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A

DIALOGUE

ON

THE DISTINCT CHARACTERS

OF

The Picturesque and the Beautiful.

BY

UVEDALE PRICE, ESQ.

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IN ANSWER TO THE

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WITH

REMARKS

ON THE IDEAS OF

Sir Joshua Reynolds & Mr. Burke,

UPON THAT SUBJECT.

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FOR J. ROBSON, NEW BOND-STREET, LONDON.

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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,

fore, 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, and 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

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 conſtantly 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 deviate 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

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 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 re-

 ceived.

ceived. 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 *joli*, 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

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

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 oppoſite to 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 mix-

* Δεδια ω μητερ αυτην, φοβερα γαρ εϛι, και χαροπη, και δεινως ανδρικη.—Lucian, 19th Dial. of the Gods.

ture

ture of the ſublime with the beautiful; but the goddeſs of love, is likewiſe the goddeſs of perfect unmixed beauty.*

In

* A doubt has been ſuggeſted, whether there is 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.

Αι Μουσαι τον Ερωτα---
Τω Καλλει παρεδωκαν.

Love, bound by the Muſes, and delivered over to Beauty,

is

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 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 own-

is 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.

ed,

ed, 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.

ſmall.* But, whatever 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 beauty.

The manner in which the ancients have repreſented their male deities, will throw

* 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 conſeſſa 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.

ſtill

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 is 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 adstas
Virgineum caput est.*

On the other hand, their awful and terrible

* 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.

deities,

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 ſculpture, we could at once view and compare with each other all the different maſter-pieces which once 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

* 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

is in the act of ſlaying the Python; he is the deſtroying, not the creating power—"Se-" vere 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 and tenderneſs is more congenial to beauty, than that of anger, however dignified. In ſuch repreſentations of him, his beauty might have borne the ſame relation to that of the ſtatue we poſſeſs, as the beauty of the Gnidian 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,

diſtinctions of the paſſion of Love. The names are Ερως, Ἱμερος, Ποθος. There probably are no terms that exactly correſpond with theſe, in any other language.

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, or the beneficent 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

* 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, de- "eſſe pondus putant. Nam ut humanæ formæ decorem ad- "diderit ſupra verum, ita non expleviſſe deorum authoritatem "videtur. Quin ætatem quoque graviorem videtur refugiſſe, "nihil auſus præter leves genas." Quint. Inſt. lib. xii. cap. 10.

of

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 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

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 on 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

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 roundneſs, 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, in which ſhe may be ſaid to have brought it to that point of perfection, before which her work would have appeared incomplete and unfiniſhed, and after 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

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 commonly 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

* 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

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

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.

form,

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-eminent, 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; and, fortunately, ſome few at leaſt of their fineſt productions ſtill remain.

By examining, then, 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

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: that 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 Gnidian Venus of Praxiteles, the moſt famous of any of the ſtatues of that goddeſs, was of the natural ſize.*

* 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.

But

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, 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,

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 qualities, 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

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 controvert 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

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;

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 is preferable to that of the Ethiopian, but I know of no other reaſon we have for it, but that we are more accuſtomed to it.

After

After obſerving, that neither novelty nor fitneſs can be ſaid to be cauſes of beauty (in which he and Mr. Burke agree,) 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;

beauty; but, I think, 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, is 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 their characters, muſt be compoſed of qualities, the knowledge of which is neceſſary to a knowledge of their 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,* is 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 only belongs to nature itſelf; that is, to *univerſal* cuſtom.

It ſeems to me, that *partial* cuſtom and

* 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.

habit,

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, or ſwelling in their throats, 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 a 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

would ſelect a model, with all thoſe qualities of beauty which Mr. Burke has mentioned, 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

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 delightful; 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

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

and of 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 objects, 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

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 accord with beauty, and eſpecially with female beauty, there is the cleareſt proof in one of his admirable Notes on Du Freſnoi. Sir Joſhua is there ſpeaking of the Venetian ſtyle of colouring, and that of Titian in particular, as the moſt excellent, and

* 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.

as

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

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.*

With

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

With reſpect to form, I will begin by obſerving in general, that 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 give a ſtrongly marked character, and thoſe ſlight elevations which are deficient in character, lies that medium, which in all things has the

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.

beſt

beſt claim to beauty. The ſame principles 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 moſt 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

Luduntque jubæ per colla per armos.

Intonsosque *agitaret* 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 or 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

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 ſtrait 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

" moſt general form of nature is the moſt " beautiful," muſt, I think, 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

Sir Joſhua's meaning muſt be different from what his words ſeem to expreſs: no man certainly had better opportunities of knowing 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 idea 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, 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; *bellezze pellegrine; leggiadria ſingolare et pellegrina;* as if beauty in any high degree was ſo rare, that they could not look for it within

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 ſhow 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

Grecian artiſts; and though they could ſeldom find that central form in the whole of any one individual, they found it in particular parts; at leaſt ſufficiently exact for them to copy from, with ſuch corrections, perhaps, as the abſtract ideas they had formed under the guidance of nature might ſuggeſt.* By putting theſe moſt perfect parts together and connecting them into a whole, both 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

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

rules

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 ſpirit, may properly be called "the inva-" riable general form," not "which na-" ture moſt frequently produces," but which ſhe may be ſuppoſed "to intend in her pro-" ductions." 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

be reckoned among "thoſe accidental ble-
"miſhes and excreſcencies, which are con-
"tinually 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 proxime signis.*

From

* 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—

Ὄμματα καὶ κεφαλὴν ἴκελος Διὶ τερπικεραύνῳ,
Ἄρεϊ τε ζωνὴν, στέρνον δὲ Ποσειδάωνι.

One might almoſt imagine, that Shakeſpeare had thought of this

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; but, 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 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

this paſſage in his deſcription of Hamlet's father; and that, as no particular part of Mars was deſcribed in Homer's compariſon, he had choſen to take the eyes from Jupiter, and transfer them to that god:

" 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."

great

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

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, 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

* 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 a-"lone 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."

the

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,

* Sir Joſhua's opinion on this point, as expreſſed in his 43d Note, has already been ſtated. From that, and the laſt mentioned Note 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 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 is 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 Mola and Feti among the Italian, and Rembrant among the Dutch maſters!

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

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.

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. 59.

Laſtly,

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. There ſeems, however, to be this difference in regard to our ideas of the ſublime, and of the beautiful. 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. Now, as that diſtinction forms a principal part of my Eſſay, I have, perhaps, too long neglected to anſwer ſuch an antagoniſt.

Great part of what I have now printed, was written immediately after the publication of the Note; but being at that time very much occupied in preparing a ſecond edition of my firſt volume, and in finiſhing my ſecond, I laid the Dialogue by, till they were both completed: and having left what I had written in its unfiniſhed ſtate, I ſhould never have reſumed it, if a perſon, on whoſe judgment I have the greateſt reliance, had not been of opinion, that it placed the whole of my diſtinction in a new, and, in ſome reſpects, in a more ſtriking point of view, than any of my former publications.

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

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

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

reaſon-

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 aukwardneſs, have been excluded. I judged, alſo, that the frequent recurrence of ſuch commas,

mas, might diſtract the reader's attention from what was going forward, and, in any caſe, take off 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

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 be-* "*cauſe 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

I cannot, however, but think that the diſtinction, of which this ingenious profeſſor has thus taken advantage, is an imaginary one, and that the picturesque is merely that kind of beauty which belongs excluſively to the ſenſe of viſion; or to the imagination, guided by that ſenſe. 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

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 pro-

perties 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

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

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 over-

whelm 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

were to recommend their works as delicious gratifications for the eye, I might be tempted to treat them both with ſome degree 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

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 belonging 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

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 aad diverſified by the various modifications of mental ſympathies, ſocial habits,

bits, 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 & 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 famous 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 whi-

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ther 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

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 others 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.

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 enquiries 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

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 much objects of the ſight, as colours. *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 naufeating repugnance of appetite, drown and overwhelm

every

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

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 gaily 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

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 guidance. 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 antient philoſophers; and as an antient, 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

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

ed

ed with that of beauty, by which ſuch objects as we have juſt been looking at, ſhould be characteriſed? 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

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

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

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 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,

figure, juſt as you ſaw him, to be expreſſed by a painter with exactneſs and ſpirit, would 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 deprives even 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

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

behold-

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 rude ſteps led from it into the lane: 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 un-

der the hollow of the bank: ſome large flat ſtones ſtood at the edge of the water; and juſt at that moment, a woman and a girl were beating clothes upon them; 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

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, riſ-

ing 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

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 ſuggeſted: 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

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 churchyard 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, jaſmines, and honey-ſuckles, 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, chearfulneſs and comfort,

I am

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 riſquing 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 diſtinc-

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 riſque 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

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

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 handſome, 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

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

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 pleaſed 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

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 the good old parſon's daughter is made upon the model of her father's houſe: her features are as irregular, and her eyes are ſomewhat inclined to look acroſs each other, like the roofs of the old parſonage; but a clear ſkin, clean white teeth, though not very even, and a look of neatneſs and chearfulneſs, 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

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 ſymmetry or 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 are analogous to beauty, 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

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,

mal, 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, lyes 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)

preſſed) 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; tho' 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 mane, 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,"

" 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 mane; 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 of ſplendour 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 ſplendour of Rubens in that hiſtorical picture," ſaid Mr. Howard, "you muſt now look at thoſe landſcapes by him, which are not leſs ſplendid: 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

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 lightening, 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

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,

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

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

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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

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

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

very

very ugly and naſty ones, 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

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

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

* The Landſcape, page 7, line 88.

to promiſe, if poſſible, ſtill more charming ſcenes beyond them!"

"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

" 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's, 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; eſpecially 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

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 fameneſs 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 interpreta-

tion 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, lyes 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

ſolute 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

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

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

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,

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 Reynolds'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

" 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 conceiving. The other " preſuppoſes *nicety* and *reſearch*, which are " only the buſineſs of the curious and at- " tentive, 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 convincing, than the paſſage you have juſt

" quoted,"

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 admirable 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

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,

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 thread-bare 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 pro-

ceſs 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 that 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

" 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,

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 any other ſenſe than 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 not likely to diſtinguiſh the minute parts, in the uſual manner of looking at ſuch objects: they would therefore have been 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, is 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

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 κτυπου. 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 blend-"ed variety of mellow and harmonious "tints," ſcarcely have been able to "view "them with abſtract and impartial attention," though they would have been "ſe-"parated 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 any of his other pictures, is at all elevated, except as compared with the reſt of his ſchool: they generally painted boors and peaſants; but Wovermans 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

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, could 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 fountains, and the handſome country houſes in different parts, have all a very rich and chearful 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

that it requires ſome practice to diſtinguiſh in what the difference conſiſts: had I the liberty of picking out a few pictures from this 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 Paninî 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,

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

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,

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

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, there is no diſtinction between the two terms: in other words, that they are, in reſpect to viſible objects, ſynonymous."

"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

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

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

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 Pani-

* The Parmeggiano, and the two Paninis, are in the collection of the Marquis of Abercorn, and each of them ſingly occupies a ſide of the ſaloon at the Priory. The Parmeggiano is, I believe, the moſt capital picture of that rare and eminent maſter. The Paninis are not leſs excellent in their ſtyle.

nis, 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 them, 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, 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,

ever, 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 having originally put the queſtion to me; and I know you rather love to promote a little altercation between me and Howard; 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 believe 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.

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 that you will prefer to any of Baptiſt, or Van Huyſſun."

When they had returned to the gallery (though not till they had paid proper attention to the other Panini, and the Parmeggiano), 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,

neſſes, 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 ſurprized to hear what a powerful ally I have met with, in ſupport of my diſtinction; no leſs a one than Marcus Verus 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 εὐειδια, 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

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

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

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 acci-

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dent ſo very active an agent; for, according to its etymology, which, I think, ſhould always be attended to, accident ſignifies what falls, or befals, 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,

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

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 ἐπιγινομενα τοις φυσει γινομενοις, the productions of nature, and their acceſſaries; I dare ſay, very juſtly: now I conceive that the φυσει γινομενα 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 ἐπιγινομενα 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

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

the

the ſtoical epicure gravely expreſſes himſelf, προθυμιαν προς την τροφην ἰδιως διακινει. 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 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—

Παν δε τ' ἐπισκυνιον κατω ἑλκεται ὀσσε καλυπτων.

The foam of the wild boar is alſo a mark

of

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, ſhew, 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,

ſtances, 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 diſ-

tinct claſs, highly ſuited to his art, but of a ſuitableneſs, clearly to be accounted for from their intrinſic 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 ſenſations; 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 that has given riſe to it: and, I muſt ſay, that

that it would be difficult to find two other men in all England, who, after ſuch a walk, with ſuch fruit 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 interfected 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 terras and the baluſtrade, with all their enrichments; for this piece of graſs, was a garden in the old Italian

ſtyle;

ſtyle; and there is no ſaying what a value theſe rich and ſtrongly marked objects in the foreground, gave to the ſoft colouring of the diſtance: you would have been no leſs pleaſed with the numberleſs gradations of tints, beginning 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 evergreen 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 have been deſtroyed in a great meaſure, 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 a 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

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 illuſtration, let me propoſe to you 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 recollected 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

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

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 a place, full of picturesque ſcenery; but where no art had been employed, though ſome judi-

cious

cious 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 the whole ſmoothed and poliſhed, and thoſe irregular trees and thickets made into clumps, I can do it for you according to the moſt approved method; but as to that rude waterfall, 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

fend 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; but in which 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 very 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, be-

cauſe

cauſe, 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, and the bank, and the path-way, and the thickets, are all gone; and you ſee how they are replaced, by thoſe clumps, and 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 Dougias 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

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

was

was lately reading, in which a fairy inflicts a ſingular puniſhment, on a young damſel of a lively, volatile diſpoſition: ſhe places 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 be-

tween

tween 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

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 agree with you entirely, 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

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 deſcribed 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

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—you muſt own, Howard—would then be all ſoftneſs, harmony, and variety; and this below, would be harſh and 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; and ſo great 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

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-by, (as far as that ſignifies) 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 miſchief was doing, 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 neglect-

* The Landſcape, p. 40, l. 194.

ed

ed 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 path-way in the long, coarſe graſs; at laſt, however, after wandering a good while, they ſaw the park-gate, where ſome horſes were ſtanding, which, from the appearance of age, and the roughneſs of their coats, 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 beautiful 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 beauty and 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 gallopping 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, in higher order, or with finer action: they are as ſleek as moles, and that cheſnut

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

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 the painter's name was Rubens) harmonized with all the ſurrounding objects: ſurely, that

which

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 unpleaſing, to the eye, as well as to the touch; and theſe firſt ideas always prevail, though we afterwards learn to diſcriminate, and to modify them. 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

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 it seems to me, that 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: so, as the sun is getting low, we had better make the best of our way to the inn."

They

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.

FINIS.

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