THREE ESSAYS:

ON

PICTURESQUE BEAUTY;

ON

PICTURESQUE TRAVEL;

AND ON

SKETCHING LANDSCAPE:

WITH A POEM, ON

LANDSCAPE PAINTING.

TO THESE ARE NOW ADDED

TWO ESSAYS,

GIVING AN ACCOUNT OF THE PRINCIPLES AND MODE IN WHICH THE AUTHOR EXECUTED HIS OWN DRAWINGS.

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ESSAY I.

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

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

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

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

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

Mr.

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

Thus

* Upon the sublime and beautiful, page 213.

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

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

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

ſmaller,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

——————— *diffundere ventis* *.

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

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

That lovely face of youth ſmiling with all it's ſweet, dimpling charms, how attractive is

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

contraſt;

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

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

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

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

Animal

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

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

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

Akenſide's

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

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

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

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

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

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

Suggeſtions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

deals

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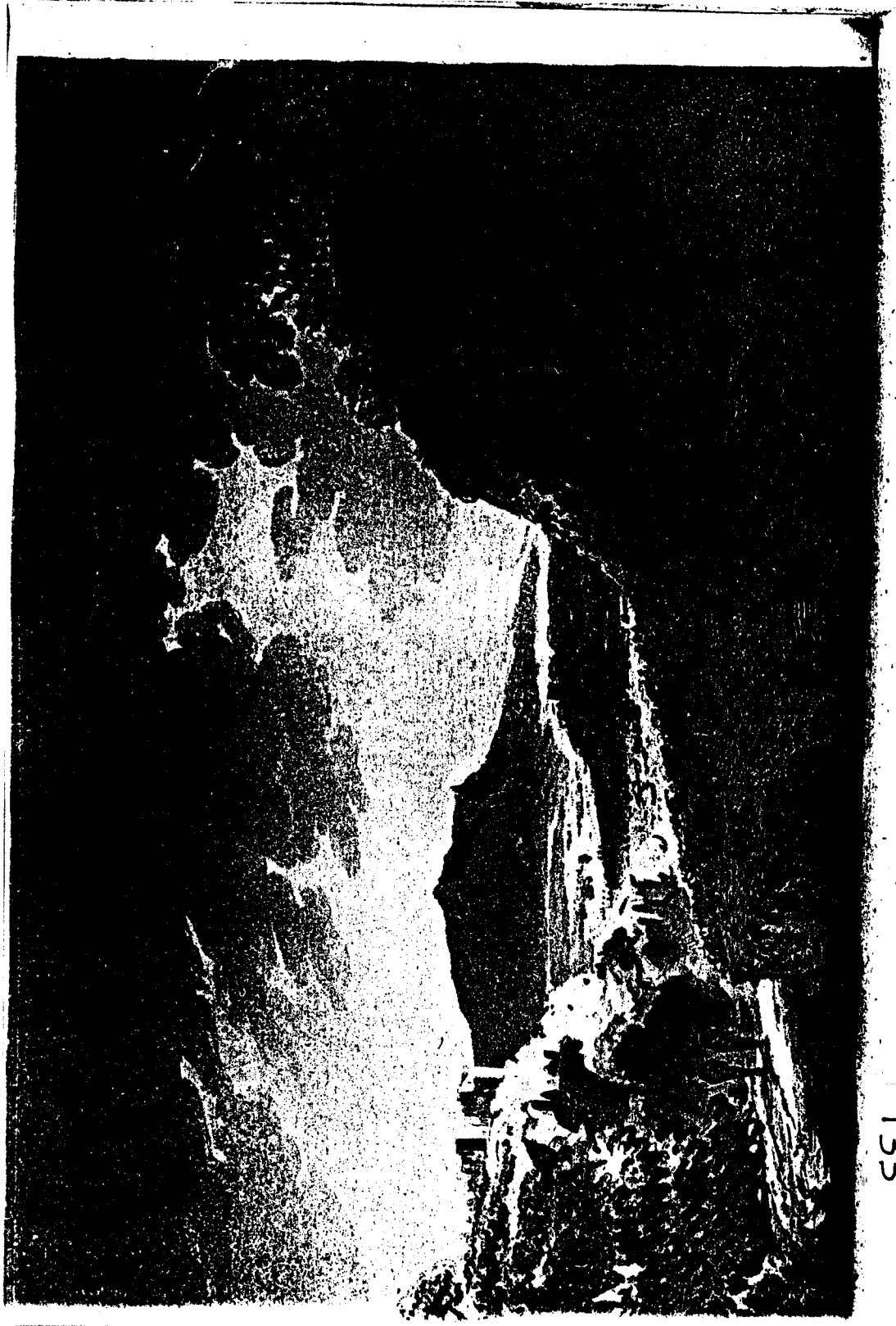

deals in lines, ſurfaces, and colours, which are an immediate addreſs to the *eye*, conceives the *very truth itſelf* concerned in his *mode* of repreſenting it. Guido's angel, and the angel on a ſign-poſt, are very different beings; but the whole of the difference conſiſts in an artful application of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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

* See page 19, &c.

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

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

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tribute greatly to embelliſh his pictures with pleaſing ſhapes.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A fourth

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

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

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

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

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

Empedocles, an Stertinii deliret acumen?

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

END OF THE FIRST ESSAY.

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

London,
April 19, 1791.

DEAR SIR,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

 ſome

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

I am, &c.

JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

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

THE ANSWER.

May 2d, 1791.

DEAR SIR,

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

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

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

ſo

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

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

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

I am, &c.

WILLIAM GILPIN.

To ſir Joſhua Reynolds,
Leiceſter-ſquare.

ESSAY II.

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

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

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

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

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

Sublimity

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

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

delight

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

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

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

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

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

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

* See page 8.

But

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

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

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

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

——— first good, first perfect, and first fair.

But

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

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

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

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

agreeable

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

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

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

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

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

it,

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

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

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

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

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

 general,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Believe

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

 formed,

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

END OF THE SECOND ESSAY.

ESSAY III.

ON

THE ART OF SKETCHING LANDSCAPE.

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ESSAY III.

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

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

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

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

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

—— or

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

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

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

In

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

 truth

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

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

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

And

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

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

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

 grounds,

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

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

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

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

But

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

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

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

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

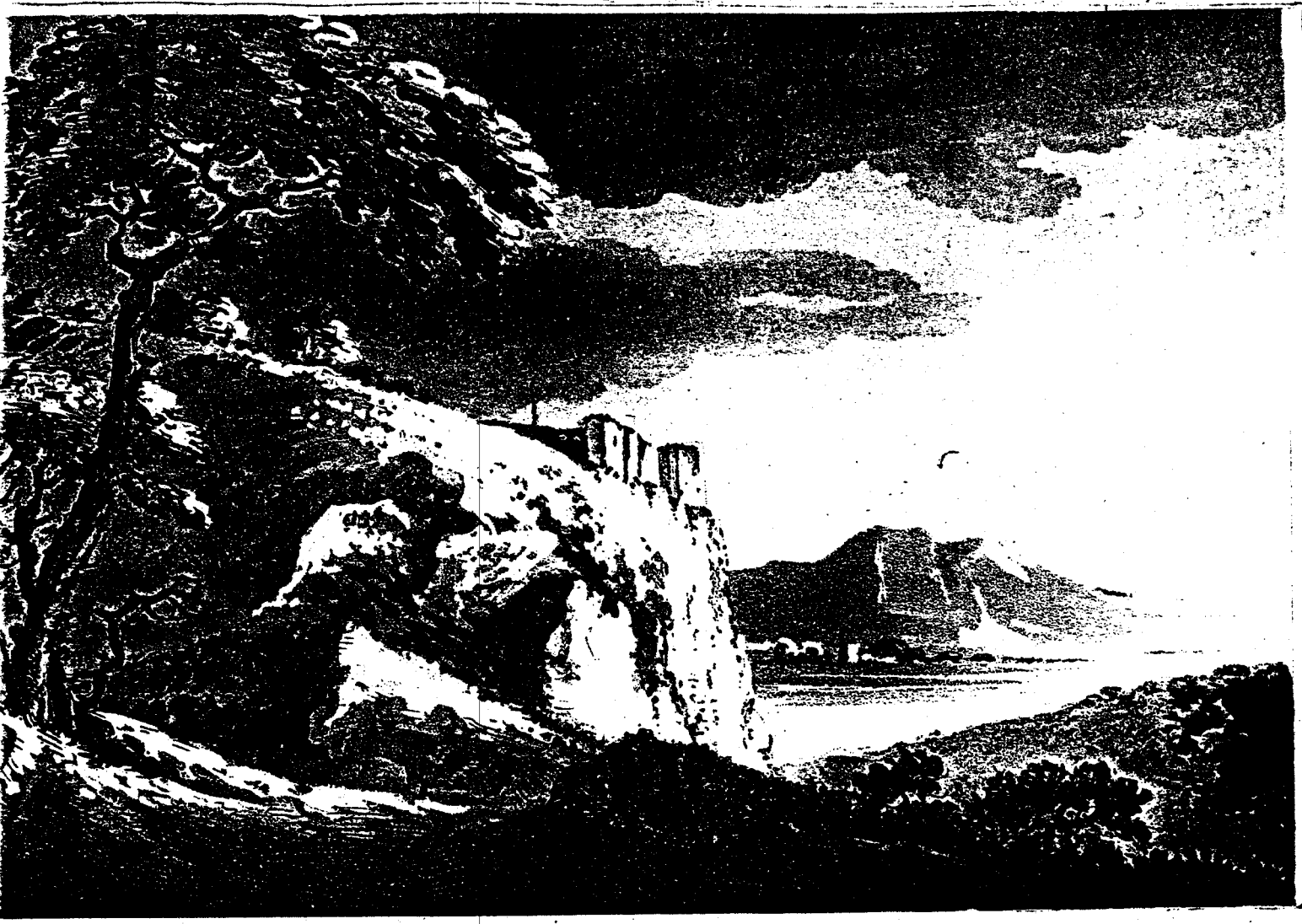
It is true: but what other inſtrument ſhall we put into his hands, that will do better? His black-lead, his bruſh, whatever he touches, will be unmaſterly. But my chief reaſon for putting a pen into his hands, is, that without a pen it will be difficult for him to preſerve his outline, and diſtances.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

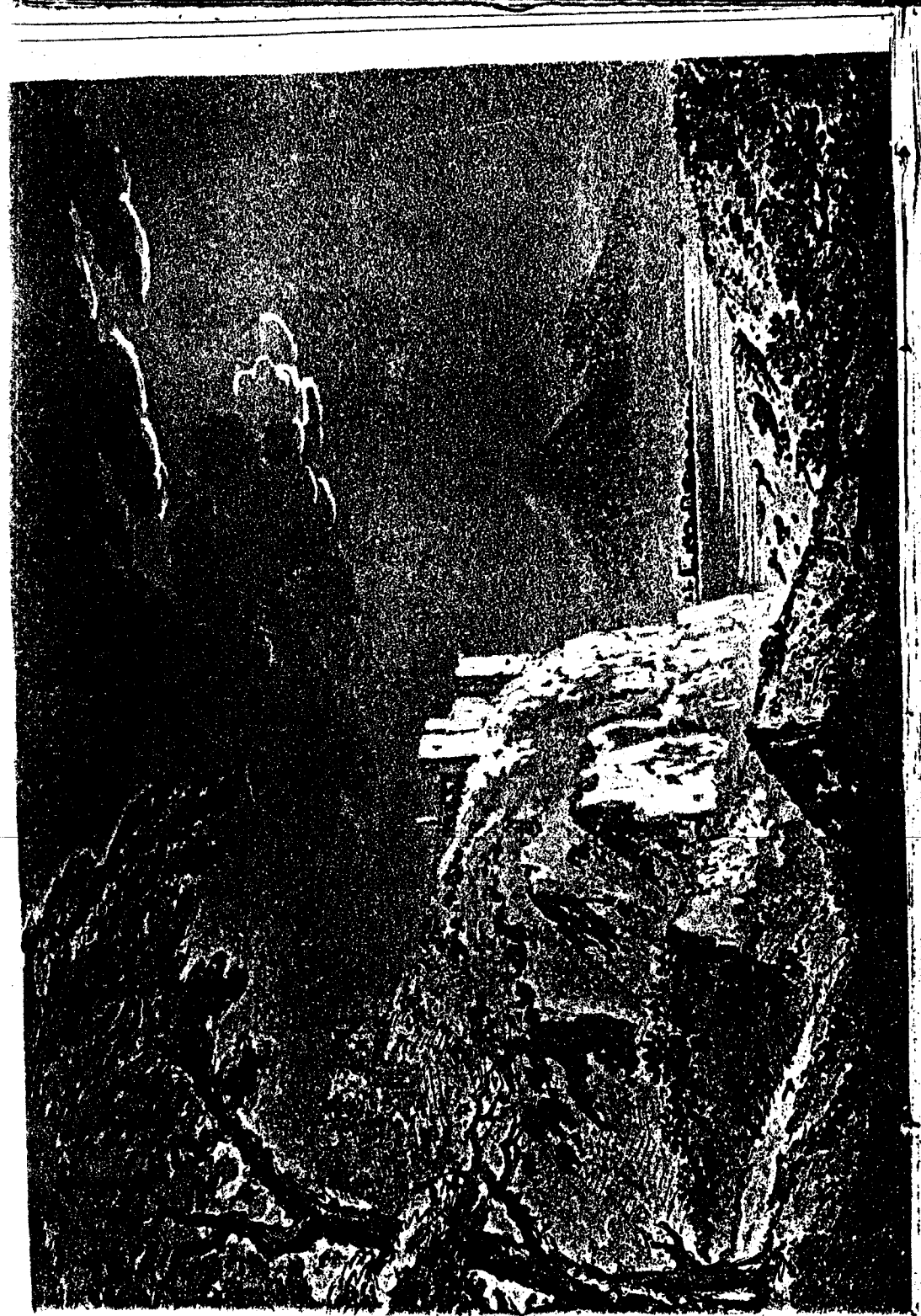
without which the whole will be a blot of confuſion. —— Nor is it perhaps ſo difficult to obtain ſome little freedom with the pen. I have ſeen aſſiduity, attended with but little genius, make a conſiderable progreſs in the uſe of this inſtrument; and produce an effect by no means diſpleaſing. — If the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

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

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

Indian





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

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

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

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

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

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

I may

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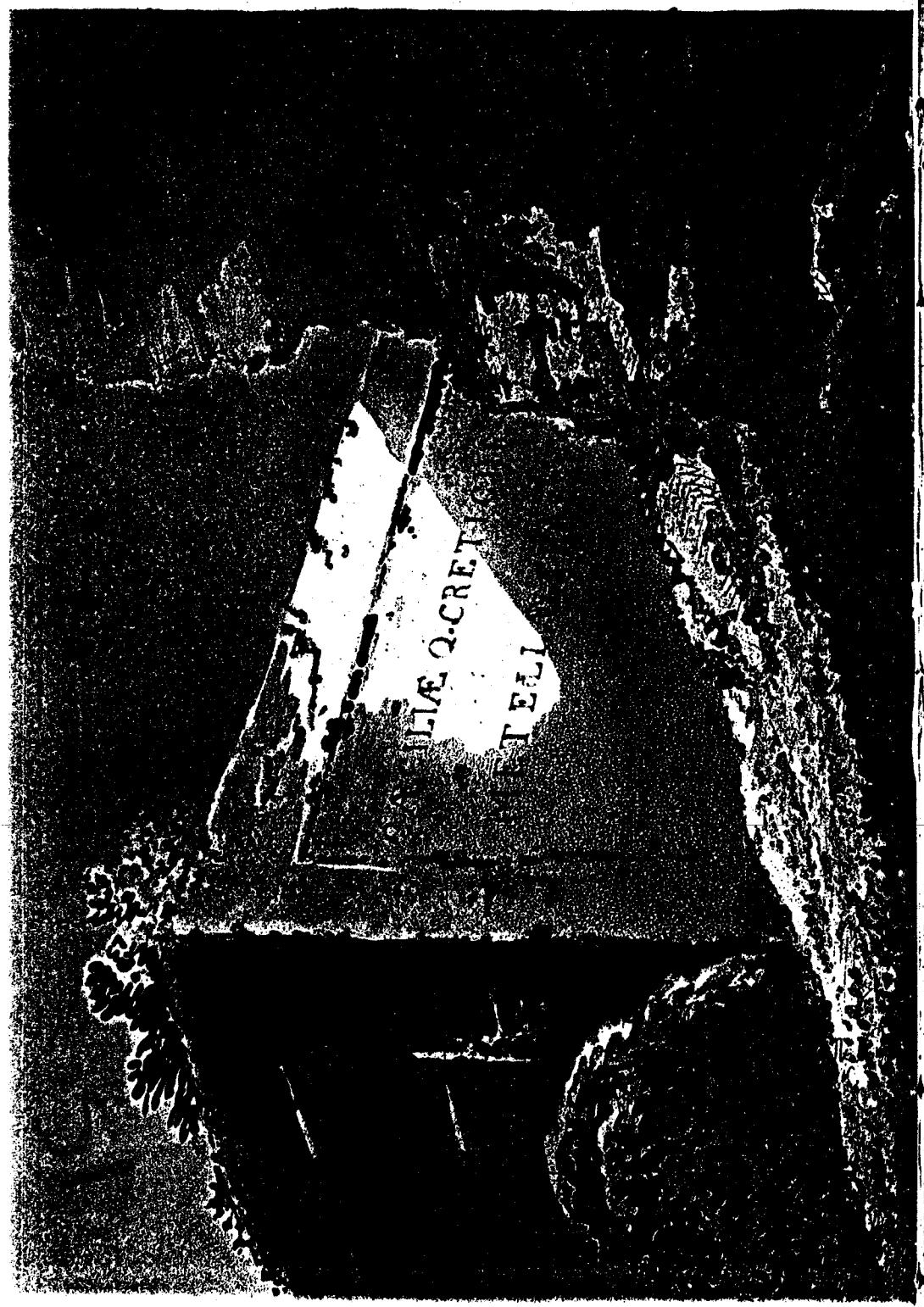

I may farther add, that the production of an *effect* is particularly neceſſary in *drawing*. In *painting*, colour in ſome degree makes up the deficiency: but in ſimple clair-obſcure there is no ſuccedaneum. It's force depends on effect; the virtue of which is ſuch, that it will give a value even to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

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

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

touches

touches are ſufficient. Attempts at finiſhing offend*.

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

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

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* See the preceding eſſay.

The

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The ſtrength, or faintneſs of this tinge depends on the ſtrength, or faintneſs of the drawing. A ſlight ſketch, ſhould be ſlightly tinged. But if the drawing be highly finiſhed, and the ſhadows ſtrong; the tinge alſo may be ſtronger. Where the ſhadows are very dark, and the lights catching, a deep tinge may ſometimes make it a good ſun-ſet. —— This tinge may be laid on, either before, or after the drawing is made. In general, I ſhould prefer the latter method; becauſe, while the drawing is yet on white paper, you may correct it with a ſponge, dipt in water; which will, in a good degree, efface Indian ink. But if you rub out any part, *after* the drawing is ſtained, you cannot eaſily lay the ſtain again upon the rubbed part without the appearance of a patch.

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

as

as a grey tint, uniting with other colours. This indeed, when chaſtely executed, (which is not often the caſe) exceeds in beauty every other ſpecies of drawing. It is however beyond my ſkill to give any inſtruction for this mode of drawing. All I mean is only to offer a modeſt way of tinting a ſketch already finiſhed in Indian ink, by the addition of a little colour; which will give ſome diſtinction to objects; and introduce rather a gayer ſtile into a landſcape.

When you have finiſhed your ſketch therefore with Indian ink, as far as you propoſe, tinge the whole over with ſome light horizon hue. It may be the roſy tint of morning; or the more ruddy one of evening; or it may incline more to a yellowiſh, or a greyiſh caſt. The firſt tint you ſpread over your drawing, is compoſed of light red, and oaker, which make an orange. It may incline to one, or the other, as you chuſe. By waſhing this tint over your *whole drawing*, you lay a foundation for harmony. When this waſh is nearly dry, repeat it in the horizon; ſoftening it off into the ſky, as you aſcend. —— Take next a purple tint, composed of lake, and blue,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

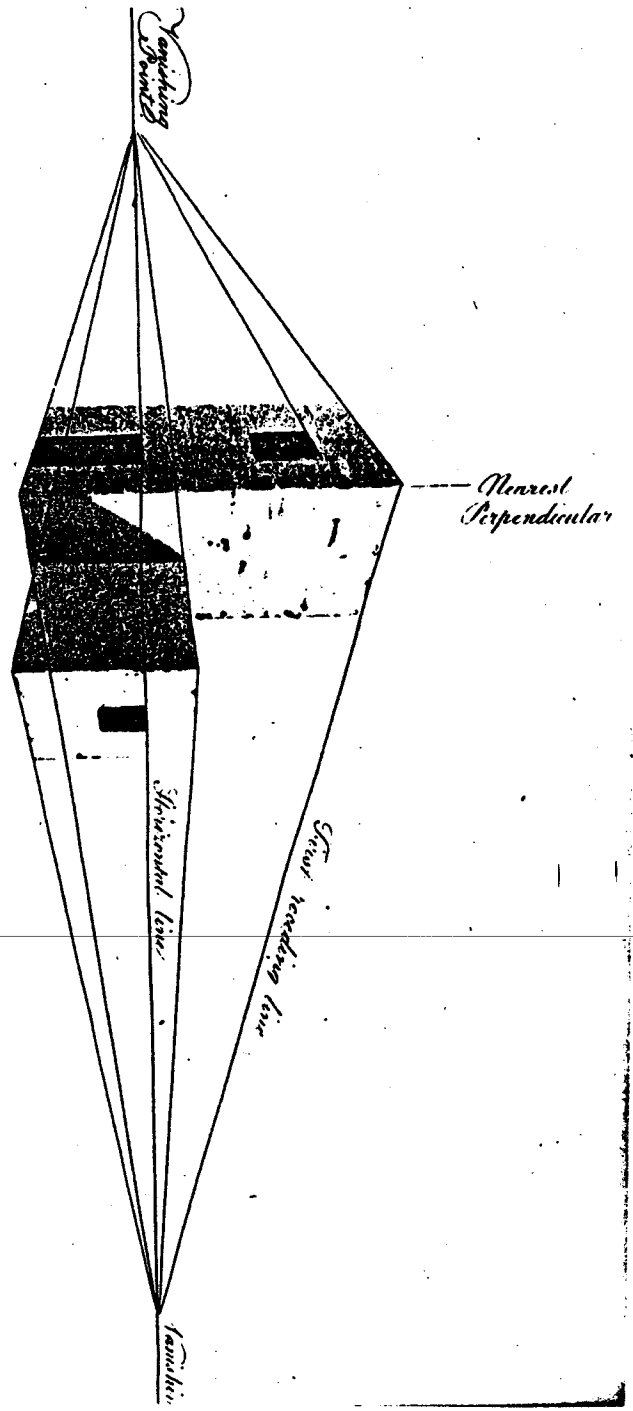
* I have been informed, that many of the purchaſers of the firſt edition of this work, have thought the plate, which illuſtrates what hath been ſaid above, was not ſo highly coloured, as they wiſhed it to have been. I apprehend this was chiefly owing to the particular care I took, to have it rather *under*,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

blue

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

Perhaps ſo: but unleſs he could work up his drawing with the *finiſhing* of nature alſo, he will find the effect very unequal. Nature mixes a variety of ſemi-tints with her brighteſt colours: and tho the eye cannot readily ſeparate them, they have a general chaſtizing effect; and keep the ſeveral tints of landſcape within proper bounds, which a glare of deep colours cannot do. Beſides, this chaſtizing hue is produced in nature by numberleſs little ſhadows, beyond the attention of art, which ſhe throws on leaves, and piles of graſs, and every other minute object; all of which, tho not eaſily diſtinguiſhed in *particulars*, tell *in the whole*, and are continually chaſtening the hues of nature.

Before I conclude theſe remarks on ſketching, it may be uſeful to add a few words, and but a few, on perſpective. The nicer parts of it contain many difficulties; and are of little uſe in common landſcape. Indeed in wild, irregular objects, it is hardly poſſible to apply it. The eye muſt regulate the winding of



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ſtudied it their whole lives, have acquired perfection.

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

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

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

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

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

END OF THE THIRD ESSAY.

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