he has brought together; but the richness of the dresses, the profusion of ornaments, and, above all, the assemblage of superb buildings, would make a strong impression on me, if I were to see them in reality, just as they appear in this painting: this may not always be a proper criterion, but it is a very natural one for an ignorant man to resort to."

"As you have admired the magic pencil of Rubens in that historical picture," said Mr. Howard, "you must now look at those landscapes by him, which are not less captivating; and first observe this singular and brilliant effect of the sun-beams bursting through a dark wood,"

"It is more than brilliant," replied Mr. Seymour, "it is perfectly dazzling; and a most extraordinary imitation of real light, when broken by leaves and branches. That other picture of the thunder-storm, is not

less striking: nothing can be more finely conceived, or more terrific, than the opposition of such extreme blackness in the clouds that hang over the mountain, to the lightning, and the glaring stream of light, which seems to pour down upon the buildings below it. Such effects in nature strike the most insensible persons, but I should suppose it must be extremely difficult to represent them in painting; the ancients at least appear to have thought it next to impossible, if I may judge from what Pliny (somewhat affectedly) says of Apelles; “*pinxit et quæ pingi non possunt; tonitrua, fulgetra, fulguraque.*”

Mr. Seymour then went on, looking at many of the pictures, but not stopping long at any of them, till he came to one of Claude Lorraine. “This,” said he, after standing some time before it, and examining it with great attention, is what I hardly expected, though I believe you gave me a hint of it when we were looking at the prospect from the hill; and really the view in this picture is not unlike that

real view: it is seen in the same manner between trees; and the river, the bridge, the distant buildings, and hills, are nearly in a similar situation. I have great pleasure in seeing the same soft lights, the same general glow which we admired in the real landscape, represented with such skill, that, now the true splendour of the sun is no longer before us, the picture seems nature itself. This, I imagine, must be the painter you alluded to, when I asked you whether such views were ever painted: what a picture would this be to have in one's sitting-room! to have always before one such an image of fine weather, such a happy mixture of warmth and freshness! a scene where one imagines that every other sense must be charmed, as well as that of seeing! Indeed, Howard, this tends very much to confirm what you have been saying; for, as all the objects here are really charming, they have no need of being separated from what might affect the other senses, by the artist's imitation: I am very sure at least that it is

not necessary to have a painter's eye in order to admire this picture. I fear however, I shall look at nothing else with pleasure, and I hardly know how to quit it."

"You may come to it again by and by," said Mr. Howard, "but do look at this picture of Teniers; and you will own that he has produced (and so have many of the Dutch school,) the most beautiful pictures, by the most exact imitation of the most ugly and disgusting objects in nature: and yet, as I observed before, it is physically impossible that an exact imitation should exhibit qualities not existing in its original."

"I do allow," said Mr. Seymour, after looking at it for some time, "that this is an admirable imitation; and I own likewise, that if what the woman is washing and cleaning, were real tripes, guts, and garbage, the sense of smelling, and animal disgust, would prevent any pleasure I might have (if pleasure there could be) in such a sight. This certainly is merely the

pleasure arising from imitation ; I mean, as far as the hogs-puddings are concerned ; for there are other parts neither ugly nor disgusting : that group of boys, for instance, who are blowing bubbles, I should look at with pleasure in nature ; and many parts of the building are what Hamilton would call picturesque, for they are broken and irregular ; and although they have nothing of beauty, they at least have nothing offensive.

“ You have given this very extraordinary piece of art as an instance, that the most *beautiful* pictures may be produced by the most ugly and disgusting objects : I must say, that if Hamilton grants you this in the strict sense of the word, it will bear very hard upon his distinctions, and indeed upon all distinctions on this subject ; but tell me, has not your eagerness to oppose his new-fangled doctrines, betrayed you into something a little like sophistry ? Is it not clear, that by beautiful, you only mean excellent ? and that in the present case the term would be quite absurd in

any other sense? If so, neither Hamilton, nor any one else will deny that the most beautiful, that is, the most excellent pictures, may be produced by any objects whatever; though I, for one, do most strenuously deny that the most beautiful, that is, the most lovely, pictures, can be produced by the most unlovely objects.

“ These incongruities strike us less, perhaps, in our own language; but how often have you and I been surprised and diverted at the expressions we have heard foreigners make use of, that seemed infinitely too grand for the occasion! If a Frenchman, for instance, were now to come into the room, and we were to shew him this picture, it is a great chance if he did not exclaim,—“ *c’est superbe! c’est magnifique!*” for we have often heard those two words full as singularly applied: and thence, my good friend, you might with equal fairness conclude, that the most superb and magnificent pictures, may be produced by the meanest and most filthy objects. Now, if we were afterwards to

take the same Frenchman to the two large pictures we first looked at, he could not find any stronger terms to express his admiration of them, than superb and magnificent; but if he were an unprejudiced man, he would certainly allow, that those terms distinctly characterized the peculiar excellence and style of those two pictures; while in the case of this Teniers, they were merely strong expressions of praise, without any other meaning.

“ If all this be true, if such expressions often convey nothing more than general commendation, the whole seems to me very simple; there is no longer any question about physical impossibility, or the exhibition of qualities which do not exist in the original. The hog's inside, in this exact imitation, is neither more, nor less beautiful, or magnificent, than a real one in a real back-kitchen; and the picture itself, according to my notions, is neither more nor less entitled to either of those epithets, than any other well-painted picture, without any one circumstance of

beauty, or magnificence. The painter, it is true, has very skilfully distributed his colours, and his lights and shadows, so that all is highly natural; and the harmony of the whole pleases my unpractised eye, now I have been taught to reflect upon it: but I must again repeat, that the term beautiful, applied to a picture without a single beautiful object in it, and with some, like those before you, very ugly and nasty, is used, if not in a licentious, at least in a very vague sense: so I will go back to the Claude, where I know and feel, that the whole, and every part, is beautiful."

"Stay," said Mr. Hamilton, "do not pass by this Magdalen of Guido for mere landscape."

"I did not observe it," said Mr. Seymour, "perhaps from its being hung higher than the rest; and I am much obliged to you for stopping me. Good God! what a difference it makes, when, with the same harmony and softness, there is such exquisite beauty of form! not only in the

face, and in the turn of the body, but where one should less expect it: look at that foot; it has such elegance of shape, and purity, and delicacy of colour, that it almost rivals the face; when the term beautiful is applied to such a picture, how fully do we feel and acknowledge its propriety! If you quit this, Howard, and return to your Teniers, I shall say you have a depraved appetite, that

“Sates itself in a celestial bed,

“And preys on garbage.”

But as I am here for my instruction, I must quit it myself for the present, and look at other pictures. What is that which hangs next to it, with strong harsh lights, and the men looking like ruffians? I see the name is Spagnolet: I dare say it has great charms for connoisseurs, as well as that opposite to it, on the other side of the Magdalen, which I suppose is by the same hand: no, I see there is another name—Michael Angelo Caravaggio: what amazingly deep shadows, and what a singular light strikes upon that

man's shoulder, and then upon the boy's cheek! it is a mixture of mid-day and mid-night: the characters I do not like, and the whole is a strong contrast to the softness and delicacy of that charming Magdalen."

"Let me shew you," said Mr. Howard, "what is as strong a contrast to your other favourite, the Claude, as these are to the Guido: it is this landscape, with banditti, by Salvator Rosa, a painter of a wild original genius, and of whom I am a most enthusiastic admirer." We did not perfectly agree about the last picture I pointed out to you; perhaps I may be more lucky this time: I think at least, you will like it a good deal better than those on each side of the Magdalen."

"I do indeed," said he, "there is a sublimity in this scene of rocks and mountains, savage and desolate as they are; that is very striking: the whole, as you say, is a perfect contrast to the Claude; and it is really curious to look from the one to the other. In that, every thing seems

formed to delight the eye, and the mind of man; in this, to alarm and terrify the imagination: in the Claude, the inhabitants inspire us with ideas of peace, security, and happiness; in this of Salvator, (for I now recollect and feel the full force of those lines I only admired before)—

“Appears in burnish’d arms some savage band;

“Each figure boldly pressing into life,

“And breathing blood, calamity, and strife.”*

In that sweet scene, the recesses amidst fresh woods and streams, seem bowers made for repose and love; in this, they are caves of death, the haunts of wild beasts—

“Or savage men, more dreadful far than they.”

What a stormy, portentous appearance in those clouds, that roll over the dark mountains, and threaten, further on, still greater desolation! while that mild evening sky, and soft tinge upon the distant hills, seem to promise, if possible, still more charming scenes beyond them!”

* The Landscape, page 7, line 88,

“Why, Seymour,” said Mr. Howard, “you talk with more enthusiasm on the subject, than either Hamilton or myself!”

“Where there is so much poetry in pictures,” answered he, it is not necessary to have a painter’s eye to enjoy them; although I am well persuaded, that a knowledge of the art would greatly enhance the pleasure.”

“As you are so much delighted with the poetry of the art,” said Mr. Hamilton, “you must look at these pictures by Nicholas Poussin, a French painter, and one of the brightest ornaments, not only of his own school, but of the art itself. He is one of the most learned and classical of the painters, and equally excellent in figures and in landscape; as I think you will see, when you examine this Bacchanalian.”

“I see at the first glance,” replied Mr. Seymour, “a great deal of beauty, grace, and expression, in the figures; and, as you observed, there is a certain antique and classical character in them, that gives to their grace and beauty a different cast,

from that which I admired in the Magdalen. Without being any judge of the composition of landscape, I admire very much the richness of those trees, with vine-leaves and clusters of grapes mixed with their foliage, and hanging from them in festoons. Such a mixture, besides its real beauty, is particularly striking to an English eye, as it marks a warmer climate and a more luxuriant vegetation than our own, and is therefore perfectly in unison with the scene, where the action may be supposed to have passed: the general glow of the colouring no less happily accords with the subject: indeed, it is in every respect, a most enchanting picture.

“ But I see that the name of Poussin is also on that picture of the crucifixion. I suppose it must be some other painter of the same name, for I never saw any thing more harsh and discordant than the colours appear to my eye, or more completely different from those of the Bacchanalian: and yet,” continued he, “ now I am nearer to it, the expressions are very striking; es-

pecially that of the soldier, who perceives the dead rising from their graves."

"It is more easy," said Mr. Hamilton, "to judge of Poussin (for there is but one historical painter of that name) by his characters and expressions, in which he very uniformly excelled, than by his colouring, in which no one was ever more different from himself; in the present instance, it is possible that these harsh colours, and this strong opposition of them, may have designedly been introduced, from an idea (I hardly think a just one) that they suited the terror of the subject. In that other picture of his—the Deluge—I believe you will be of opinion, that the colouring and the subject are more happily adapted to each other."

"I am indeed," answered Mr. Seymour; "I feel very sensibly, that the sameness and deadness of the general hue, perfectly accords with my conceptions of such a scene: and, as he has shewn in the Bacchanalian, that he knew how to give the most animated glow to his colours, when

the occasion called for it, I must attribute this total absence of all brilliancy and variety, to great judgment and reflection."

"You have, perhaps unknowingly," said Mr. Howard, "been paying a compliment to yourself, in shewing so much admiration of Poussin; for he has been called "Le peintre des gens d'esprit."

"It was indeed unknowingly," replied Mr. Seymour; "but whatever interpretation you may put on it, I cannot help saying, that he seems to deserve his title: but I must tell you, Howard, that one thing strikes me, in consequence of the extreme contrast that I have remarked between many of the pictures; and the rest of them will probably furnish more examples. You say, that between the two extremes of monotony and harshness, lies the grateful medium of grateful irritation, which is called beauty, or picturesque beauty: now, I must say, that this is a most extensive medium; for, among the pictures that we have been looking at, there are some as near as possible to absolute

monotony; and others, which are clearly intended to produce as much irritation, as can well be produced by strong, sudden contrasts, of every kind. It seems to me, therefore, that, according to your system, whatever is not absolute monotony, or absolute discord, is positive beauty, or, if you please, *picturesque* beauty; for that epithet, taken in your sense, only confines the term to visible objects, but makes no other discrimination."

"I flatter myself," said Mr. Howard, "that as you become more conversant with pictures, you will come over to my opinion, and perceive that there is really no such discrimination as Hamilton imagines; I therefore appeal from your present to your future judgment."

"My present judgment," replied Mr. Seymour, "must be very crude, as being formed on what has struck me at the moment; I shall most willingly suspend it, till I am better instructed, which I hope to be in a short time, if I continue picture-hunting with you and Hamilton; and I

assure you, also, that what I have just seen, has amused and interested me much more than I should have expected; probably on account of the discussion that has taken place. At present, indeed, I find I have no relish for many of the pictures which you seem to admire; for unless there be something obviously grand, or beautiful, according to my notions, what you call grandeur or beauty of style, has little effect upon me. I must, however, except these small Dutch pictures; for though the subjects are mean, and the figures without grace or dignity, yet their characters, actions, and expressions, are so true, and the detail of circumstances so distinctly expressed, that I have received great entertainment from several of them, though I did not think it worth while to discuss their merits with you: I have even looked, not only without disgust, but with a degree of pleasure, at some, where the subject was rather of a coarse and a dirty kind. There is a darkish picture a little further on, which seems to be something

of that nature. Now I am nearer to it, I see it is an ox hung up, and the painter's name Rembrandt; who, I conclude, is a Dutchman, though the picture is not so finished as the others. It certainly is very like the thing; and yet, though it is so like, and the subject so offensive, I do not look at it with as much repugnance as I should have expected.

“You certainly are in the right, Howard,” continued Mr. Seymour, “and have accounted for this perfectly well: I cannot, indeed, easily bring myself to call such a picture beautiful; but I do perceive, and with pleasure, the blended variety of mellow and harmonious tints you spoke of, both on the ox itself, on the gloomy window behind, and on the woman leaning over the wicket. Now, I recollect that in coming through the village, we passed by a butcher's shop, where a real ox was hung up much in the same manner; but neither of you stopped to examine it; on the contrary, we all got a little out of the way. Animal disgust, therefore, prevailed in the

one case, and not in the other; and thus far, I think, even you, Hamilton, must allow, that Howard's distinction is just; though you do not agree with him on the point altogether."

"Before I answer you," said Mr. Hamilton, "I beg you will look at this head, and tell me what you think of it."

"What I think of it!" said he, "why, I think it a much more exact, and extraordinary imitation of nature, than any thing I have seen; every line of the countenance, every hair is expressed; it is natural to a degree, that I had no idea the art of painting could arrive at; and I shall not easily forget the name of Denner, which the artist is well justified in having written on it."

"I do not immediately guess," said Mr. Howard, "what is Hamilton's aim in making you look so particularly at this Denner, though, I dare say, he has his motive. I must now beg, in my turn, that you will cast your eye towards that head which hangs on one side of the ox, and is by the same master,

Rembrandt. It is, in one sense, and, I believe, in the truest sense, more natural than the Denner; and as you may doubt my opinion, and think it rather paradoxical, I will mention a passage from one of Sir Joshua Reynold's Discourses, which struck me so forcibly when I first read it, and has since recurred to me on so many occasions, that I dare say I can nearly repeat it.

“The detail of particulars,” says that excellent writer, “which does not assist the expression of the main characteristic, is worse than useless; it is mischievous, as it dissipates the attention, and draws it from the principal point. It may be remarked, that the impression which is left on our mind, even of things which are familiar to us, is seldom more than their general effect; beyond which, we do not look in recognizing such objects. To express this in painting, is to express what is congenial and natural to the mind of man, and what gives him, by reflection, his own mode of conceiv-

ing. The other presupposes *nicety* and
 “*research*, which are only the business of
 “the curious and attentive, and therefore
 “does not speak to the general sense of
 “the whole species; in which common,
 “and, as I may so call it, mother tongue,
 “every thing grand and comprehensive
 “must be uttered.”

“If you will apply this masterly obser-
 vation to the two heads before us, you will
 see the reason why Rembrandt holds a
 much higher place in the scale of painters,
 than Denner.”

“Nothing can be more striking and con-
 vincing, than the passage you have just
 quoted,” said Mr. Seymour; “and though,
 in spite of reason and authority, I still
 cannot help feeling a preference for this
 highly finished head, yet I am persuaded
 that you and Sir Joshua are right. Indeed,
 the same sort of reflection has frequently
 occurred to me, in respect to another kind
 of painting with which I am much more
 conversant, the *pictura loquens*, as poetry
 has been called. The descriptions, for
 instance, in Thomson’s Seasons, are ad-

mirable in their style; but, compared with those which we meet with in poets of a higher cast, and not professedly descriptive, I own they, in some respects, put me in mind of Denner; for Thomson seems to have watched all the detail of circumstances, one after another, in the most minute manner, in order to describe them as minutely; and, therefore, according to Sir Joshua's excellent remark, (a remark equally applicable to both arts,) he does not so much express what is congenial and natural to the mind of man, as what presupposes research and nicety. I must not, however, be unjust to Thomson: his subject often required minute description; and at least he is far from having the coldness which often accompanies minuteness; on the contrary, to express myself in painters' language, he has great glow of colouring, and great force of light and shadow."

"As you seem," said Mr. Howard, "tacitly to allow, that Denner has some of the defects which attend minuteness, let me shew you a most uncommon union; that of

Rembrandt's great principles of light and shadow, with the detail of Denner. If you will come this way, you will see it in that picture of Gerard Dow. Do not, however, go too close, at first, but look from this place at the general effect: you who begin to feel some relish for the mellow harmonious tints of Rembrandt, may here admire the same excellencies in this work of his scholar. I will now allow you to come quite close; and I beg you will examine the minute but mellow style of finishing, which is displayed in the woman's face and hands, in the sleeping child, the basket-work of the cradle, and, above all, in the old velvet chair; part of which you plainly see has been rubbed threadbare by long use. To raise your wonder still higher, I must desire you will look at it with this glass; though, to say the truth, the trial is too severe; for the glass is one I make use of for examining gems, and is a very powerful magnifier."

"This is surprising, indeed," said Mr. Seymour: "I saw, with my naked eye, how admirably he had represented the

worn-out part of the velvet; but, with this assistance, one distinguishes each of the bare threads, so as really to follow, in a manner, the process of the loom. You may now take your glass again, for though it is very curious to examine it with such a magnifier, it is much more pleasant to look at it without. I am afraid the Denner will suffer by comparison with this exquisite piece of art; let us, however, return to it. Yes," continued he, "I do perceive there is a crudeness of imitation, compared with the last—but, Hamilton, you have been quite silent all this time; I believe Howard's suspicion was unjust, or, at least, that hitherto you agree with him in all he has advanced."

"I do most entirely agree with him," replied Mr. Hamilton; "for I am not so apt to quarrel with his distinctions, as he is with mine; and that distinction which he made between these three different styles of painting, is, in my opinion, a very just one. But, tell me, which of the three do you prefer?"

“That of the picture with the child and cradle,” answered he, “in which the detail, though highly interesting, is not forced upon your notice. I am not sure, however, whether its being on so much smaller a scale than the head, may not be one cause of my preference. I know, at least, that when I have been shewn a view in a concave mirror, I have been highly pleased with what I had looked at with indifference in nature; and, again, when I took my eyes off it, the real scene has looked comparatively coarse. Perhaps, therefore, the cradle picture may have the same sort of advantage over the head, as a view in the mirror has over the real one, and on this principle—that in both of them the detail, though not lessened in quantity by the diminution of the scale, appears from it more soft and delicate.”

“On that principle,” said Mr. Hamilton, “you then will certainly allow, that the real carcass of an ox reflected in such a mirror, would lose part of its disgusting appearance, though the detail would be

preserved ; and still more so, if the mirror should be one of the dark kind, which are often made use of for viewing scenery."

" I allow it," said Mr. Seymour.

" Let us, then," continued Mr. Hamilton, " apply all this to painting. If, for instance, the ox in that Rembrandt, which (as in the case of the dark mirror) is of a lower tone than nature, and in which the detail is skilfully suppressed, were painted in the same full light, and with the same minute exactness as this head of Denner, you would probably turn with some disgust from such a crude, undisguised display of raw flesh. But, again, suppose instead of being, as it now is, hardly a fourth part of the size of a real ox, it were as large as nature, and still every part thus distinctly expressed as if seen quite close, I am not sure that you would not keep at the same distance from it, as you did from the shambles in the village."

" I easily conceive," said Mr. Seymour, " that it makes a very great difference whether you are close to a large disgusting

object, or at some distance from it, even supposing every other sense than that of seeing out of the question; but did painters never paint shambles, and such objects on a large scale?

“They did,” said Mr. Hamilton; “but then they imagined the spectator to be at such a distance, as easily to take in the whole together; and consequently, in the usual manner of looking at such objects, not likely to distinguish the minute parts: they would therefore be untrue to nature, had they made them distinct. Denner has supposed you to be quite close to the object, and intent upon every particular: his choice, therefore, is in some measure unnatural, though he has great merit in the execution. If you put all these circumstances together, I think you will perceive, that even without having recourse to the operation of the other senses, we may account for the difference between the effect of disgusting objects in reality, and in pictures; in which last, not only the size of objects, and their detail, are in general very

much lessened, but also the scale both of light and colour, is equally lowered.

“ I must here put you in mind of a circumstance, that I dare say you will remember, though you could little expect to hear it introduced on this occasion. Do not you recollect calling upon me some time ago, when I was looking over some prints? They were by this very master, Rembrandt; one of them was of a very ugly woman, in a filthy and indecent attitude, from which I remember you turned with extreme disgust: yet, that was merely a little black and white print! what then would have been your disgust, if, upon entering my room, you had seen a picture of the same beastly creature as large as life, and the whole detail as distinctly coloured and expressed, as in this head of Denner! I believe it would have been only less, than if you had seen the real object. Æschylus, you know, makes one of his characters say *δεδορκα κτυπων*; I think such a representation, would justify the application of the same daring figure to

another sense: I am sure, at least, the impression would have been so powerful, that you would scarcely have felt any "mild pleasure of vision from the blended variety of mellow and harmonious tints," scarcely have been able to "view them with abstract and impartial attention," though they would have been "separated in the painter's imitation."

"And now, I think, you must have had nearly enough of this discussion; and very probably may imagine, from all you have seen and heard of the Dutch masters, that they never painted any but low, and those often filthy subjects. It is true, that they seldom attempted the higher style of the art; yet still, they did not always confine themselves to the lowest: and I should like to shew you a picture of Wovermans which, used to hang at yonder corner next to the saloon. I do not mean that the subject of this, or of any of his other pictures, is at all elevated, except as compared with the other painters of his school: they generally painted boors and peasants; but Wover-

mans often represented the most dignified characters he was acquainted with; that is the nobility of the country, handsomely dressed, and mounted on beautiful horses, and occupied in the gay diversions of hunting, hawking," &c.

When they came up to the picture, Mr. Seymour looked very significantly at Mr. Hamilton; "I begin to suspect," said he, "that you had your reasons for bringing me almost the whole length of the gallery, to look at this picture. I now recollect, when we first began this discussion soon after leaving the hovel, that I asked Howard, whether handsome well-dressed men and women, and handsome horses with gay caparisons, did not admit of effects of light and shadow, and harmonious colouring, as well as gypsies, asses, and panniers: and I rejoice to have my questions so satisfactorily answered. These are, indeed, very beautiful horses, and full of sprightly and graceful action; their riders, of both sexes, are pleasing figures; the whole scenery too, the portico, the gardens, the foun-

tains, and the handsome country houses in different parts, have all a very rich and cheerful appearance. I am quite glad to find, that what, according to my ideas, is beautiful, and highly ornamented, may be expressed in painting, as well as what is so like dirt and ugliness, that it requires some practice to distinguish in what the difference consists: had I the liberty of picking out a few pictures from the collection for my own amusement, this certainly would be one of them."

"And with much reason," said Mr. Hamilton; "for where great excellence in the art is employed on pleasing objects, the superior interest will be felt by every observer; but especially by those who are less conversant in the mechanical part. On that account, I am persuaded, that the two pictures of Panini in the next room, which Howard and I have both mentioned to you, will give as much pleasure to you, as they do to us; particularly that of the inside of St. Peter's."

“As it is getting rather late,” said Mr. Seymour, “and as we have nearly finished the gallery, I think we had better try the experiment.”

“If you will give me leave,” said Mr. Howard, “I shall commit you to Hamilton’s care; I know the two pictures by heart, having often seen them in the house of their late possessor; and I wish to examine a few pictures in the lower part of the gallery, that are new to me. I believe, however, I am doing an imprudent thing; for, I have no doubt, that Hamilton will take this opportunity of instilling some of his doctrines.”

“I shall not neglect it, most certainly,” said he; “and I rather think the opportunity will be favourable.”

Mr. Howard then returned to the further part of the gallery, while the two other friends entered the saloon together; on the opposite side of which, and quite alone, hung the picture of the inside of St. Peter’s.

As they advanced towards it, Mr. Hamilton observed, with great pleasure; the admiration of his friend; who stopped before it a long while, without saying a word. When at last he began to speak: "I have often heard," said he, "of the beauty and magnificence of this building, the grandest, I believe, of any modern temple, or perhaps of any that ever existed: I have often longed to see the original, and just before the French got possession of Italy, I had determined to go to Rome. This picture makes me feel still greater regret at the disappointment, and at the same time, in some degree, consoles me for it; but I cannot help reflecting with pain, that a building, which requires such constant attention and expence to keep it in repair, may now perhaps, by degrees, become a mere ruin: all that delightful symmetry, that correspondence of all the parts, that profusion of gilding and of precious marbles, may, in a few years, be broken and defaced, and covered with dirty stains and incrustations; in short, all its high finished ornaments

totally destroyed: and then, perhaps, this picture, a frail memorial of such a work, may be the only one existing of its former splendour and magnificence."

"I wish your fears may not be too well founded," said Mr. Hamilton; "and I own I feel just as you do: now, if Howard were here, he could comfort you, though I cannot; for, according to his system, it will become still more beautiful, when it is in the state that you have just been describing with so much horror."

"You cannot mean this seriously," said the other; "you cannot mean, that Howard would assert, that when all the circumstances which now give beauty to this building are destroyed, it will then become more beautiful!"

"No," replied Mr. Hamilton, "not in those terms; he is not a man to give such a hold to his adversary; but it is a conclusion fairly to be drawn from what he has asserted. He must acknowledge, (for nothing is more generally acknowledged) that a building when in ruins, is more picturesque than

it was in its entire state ; therefore, according to him, it must be more beautiful, for he says, that the picturesque is merely that kind of beauty which belongs exclusively to the sense of vision ; in other words that it is the beautiful in visible objects.

“ You have, indeed, made good use of this inside of St. Peter’s,” said Mr. Seymour ; “ and I must own, it has befriended you extremely in this discussion. Nothing has so much tended to convince me of the want of a distinction ; for though I have never paid much attention to the strict use of the word, I have perpetually heard it observed, that ruins are more picturesque than entire buildings : now, when I look at that building, there seems to be something so very contradictory in the idea of its becoming more beautiful by destruction, that I must either deny that it will become more picturesque, or give a very different sense to those words. But is it possible that in such a case Howard can really think there is no distinction ?”

“I am so thoroughly convinced, that there is one myself,” said Mr. Hamilton, “and the whole appears to me so clear, that I can scarcely believe him to be quite in earnest. No one has a more quick, and accurate perception of distinctions than our friend; and I once hoped he would have employed his talents in throwing new lights on this distinction: but, unfortunately, he has exercised all his ingenuity in trying to prove, that youth and age, freshness and decay, what is rough, broken, and rudely irregular, and what has that symmetry, continuity of parts, and last finishing polish, which the artist (whether divine or human) manifestly intended, are all to be considered as belonging to one general class. Therefore for instance, not only this building, in its present state, or in ruins, but this building, and the inside of a broken hovel, would be indifferently either beautiful or picturesque; and either of these terms, would not only suit a Paris or a Belisarius, but a Paris and a common old beggar.”

“ I can allow a great deal,” said Mr. Seymour, “ for the manner in which painters view objects, and consider them with respect to their art, and consequently apply terms to them, which others would hardly use; except those, perhaps, who, without being artists, may have acquired their ideas and language: but tell me, Hamilton, is it possible that when that roof, with all its brilliant ornaments, shall be rent and broken; when the gilding, the marbles, the rich frizes, and cornices, become stained with moisture, and are mouldering away, the painter will admire them more than when in perfect preservation, or think them more suited to his art? But why do I ask: is not this a picture? and does it not delight you and Howard, as much as it does me, and such untutored eyes as mine?—But I see Howard is just come in; and I shall not be sorry to hear you discuss this point together.”

“ Well, Seymour,” said Mr. Howard, when he came up to them, “ are not these

three admirable pictures? I hardly know so beautiful a head as that of the St. John, in the Parmeggiano; and the Virgin and child in the upper part, have a fine mixture of grace and dignity: as to the two Paninis, I can scarcely tell which I prefer; for that amazing assemblage of columns in the opposite picture, the *selva di colonne*, as the Italians call it, is no less beautiful in its style, than this richly ornamented inside of St. Peter's.*

“To say the truth,” said Mr. Seymour, “we have as yet only looked at this one picture.”

“How, Seymour,” said the other! “all this time at one picture! The love of painting has made a surprising progress with you! but I fancy I prophesied very justly when you left me.”

“You did, indeed,” said Mr. Seymour; “Hamilton has made good use of his time,

* The two Paninis, are in the collection of the Marquis of Abercorn, and each of them singly occupies a side of the drawing-room at the Priory.

and of this picture ; and, I can tell you, it is as dangerous to quit a disciple, as a mistress : your rival has been very pressing ; and I wish I may not have given him too much encouragement. I am glad, however, you are come, as I had just begun to question him on a point, which I wish to hear discussed with you : it is, whether painters, or connoisseurs like yourselves, would continue to admire such a building as this, if all that I admire were broken and defaced, as much, or even more, than in its present entire and finished state.”

“ I perceive you look to me for an answer,” said Mr. Hamilton, “ probably as I am the person to whom you originally put the question ; and I know you rather love to promote a little altercation between Howard and me ; but upon this particular point, I think we shall not differ very materially. It certainly has been imagined, that because ruins are more picturesque than entire buildings, they are consequently preferred to them by painters : I think, however, the idea is unfounded ; for I be-

lieve there are at least as many perfect buildings as there are ruins, in the works of the most eminent artists. If, then, painters themselves balance between the two, it is very natural that you, when you look at that picture, should think with horror of any possible change; and not conceive how the most prejudiced person, could make the smallest comparison between the building you now see, and any future state of it: but the fact is, that however striking the effect of ruins, when they are fully mellowed by time, the first beginning of decay is no less odious to the painter, than to the rest of mankind. When that gilded roof, those finished ornaments, those precious marbles, shall first begin to be soiled and broken, while the greatest part of them, will still remain perfect, each crack, each stain, will obviously destroy so much beauty; that is, so much of its original character: and this incongruity continues, till the whole, by degrees, assumes a new, and totally distinct character. Such a building, is not a phœnix, that arises with renewed,

yet similar, beauty and brilliancy from destruction: on the contrary, it is changed by a slow process, into something totally different from its former self; and that butterfly there, with his painted wings, is not more unlike the chrysalis from which it proceeded, than the St. Peter's you here see in its glory, is unlike the St. Peter's, which some future age, (I hope a far distant one) will admire as a ruin."

"I like the first part of your explanation so well," said Mr. Howard, "that I will not quarrel with you about the end of it; and, indeed, I want you both to return to the gallery as soon as you have looked at the two other pictures; for, if I am not mistaken, I shall shew you a fruit-piece, which you will prefer to any of Baptist, or Van Huÿssun."

When they had returned to the gallery (though not till they had paid proper attention to the other Fanini, and the Parmegiano), they found that the servant had brought in a quantity of beautiful fruit; and among the rest, some remarkably fine

bunches of grapes: these with their leaves, and the branches on which they hung, were suspended over a small wooden frame in such a manner, that the frame was concealed, while the fruit and foliage were displayed to the greatest advantage. They were all delighted with the fruit itself, and with its arrangement; and they agreed that nothing could be more truly beautiful than the whole effect.

“I desire,” said Mr. Howard, “that you will look at the bread as well as the fruit, for according to Hamilton’s doctrines, there never was so truly picturesque a loaf; at least I never saw one so full of cracks, roughnesses, and inequalities: all of which I acknowledge are very inviting to the taste, whatever effect they may produce on the pleasures of vision distinctly considered.”

“I am much obliged to you,” said Mr. Hamilton, “for putting me in mind of a passage I was reading a little time ago, and which, I believe, in all our disputes I never mentioned to you: you will be surprised to

hear what a powerful ally I have met with, in support of my distinction; no less a one than Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, emperor and philosopher! The passage is in his third book; he there describes such a loaf as this, with a comment not very unlike your's, and afterwards mentions several other objects, which, together with the circumstances attending them, we should call picturesque; such as the bursting of figs when over-ripe; the appearance of olives when just approaching to decay; the heads of corn bent downwards; the over-hanging brows of a lion; the foam of a wild boar; all of which, he observes (together with many other things of the same kind) though far from beautiful to the eye, yet, if considered distinctly, and as they follow the course of nature, have an ornamental and alluring effect."

"You will gain but little from this passage," answered Mr. Howard; "I remember it very well, and am not afraid of your pretended ally. Antoninus, you know, was a stoic, and the whole turns on the stoical

doctrines about nature ; they held, that the productions of nature, and their accessaries, were all *καλα* ; that is, beautiful in the general sense, on account of their fitness, though they might not be *εὐεῖδία*, that is, beautiful to the eye ; and you must recollect, that they thought much less highly of the pleasures of vision than we do, and held them indeed below the concern of a philosophic mind. If you were to read the whole treatise, you would find, that every thing refers to those doctrines ; but, I dare say, *you* discover very clearly in this passage, the first dawn of the distinction you are so fond of ; and consider Antoninus to have been as truly the herald of the picturesque, as Bacon was of the true philosophy."

"I may, perhaps, have indulged some fancies of that kind," replied Mr. Hamilton : "indeed, the passage was pointed out to me by our excellent friend Winterton, for, as you very well know, I am no great Grecian, and the book itself is out of my course of reading. He thought the passage curious, and that it contained an allusion,

though a faint one, to the distinction which you deny. I remember, too, that he was much diverted at the good emperor's panegyric on kissing crust; and he put me in mind of a scene we had witnessed together, when a French gentleman, before a pretty large company at breakfast, very openly expressed his disappointment, at not finding any crust of that kind: we had observed him turning the loaf round several times; at last he exclaimed, "Ma foi je le tourne, le retourne, et n'y vois rien d'appetissant!" But, to return from this Frenchman to the emperor: I believe, as you say, that he meant to account for the pleasure he received, solely from his stoic doctrines, and yet, as, according to those doctrines, all the productions of nature universally, (even those that are baneful, as poisons) were to be admired, why should he select and specify these particular objects, as having something *peculiarly* ornamental and attractive? I think I can account for this selection, and, as you may suppose, in a manner that accords with my distinction.

The emperor, you know, was a dilettante in painting, as well as in philosophy, having actually studied the practical part of the art under Diognotus : this would naturally make him attend to those objects which have an effect in painting, such as the brow of the lion, the foam of the boar : and that the ancients were struck with the effect of foam in a picture, we may infer from the story of Apelles ; which, by the way, is a very good instance of accident having performed, what design could not. You remember, that after trying in vain to paint the foam of a horse in the regular way, he threw his sponge at the picture in despair ; and by that lucky accident produced an effect of foam, which was the admiration of all who saw it. I am very fond of this anecdote, for it agrees with my doctrine, that accident is a principal agent in producing picturesque circumstances."

"I will own," said Mr. Seymour, "that I should have some scruple in making accident so very active an agent ; for, according to its etymology, which, I think, should

always be attended to, accident signifies what falls, or befalls, from the effect of some unknown cause; the use therefore which you seem inclined to make of it, appears to me (*con rispetto parlando*) rather unphilosophical; you may say, perhaps that one need not be so very strict in conversation; but the history of our sensations, and whatever relates to it, is a subject so truly philosophical, that even in common discourse I had rather consider it as such, and not get into a habit of turning effects into causes."

"And yet," replied Mr. Hamilton, "from our very limited knowledge, how often are we obliged to consider effects as causes! I really think, as we make Fortune a goddess, and place her in heaven, Accident may be allowed to become an agent upon earth. Perhaps, too, if we were to examine into the rights of the universally acknowledged agent Nature, she might possibly be degraded from a cause into an effect: in short, I have been so much accustomed, however unphilosophically, to

give accident an active employment, that I should be quite at a loss without its assistance. All I can do for you is, to imitate what I have seen done in Italy by the writers of operas, though from motives which certainly have nothing to do with philosophy; they begin with professing, that although the words "*fato, fortuna,*" &c. are made use of, nothing is to be understood contrary to the true Catholic faith. I am ready to make the same sort of profession; and now, with your leave, will go on; only premising, that as by nature, I mean the constant and regular effect of an unknown cause; so by accident, I mean the inconstant, and irregular effect, of a cause equally unknown.

"If then the emperor were present, I think I could account to him for the pleasure he received from the objects he mentions, much better than he has done by his stoic doctrines; and yet, in some measure, according to his own expressions. You translate τα ἐπιγινόμενα τοῖς φύσει γινόμενοις, the productions of nature, and their accessa-

ries; I dare say, very justly: now I conceive that the φυσικὰ γινόμενα may refer to what might be called the usual and regular course, either of nature or of art (for the emperor clearly gives one example from the latter) and the ἐπιγινόμενα to the effects of accident.* Thus, for instance, the baker (as Antoninus observes) designs to make the bread of a regular form, according to the principles of his art; accident gives it a broken and irregular appearance, by which it becomes picturesque, and likewise *appetissant*; or, as the stoical epicure gravely expresses himself, προθυμίαν προς την τροφήν ἰδίως διακινεῖ. The fig becomes ripe in the regular course of nature; it bursts in various ways from the operation of accident. Olives ripen in the same regular manner; but accident often makes them drop before they are ripe, and then gives them that peculiar appearance in decay, which the emperor was struck with. The

* It so happens, (and aptly enough for the sound at least) that Stephens interprets ἐπιγίνεται supervenit, magis tamen proprie accidit.

same may be said of corn: its regular growth is upright; accident bends it in a thousand directions. The brow of the lion is always a marked feature of nature; but the effect of passions, which are the accidents of the mind, makes it infinitely more striking; and Antoninus might very possibly think of that famous line of Homer, which describes the lion drawing down his brow in anger. The foam of the wild boar is also a mark of passion, and consequently has a stronger effect on the imagination. All that he says, too, of the pleasure we receive from looking at those objects in reality, which we have been used to admire in painting, and of that which we receive from viewing the strongly marked lines of age, as well as the loveliness of youth, shews that he examined objects with a painter's eye, however stoically he might account for the pleasure they gave him.

“ But let us suppose, that his master Diognotus (or any painter of an enquiring mind, but not addicted, like Antoninus, to

a particular sect) had been to account for the pleasure he received from such objects as the emperor has described; I think he very naturally would have first reflected on the pleasure they gave him, when he was imitating them in his own art; and thence have been led to enquire, what were the circumstances, which made them so particularly suited to that art. He would have found that they were suited to it, by reason of their strongly marked, and peculiar character; by their sudden, and irregular variation of form, and correspondent lights and shadows; and often (as in the decaying olives) by their peculiar tints: that these, in many cases, arose from accident; in others, from natural conformation; and that in most cases, accident seemed to increase peculiarity of character. He might then reflect, (as Antoninus does) that all such objects were far from being beautiful; and he might also make a further reflection, which Antoninus does not make, but which the art of painting might well have suggested—that they were equally far from insipid

ugliness ; that is, from the character of numberless objects, alike uninteresting to the painter, and to the rest of mankind : that therefore, they formed a separate class, highly suited to his art, but of a suitability, clearly to be accounted for from their distinct qualities.

“ Thus the painter might have reasoned : while the philosopher, even supposing the whole of these reflections had come into his mind, as part of them seems to have done, would have thought himself guilty of heresy, if he had thus accounted for his feelings ; and consequently Antoninus, though he felt like a painter, reasoned like a stoic. If he were present, I should pursue the subject much further ; but as he is not, I will spare you.”

“ Many, many thanks to you for your forbearance,” said Mr. Seymour ; “ for though I like your different comments upon Antoninus’s text, and at another time should not have been sorry to prolong the discussion, I really think we may as well taste the fruit and the loaf which have given

rise to it: and, I must say, that it would be difficult to find two other men in all England, who, after such a walk, with such tempting objects before them, would have entered into a long discussion on their visible qualities and effects."

Mr. Seymour's advice was immediately followed; and, after making a most delicious repast (for every thing was as delightful to the taste as to the eye) the three friends walked towards the garden.

They stood some time looking at the view from the house, the distant objects in which, were nearly the same as those from the hill, but less happily accompanied: when Mr. Hamilton, addressing himself to Mr. Howard, "You cannot imagine," said he, "what a loss there is in that group of trees, of which my old friend the clergyman was speaking. I can shew you very nearly where it stood: you see where there is a sinking in those hills to the left; from about this point where we stand, the trees just intersected that part; and as they rose a great deal above the horizon, and spread

very much at top, you may imagine how well they must have divided this long continued view. You will immediately perceive, too, that the noble reach of the river in the second distance, with the bridge, the town, and the hills beyond, came in to the right of the group; and being separated by it from the general view, formed quite a picture. The composition was most perfect from that window of the drawing-room; but from many of the other windows, the glitter of the water and of the buildings on a fine evening like this, was seen between the stems, and through the branches, in a manner that would have enchanted you with its brilliancy and variety. You too, I know, would have admired the terrace and the balustrade, with all their enrichments; for this piece of grass, was a garden in the old Italian style; and there is no saying what a value these rich and strongly marked objects in the fore-ground, gave to the soft colouring of the distance: you would have been no less pleased with the numberless gradations of tints, begin-

ning at the massy balusters with their accompaniments, and the forcible effect of their light and shadow when the sun darted obliquely through them; then going on to the high group of trees, near which, I remember, there were some old cypresses, and ever-green oaks; and thence to the more general glow on that fine expanse of country, quite to the pearly hue of the most distant boundary. I am well persuaded, that all these striking circumstances in the fore-ground have been destroyed, for the purpose of making this stiffly levelled slope; and as the level of the trees, would not agree with that of the new made ground, they of course were sacrificed."

"I perfectly conceive the effect of all the objects you have described," said Mr. Howard, "and regret the loss of them as much as you can. I suppose, too, that the canal I see in the lawn, is another improvement; and that it was once the river your old friend at the parsonage spoke of."

"Exactly so," said Mr. Hamilton; "it is a tributary stream, and no inconsiderable

one, to the large river beyond. We had better go down to it now, for, I believe, it is our nearest way."

They then passed through a close shrubbery and a plantation, when the whole of the serpentine river, with its regular curves, appeared in all its nakedness and formality.

"If I may judge," said Mr. Seymour, "from all you have said, and from your looks now, you have both of you the greatest contempt for this water; and I must acknowledge, (for you have made me perceive it more than I used to do) that there is something of tameness and monotony about it: but surely there is in the whole scene, a great look of neatness and of high polish, and that is no small point."

"I allow it," said Mr. Howard; "but not so great a one, as to justify the exclusion of more essential qualities. By way of illustrating, this point let me remind you of our friend Lacy: nothing can be more highly polished than his conversation, as far as high polish consists in the absence of all

roughness; you grew very sick of it, however, towards the end of the week we passed with him last spring: how then should you like to pass your life with a man, whose ideas have one uniform flow, without the least energy or variety? He is to the mind, what this place is to the eye."

"You might equally have made the comparison," said Mr. Seymour, "between his own place and his mind; for it is laid out exactly in the same style with this: he had noble disputes with you both, and particularly with Hamilton, about his improvements: but as at that time I felt no great interest in the subject, I did not much attend to them. I remember, however, that one of his great arguments was, that "his object was beauty alone, and that the improvers of Mr. Brown's school, had nothing to do with the picturesque." Had I then been as much initiated in your doctrines as I am at present, I should have paid more attention to what was going forward: indeed, I probably should not have recollect-

ed even that one sentence, if Lacy had not so frequently repeated it."

"That one sentence," said Mr. Hamilton, "constitutes the whole of their attack, and their defence; and I am glad you have mentioned it, as it has been thought to contain some argument; but the sophistry of it is so easily pointed out, that you will hardly conceive how it can have imposed on any one. You will observe, that in the first member of this little sentence, beauty is employed to signify whatever pleases, without regard to the manner; for they do not profess to adopt any particular definition, or limitation of the word; and consequently it may include whatever is grand, or picturesque: but then, in the second member, picturesque is used as something contrasted to beauty, which thus, by implication, is confined to one peculiar set of pleasing objects. Now, if the meaning were expressed in words that did not admit of ambiguity, the sophistry would appear at once; for thus it would stand—

“the effects which we of Mr. Brown’s school mean to produce, are only such as proceed from verdure, smoothness, and flowing lines, which in our idea constitute beauty of scenery; we have nothing to do with irritation of any kind, or degree; or with any of those sources of pleasure, which arise from sudden variety and intricacy, from the contrast of wild and broken scenery, of rocks, cataracts, or abruptness of any kind; or from what is called picturesque composition.”

“It must be owned,” said Mr. Seymour, “that you have translated them out of their sophistry into plain English: I question, however, whether you will get them to abide by your translation; for it would confine them within stricter limits than they probably would approve of.”

“I believe they are aware of it,” said Mr. Hamilton; “and certainly such a clear explicit declaration, might put a professed improver of that school, into a perplexing situation. Supposing, for instance, that he were consulted on the improvements of

an extensive place, full of picturesque scenery; but where no art had been employed, though some judicious alterations and communications were wanting: he of course would not like to refuse such an engagement; and yet, if he were a conscientious man, he ought to tell his employer, "all this is out of my line, if you intend to preserve the present wild style of scenery, for I have nothing to do with the picturesque. If you would like to have every thing smoothed and polished, those irregular trees and thickets made into clumps, the grounds surrounded by a belt, and a gravel walk carried regularly round the whole, I can do it for you according to the most approved method; but as to that rude water-fall, those rocks, the manner of approaching them, and the sort of wild path which you wish to make amidst their intricacies, I really can give you no advice whatever: they are grand, as well as picturesque, and we confine ourselves entirely to the beautiful."

"Of which," said Mr. Howard, "the scene before us, is a complete specimen."

“Seymour,” said Mr. Hamilton, “you will have hard work, if you attempt to defend this piece of water; Howard and I are firmly united against you, and I am inclined to speak more strongly than he has done; for I remember it in its original, but by no means unpolished state. It was a charming natural meadow, perfectly free from every thing that looked slovenly; in which, however, several groups of trees, mixed with a few thorns and hollies, had been very judiciously, at least very luckily, suffered to remain. I used to delight in walking along the old path-way: for the most part, it kept near the water, and every now-and-then passed through one of the thickets, where for a moment you lost sight of the river; the banks of which, though neither high nor rocky, possessed a great deal of pleasing variety. I recollect particularly one projecting part, that was higher than the rest, and most beautifully fringed; and where there were some large stones, on the side, and at the bottom of the bank: I remember it the more, because, from my

favourite window in the drawing-room, it appeared with its beautiful reflections, just under the branches of that group of trees, which the old rector and I so much regret. Now, the trees, the bank, the path-way, and the thickets, are all gone; and you see how they are replaced, by those clumps, that naked building, and shaven bank."

"I do perceive," said Mr. Seymour, "that upon this point, you and Howard are perfectly of the same mind, and I shall not contend against

"The Percy and the Douglas join'd together." indeed I myself should certainly have preferred the path-way, and all the accompaniments you have described, to the present bare banks; but really you two, seem quite worn down with this last part of our walk. You bring to my mind a French novel* I was lately reading, in which a fairy inflicts a singular punishment on a young damsel, of a lively, volatile disposition: she places

* *Le Palais de la Verité*, by Madame de Genlis.

her in the midst of an immense smooth, green lawn, where she forces her by her enchantments, to be constantly walking a slow, regular pace: now, I think an eternal walk, round and round the banks of one of these serpentine rivers, would be no bad punishment in another world for picturesque sinners."

"It would be a most terrifying one," said Mr. Howard; "but I believe our present purgatory is nearly over; for if I am not mistaken, that line of Scotch firs, announces the head which it was meant to conceal. I guessed right," continued he, when they got up to it; "I am glad to see, however, that the improvements have proceeded no further, for below, the banks have not been touched. I now beg you will look at the contrast between nature, and such art, as has been displayed here; and observe, at the same time, how very little the quality of smoothness, and evenness of surface, has to do with beauty. Look at the reflection of that glaring white building, and of the shaven banks in the

still water above; we call that water *smooth*, because we *perceive* its surface to be smooth and even, though the impression which all these harsh and edgy reflections of light produce on the eye, is analogous to that which roughness produces on the touch: I do not know how it affects you; but to me the reflection of that building is so irritating, that I can hardly bear to look at it for any time. Now, pray turn round, and look at that agitated stream, flowing between broken and sedgy banks, and indistinctly reflecting the waving foliage which hangs over it: *that* we call rough, because we know from habitual observation, that its impression on the eye is produced by uneven surfaces: at the same time, can any thing be more soft and harmonious than the impression itself, or more analogous to what the most grateful and nicely varied smoothness would be to the touch?"

"Howard," cried Mr. Hamilton, "this is an excellent masqued battery; and Seymour can hardly guess how dextrously it is pointed against me: for I entirely agree

with you, that the upper scene is harsh, and the lower one soft and harmonious. Your point is to prove, that smoothness is not a principle of the beautiful; nor roughness of the picturesque: then in order to make it appear that smoothness may be harsh and irritating, and analogous to what roughness is to the touch, you shew us a piece of still smooth water, and a glaring white building reflected in it; which proves nothing more, than what every body will acknowledge, namely, that a strong light is irritating, and that white objects are those which reflect light most strongly: for the water itself, my good friend, is only a mirror, and no more responsible for the qualities of the objects which it reflects, than any other mirror. If a very perfect looking-glass were shewn to you, would you deny that the clearness and evenness of its surface were beauties, because a Bardolph, with his flaming carbuncled face in full sun-shine, happened to be standing opposite to it? This water is the looking-glass, and that building (though if it had

been brick, my comparison would have been more perfect) is Bardolph.

“ But to shew you in what a peculiar degree, clear and still water accords with beautiful scenery, and beautiful objects, I will put you in mind of a favourite description of your’s in Milton,—that of the clear, smooth lake, in which Eve first views her own image : you surely must feel, that, independently of its being a mirror, the least ruffling of its surface would destroy the idea of that soft repose, which, above all things, is congenial to beauty. What most accords with beauty next to stillness in water (and in many respects, perhaps, in at least an equal degree,) is gentle motion ; and now, having stated some of my principles, let us examine what you call the rough scene below.

“ In the first place I must take notice of one expression of your’s in talking of it, which shews that you were thinking more of pointing your battery against me, than of the scene before you : it diverted me to hear you call that an *agitated* stream,

because it was to be a principal feature in the rough scene, and yet describe it as *flowing* between its *sedgy* banks; and you see it does flow very gently where the reflections and the sedges begin; for here, immediately below us, as far as the effect of the cascade extends, and where the water is really agitated, there are neither sedges nor reflections. The broken banks, too, you see are disguised and softened by the foliage that hangs over them, and by the sedges below; and certainly the indistinct reflections of such a bank in a flowing stream, is a very mild example of roughness, and much more suited to Claude, than Salvator. If the fairy, whom Seymour just now was speaking of, would only touch the two banks with her wand, and make them change their places, without changing the water—the scene above—own the truth Howard—would then be all softness, harmony, and variety; and this below, would be harsh, edgy, and insipid.

“ Another thing,” continued Mr. Hamilton, “ I must mention: you have laid no slight stress on the analogy between the sight and the touch; there cannot be a more evident one; I think, however, there is this very essential difference as to the manner in which the two senses are affected: sharp, or rugged surfaces of any kind, are *always* unpleasant to the *touch*—

“ ’Tis pain in each degree;”

whereas light is only painful when excessive: in all its various degrees, short of that excess, it is the great, the only source of pleasure; so great indeed is the pleasure, that light, by the splendour and magnificence of its effects, compensates, in many instances, the pain it gives to the mere organ. You remember what Lear says—

..... “ When the mind’s free,

“ The body’s delicate:”

in the same manner, when the imagination is not affected, the organ is delicate; and as this white building, and shaven bank, certainly have no hold on your imagination, you are very impatient at the glare.

“ How differently did you feel, when we were on the western coast a few days ago ! how steadily did you look towards the setting sun, though I never yet saw a more dazzling light ; for, as a slight breeze had curled the waves, they sparkled, as if the whole surface of the sea had been studded with diamonds : then, into the bargain, you know there were a number of vessels, whose white sails caught the light, which again glanced upon the rocks, and made the window of the old castle appear on fire. You then never once complained of irritation ; and yet that ruffled sea was a thousand times more dazzling than this still water : which proves, by-the-bye, how infinitely more irritating the effect of light becomes, when the surface which reflects it is broken.

“ With regard to that bank and building which have given rise to this discussion, they would make you still more indignant, if you had remembered the whole in its former state as I do. I particularly regret the part where the building now stands, so naked and staring ; for, besides the bushes

and trees which adorned the old bank before it was newly formed and levelled, there were several large massy stones that appeared in many parts, and all about it were the richest tufts of fern I ever beheld: unluckily, I was abroad while the alteration was going forward, or might possibly have prevented it; had I been here, how earnestly should I have said to the owner,

- “ Teach them to place, and not remove, the stone
- “ On yonder bank, with moss and fern o’ergrown;
- “ To cherish, not mow down, the weeds that creep
- “ Along the shore, and overhang the steep;
- “ To break, not level, the slow-rising ground,
- “ And guard, not cut, the fern that shades it round.”*

They now crossed the head of the water, and, after passing on to the other side of a small hill, they found themselves in a neglected part of the park, full of old, ragged thorns, that grew among a few stag-headed oaks. They got entangled in this wild scene, and could not distinguish any pathway in the long, coarse grass; at last, however, after wandering a good while, they

* *The Landscape*, p. 40, l. 194.

saw the park-gate, where some horses were standing, which, from the appearance of age, looked as if they had the run of the park in reward of their past services: near them, was an ass and her foal; and the whole made an excellent group, and mixed very happily with the thorns and oaks, and with the old park-pales, that were seen here and there between the trees and the thickets.

Mr. Seymour thought his two friends stopped to look at this rather longer than was necessary; so he dragged them on to the gate, and then through it into a piece of fresh pasture, in which, on a rising bit of ground to the right, were a number of very handsome cattle; some standing, others lying down under the shade of a large group of flourishing trees. While they were looking at them, and admiring their high condition, a groom passed through the gate with two very fine horses, which they understood from him, were just going to be turned out for half an hour, and for

the first time. As soon as he had let them loose, they began

“ Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,
“ Such was the hot condition of their blood.”

After galloping twice round the field, and scampering among the peaceful cattle, they stopped and grazed very quietly near the gate.

“ This is really a very lucky incident,” said Mr. Seymour ; “ I never saw two more beautiful horses ; what fine action ! and what high order they are in ! they are as sleek as moles, and that chesnut, particularly ; his coat is like silk, and looks as if it were powdered with gold : then this charming fresh turf, intermixed with such flourishing trees, and the cattle, and the mildness of the evening, make it altogether one of the most pleasing scenes I ever saw : surely, Howard, you will allow that this, at least, is all softness and harmony.”

“ I can by no means allow it,” said Mr. Howard, “ particularly when compared with the scene you forced me away from on the

other side of the gate. You admire the fine coats of these horses and cattle; but if you were to consider the subject attentively, you would find that all smooth animals, as their forms are determined by marked outlines, and the surfaces of their skins produce strong reflections of light, have an effect on the eye, correspondent to what irritating roughness has on the touch: while the coats of animals which are rough and shaggy, (like those of the horses and the ass on the other side,) by partly absorbing the light, and partly softening it by a mixture of tender shadows, and thus connecting and blending it with that which proceeds from surrounding objects, produce an effect on the eye similar to that which an undulated, and gently varied smoothness affords to the touch."

"So, I find," said Mr. Seymour, "that these horses and cattle, have a rough, irritating effect on my eye which I never should have suspected: and yet you, who refer every thing so much to painting, were delighted with two pictures in the gallery, in

which there were horses as smooth, and with coats as fine as these ; and I particularly remember your remarking, how admirably those in the larger picture (I think it was by Rubens) harmonized with all the surrounding objects: surely, that which is in perfect harmony in a picture, must often, at least, be so in nature; and cannot be like what irritating roughness is to the touch.

“ It is true, that I have not much attended to these subjects ; but some of our earliest ideas are, that smoothness is pleasing, and roughness displeasing to the eye, as well as to the touch; and these first ideas always prevail, though we afterwards learn to discriminate, and to modify them. In the same manner, bright and clear colours are more pleasing to the eye than such as are dingy ; and, therefore, almost all men, I believe, would think the colours of these horses, and of this fresh turf, more beautiful than those of the old ragged horses, of the ass, and of the shaggy pasture in which they were feeding.

“ I observed from the remarks which both you and Hamilton made on several of the pictures to day, that there may be as much relative harmony between bright colours and the objects round them, as between such as are dingy; and yet, as it seems to me, the whole tenor of your argument goes to prove, that, with respect to colours, the mere absence of discord, is the great principle of visible beauty; whereas, if there be a positive beauty in any thing, it must be in colours: the *general* effect, I allow, will not be beautiful without harmony; but neither can the most perfect accord change the nature of dull or ugly colours, and make them beautiful. No, my dear friend, this negative system of your's is too refined for the generality of mankind; and, as to myself, all that you can say on this point, however I may admire the ingenuity of your arguments, cannot shake my early and inveterate habits.”

“ Many of them,” said Mr. Hamilton, “ are so founded in nature, that we ought not to allow them to be shaken: and it is

in a great measure on those early habits and feelings, which are common to all mankind, that I ground the distinction which Howard rejects as imaginary. I watched your feelings, unbiassed as they were by any thing of system, or by associations with pictures; and I remarked throughout our whole progress to day, (and sometimes, I believe, mentioned it at the moment) that although you scarcely paid any attention to those objects or combinations, the charms of which have been pointed out by painting, you were not less delighted than Howard and myself, with all that the common sentiment of mankind, as well as that of more refined and cultivated minds like your own, proclaims to be beautiful: and in the picture gallery, your delight, or indifference, was influenced by similar feelings. Had you been struck in the same manner, if not in the same degree, with the hovel, the gypsies, the blasted oak, and all the circumstances and accompaniments, as we were; had you lingered with us in the hollow lane,—indeed, had I

not observed so many instances at various times, of the indifference of persons little conversant with pictures to picturesque objects—I must have given up one principal ground of my distinction. Its strongest foundation, however, rests upon the direct and striking opposition that exists between the qualities which prevail in objects which all allow to be beautiful, and those which prevail in others, almost as generally admitted to be picturesque: and till youth and age, freshness and decay, smoothness and ruggedness, symmetry and irregularity, are looked upon in the same light, and the objects in which they are prevalent give the same kind of pleasure to all persons,—whether one term be applied to all objects however constituted, or the terms beautiful and picturesque be applied to them indifferently,—the character of the objects themselves, must, in truth, be as distinct, as the qualities of which they are composed. This, Seymour, is my creed, which I have made as short as I could, and may perhaps write down, as a sort of

manual, for your use: if Howard likes to make a summary of his doctrines by way of counter-poison,—*padronissimo*, as the Italians say: but, you see the sun is getting low and we must make the best of our way to the inn.”

They then crossed the pasture, and on getting over the next stile, saw the town they were going to standing on an eminence, and in great beauty; for the sun being almost immediately behind it, gilded with his last beams the tops of the trees, and the battlements and pinnacles of the churches; while the lower buildings were in a mass of shade. After a pleasant walk over fields, the three friends got to their inn just before it was dusk, highly pleased with the excursion they had made, and full of new plans for the rest of the time they were to pass together.

NOTES

TO THE

INTRODUCTION.

P. 191. l. 16. **A** DOUBT has been suggested, whether there be any authority for supposing that Venus was considered by the ancients as the goddess of beauty; or whether beauty was considered by them as a positive quality, of which there could be an abstract personification. It is very possible that there may be no passage in which Venus is directly mentioned as the goddess of beauty; but, I may safely assert that no figurative genealogy was ever more plain and obvious, than that love is the offspring of beauty; and, therefore, the mother of love, whose attendants are the graces, must virtually be considered as beauty personified and deified. The judgment of Paris, notwithstanding the charge of bribery in the judge, is strongly in favour of her superiority over the other goddesses in point of beauty; and we find in the poets, that women are compared to Venus for beauty, as they are

to Minerva for excellence in the arts, or to Diana for stature. The ancients were so much in the habit of personifying abstract qualities, that it would be singular indeed, if it should appear that they had neglected one, which they so highly prized as that of beauty. Force and strength are not merely personified by Æschylus in description, but they are two of the dramatis personæ, and act no inconsiderable part in the Prometheus. That beauty was considered as a positive quality, and actually personified, may, I think, be shewn from a passage in one of the poems that go under the name of Anacreon, and which were at least written early enough, to be of sufficient authority in the present case.

Αἱ Μοῦσαι τὸν Ἔρωτα—
 Τῷ Καλλεὶ παρέδωκαν.

Love, bound by the Muses, and delivered over to Beauty, implies a manifest personification of that quality : and if it should be a single instance, it will, on that account, be rather in favour of what I have advanced ; for, I take it, that the reason why beauty was not in general personified as beauty, is, that it was personified in a more august and splendid manner, under the name and deity of Venus or Aphrodite.

P. 204. l. 7. I have already had occasion, in some instances, to differ from Mr. Burke, but in none so strongly (at least in appearance) as in the present ; for he expressly states, that perfection is not the

cause of beauty, and has an entire section on that particular point: I imagine, however, that Mr. Burke was there considering the subject with a different view; for it is clear that, as I have considered it, nothing can more exactly accord with his general principles. Mr. Burke's aim throughout his Essay, is to shew that love is the constant effect of beauty; while every thing that creates awe, or even respect, is allied to the sublime: he points out that the sublimer virtues, which approach to mental perfection, are less engaging than the softer virtues; some of which (as compassion, for instance,) border upon weakness. It is on this same idea, as I conceive, that in the section I allude to, he supposes that there may be some kinds of *bodily* weaknesses and imperfections, more attractive, and thence more conducive to beauty, than the absolute exemption from all defects—

“The faultless monster which the world ne'er saw,”

I must own, however, that there is, in my opinion, a very essential difference between the two cases: it is undoubtedly true, that there is an awful severity in the higher virtues and in a perfect moral character exempt from all human frailty; but there is nothing severe or awful in the fresh and tender colours, and in the graceful form of youthful beauty, however perfect, considered in themselves: the Antinous, and the Venus de Medicis, are only attractive; so, probably, both in form and colour, was the Venus of Apelles: and if the Belvidere Apollo strikes us with a sort of awe, it is from the

grandeur, not from the beauty of his countenance and attitude.

P. 238. l. 11. Sir Joshua's opinion on this point, as expressed in his 43d Note on Du Fresnoy, has already been stated.* From that, and another passage which I have quoted from the same work,† I think it may be inferred, that he considered beauty of form as a distinct character, to which a flowing outline is essential; and to which likewise a particular style of colouring, of a pure and delicate kind, is above all others congenial: and so far he coincides with Mr. Burke's idea of the beautiful, in the two principal points of form and colour. Then, likewise, as he considers a more rich and glowing tint, though its effect be much more striking and powerful, as less suited to genuine beauty, I flatter myself that his great authority supports in some measure my idea of a character in colour, and in colouring, which might without impropriety be called picturesque:‡ for if the colouring of Titian, who so minutely attended to the nicest variations in the tints of naked bodies, (confessedly the most difficult part of the art of colouring,) was thought by him less suited to beauty than that of Guido, how much less suited to it must be the colouring of many other painters, who are indeed highly celebrated for richness and effect, but are far from possessing the delicacy of Titian; such as

* Page 221.

† Note in Page 237.

‡ Essay on the Picturesque, vol. i, p, 198.

Mola and Feti among the Italian, and Rembrant among the Dutch masters!

That their style of colouring is not congenial to beauty in its strict sense, we have Sir Joshua's authority: we have likewise his authority, that it is not suited to grandeur, when compared with the unbroken colours of the Roman and Florentine schools, or the solemn hue of the Bolognian;* but that it must be suited to some character in nature, and of no mean or obscure kind, it is impossible to doubt.

* Discourse IV. p. 63.

APPENDIX.

MR. KNIGHT, in his advertisement to the second edition of his *Analytical Inquiry*, has made a kind of apology for the additional arguments he has inserted against Mr. Burke's theories and mine: he seems conscious that some of these additions are not of a very mild nature; but he says, they were introduced in consequence of my having signified my intention of refuting generally, what he had advanced in opposition to both of us. I cannot pretend to remember with any accuracy, what I may have signified in conversation, or in our correspondence; but I am perfectly sure that the word *refuting*, which, from

Mr. Knight's very just consciousness of his own powers, might naturally have presented itself to him, was never made use of by me. Perhaps it may be a question, how far what I may have signified unguardedly and in private, should be formally announced to the public; as to myself, I certainly should have had some scruples of announcing, without consulting him, any intention of his under the same circumstances. To him, however, it would have been of less consequence; as, from the abundant stores of his mind, and above all from his power of application, he could easily have performed any engagement I might have made for him; but it surprises an indolent writer, who can so little depend on any constant and regular exertions, to find himself engaged, not only to combat, but to refute the arguments of such an adversary, before he had even begun to write. How long it may be before the work, thus prematurely and unexpectedly announced, will be finished, is rather uncertain; I therefore have thought it best in this new edition of my

publications, to take notice of Mr. Knight's censures, where they related to particular passages; leaving the more general discussion of his animadversions on Mr. Burke's and my theories, till some future, though I hope not very far distant period.

My outset on the present occasion is not auspicious. In the former edition of the Dialogue, I committed a gross blunder, of which my antagonist, according to a common, though not always an accurate expression, has *taken advantage*. The passage stood thus; "all these ideas, it is true, are originally acquired by the touch, but from use they are become as much objects of sight as colours.*" *They* clearly refers to ideas, and my words certainly express, what I should have hoped no one would have thought me capable of meaning,—that ideas may become visible.

It so happened, that the Dialogue was oftener looked over in manuscript than any of my other publications, and by several

* Dialogue, p. 107. line 6.

persons who had the kindness to examine it with particular attention, and who suggested many alterations : but though some of them were men as high in reputation for ability and acuteness as any in the kingdom, yet this most palpable blunder escaped them all; probably from their having so clearly perceived the general drift and intention, that they did not attend to the particular expression. On such occasions the eye of an antagonist is sharper than that of a friend; for however keen in itself, it is rendered still keener by controversy. Mr. Knight discovered the blunder, and as such, might very fairly have laughed at it: he has chosen, however, to suppose, not only that it was my deliberate opinion that ideas might become objects of sight, but that I considered this visibility of ideas, as a fundamental principle, and that it furnished him with a key to all my doctrines.* As my friend, from our long intimacy, must be supposed to know the

* Analytical Inquiry, p. 202. part 2. ch. 2. sec. 80.

limits of my capacity better than most men, I might long have passed for a driveller, if the Edinburgh Reviewers in their account of the Analytical Inquiry, had not very kindly taken my part: they have defended me (not without a little *risposte* to my antagonist) more ably, and with much more effect than I could have defended myself: it is clear that it was, and could only be a slip of the pen; but they have pointed out whence the mistake arose, and how by a slight alteration, which I have readily adopted, the passage might be made consistent with the general tenor of the reasoning, and with common sense.* In short they have taken Mr. Knight's *key* from him, which, after all, seems to have been very like a lord of the bed-chamber's; a key of mere parade, and never intended to unlock any thing.

Controversy I am afraid has some resemblance to gaming; those who are warmly engaged in either, can hardly refrain from

* Edinburgh Review, No. xiv. p. 309. Jan. 1806.

taking advantage of every kind of slip or carelessness, and sometimes in a way that the usual licence amongst either gamesters or writers, does not admit of. One very singular instance I remember with respect to gaming, where the person was very far from being low either in rank or fortune: if his neighbours did not keep their heaps of gold pretty close to them, and a guinea happened to stray, he could not forbear hooking it a little with his finger, till it was near enough for him to claim it. A friend of mine used sometimes to take the expensive amusement of *baiting* him with a stray guinea, and never failed to have sport. It would in one sense be a more ruinous amusement, were an author purposely to scatter a few blunders over his work by way of baits; but there are adversaries so greedy, that they would be sure to swallow them hook and all.

I must add a few more words with respect to the blunder in question, which, I can assure the reader, was made very innocently, and without any insidious purpose. In the

part of his work where Mr. Knight speaks of it, he gives his readers to understand, that the argument in the discussion where it occurs is given to an interlocutor, who on *that occasion* sustains *my own part* in the Dialogue. By this he seems to insinuate, that the argument ought to have been in the mouth of Mr. Hamilton, not of Mr. Seymour; in short that I had done what careless apothecaries, and sometimes great doctors have been accused of;—had put on the wrong labels. But as Mr. Seymour is not represented as ignorant upon any other subject than that of painting, there was no reason from any thing in his supposed character, why he should not argue on sensation and perception; and there were reasons in my judgment, why the arguments should come from him rather than from Mr. Hamilton: chiefly, because they seem to lead naturally to the observations and the sentiments which follow, and which completely belong to Mr. Seymour.

I could wish that in other parts Mr. Knight had paid a little more attention to the *labels*; as possibly some of his stric-

tures might not have been made, if he had considered who was the speaker. There are places where it is a matter of indifference; it was perfectly immaterial, for instance, whether the *blunder* came from Mr. Seymour, or Mr. Hamilton, as I certainly did not mean that either of them should speak like a madman, or an idiot; but the character of the speaker is by no means indifferent where he accuses me (perhaps by way of recrimination for a similar charge on my side) of having used the epithets beautiful and lovely as synonymous, and defined the one by the other.* As love, however, has always been the natural effect of beauty, and as the goddess of beauty is also the goddess of love, I should not feel much ashamed, if I had been convicted of having made this synonym and definition in my own proper character, or through my representative, Mr. Hamilton; but my antagonist ought to have observed, that it is not Mr. Hamilton, but Mr. Sey-

* Analytical Inquiry, part 2. chap. 2. sec. 79, at the end.

mour, who says the most beautiful, that is the most lovely pictures.”

One principal advantage of writing in dialogue, and of which my friend seems inclined to deprive me, is that of being able to give to some one of the speakers—whether for the sake of variety and contrast, or in order to support indirectly an opinion you wish to prevail—expressions and sentiments which could not come in a direct manner from any of the others. It is Mr. Hamilton's, or, if you please, my interest, to have it thought that the term beautiful is improperly applied to a picture in which the objects are ugly or disgusting, whatever may be its merit as a work of art: this was to be effected in part through Mr. Seymour; who, though he ought not to say any thing that betrayed folly, may be allowed, when speaking of pictures, to discover sentiments, and to use expressions, which would not perhaps occur to a thorough-bred connoisseur. In such cases the author is no further answerable for the expressions or the sentiments, than that they should accord with the character which he has assigned to the

speaker; and indeed were it otherwise, all the interlocutors in all dialogues, must speak and think alike. With regard to the epithet in question, I dare say Mr. Knight has heard many ladies, and many gentlemen exclaim, O, what a lovely picture! and if he could have thought it necessary to ask what they meant by it, they probably would have interpreted it by beautiful. The expression would not perhaps have been quite proper in Mr. Hamilton's mouth, though he might not feel much repugnance to it; in Mr. Howard's, with regard to whose sentiments and expressions I was bound to be extremely cautious, it would have been quite improper; but Mr. Seymour was more at liberty, and any one who reads the part, will see that he uses the word *lovely*, not as being *generally* synonymous with beautiful, but as expressing and explaining his particular feeling; that is, his repugnance to call those pictures beautiful, the subjects of which, with the objects represented in them, were the most directly opposite to every idea of loveliness.

Again, it is Mr. Seymour, not Mr. Hamilton, who speaks of the parson's daughter as not being an undesirable object, though her features were irregular, and her eyes *somewhat inclined* to look across each other: this slight *inclination*, my adversary, has exaggerated into a squint.* Perhaps there is no defect in the human countenance that depends so much on the degree, as that of a deviation in the eyes: the inclination to deviate may be such, as scarcely to be perceptible at first sight; and a slight *cast* in the eye, as it is called, though no one would call it a beauty, may give an archness and a peculiarity, which may accord with the general character and expression of the countenance, and, like other peculiarities, suit particular tastes: positive squinting is among the worst of deformities; it is one however that belongs to Mr. Knight's comment, not to my text. I would not claim too much indulgence for the style of a dialogue; but I should hardly have expected that the jocular manner in which Mr. Seymour speaks of the parson's daughter, and the allusions

* Analytical Inquiry, Part 2. chap. 2. sec. 79.

he makes to her father's house, would have been canvassed as strictly as the positions in a philosophical treatise; much less that the whole would be placed in a false, because an exaggerated point of view. Let us however consider it gravely: if it be true then, that a woman with irregular features, with a slight cast in her eyes, with uneven teeth, but those teeth white and clean, and with her complexion fresh and clear, may, to many tastes, be often more attractive than a woman regularly handsome; and if a house under circumstances as nearly similar as the two cases will admit of, may also be preferred by many, to houses of regular architecture,—then Mr. Seymour, whether he were jocular or serious, might be allowed to profess his willingness, under certain circumstances, to take to the house and its inhabitant. With regard to the lady, Mr. Knight may attribute such a liking (for that is the most it can be called) to what motives he pleases; but he must allow that fondness for a house, cannot arise from “social and sensual sympathies.*”

* Anal. Inquiry, Part 2. chap. 2. sec. 81.

In writing this Dialogue, I was very peculiarly circumstanced. In all that related to Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Seymour I was free as air; but as Mr. Howard was manifestly the representative of Mr. Knight, I was almost restricted to the very words that he himself had written. This restraint was not without its advantage, and he felt it as such: for he complained to me, but with the greatest good humour, of my having taken what he jocosely called his *buckram* note, and put it piecemeal into the mouth of an interlocutor; where it must be owned that the note thus divided and in dialogue, has rather a buckram appearance, and that Mr. Howard *parle comme un livre*. As I had put his grave note in dialogue, it was no unfair retaliation to treat any jocular part of my dialogue as serious;

“ Thus then exchange we mutually forgiveness.”

There is, however one point remaining to be discussed (and it is the last) on which my friend does not appear in a forgiving humour; for he very seriously complains of

misrepresentation: it may be right therefore to give the accusation at length in his own words. "I am not aware," says Mr. Knight, "that any thing, I have ever written or said on the subject, can fairly be construed to imply that I ever considered the words beautiful and picturesque to be synonymous or convertible terms, as has been supposed. In the Essays on the Picturesque, indeed it is merely stated *"that there are persons, who in reality, hold the two words to be synonymous, though they do not say so in express terms; and others, who allow that the words have a different meaning, but that there is no distinct character of the picturesque."* Of this latter sect I have always *meant* to profess myself; and even if I have expressed that meaning so ill, as to give just cause for being placed in the other, I cannot but think that the interlocutor in the dialogue, who makes me *in express terms*, say *"that there is no distinction between them: in other words, that they are, in respect to visible objects synonymous,"* adopts rather an inquisitorial mode of proceeding; which, howsoever sanctioned by

authority in the trials of heretics, has not yet been acknowledged in the courts of philosophy, or by the judicature of common sense."

I am persuaded that my friend never meant seriously to accuse me of being possessed with the spirit of the inquisition; it is only his way of writing. Perhaps before he indulged himself in it, he ought to have examined his own expressions which gave rise to my supposed mis-statement, and to have been pretty certain that they do not fairly admit of the interpretation I have given them; or at least sufficiently so, to lead me into the mistake, if it be one, without my having had any evil intention: the reader must judge between us. The accusation is, that I have supposed him to consider the words beautiful and picturesque as synonymous; not as *generally* so, for then I should undoubtedly have misrepresented him; but with respect to visible objects: in other words, that I have supposed him to be of opinion, that, as far as visible objects are concerned, there is no differ-

ence or distinction between them. Now it seems to me that this is precisely what he sets out by declaring; for after having given it as his opinion, that the distinction which I have made is imaginary, he says “the picturesque is merely that kind of beauty which belongs exclusively to the sense of vision, or to the imagination guided by that sense.” I really have considered this definition with the best attention I have been able to give it, and I can only understand from it, that the picturesque is merely the beautiful in *visible* objects, that the word cannot be applied to the beautiful in sounds, smells, &c. but that with those exclusions, it is the very same as the beautiful, and of course may be applied on all occasions where *visible* beauty is talked of; for after all “that kind of beauty which belongs exclusively to the sense of seeing,” can mean nothing more than is expressed in the two words—visible beauty. If this be so, (and I do not comprehend how it can be otherwise) the picturesque, according to Mr. Knight’s own definition, is

the beautiful in objects of sight, and the two terms are in the strictest sense synonymous or convertible, as they mean precisely the same thing in all that regards the sense of seeing.

I trust that I shall not be suspected of having knowingly on any occasion misinterpreted an antagonist's meaning: but supposing that on this I *had* been mistaken, or that in any part of the Dialogue I had mistated Mr. Knight's meaning, the utmost, in my opinion, that he ought to have done, was simply to set me right; without any thing however that tended to reproof. Before the Dialogue was printed, I gave him the manuscript, and begged him to mark any thing that he thought unfair or uncandid: he returned it without any remark of that kind; and though it be true that he might not have examined it with sufficient attention, or that things which did not then occur to him, may afterwards have struck him in the printed copy, still, having had the manuscript, he

ought on this occasion to have been contented with defending himself, without turning me into an inquisitor. Should it be asked whether I continued this practice of shewing him what related to himself before it was published, and whether he saw in manuscript, what the reader has just seen, my answer must be

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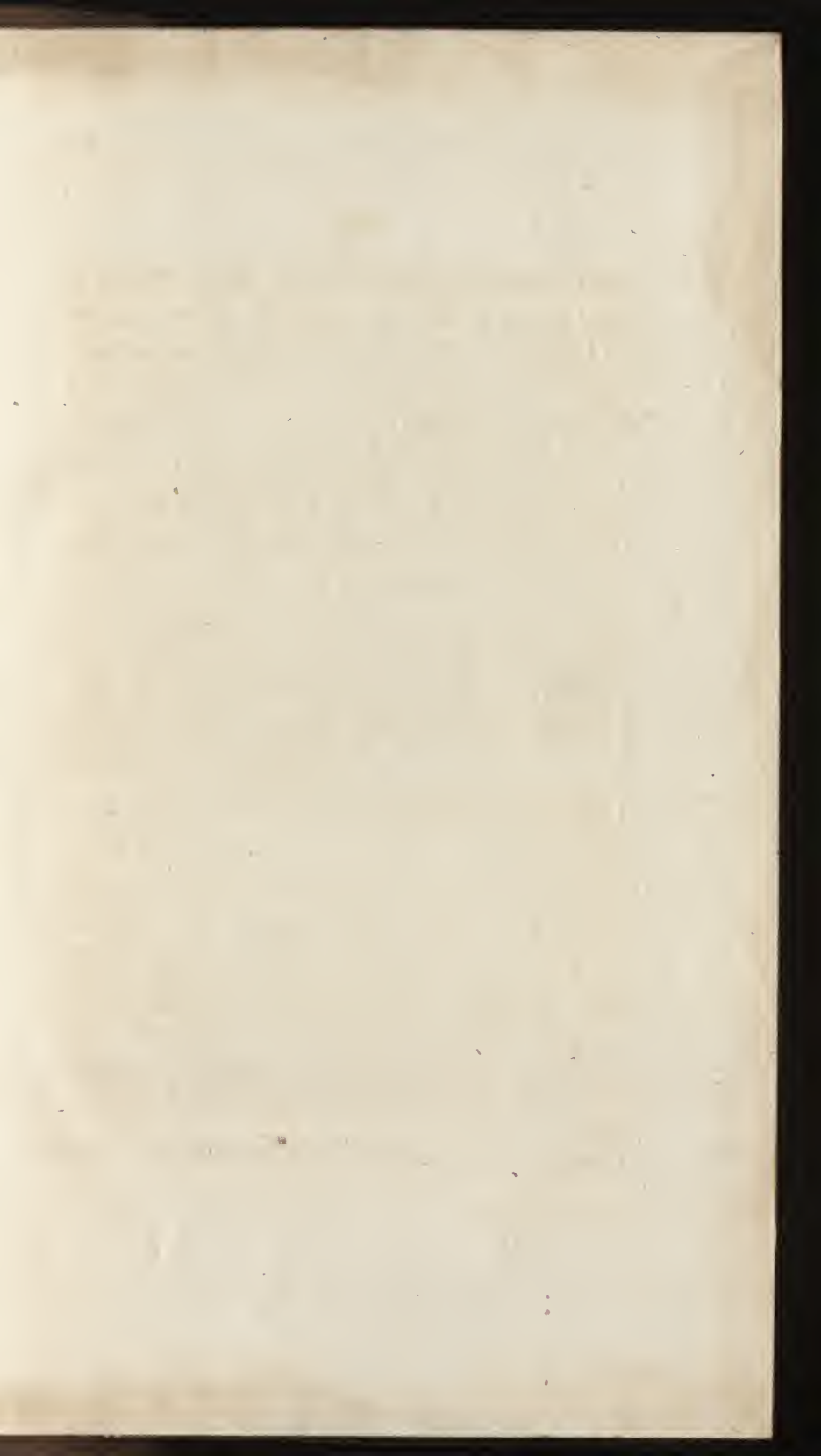
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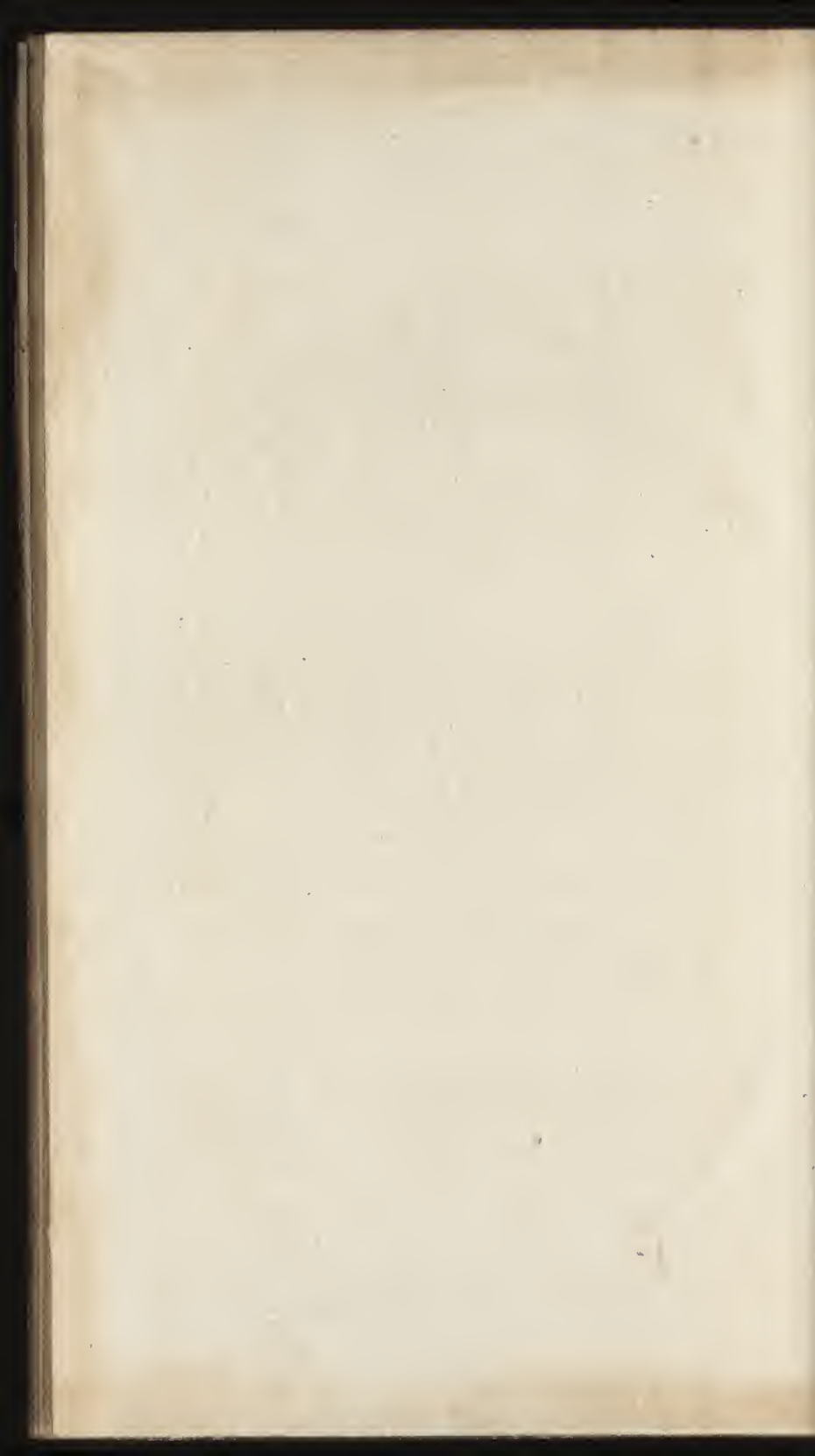
the first work of his that appeared after the Dialogue came out, was the Analytical Inquiry, and I saw nothing of it till after it was published.

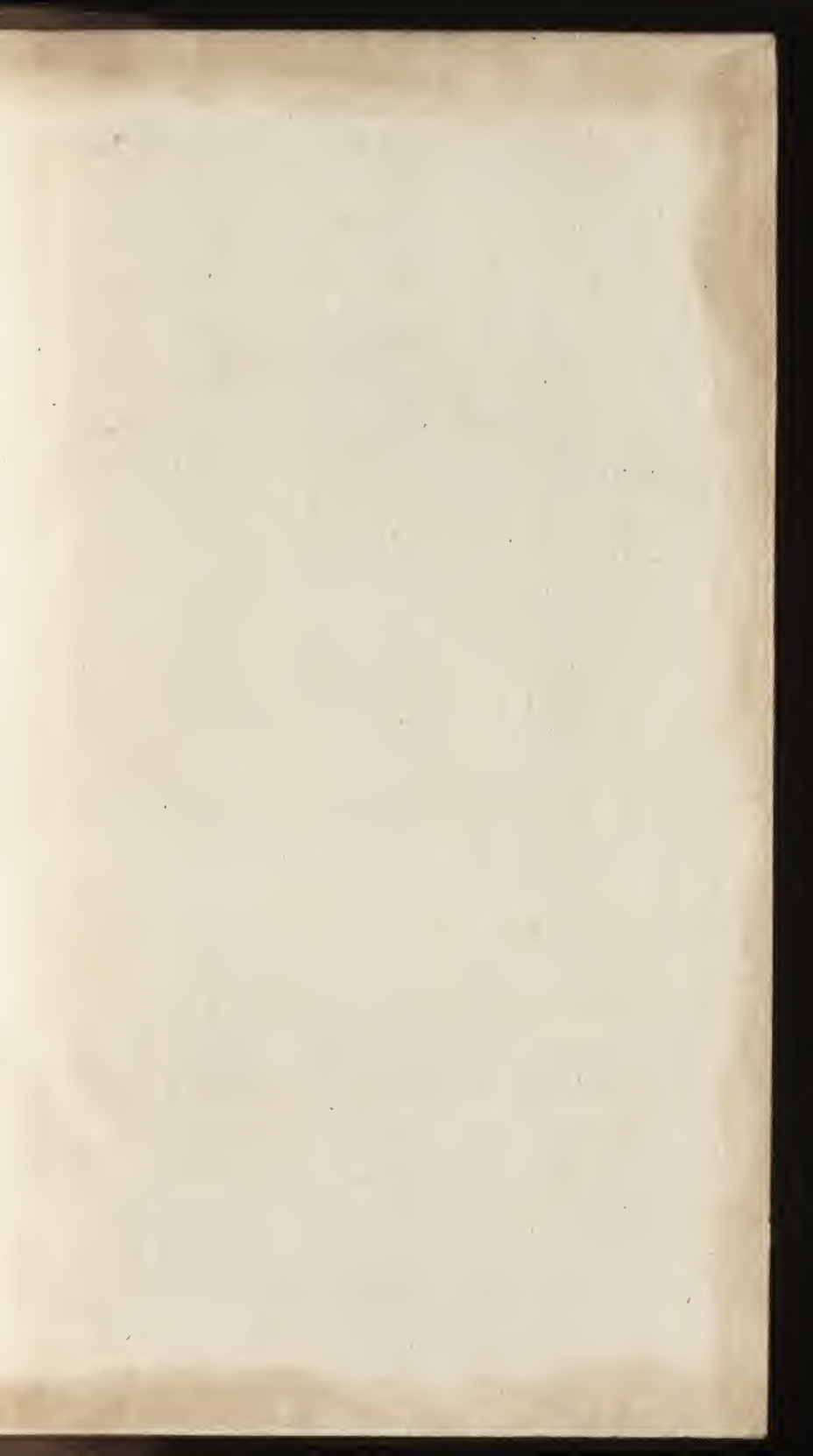
I must beg leave to remind the reader, that what is said in the Dialogue, can only have a reference to the opinions contained in the note which gave rise to it; not to those which were published long afterwards in the Analytical Inquiry. In that work Mr. Knight, if I may venture to say so, appears *somewhat inclined* to make the same sort of distinction between the beautiful and the picturesque which I have made,

and which in his note he had treated as imaginary. All his opinions, however, on that point, and their accuracy and consistency, may, perhaps, be the subject of a separate discussion.

THE END.







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