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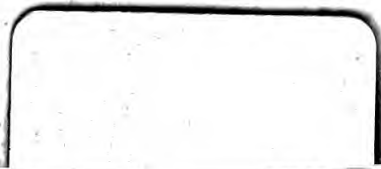
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THE  
WORKS  
OF  
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, KNIGHT ;

LATE PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY :

CONTAINING  
HIS DISCOURSES, IDLERS,  
A JOURNEY TO FLANDERS AND HOLLAND,  
AND HIS COMMENTARY ON DU FRESNOY'S ART OF  
PAINTING ;

PRINTED FROM HIS REVISED COPIES,  
(WITH HIS LAST CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS,)

*IN THREE VOLUMES.*

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED  
AN ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF THE  
AUTHOR,

By EDMOND MALONE, Esq.

ONE OF HIS EXECUTORS.

THE SECOND EDITION CORRECTED.

—QUASI NON EA PRÆCIPIAM ALIIS, QUÆ MIHI IPSI DESUNT. CICERO.

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VOLUME THE SECOND.

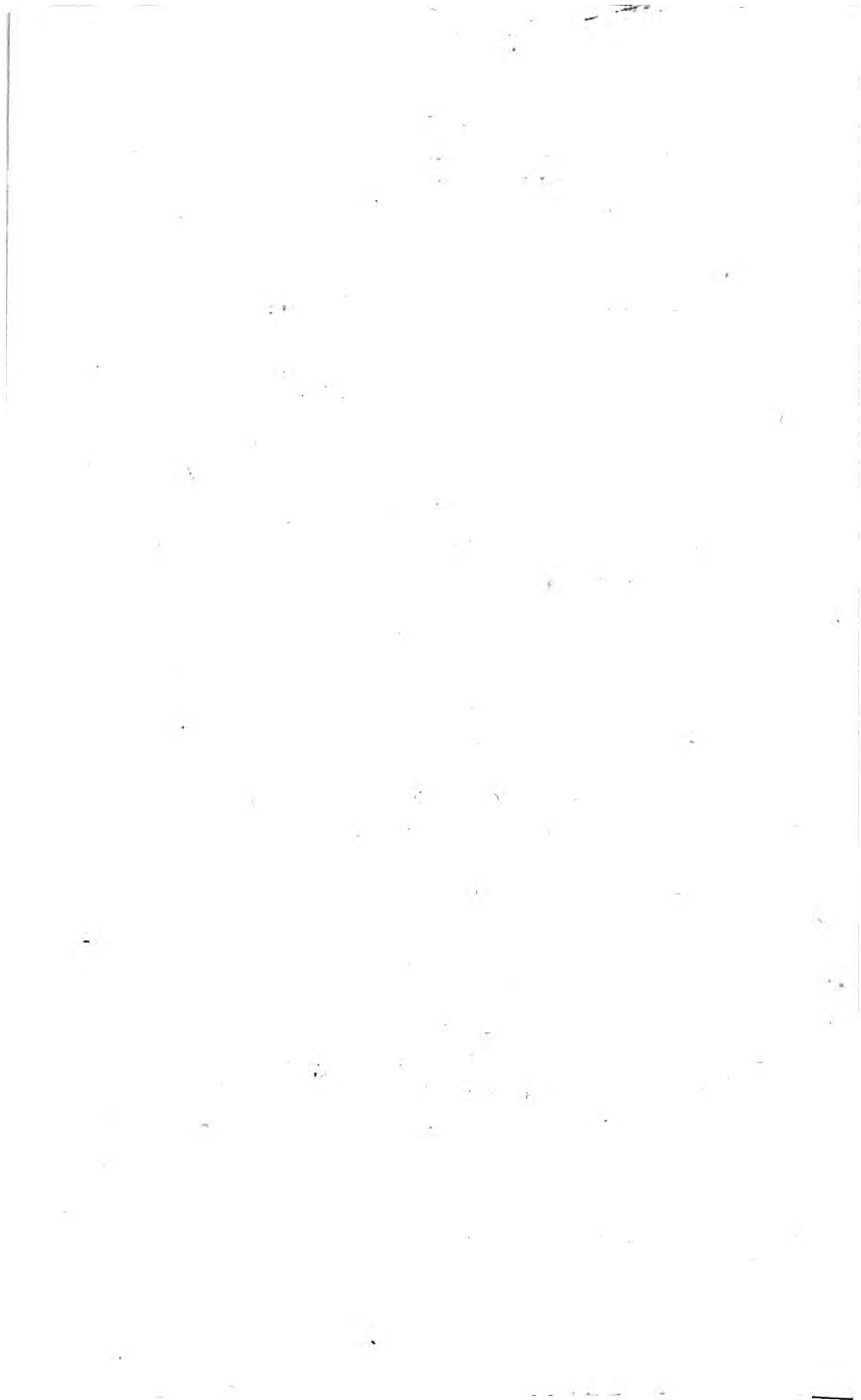
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LONDON:

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1798.





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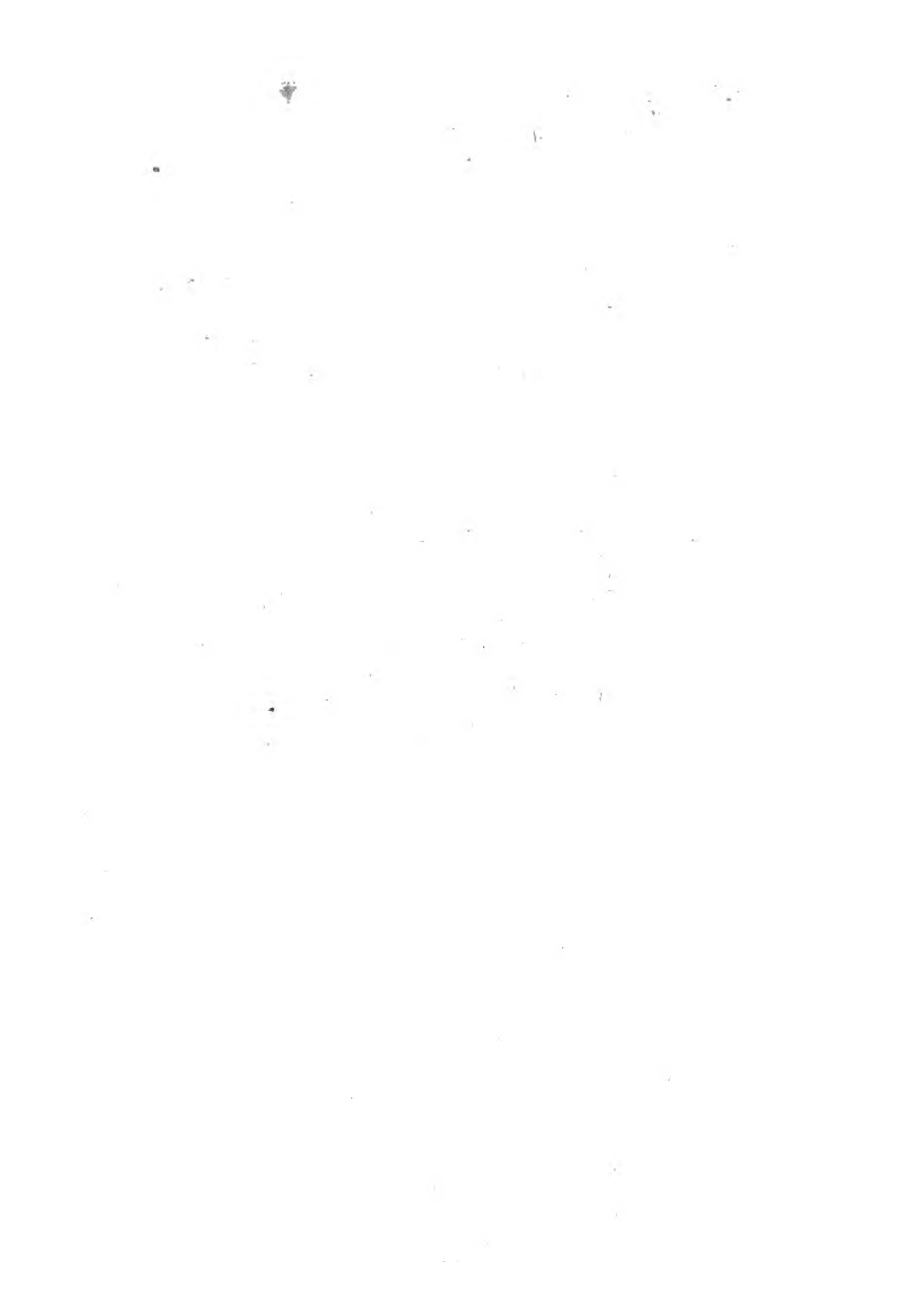
IN

SOMERSET-PLACE.

OCTOBER 16, 1780.

VOL. II.

B



## DISCOURSE IX.

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ON THE REMOVAL OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY TO SOMERSET-PLACE.—THE ADVANTAGES TO SOCIETY FROM CULTIVATING INTELLECTUAL PLEASURE.

GENTLEMEN,

THE honour which the Arts acquire by being permitted to take possession of this noble habitation, is one of the most considerable of the many instances we have received of his Majesty's protection; and the strongest proof of his desire to make the Academy respectable.

Nothing has been left undone, that might contribute to excite our pursuit, or to reward our attainments. We have already the happiness of seeing the Arts in a state to which they never before arrived in this nation. This Building, in which we are now assembled, will remain to many future ages an illustrious

specimen of the Architect's\* abilities. It is our duty to endeavour that those who gaze with wonder at the structure, may not be disappointed when they visit the apartments. It will be no small addition to the glory which this nation has already acquired from having given birth to eminent men in every part of science, if it should be enabled to produce, in consequence of this institution, a School of English Artists. The estimation in which we stand in respect to our neighbours, will be in proportion to the degree in which we excel or are inferior to them in the acquisition of intellectual excellence, of which Trade and its consequential riches must be acknowledged to give the means; but a people whose whole attention is absorbed in those means, and who forget the end, can aspire but little above the rank of a barbarous nation. Every establishment that tends to the cultivation of the pleasures of the mind, as distinct from those of sense, may be considered as an inferior school of morality, where the mind is polished and prepared for higher attainments.

\* Sir William Chambers.

Let us for a moment take a short survey of the progress of the mind towards what is, or ought to be, its true object of attention. Man, in his lowest state, has no pleasures but those of sense, and no wants but those of appetite ; afterwards, when society is divided into different ranks, and some are appointed to labour for the support of others, those whom their superiority sets free from labour, begin to look for intellectual entertainments. Thus, whilst the shepherds were attending their flocks, their masters made the first astronomical observations ; so musick is said to have had its origin from a man at leisure listening to the strokes of a hammer.

As the senses, in the lowest state of nature, are necessary to direct us to our support, when that support is once secure there is danger in following them further ; to him who has no rule of action but the gratification of the senses, plenty is always dangerous : it is therefore necessary to the happiness of individuals, and still more necessary to the security of society, that the mind should be elevated to the idea of general beauty, and



the contemplation of general truth ; by this pursuit the mind is always carried forward in search of something more excellent than it finds, and obtains its proper superiority over the common senses of life, by learning to feel itself capable of higher aims and nobler enjoyments. In this gradual exaltation of human nature, every art contributes its contingent towards the general supply of mental pleasure. Whatever abstracts the thoughts from sensual gratifications, whatever teaches us to look for happiness within ourselves, must advance in some measure the dignity of our nature.

Perhaps there is no higher proof of the excellency of man than this,—that to a mind properly cultivated whatever is bounded is little. The mind is continually labouring to advance, step by step, through successive gradations of excellence, towards perfection, which is dimly seen, at a great though not hopeless distance, and which we must always follow because we never can attain ; but the pursuit rewards itself: one truth teaches another, and our store is always

increasing, though nature can never be exhausted. Our art, like all arts which address the imagination, is applied to somewhat a lower faculty of the mind, which approaches nearer to sensuality; but through sense and fancy it must make its way to reason; for such is the progress of thought, that we perceive by sense, we combine by fancy, and distinguish by reason: and without carrying our art out of its natural and true character, the more we purify it from every thing that is gross in sense, in that proportion we advance its use and dignity; and in proportion as we lower it to mere sensuality, we pervert its nature, and degrade it from the rank of a liberal art; and this is what every artist ought well to remember. Let him remember also, that he deserves just so much encouragement in the state as he makes himself a member of it virtuously useful, and contributes in his sphere to the general purpose and perfection of society.

The Art which we profess has beauty for its object; this it is our business to discover and to express; but the beauty of which we

are in quest is general and intellectual ; it is an idea that subsists only in the mind ; the sight never beheld it, nor has the hand expressed it : it is an idea residing in the breast of the artist, which he is always labouring to impart, and which he dies at last without imparting ; but which he is yet so far able to communicate, as to raise the thoughts, and extend the views of the spectator ; and which, by a succession of art, may be so far diffused, that its effects may extend themselves imperceptibly into publick benefits, and be among the means of bestowing on whole nations refinement of taste : which, if it does not lead directly to purity of manners, obviates at least their greatest depravation, by disentangling the mind from appetite, and conducting the thoughts through successive stages of excellence, till that contemplation of universal rectitude and harmony which began by Taste, may, as it is exalted and refined, conclude in Virtue.

DISCOURSE X.

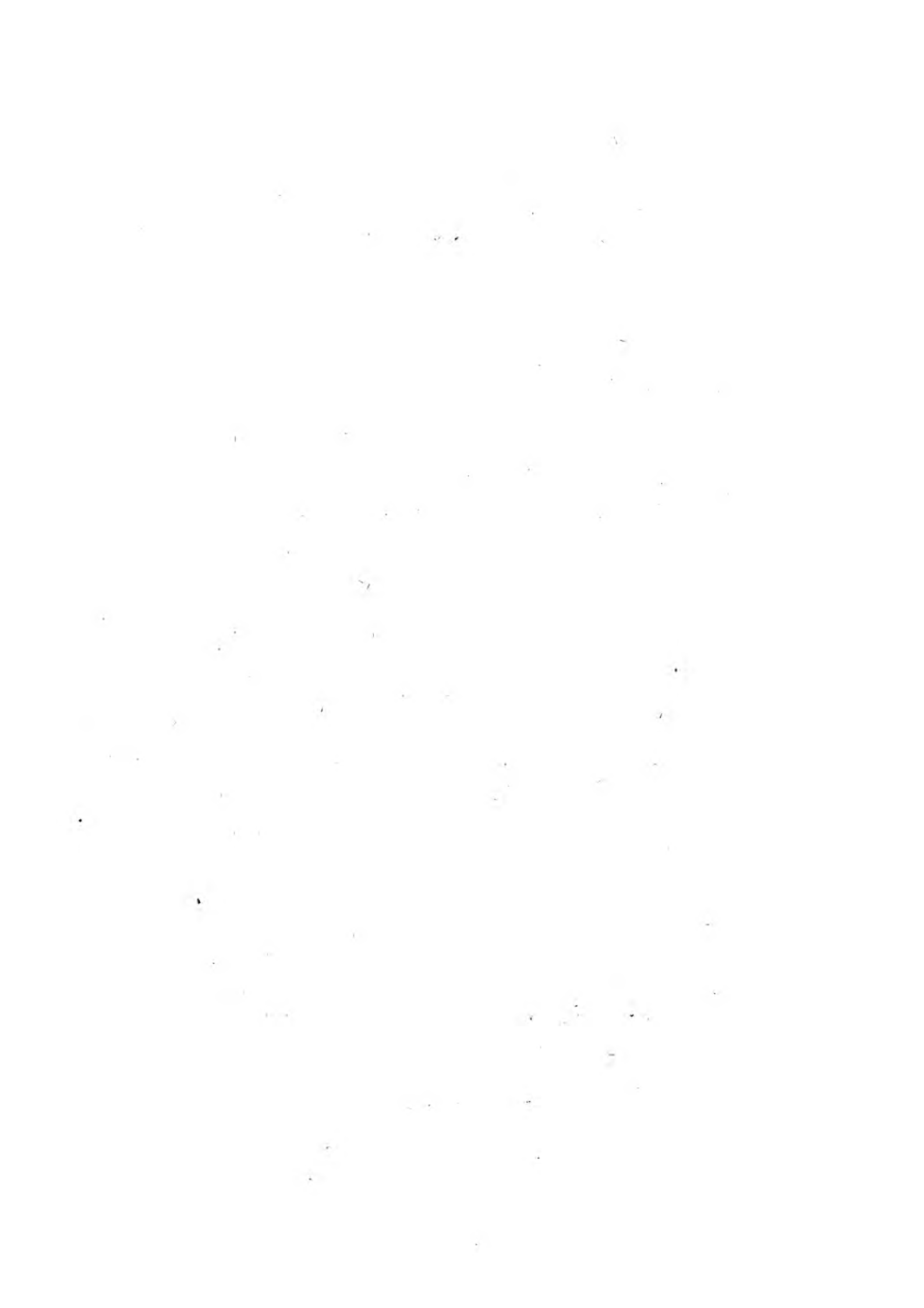
DELIVERED TO THE STUDENTS OF

THE ROYAL ACADEMY,

ON THE

DISTRIBUTION OF THE PRIZES,

DECEMBER 11, 1780.



## DISCOURSE XII.

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PARTICULAR METHODS OF STUDY OF LITTLE CONSEQUENCE.—LITTLE OF THE ART CAN BE TAUGHT.—LOVE OF METHOD OFTEN A LOVE OF IDLENESS. PITTORI IMPROVVISATORI APT TO BE CARELESS AND INCORRECT; SELDOM ORIGINAL AND STRIKING. THIS PROCEEDS FROM THEIR NOT STUDYING THE WORKS OF OTHER MASTERS.

GENTLEMEN,

IN consequence of the situation in which I have the honour to be placed in this Academy, it has often happened, that I have been consulted by the young Students who intend to spend some years in Italy, concerning the method of regulating their studies. I am, as I ought to be, solicitously desirous to communicate the entire result of my experience and observation; and though my openness and facility in giving my opinions might make some amends for whatever was defective in them, yet I fear my answers have not

often given satisfaction. Indeed I have never been sure, that I understood perfectly what they meant, and was not without some suspicion that they had not themselves very distinct ideas of the object of their enquiry.

If the information required was, by what means the path that leads to excellence could be discovered ; if they wished to know whom they were to take for their guides ; what to adhere to, and what to avoid ; where they were to bait, and where they were to take up their rest ; what was to be tasted only, and what should be their diet ; such general directions are certainly proper for a Student to ask, and for me, to the best of my capacity, to give ; but these rules have been already given : they have in-reality been the subject of almost all my Discourses from this place. But I am rather inclined to think, that by *method of study*, it was meant, (as several do mean,) that the times and the seasons should be prescribed, and the order settled, in which every thing was to be done : that it might be useful to point out to what degree of excellence one part of the

Art was to be carried, before the Student proceeded to the next; how long he was to continue to draw from the ancient statues, when to begin to compose, and when to apply to the study of colouring.

Such a detail of instruction might be extended with a great deal of plausible and ostentatious amplification. But it would at best be useless. Our studies will be for ever, in a very great degree, under the direction of chance; like travellers, we must take what we can get, and when we can get it; whether it is, or is not administered to us in the most commodious manner, in the most proper place, or at the exact minute when we would wish to have it.

Treatises on education, and method of study, have always appeared to me to have one general fault. They proceed upon a false supposition of life; as if we possessed not only a power over events and circumstances, but had a greater power over ourselves than I believe any of us will be found to possess. Instead of supposing ourselves to be perfect



patterns of wisdom and virtue, it seems to me more reasonable to treat ourselves (as I am sure we must now and then treat others) like humoursome children, whose fancies are often to be indulged, in order to keep them in good-humour with themselves and their pursuits. It is necessary to use some artifice of this kind in all processes which by their very nature are long, tedious, and complex, in order to prevent our taking that aversion to our studies, which the continual shackles of methodical restraint are sure to produce.

I would rather wish a student, as soon as he goes abroad, to employ himself upon whatever he has been incited to by any immediate impulse, than to go sluggishly about a prescribed task: whatever he does in such a state of mind, little advantage accrues from it, as nothing sinks deep enough to leave any lasting impression; and it is impossible that any thing should be well understood, or well done, that is taken into a reluctant understanding, and executed with a servile hand.

It is desirable, and indeed is necessary to intellectual health, that the mind should be recreated and refreshed with a variety in our studies; that in the irksomeness of uniform pursuit we should be relieved, and, if I may so say, deceived, as much as possible. Besides; the minds of men are so very differently constituted, that it is impossible to find one method which shall be suitable to all. It is of no use to prescribe to those who have no talents; and those who have talents will find methods for themselves—methods dictated to them by their own particular dispositions, and by the experience of their own particular necessities.

However, I would not be understood to extend this doctrine to the younger students. The first part of the life of a student, like that of other school-boys, must necessarily be a life of restraint. The grammar, the rudiments, however unpalatable, must at all events be mastered. After a habit is acquired of drawing correctly from the model (whatever it may be) which he has before

him, the rest, I think, may be safely left to chance ; always supposing that the student is *employed*, and that his studies are directed to the proper object.

A passion for his art, and an eager desire to excel, will more than supply the place of method. By leaving a student to himself, he may possibly indeed be led to undertake matters above his strength : but the trial will at least have this advantage, it will discover to himself his own deficiencies ; and this discovery alone, is a very considerable acquisition. One inconvenience, I acknowledge, may attend bold and arduous attempts ; frequent failure may discourage. This evil, however, is not more pernicious than the slow proficiency - which is the natural consequence of too easy tasks.

Whatever advantages method may have in dispatch of business, (and there it certainly has many,) I have but little confidence of its efficacy in acquiring excellence in any art whatever. Indeed, I have always strongly suspected, that this love of method,

on which some persons appear to place so great dependance, is, in reality, at the bottom, a love of idleness; a want of sufficient energy to put themselves into immediate action: it is a sort of an apology to themselves for doing nothing. I have known artists who may truly be said to have spent their whole lives, or at least the most precious part of their lives, in planning methods of study, without ever beginning; resolving, however, to put it all in practice at some time or other, — when a certain period arrives, — when proper conveniencies are procured, — or when they remove to a certain place better calculated for study. It is not uncommon for such persons to go abroad with the most honest and sincere resolution of studying hard, when they shall arrive at the end of their journey. The same want of exertion, arising from the same cause which made them at home put off the day of labour until they had found a proper scheme for it, still continues in Italy, and they consequently return home with little, if any, improvement.

In the practice of art, as well as in morals, it is necessary to keep a watchful and jealous eye over ourselves: idleness, assuming the specious disguise of industry, will lull to sleep all suspicion of our want of an active exertion of strength. A provision of endless apparatus, a bustle of infinite enquiry and research, or even the mere mechanical labour of copying, may be employed, to evade and shuffle off real labour,—the real labour of thinking.

I have declined for these reasons to point out any particular method and course of study to young Artists on their arrival in Italy. I have left it to their own prudence, a prudence which will grow and improve upon them in the course of unremitting, ardent industry, directed by a real love of their profession, and an unfeigned admiration of those who have been universally admitted as patterns of excellence in the art.

In the exercise of that general prudence, I shall here submit to their consideration such miscellaneous observations as have occurred

to me on considering the mistaken notions or evil habits, which have prevented that progress towards excellence, which the natural abilities of several Artists might otherwise have enabled them to make.

False opinions and vicious habits have done far more mischief to Students, and to Professors too, than any wrong methods of study.

Under the influence of sloth, or of some mistaken notion, is that disposition which always wants to lean on other men. Such Students are always talking of the prodigious progress they should make, if they could but have the advantage of being taught by some particular eminent Master. To him they would wish to transfer that care, which they ought and must take of themselves. Such are to be told, that after the rudiments are past, very little of our Art can be taught by others. The most skilful Master can do little more than put the end of the clue into the hands of his Scholar, by which he must conduct himself.

It is true, the beauties and defects of the works of our predecessors may be pointed out; the principles on which their works are conducted, may be explained; the great examples of Ancient Art may be spread out before them; but the most sumptuous entertainment is prepared in vain, if the guests will not take the trouble of helping themselves.

Even the Academy itself, where every convenience for study is procured, and laid before them, may, from that very circumstance, from leaving no difficulties to be encountered in the pursuit, cause a remission of their industry. It is not uncommon to see young artists whilst they are struggling with every obstacle in their way, exert themselves with such success as to outstrip competitors possessed of every means of improvement. The promising expectation which was formed, on so much being done with so little means, has recommended them to a Patron, who has supplied them with every convenience of study; from that time their industry and eagerness of pursuit has forsaken them; they

stand still, and see others rush on before them.

Such men are like certain animals, who will feed only when there is but little provender, and that got at with difficulty through the bars of a rack, but refuse to touch it when there is an abundance before them.

Perhaps, such a falling off may proceed from the faculties being overpowered by the immensity of the materials; as the traveller despairs ever to arrive at the end of his journey, when the whole extent of the road which he is to pass is at once displayed to his view.

Among the first moral qualities therefore, which a Student ought to cultivate, is a just and manly confidence in himself, or rather in the effects of that persevering industry which he is resolved to possess.

When Raffaello, by means of his connection with Bramante, the Pope's Architect, was fixed upon to adorn the Vatican with his



works, he had done nothing that marked in him any great superiority over his contemporaries ; though he was then but young, he had under his direction the most considerable Artists of his age ; and we know what kind of men those were : a lesser mind would have sunk under such a weight ; and if we should judge from the meek and gentle disposition which we are told was the character of Raffaello, we might expect this would have happened to him ; but his strength appeared to increase in proportion as exertion was required ; and it is not improbable that we are indebted to the good fortune which first placed him in that conspicuous situation, for those great examples of excellence which he has left us.

The observations to which I formerly wished, and now desire, to point your attention, relate not to errors which are committed by those who have no claim to merit, but to those inadvertencies into which men of parts only can fall by the over-rating or the abuse of some real, though perhaps subordinate, excellence. The errors

last alluded to are those of backward, timid characters; what I shall now speak of, belong to another class; to those Artists who are distinguished for the readiness and facility of their invention. It is undoubtedly a splendid and desirable accomplishment to be able to design instantaneously any given subject. It is an excellence that I believe every Artist would wish to possess; but unluckily, the manner in which this dexterity is acquired, habituates the mind to be contented with first thoughts without choice or selection. The judgement, after it has been long passive, by degrees loses its power of becoming active when exertion is necessary.

Whoever, therefore, has this talent, must in some measure undo what he has had the habit of doing, or at least give a new turn to his mind: great works, which are to live and stand the criticism of posterity, are not performed at a heat. A proportionable time is required for deliberation and circumspection. I remember when I was at Rome looking at the fighting Gladiator, in

company with an eminent Sculptor, and I expressed my admiration of the skill with which the whole is composed, and the minute attention of the Artist to the change of every muscle in that momentary exertion of strength, he was of opinion that a work so perfect required nearly the whole life of man to perform.

I believe, if we look around us, we shall find, that in the sister art of Poetry, what has been soon done, has been as soon forgotten. The judgement and practice of a great Poet on this occasion is worthy attention. Metastasio, who has so much and justly distinguished himself throughout Europe, at his outset was an *Improvvisatore*, or *extempore* Poet, a description of men not uncommon in Italy: it is not long since he was asked by a friend, if he did not think the custom of inventing and reciting *extempore*, which he practised when a boy in his character of an *Improvvisatore*, might not be considered as a happy beginning of his education; he thought it, on the contrary, a disadvantage to him: he said that he had

acquired by that habit a carelessness and incorrectness, which it cost him much trouble to overcome, and to substitute in the place of it a totally different habit, that of thinking with selection, and of expressing himself with correctness and precision.

However extraordinary it may appear, it is certainly true, that the inventions of the *Pittori improvvisatori*, as they may be called, have,—notwithstanding the common boast of their authors that all is spun from their own brain,—very rarely any thing that has in the least the air of originality:—their compositions are generally common-place, uninteresting, without character or expression; like those flowery speeches that we sometimes hear, which impress no new ideas on the mind.

I would not be thought, however, by what has been said, to oppose the use, the advantage, the necessity there is, of a Painter's being readily able to express his ideas by sketching. The further he can carry such designs, the better, The evil to

be apprehend is, his resting there, and not correcting them afterwards from nature, or taking the trouble to look about him for whatever assistance the works of others will afford him.

We are not to suppose, that when a Painter sits down to deliberate on any work, he has all his knowledge to seek; he must not only be able to draw *extempore* the human figure in every variety of action, but he must be acquainted likewise with the general principles of composition, and possess a habit of foreseeing, while he is composing, the effect of the masses of light and shadow, that will attend such a disposition. His mind is entirely occupied by his attention to the whole. It is a subsequent consideration to determine the attitude and expression of individual figures. It is in this period of his work that I would recommend to every Artist to look over his port-folio, or pocket-book, in which he has treasured up all the happy inventions, all the extraordinary and expressive attitudes that he has met with in the course of his studies; not only for

the sake of borrowing from those studies whatever may be applicable to his own work, but likewise on account of the great advantage he will receive by bringing the ideas of great Artists more distinctly before his mind, which will teach him to invent other figures in a similar style.

Sir Francis Bacon speaks with approbation of the provisional methods Demosthenes and Cicero employed to assist their invention: and illustrates their use by a quaint comparison after his manner. These particular *Studios* being not immediately connected with our art, I need not cite the passage I allude to, and shall only observe that such preparation totally opposes the general received opinions that are floating in the world, concerning genius and inspiration. The same great man in another place, speaking of his own *Essays*, remarks, that they treat of "those things, wherein  
" both men's lives and persons are most  
" conversant, whereof a man shall find  
" much in experience, but little in books:" they are then what an artist would naturally

call invention; and yet we may suspect that even the genius of Bacon, great as it was, would never have been enabled to have made those observations, if his mind had not been trained and disciplined by reading the observations of others. Nor could he without such reading have known that those opinions were not to be found in other books.

I know there are many Artists of great fame, who appear never to have looked out of themselves, and who probably would think it derogatory to their character, to be supposed to borrow from any other Painter. But when we recollect, and compare the works of such men with those who took to their assistance the inventions of others, we shall be convinced of the great advantage of this latter practice.

The two men most eminent for readiness of invention, that occur to me, are Luca Giordano and La Fage; one in painting, and the other in drawing.

• To such extraordinary powers as were

possessed by both of those Artists, we cannot refuse the character of Genius; at the same time, it must be acknowledged, that it was that kind of mechanick Genius which operates without much assistance of the head. In all their works, which are (as might be expected) very numerous, we may look in vain for any thing that can be said to be original and striking; and yet, according to the ordinary ideas of originality, they have as good pretensions as most Painters; for they borrowed very little from others, and still less will any Artist, that can distinguish between excellence and insipidity, ever borrow from them.

To those men, and all such, let us oppose the practice of the first of Painters. I suppose we shall all agree, that no man ever possessed a greater power of invention, and stood less in need of foreign assistance, than Raffaello; and yet, when he was designing one of his greatest as well as latest works, the Cartoons, it is very apparent that he had the studies which he had made from Masaccio before him.



Two noble figures of St. Paul, which he found there, he adopted in his own work: one of them he took for St. Paul preaching at Athens; and the other for the same Saint, when chastising the sorcerer Elymas. Another figure in the same work, whose head is sunk in his breast, with his eyes shut, appearing deeply wrapt up in thought, was introducēd amongst the listeners to the preaching of St. Paul. The most material alteration that is made in those two figures of St. Paul, is the addition of the left hands, which are not seen in the original. It is a rule that Raffaele observed, (and indeed ought never to be dispensed with,) in a principal figure, to shew both hands; that it should never be a question, what is become of the other hand. For the Sacrifice at Listra, he took the whole ceremony much as it stands in an ancient Basso-relievo, since published in the ADMIRANDA.

I have given examples from those pictures only of Raffaele which we have among us, though many other instances might be produced of this great Painter's not dis-

daining assistance: indeed his known wealth was so great, that he might borrow where he pleased without loss of credit.

It may be remarked, that this work of Masaccio, from which he has borrowed so freely, was a publick work, and at no farther distance from Rome, than Florence; so that if he had considered it a disgraceful theft, he was sure to be detected; but he was well satisfied that his character for Invention would be little affected by such a discovery; nor is it, except in the opinion of those who are ignorant of the manner in which great works are built,

Those who steal from mere poverty; who, having nothing of their own, cannot exist a minute without making such depredations; who are so poor that they have no place in which they can even deposit what they have taken; to men of this description nothing can be said: but such Artists as those to whom I suppose myself now speaking, men whom I consider as competently provided with all the necessaries and conveniencies of

art, and who do not desire to steal baubles and common trash, but wish only to possess peculiar rarities which they select to ornament their cabinets, and take care to enrich the general store with materials of equal or of greater value than what they have taken; such men surely need not be ashamed of that friendly intercourse which ought to exist among Artists, of receiving from the dead and giving to the living, and perhaps to those who are yet unborn.

The daily food and nourishment of the mind of an Artist is found in the great works of his predecessors. There is no other way for him to become great himself. *Serpens nisi serpentem comederit, non fit draco\**, is a remark of a whimsical Natural History, which I have read, though I do not recollect its title; however false as to dragons, it is applicable enough to Artists.

\* In Ben Jonson's CATILINE, we find this aphorism, with a slight variation:

“ A serpent, ere he comes to be a dragon,

“ Must eat a bat.” M.

Raffaello, as appears from what has been said, had carefully studied the works of Masaccio; and indeed there was no other, if we except Michael Angelo, (whom he likewise imitated,) so worthy of his attention; and though his manner was dry and hard, his compositions formal, and not enough diversified, according to the custom of Painters in that early period, yet his works possess that grandeur and simplicity which accompany, and even sometimes proceed from, regularity and hardness of manner. We must consider the barbarous state of the Arts before his time, when skill in drawing was so little understood, that the best of the painters could not even foreshorten the foot, but every figure appeared to stand upon his toes; and what served for drapery, had, from the hardness and smallness of the folds, too much the appearance of cords clinging round the body. He first introduced large drapery, flowing in an easy and natural manner: indeed he appears to be the first who discovered the path that leads to every excellence to which the Art afterwards arrived, and may therefore be justly con-

sidered as one of the Great Fathers of modern Art.

Though I have been led on to a longer digression respecting this great Painter than I intended, yet I cannot avoid mentioning another excellence which he possessed in a very eminent degree ; he was as much distinguished among his contemporaries for his diligence and industry, as he was for the natural faculties of his mind. We are told, that his whole attention was absorbed in the pursuit of his art, and that he acquired the name of Masaccio\*, from his total disregard to his dress, his person, and all the common concerns of life. He is indeed a signal instance of what well-directed diligence will do in a short time ; he lived but twenty-seven years ; yet in that short space carried the art so far beyond what it had before reached, that he appears to stand alone as a model for his successors. Vasari gives a long catalogue of Painters and Sculptors, who formed their taste, and learned their

\* The addition of *accio* denotes some deformity or imperfection attending that person to whom it is applied. R.

Art, by studying his works ; among those, he names Michael Angelo, Lionardo da Vinci, Pietro Perugino, Raffaelle, Bartolomeo, Andrea del Sarto, Il Rosso, and Pierino del Vaga.

The habit of contemplating and brooding over the ideas of great geniuses, till you find yourself warmed by the contact, is the true method of forming an artist-like mind ; it is impossible, in the presence of those great men, to think, or invent in a mean manner ; a state of mind is acquired that receives those ideas only which relish of grandeur and simplicity.

Beside the general advantage of forming the taste by such an intercourse, there is another of a particular kind, which was suggested to me by the practice of Raffaelle, when imitating the work of which I have been speaking. The figure of the Proconsul, Sergius Paulus, is taken from the Felix of Masaccio, though one is a front figure, and the other seen in profile ; the action is likewise somewhat changed ; but it is plain

Raffaelle had that figure in his mind. There is a circumstance indeed, which I mention by the by, which marks it very particularly ; Sergius Paulus wears a crown of laurel ; this is hardly reconcileable to strict propriety, and the *costume*, of which Raffaelle was in general a good observer ; but he found it so in Masaccio, and he did not bestow so much pains in disguise as to change it. It appears to me to be an excellent practice, thus to suppose the figures which you wish to adopt in the works of those great Painters to be statues ; and to give, as Raffaelle has here given, another view, taking care to preserve all the spirit and grace you find in the original.

I should hope, from what has been lately said, that it is not necessary to guard myself against any supposition of recommending an entire dependence upon former masters. I do not desire that you should get other people to do your business, or to think for you ; I only wish you to consult with, to call in, as Counsellors, men the most distinguished for their knowledge and experience, the result

of which counsel must ultimately depend upon yourself. Such conduct in the commerce of life has never been considered as disgraceful, or in any respect to imply intellectual imbecility ; it is a sign rather of that true wisdom, which feels individual imperfection ; and is conscious to itself how much collective observation is necessary to fill the immense extent, and to comprehend the infinite variety, of nature. I recommend neither self-dependence nor plagiarism. I advise you only to take that assistance which every human being wants, and which, as appears from the examples that have been given, the greatest Painters have not disdained to accept. Let me add, that the diligence required in the search, and the exertion subsequent in accommodating those ideas to your own purpose, is a business which idleness will not, and ignorance cannot, perform. But in order more distinctly to explain what kind of borrowing I mean, when I recommend so anxiously the study of the works of great Masters, let us for a minute return again to Raffaele, consider his method of practice,



and endeavour to imitate him, in his manner of imitating others.

The two figures of St. Paul which I lately mentioned, are so nobly conceived by Masaccio, that perhaps it was not in the power even of Raffaele himself to raise and improve them, nor has he attempted it ; but he has had the address to change in some measure without diminishing the grandeur of their character ; he has substituted, in the place of a serene composed dignity, that animated expression which was necessary to the more active employment he has assigned them.

In the same manner he has given more animation to the figure of Sergius Paulus, and to that which is introduced in the picture of St. Paul preaching, of which little more than hints are given by Masaccio, which Raffaele has finished. The closing the eyes of this figure, which in Masaccio might be easily mistaken for sleeping, is not in the least ambiguous in the Cartoon : his eyes indeed are closed, but they are closed

with such vehemence, that the agitation of a mind *perplexed in the extreme* is seen at the first glance: but what is most extraordinary, and I think particularly to be admired, is, that the same idea is continued through the whole figure, even to the drapery, which is so closely muffled about him, that even his hands are not seen; by this happy correspondence between the expression of the countenance, and the disposition of the parts, the figure appears to think from head to foot. Men of superior talents alone are capable of thus using and adapting other men's minds to their own purposes, or are able to make out and finish what was only in the original a hint or imperfect conception. A readiness in taking such hints, which escape the dull and ignorant, makes in my opinion no inconsiderable part of that faculty of the mind which is called Genius.

It often happens that hints may be taken and employed in a situation totally different from that in which they were originally employed. There is a figure of a Bacchantë leaning backward, her head thrown quite

behind her, which seems to be a favourite invention, as it is so frequently repeated in basso-relievos, camæos, and intaglios; it is intended to express an enthusiastick frantick kind of joy. This figure Baccio Bandinelli, in a drawing that I have of that Master, of the Descent from the Cross, has adopted, (and he knew very well what was worth borrowing,) for one of the Marys, to express frantick agony of grief. It is curious to observe, and it is certainly true, that the extremes of contrary passions are with very little variation expressed by the same action.

.. If I were to recommend method in any part of the study of a Painter, it would be in regard to invention; that young Students should not presume to think themselves qualified to invent, till they were acquainted with those stores of invention the world already possesses, and had by that means accumulated sufficient materials for the mind to work with. It would certainly be no improper method of forming the mind of a young Artist, to begin with such exercises as the Italians call a *Pasticcio* composition of

the different excellencies which are dispersed in all other works of the same kind. It is not supposed that he is to stop here, but that he is to acquire by this means the art of selecting, first what is truly excellent in Art, and then what is still more excellent in Nature; a task, which, without this previous study, he will be but ill qualified to perform.

The doctrine which is here advanced, is acknowledged to be new, and to many may appear strange. But I only demand for it the reception of a stranger; a favourable and attentive consideration, without that entire confidence which might be claimed under authoritative recommendation.

After you have taken a figure, or any idea of a figure, from any of those great Painters, there is another operation still remaining, which I hold to be indispensably necessary, that is, never to neglect finishing from Nature every part of the work. What is taken from a model, though the first idea may have been suggested by another, you have a just right to consider as your own

property. And here I cannot avoid mentioning a circumstance in placing the model, though to some it may appear trifling. It is better to possess the model with the attitude you require, than to place him with your own hands: by this means it happens often that the model puts himself in an action superior to your own imagination. It is a great matter to be in the way of accident, and to be watchful and ready to take advantage of it: besides; when you fix the position of a model, there is danger of putting him in an attitude into which no man would naturally fall. This extends even to drapery. We must be cautious in touching and altering a fold of the stuff, which serves as a model, for fear of giving it inadvertently a forced form; and it is perhaps better to take the chance of another casual throw, than to alter the position in which it was at first accidentally cast.

Rembrandt, in order to take the advantage of accident, appears often to have used the pallet-knife to lay his colours on the canvas, instead of the pencil. Whether it is the

knife or any other instrument, it suffices if it is something that does not follow exactly the will. Accident in the hands of an Artist who knows how to take the advantage of its hints, will often produce bold and capricious beauties of handling and facility, such as he would not have thought of, or ventured, with his pencil, under the regular restraint of his hand. However, this is fit only on occasions where no correctness of form is required, such as clouds, stumps of trees, rocks, or broken ground. Works produced in an accidental manner will have the same free unrestrained air as the works of nature, whose particular combinations seem to depend upon accident,

I again repeat, you are never to lose sight of nature ; the instant you do, you are all abroad, at the mercy of every gust of fashion, without knowing or seeing the point to which you ought to steer. Whatever trips you make, you must still have nature in your eye. Such deviations as art necessarily requires, I hope in a future Discourse to be able to explain. In the mean time, let me recom-

mend to you, not to have too great dependance on your practice or memory, however strong those impressions may have been which are there deposited. They are for ever wearing out, and will be at last obliterated, unless they are continually refreshed and repaired.

It is not uncommon to meet with artists who from a long neglect of cultivating this necessary intimacy with Nature, do not even know her when they see her ; she appearing a stranger to them, from their being so long habituated to their own representation of her. I have heard Painters acknowledge, though in that acknowledgment no degradation of themselves was intended, that they could do better without Nature than with her ; or as they expressed it themselves, *that it only put them out*. A Painter with such ideas and such habits, is indeed in a most hopeless state. *The art of seeing Nature*, or in other words, the art of using Models, is in reality the great object, the point to which all our studies are directed. As for the power of being able to do tolerably well, from practice alone, let it be valued according to its worth,

But I do not see in what manner it can be sufficient for the production of correct, excellent, and finished Pictures. Works deserving this character never were produced, nor ever will arise, from memory alone ; and I will venture to say, that an Artist who brings to his work a mind tolerably furnished with the general principles of Art, and a taste formed upon the works of good Artists, in short who knows in what excellence consists, will, with the assistance of Models, which we will likewise suppose he has learnt the art of using, be an over-match for the greatest Painter that ever lived who should be debarred such advantages.

Our neighbours, the French, are much in this practice of *extempore* invention, and their dexterity is such as even to excite admiration, if not envy ; but how rarely can this praise be given to their finished pictures !

The late Director of their Academy, *Boucher*, was eminent in this way. When I visited him some years since, in France, I found him at work on a very large Picture,



without drawings or models of any kind. On my remarking this particular circumstance, he said, when he was young, studying his art, he found it necessary to use models; but he had left them off for many years.

Such Pictures as this was, and such as I fear always will be produced by those who work solely from practice or memory, may be a convincing proof of the necessity of the conduct which I have recommended. However, in justice I cannot quit this Painter without adding, that in the former part of his life, when he was in the habit of having recourse to nature, he was not without a considerable degree of merit,—enough to make half the Painters of his country his imitators; he had often grace and beauty, and good skill in composition; but I think, all under the influence of a bad taste: his imitators are indeed abominable.

Those Artists who have quitted the service of nature, (whose service, when well understood, is *perfect freedom*,) and have put

themselves under the direction of I know not what capricious fantastical mistress, who fascinates and overpowers their whole mind, and from whose dominion there are no hopes of their being ever reclaimed, (since they appear perfectly satisfied, and not at all conscious of their forlorn situation,) like the transformed followers of Comus,—

Not once perceive their foul disfigurement ;  
But boast themselves more comely than before.

Methinks, such men, who have found out so short a path, have no reason to complain of the shortness of life, and the extent of art; since life is so much longer than is wanted for their improvement, or indeed is necessary for the accomplishment of their idea of perfection. On the contrary, he who recurs to nature, at every recurrence renews his strength. The rules of art he is never likely to forget; they are few and simple; but Nature is refined, subtle, and infinitely various, beyond the power and retention of memory; it is necessary, therefore, to have continual recourse to her. In this intercourse,

there is no end of his improvement; the longer he lives, the nearer he approaches to the true and perfect idea of Art,

DISCOURSE XV.

DELIVERED TO THE STUDENTS OF

THE ROYAL ACADEMY,

ON THE

DISTRIBUTION OF THE PRIZES,

DECEMBER 10, 1790.

DISCOURSE XV.

PRESENTED TO THE STUDENTS OF  
THE ROYAL ACADEMY  
BY  
JAMES W. HALL, M.D., F.R.S.E.

THE ROYAL ACADEMY  
of Medicine, London, which I have had  
the honor to attend ever since its  
institution, the social duties in which we  
are distinguished by the various years,  
any profession of attachment to this  
Academy, or to its other support-  
ers, the influence of their name in such a  
country would naturally have produced it.

## DISCOURSE XV.

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THE PRESIDENT TAKES LEAVE OF THE ACADEMY.—A  
REVIEW OF THE DISCOURSES.—THE STUDY OF THE  
WORKS OF MICHAEL ANGELO RECOMMENDED.

GENTLEMEN,

THE intimate connection which I have had with the ROYAL ACADEMY ever since its establishment, the social duties in which we have all mutually engaged for so many years, make any profession of attachment to this Institution, on my part, altogether superfluous; the influence of habit alone in such a connection would naturally have produced it.

Among men united in the same body, and engaged in the same pursuit, along with permanent friendship occasional differences will arise. In these disputes men are naturally too favourable to themselves, and think perhaps too hardly of their antagonists. But composed and constituted as we are, those

little contentions will be lost to others, and they ought certainly to be lost amongst ourselves, in mutual esteem for talents and acquirements: every controversy ought to be, and I am persuaded, will be, sunk in our zeal for the perfection of our common Art.

In parting with the Academy, I shall remember with pride, affection, and gratitude, the support with which I have almost uniformly been honoured from the commencement of our intercourse. I shall leave you, Gentlemen, with unaffected cordial wishes for your future concord, and with a well-founded hope, that in that concord, the auspicious and not obscure origin of our Academy may be forgotten in the splendour of your succeeding prospects.

My age, and my infirmities still more than my age, make it probable that this will be the last time I shall have the honour of addressing you from this place. Excluded as I am, *spatiis iniquis*, from indulging my imagination with a distant and forward

perspective of life, I may be excused if I turn my eyes back on the way which I have passed.

We may assume to ourselves, I should hope, the credit of having endeavoured, at least, to fill with propriety that middle station which we hold in the general connection of things. Our predecessors have laboured for our advantage, we labour for our successors; and though we have done no more in this mutual intercourse and reciprocation of benefits, than has been effected by other societies formed in this nation for the advancement of useful and ornamental knowledge, yet there is one circumstance which appears to give *us* an higher claim than the credit of merely doing our duty. What I at present allude to, is the honour of having been, some of us, the first contrivers, and all of us the promoters and supporters, of the annual Exhibition. This scheme could only have originated from Artists already in possession of the favour of the publick; as it would not have been so much in the power of others to have



excited curiosity. It must be remembered, that for the sake of bringing forward into notice concealed merit, they incurred the risk of producing rivals to themselves; they voluntarily entered the lists, and ran the race a second time for the prize which they had already won.

When we take a review of the several departments of the Institution, I think we may safely congratulate ourselves on our good fortune in having hitherto seen the chairs of our Professors filled with men of distinguished abilities, and who have so well acquitted themselves of their duty in their several departments. I look upon it to be of importance, that none of them should be ever left unfilled: a neglect to provide for qualified persons, is to produce a neglect of qualifications.

In this honourable rank of Professors, I have not presumed to class myself; though in the Discourses which I have had the honour of delivering from this place, while in one respect I may be considered as a volun-

teer, in another view it seems as if I was involuntarily pressed into this service. If prizes were to be given, it appeared not only proper, but almost indispensably necessary, that something should be said by the President on the delivery of those prizes; and the President for his own credit would wish to say something more than mere words of compliment, which, by being frequently repeated, would soon become flat and uninteresting, and by being uttered to many, would at last become a distinction to none. I thought, therefore, if I were to preface this compliment with some instructive observations on the Art, when we crowned merit in the Artists whom we rewarded, I might do something to animate and guide them in their future attempts.

I am truly sensible how unequal I have been to the expression of my own ideas. To develop the latent excellencies, and draw out the interior principles, of our art, requires more skill and practice in writing, than is likely to be possessed by a man perpetually occupied in the use of the pencil.

and the pallet. It is for that reason, perhaps, that the sister Art has had the advantage of better criticism. Poets are naturally writers of prose. They may be said to be practising only an inferior department of their own art, when they are explaining and expatiating upon its most refined principles. But still such difficulties ought not to deter Artists who are not prevented by other engagements, from putting their thoughts in order as well as they can, and from giving to the publick the result of their experience. The knowledge which an Artist has of his subject will more than compensate for any want of elegance in the manner of treating it, or even of perspicuity, which is still more essential; and I am convinced that one short essay written by a Painter, will contribute more to advance the theory of our art, than a thousand volumes such as we sometimes see; the purpose of which appears to be rather to display the refinement of the Author's own conceptions of impossible practice, than to convey useful knowledge or instruction of any kind whatever. An Artist knows what

is, and what is not, within the province of his art to perform; and is not likely to be for ever teasing the poor Student with the beauties of mixed passions, or to perplex him with an imaginary union of excellencies incompatible with each other.

To this work, however, I could not be said to come totally unprovided with materials. I had seen much, and I had thought much upon what I had seen; I had something of an habit of investigation, and a disposition to reduce all that I observed and felt in my own mind, to method and system; but never having seen what I myself knew, distinctly placed before me on paper, I knew nothing correctly. To put those ideas into something like order was, to my inexperience, no easy task. The composition, the *ponere totum* even of a single Discourse, as well as of a single statue, was the most difficult part, as perhaps it is of every other art, and most requires the hand of a master.

For the manner, whatever deficiency there

was, I might reasonably expect indulgence ; but I thought it indispensably necessary well to consider the opinions which were to be given out from this place, and under the sanction of a Royal Academy ; I therefore examined not only my own opinions, but likewise the opinions of others. I found in the course of this research, many precepts and rules established in our art, which did not seem to me altogether reconcileable with each other, yet each seemed in itself to have the same claim of being supported by truth and nature ; and this claim, irreconcilable as they may be thought, they do in reality alike possess.

To clear away those difficulties, and reconcile those contrary opinions, it became necessary to distinguish the greater truth, as it may be called, from the lesser truth ; the larger and more liberal idea of nature from the more narrow and confined ; that which addresses itself to the imagination, from that which is solely addressed to the eye. In consequence of this discrimination, the different branches of our art, to which those

different truths were referred, were perceived to make so wide a separation, and put on so new an appearance, that they seemed scarcely to have proceeded from the same general stock. The different rules and regulations, which presided over each department of art, followed of course: every mode of excellence, from the grand style of the Roman and Florentine Schools down to the lowest rank of still life, had its due weight and value,—fitted some class or other; and nothing was thrown away. By this disposition of our art into classes, that perplexity and confusion, which I apprehend every Artist has at some time experienced from the variety of styles, and the variety of excellence with which he is surrounded, is, I should hope, in some measure removed, and the Student better enabled to judge for himself, what peculiarly belongs to his own particular pursuit.

In reviewing my Discourses, it is no small satisfaction to be assured that I have, in no part of them, lent my assistance to foster *newly-hatched unfledged* opinions, or endea-

voured to support paradoxes, however tempting may have been their novelty; or however ingenious I might, for the minute, fancy them to be; nor shall I, I hope, any where be found to have imposed on the minds of young Students declamation for argument, a smooth period for a sound precept. I have pursued a plain and *honest method*; I have taken up the art simply as I found it exemplified in the practice of the most approved Painters. That approbation which the world has uniformly given, I have endeavoured to justify by such proofs as questions of this kind will admit; by the analogy which Painting holds with the sister Arts, and consequently by the common congeniality which they all bear to our nature. And though in what has been done no new discovery is pretended, I may still flatter myself, that from the discoveries which others have made by their own intuitive good sense and native rectitude of judgement, I have succeeded in establishing the rules and principles of our Art on a more firm and lasting foundation than that on which they had formerly been placed.

Without wishing to divert the Student from the practice of his Art to speculative theory, to make him a mere Connoisseur instead of a Painter, I cannot but remark, that he will certainly find an account in considering once for all, on what ground the fabrick of our art is built. Uncertain, confused, or erroneous opinions are not only detrimental to an Artist in their immediate operation, but may possibly have very serious consequences ; affect his conduct, and give a peculiar character (as it may be called) to his taste, and to his pursuits, through his whole life.

I was acquainted at Rome in the early part of my life, with a Student of the French Academy, who appeared to me to possess all the qualities requisite to make a great Artist, if he had suffered his taste and feelings, and I may add even his prejudices, to have fair play. He saw and felt the excellencies of the great works of Art with which we were surrounded, but lamented that there was not to be found that Nature which is so admirable in the inferior schools;



and he supposed with Felibien, Du Piles, and other Theorists, that such an union of different excellencies would be the perfection of Art. He was not aware, that the narrow idea of Nature, of which he lamented the absence in the works of those great Artists, would have destroyed the grandeur of the general ideas which he admired, and which was indeed the cause of his admiration. My opinions being then confused and unsettled, I was in danger of being borne down by this kind of plausible reasoning, though I remember I then had a dawning of suspicion that it was not sound doctrine; and at the same time I was unwilling obstinately to refuse assent to what I was unable to confute.

That the young Artist may not be seduced from the right path, by following what, at first view, he may think the light of Reason, and which is indeed Reason in part, but not in the whole, has been much the object of these Discourses.

I have taken every opportunity of recommending a rational method of study, as of

the last importance. The great, I may say the sole, use of an Academy is, to put, and for some time to keep, Students in that course; that too much indulgence may not be given to peculiarity, and that a young man may not be taught to believe, that what is generally good for others is not good for him.

I have strongly inculcated in my former Discourses, as I do in this my last, the wisdom and necessity of previously obtaining the appropriated instruments of the Art, in a first correct design, and a plain manly colouring, before any thing more is attempted. But by this I would not wish to cramp and fetter the mind, or discourage those who follow (as most of us may at one time have followed) the suggestion of a strong inclination: something must be conceded to great and irresistible impulses: perhaps every Student must not be strictly bound to general methods, if they strongly thwart the peculiar turn of his own mind. I must confess, that it is not absolutely of much consequence, whether he proceeds in the general method of seeking first to acquire mechanical accu-

racy, before he attempts poetical flights, provided he diligently studies to attain the full perfection of the style he pursues; whether like Parmegiano, he endeavours at grace and grandeur of manner before he has learned correctness of drawing, if like him he feels his own wants, and will labour, as that eminent artist did, to supply those wants; whether he starts from the East or from the West, if he relaxes in no exertion to arrive ultimately at the same goal. The first publick work of Parmegiano is the St. Eustachius, in the church of St. Petronius in Bologna, and was done when he was a boy; and one of the last of his works is the Moses breaking the tables, in Parma. In the former there is certainly something of grandeur in the outline, or in the conception of the figure, which discovers the dawnings of future greatness; of a young mind impregnated with the sublimity of Michael Angelo, whose style he here attempts to imitate, though he could not then draw the human figure with any common degree of correctness. But this same Parmegiano, when in his more mature age he painted the Moses, had so completely

supplied his first defects, that we are here at a loss which to admire most, the correctness of drawing, or the grandeur of the conception. As a confirmation of its great excellence, and of the impression which it leaves on the minds of elegant spectators, I may observe, that our great Lyrick Poet, when he conceived his sublime idea of the indignant Welch bard, acknowledged, that though many years had intervened, he had warmed his imagination with the remembrance of this noble figure of Parmegiano.

When we consider that Michael Angelo was the great archetype to whom Parmegiano was indebted for that grandeur which we find in his works, and from whom all his contemporaries and successors have derived whatever they have possessed of the dignified and the majestick; that he was the bright luminary, from whom Painting has borrowed a new lustre; that under his hands it assumed a new appearance, and is become another and superior art; I may be excused if I take this opportunity, as I have hitherto taken every occasion, to turn your attention to this

exalted Founder and Father of Modern Art, of which he was not only the inventor, but which, by the divine energy of his own mind, he carried at once to its highest point of possible perfection.

The sudden maturity to which Michael Angelo brought our Art, and the comparative feebleness of his followers and imitators, might perhaps be reasonably, at least plausibly explained, if we had time for such an examination. At present I shall only observe, that the subordinate parts of our Art, and perhaps of other Arts, expand themselves by a slow and progressive growth; but those which depend on a native vigour of imagination generally burst forth at once in fulness of beauty. Of this Homer probably, and Shakspeare more assuredly, are signal examples. Michael Angelo possessed the poetical part of our art in a most eminent degree: and the same daring spirit, which urged him first to explore the unknown regions of the imagination, delighted with the novelty, and animated by the success of his discoveries, could

not have failed to stimulate and impel him forward in his career beyond those limits, which his followers, destitute of the same incentives, had not strength to pass.

To distinguish between correctness of drawing, and that part which respects the imagination, we may say the one approaches to the mechanical (which in its way too may make just pretensions to genius) and the other to the poetical. To encourage a solid and vigorous course of study, it may not be amiss to suggest, that perhaps a confidence in the mechanick produces a boldness in the poetick. He that is sure of the goodness of his ship and tackle puts out fearlessly from the shore; and he who knows that his hand can execute whatever his fancy can suggest, sports with more freedom in embodying the visionary forms of his own creation. I will not say Michael Angelo was eminently poetical, only because he was greatly mechanical; but I am sure that mechanick excellence invigorated and emboldened his mind to carry painting into the regions of poetry, and to emulate that art in

its most adventurous flights. Michael Angelo equally possessed both qualifications. Yet of mechanick excellence there were certainly great examples to be found in Ancient Sculpture, and particularly in the fragment known by the name of the Torso of Michael Angelo; but of that grandeur of character, air, and attitude, which he threw into all his figures, and which so well corresponds with the grandeur of his outline, there was no example; it could therefore proceed only from the most poetical and sublime imagination.

It is impossible not to express some surprise, that the race of Painters who preceded Michael Angelo, men of acknowledged great abilities, should never have thought of transferring a little of that grandeur of outline which they could not but see and admire in Ancient Sculpture, into their own works; but they appear to have considered Sculpture as the later Schools of Artists look at the inventions of Michael Angelo,—as something to be admired, but with which they have nothing to do: *quod super nos, nihil ad*

*nos.*—The Artists of that age, even Raffaello himself, seemed to be going on very contentedly in the dry manner of Pietro Perugino; and if Michael Angelo had never appeared, the Art might still have continued in the same style.

Beside Rome and Florence, where the grandeur of this style was first displayed, it was on this Foundation that the Caracci built the truly great Academical Bolognian school, of which the first stone was laid by Pellegrino Tibaldi. He first introduced this style amongst them; and many instances might be given in which he appears to have possessed as by inheritance, the true, genuine, noble and elevated mind of Michael Angelo. Though we cannot venture to speak of him with the same fondness as his countrymen, and call him, as the Caracci did, *Nostra Michael Angelo riformato*, yet he has a right to be considered amongst the first and greatest of his followers: there are certainly many drawings and inventions of his, of which Michael Angelo himself might not disdain to be supposed



the author, or that they should be, as in fact they often are, mistaken for his. I will mention one particular instance, because it is found in a book which is in every young Artist's hands;—Bishop's Ancient Statues. He there has introduced a print, representing Polyphemus, from a drawing of Tibaldi, and has inscribed it with the name of Michael Angelo, to whom he has also in the same book attributed a Sybil of Raffaelle. Both these figures, it is true, are professedly in Michael Angelo's style and spirit, and even worthy of his hand. But we know that the former is painted in the *Institute a Bologna* by Tibaldi, and the other in the *Pace* by Raffaelle.

The Caracci, it is acknowledged, adopted the mechanical part with sufficient success. But the divine part which addresses itself to the imagination, as possessed by Michael Angelo or Tibaldi, was beyond their grasp: they formed, however, a most respectable school, a style more on the level, and calculated to please a greater number; and if excellence of this kind is to be valued

according to the number, rather than the weight and quality of admirers, it would assume even an higher rank in Art. The same, in some sort, may be said of Tintoret, Paolo Veronese, and others of the Venetian Painters. They certainly much advanced the dignity of their style by adding to their fascinating powers of colouring something of the strength of Michael Angelo; at the same time it may still be a doubt, how far their ornamental elegance would be an advantageous addition to his grandeur. But if there is any manner of painting which may be said to unite kindly with his style, it is that of Titian. His handling, the manner in which his colours are left on the canvass, appears to proceed (as far as that goes) from a congenial mind, equally disdainful of vulgar criticism.

MICHAEL ANGELO's strength thus qualified, and made more palatable to the general taste, reminds me of an observation which I heard a learned critick \* make, when it was incidentally remarked, that our translation of Homer, however excellent, did not convey

\* Dr. Johnson.

the character, nor had the grand air of the original. He replied, that if Pope had not cloathed the naked Majesty of Homer, with the graces and elegancies of modern fashions, —though the real dignity of Homer was degraded by such a dress, his translation would not have met with such a favourable reception, and he must have been contented with fewer readers.

Many of the Flemish painters, who studied at Rome in that great era of our art, such as Francis Floris, Hemskerk, Michael Caxis, Jerom Cock, and others returned to their own country with as much of this grandeur as they could carry. But like seeds falling on a soil not prepared or adapted to their nature, the manner of Michael Angelo thrived but little with them; perhaps, however, they contributed to prepare the way for that free, unconstrained, and liberal outline, which was afterwards introduced by Rubens, through the medium of the Venetian Painters.

This grandeur of style has been in dif-

ferent degrees disseminated over all Europe. Some caught it by living at the time, and coming into contact with the original author, whilst others received it at second hand ; and being every where adopted, it has totally changed the whole taste and style of design, if there could be said to be any style before his time. Our art, in consequence, now assumes a rank to which it could never have dared to aspire, if Michael Angelo had not discovered to the world the hidden powers which it possessed. Without his assistance we never could have been convinced, that Painting was capable of producing an adequate representation of the persons and actions of the heroes of the Iliad.

I would ask any man qualified to judge of such works, whether he can look with indifference at the personification of the Supreme Being in the center of the Capella Sestina, or the figures of the Sybils which surround that chapel, to which we may add the statue of Moses ; and whether the same sensations are not excited by those works, as what he may remember to have felt from the most

sublime passages of Homer? I mention those figures more particularly, as they come nearer to a comparison with his Jupiter, his demigods, and heroes; those Sybils and Prophets being a kind of intermediate beings between men and angels. Though instances may be produced in the works of other Painters, which may justly stand in competition with those I have mentioned, such as the Isaiah, and the vision of Ezekiel, by Raffaello, the St. Mark of Frate Bartolomeo, and many others; yet these, it must be allowed, are inventions so much in Michael Angelo's manner of thinking, that they may be truly considered as so many rays, which discover manifestly the center from whence they emanated.

The sublime in Painting, as in Poetry, so overpowers, and takes such a possession of the whole mind, that no room is left for attention to minute criticism. The little elegancies of art in the presence of these great ideas thus greatly expressed, lose all their value, and are, for the instant at least, felt to be unworthy of our notice. The

correct judgement, the purity of taste, which characterise Raffaello, the exquisite grace of Correggio and Parmegiano, all disappear before them.

That Michael Angelo was capricious in his inventions, cannot be denied; and this may make some circumspection necessary in studying his works; for though they appear to become him, an imitation of them is always dangerous, and will prove sometimes ridiculous. "Within that circle none durst walk but he." To me, I confess, his caprice does not lower the estimation of his genius, even though it is sometimes I acknowledge, carried to the extreme: and however those eccentric excursions are considered, we must at the same time recollect, that those faults, if they are faults, are such as never could occur to a mean and vulgar mind; that they flowed from the same source which produced his greatest beauties, and were therefore such as none but himself was capable of committing: they were the powerful impulses of a mind unused to subjection of

any kind, and too high to be controlled by cold criticism.

Many see his daring extravagance, who can see nothing else. A young Artist finds the works of Michael Angelo so totally different from those of his own master, or of those with whom he is surrounded, that he may be easily persuaded to abandon and neglect studying a style, which appears to him wild, mysterious, and above his comprehension, and which he therefore feels no disposition to admire; a good disposition, which he concludes that he should naturally have, if the style deserved it. It is necessary therefore that students should be prepared for the disappointment which they may experience at their first setting out; and they must be cautioned, that probably they will not, at first sight, approve.

It must be remembered, that this great style itself is artificial in the highest degree, it presupposes in the spectator, a cultivated and prepared artificial state of mind. It is an absurdity therefore to suppose that

## THE FIFTEENTH DISCOURSE.

we are born with this taste, though we are with the seeds of it, which, by the heat and kindly influence of his genius, may be ripened in us.

A late Philosopher and Critick \* has observed, speaking of taste, that *we are on no account to expect that fine things should descend to us*—our taste, if possible, must be made to ascend to them. The same learned writer recommends to us *even to feign a relish, till we find a relish come ; and feel, that what began in fiction, terminates in reality*. If there be in our Art any thing of that agreement or compact, such as I apprehend there is in musick, with which the Critick is necessarily required previously to be acquainted, in order to form a correct judgement: the comparison with this art will illustrate what I have said on these points, and tend to shew the probability, we may say the certainty, that men are not born with a relish for those arts in their most refined state, which as they cannot understand, they cannot be impressed with

\* James Harris, Esq. R.



their effects. This great style of Michael Angelo is as far removed from the simple representation of the common objects of nature, as the most refined Italian musick is from the inartificial notes of nature, from whence they both profess to originate. But without such a supposed compact, we may be very confident that the highest state of refinement in either of those arts will not be relished without a long and industrious attention.

In pursuing this great Art, it must be acknowledged that we labour under greater difficulties than those who were born in the age of its discovery, and whose minds from their infancy were habituated to this style; who learnt it as language, as their mother tongue. They had no mean taste to unlearn; they needed no persuasive discourse to allure them to a favourable reception of it, no abstruse investigation of its principles to convince them of the great latent truths on which it is founded. We are constrained, in these later days, to have recourse to a sort of Grammar and Dictionary, as the

only means of recovering a dead language. It was by them learned by rote, and perhaps better learned that way than by precept.

The style of Michael Angelo, which I have compared to language, and which may, poetically speaking, be called the language of the Gods, now no longer exists, as it did in the fifteenth century ; yet, with the aid of diligence, we may in a great measure supply the deficiency which I mentioned, --of not having his works so perpetually before our eyes,—by having recourse to casts from his models and designs in Sculpture ; to drawings or even copies of those drawings ; to prints, which, however ill executed, still convey something by which this taste may be formed, and a relish may be fixed and established in our minds for this grand style of invention. Some examples of this kind we have in the Academy ; and I sincerely wish there were more, that the younger Students might in their first nourishment imbibe this taste ; whilst others, though settled in the practice of the common-place style of

Painters, might infuse, by this means, a grandeur into their works.

I shall now make some remarks on the course which I think most proper to be pursued in such a study. I wish you not to go so much to the derivative streams, as to the fountain-head ; though the copies are not to be neglected ; because they may give you hints in what manner you may copy, and how the genius of one man may be made to fit the peculiar manner of another.

To recover this lost taste, I would recommend young Artists to study the works of Michael Angelo, as he himself did the works of the ancient Sculptors ; he began when a child, a copy of a mutilated Satyr's head, and finished in his model what was wanting in the original. In the same manner, the first exercise that I would recommend to the young artist when he first attempts invention, is, to select every figure, if possible, from the inventions of Michael Angelo. If such borrowed figures will not bend to his

purpose, and he is constrained to make a change to supply a figure himself, that figure will necessarily be in the same style with the rest; and his taste will by this means be naturally initiated, and nursed in the lap of grandeur. He will sooner perceive what constitutes this grand style by one practical trial than by a thousand speculations, and he will in some sort procure to himself that advantage which in these later ages has been denied him; the advantage of having the greatest of Artists for his master and instructor.

The next lesson should be, to change the purpose of the figures without changing the attitude, as Tintoret has done with the Sampson of Michael Angelo. Instead of the figure which Sampson bestrides, he has placed an eagle under him; and instead of the jaw-bone, thunder and lightning in his right hand; and thus it becomes a Jupiter. Titian, in the same manner, has taken the figure which represents God dividing the light from the darkness in the vault of the Capella Sestina, and has introduced it in the

famous battle of Cadore, so much celebrated by Vasari; and extraordinary as it may seem, it is here converted to a general, falling from his horse. A real judge who should look at this picture, would immediately pronounce the attitude of that figure to be in a greater style than any other figure of the composition. These two instances may be sufficient, though many more might be given in their works, as well as in those of other great Artists.

When the Student has been habituated to this grand conception of the Art, when the relish for this style is established, makes a part of himself, and is woven into his mind, he will, by this time, have got a power of selecting from whatever occurs in nature that is grand, and corresponds with that taste which he has now acquired; and will pass over whatever is common-place and insipid. He may then bring to the mart such works of his own proper invention as may enrich and increase the general stock of invention in our Art.

I am confident of the truth and propriety of the advice which I have recommended ; at the same time I am aware, how much by this advice I have laid myself open to the sarcasms of those criticks who imagine our Art to be a matter of inspiration. But I should be sorry it should appear even to myself that I wanted that courage which I have recommended to the Students in another way ; equal courage perhaps is required in the adviser and the advised ; they both must equally dare and bid defiance to narrow criticism and vulgar opinion,

That the Art has been in a gradual state of decline, from the age of Michael Angelo to the present, must be acknowledged ; and we may reasonably impute this declension to the same cause to which the ancient Criticks and Philosophers have imputed the corruption of eloquence. Indeed the same causes are likely at all times and in all ages to produce the same effects : indolence,—not taking the same pains as our great predecessors took,—desiring to find a shorter way,—are the general imputed causes. The words of

Petronius \* are very remarkable. After opposing the natural chaste beauty of the eloquence of former ages to the strained inflated style then in fashion, “neither,” says he, “has the art of Painting had a better fate, “after the boldness of the Egyptians had “found out a compendious way to execute “so great an art.”

By *compendious*, I understand him to mean a mode of Painting, such as has infected the style of the later Painters of Italy and France; common-place, without thought, and with as little trouble, working as by a receipt; in contradistinction to that style for which even a relish cannot be acquired without care and long attention, and most certainly the power of executing cannot be obtained without the most laborious application.

I have endeavoured to stimulate the ambition of Artists to tread in this great path

\* *Pictura quoque non alium exitum fecit, postquam Ægyptiorum audacia tam magnæ artis compendiarium invenit. R.*

of glory, and, as well as I can, have pointed out the track which leads to it, and have at the same time told them the price at which it may be obtained. It is an ancient saying, that labour is the price which the Gods have set upon every thing valuable.

The great Artist who has been so much the subject of the present Discourse, was distinguished even from his infancy for his indefatigable diligence; and this was continued through his whole life, till prevented by extreme old age. The poorest of men, as he observed himself, did not labour from necessity, more than he did from choice. Indeed, from all the circumstances related of his life, he appears not to have had the least conception that his art was to be acquired by any other means than great labour; and yet he, of all men that ever lived, might make the greatest pretensions to the efficacy of native genius and inspiration. I have no doubt that he would have thought it no disgrace, that it should be said of him, as he himself said of Raffaele, that he did not possess his art (from



nature, but by long study\*. He was conscious that the great excellence to which he arrived was gained by dint of labour, and was unwilling to have it thought that any transcendent skill, however natural its effects might seem, could be purchased at a cheaper price than he had paid for it. This seems to have been the true drift of his observation. We cannot suppose it made with any intention of depreciating the genius of Raffaëlle, of whom he always spoke, as Condivi says, with the greatest respect: though they were rivals, no such illiberality existed between them; and Raffaëlle on his part entertained the greatest veneration for Michael Angelo, as appears from the speech which is recorded of him, that he congratulated himself, and thanked God, that he was born in the same age with that painter,

If the high esteem and veneration in which Michael Angelo has been held by all nations and in all ages, should be put to the account of prejudice, it must still be granted that

\* *Che Raffaëlle non ebbe quest' arte da natura, ma per lungo studio. R.*

those prejudices could not have been entertained without a cause: the ground of our prejudice then becomes the source of our admiration. But from whatever it proceeds, or whatever it is called, it will not I hope, be thought presumptuous in me to appear in the train, I cannot say of his imitators, but of his admirers. I have taken another course, one more suited to my abilities, and to the taste of the times in which I live. Yet however unequal I feel myself to that attempt, were I now to begin the world again, I would tread in the steps of that great master: to kiss the hem of his garment, to catch the slightest of his perfections, would be glory and distinction enough for an ambitious man,

I feel a self-congratulation in knowing myself capable of such sensations as he intended to excite. I reflect, not without vanity, that these Discourses bear testimony of my admiration of that truly divine man; and I should desire that the last words which I should pronounce in this Academy, and

from this place, might be the name of—  
MICHAEL ANGELO\*.

\* Unfortunately for mankind, these *were* the last words pronounced by this great Painter from the Academical chair. He died about fourteen months after this Discourse was delivered. M.

THE END OF THE DISCOURSES.

THREE LETTERS  
TO  
THE IDLER.

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# T H E I D L E R.

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NUMB. 76. *Saturday, September 29, 1759.*

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*To the IDLER.*

SIR,

I WAS much pleased with your ridicule of those shallow Criticks, whose judgment, though often right as far as it goes, yet reaches only to inferior beauties; and who, unable to comprehend the whole, judge only by parts, and from thence determine the merit of extensive works. But there is another kind of Critick still worse, who judges by narrow rules, and those too often false, and which though they should be true, and founded on nature, will lead him but a very little way towards the just estimation of the sublime beauties in works of Genius; for whatever part of an art can be executed or criticised by rules, that part is no longer the

work of Genius, which implies excellence out of the reach of rules. For my own part, I profess myself an Idler, and love to give my judgment, such as it is, from my immediate perceptions, without much fatigue of thinking; and I am of opinion, that if a man has not those perceptions right, it will be vain for him to endeavour to supply their place by rules; which may enable him to talk more learnedly, but not to distinguish more acutely. Another reason which has lessened my affection for the study of Criticism is, that Criticks, so far as I have observed, debar themselves from receiving any pleasure from the polite arts, at the same time that they profess to love and admire them: for these rules being always uppermost, give them such a propensity to criticize, that instead of giving up the reins of their imagination into their author's hands, their frigid minds are employed in examining whether the performance be according to the rules of art.

To those who are resolved to be Criticks in spite of nature, and at the same time have

no great disposition to much reading and study, I would recommend to assume the character of Connoisseur, which may be purchased at a much cheaper rate than that of a Critick in poetry. The remembrance of a few names of Painters, with their general characters, and a few rules of the Academy, which they may pick up among the Painters, will go a great way towards making a very notable Connoisseur.

With a Gentleman of this cast, I visited last week the Cartoons at Hampton-Court; he was just returned from Italy, a Connoisseur, of course, and of course his mouth full of nothing but the Grace of Raffaele, the Purity of Domenichino, the Learning of Poussin, the Air of Guido, the greatness of Taste of the Carraccis, and the Sublimity and grand Contorno of Michael Angelo; with all the rest of the cant of Criticism, which he emitted with that volubility which generally those orators have, who annex no ideas to their words.

As we were passing through the rooms,



in our way to the Gallery, I made him observe a whole length of Charles the first, by Vandyck, as a perfect representation of the character as well as the figure of the man: He agreed it was very fine, but it wanted spirit and contrast, and had not the flowing line, without which a figure could not possibly be graceful. When we entered the Gallery, I thought I could perceive him recollecting his Rules by which he was to criticise Raffaele. I shall pass over his observation of the boats being too little, and other criticisms of that kind, till we arrived at *St. Paul preaching*. "This, says he, is esteemed the most excellent of all the Cartoons: what nobleness, what dignity there is in that figure of St. Paul! and yet what an addition to that nobleness could Raffaele have given, had the art of Contrast been known in his time; but above all, the flowing line, which constitutes Grace and Beauty. You would not then have seen an upright figure standing equally on both legs, and both hands stretched forward in the same direction, and his drapery, to all appearance, without the least art of dispo-

sition." The following Picture is the *Charge to Peter*. " Here, says he, are twelve upright figures; what a pity it is that Raffaelle was not acquainted with the pyramidal principle; he would then have contrived the figures in the middle to have been on higher ground, or the figures at the extremities stooping or lying; which would not only have formed the group into the shape of a pyramid, but likewise contrasted the standing figures. Indeed, added he, I have often lamented that so great a genius as Raffaelle had not lived in this enlightened age, since the art has been reduced to principles, and had his education in one of the modern Academies; what glorious works might we then have expected from his divine pencil!"

I shall trouble you no longer with my friend's observations, which, I suppose, you are now able to continue by yourself. It is curious to observe, that at the same time that great admiration is pretended for a name of fixed reputation, objections are raised

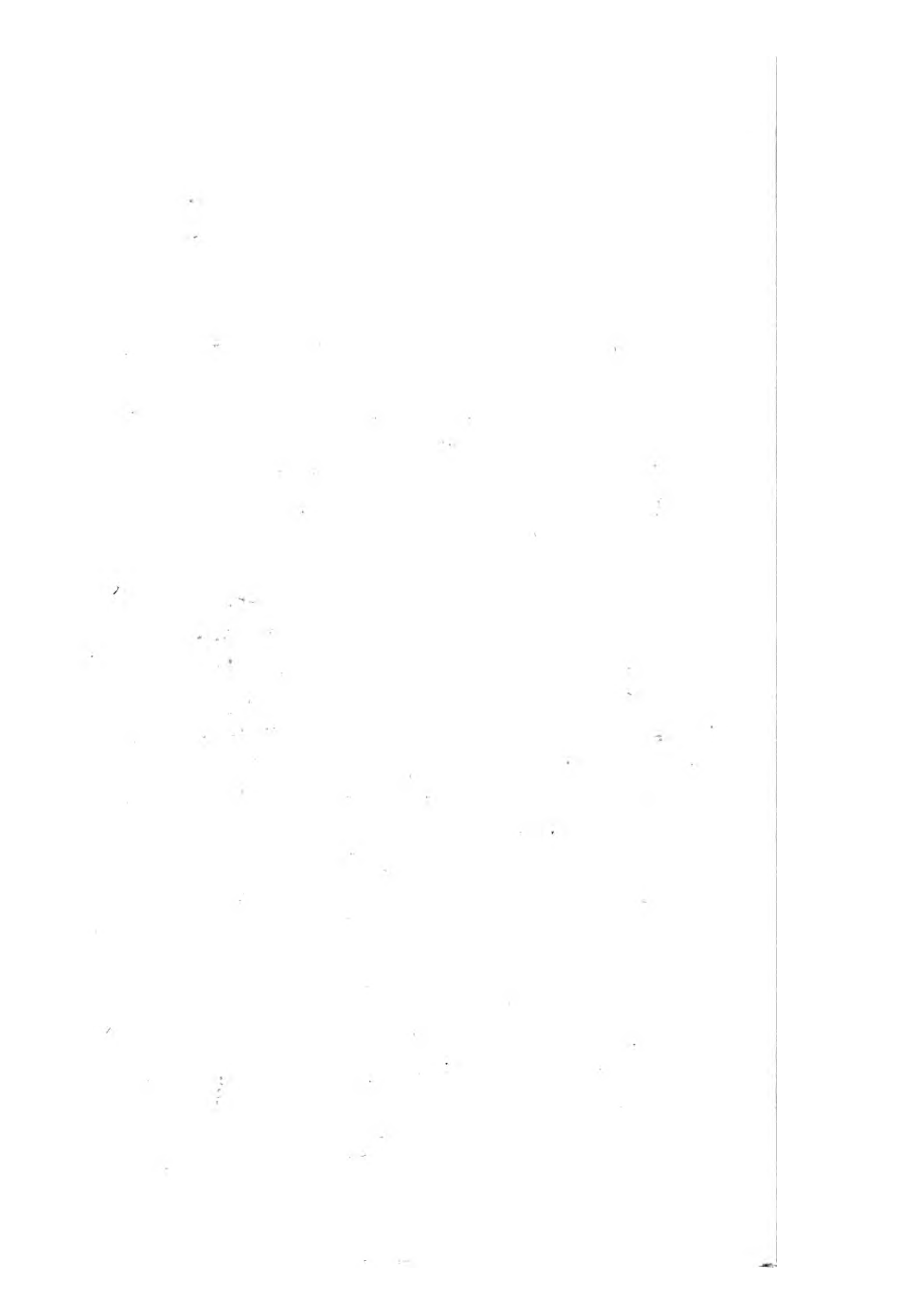
against those very qualities by which that great name was acquired.

These Criticks are continually lamenting that Raffaele had not the Colouring and Harmony of Rubens, or the Light and Shadow of Rembrandt, without considering how much the gay harmony of the former, and affectation of the latter, would take from the Dignity of Raffaele; and yet Rubens had great Harmony, and Rembrandt understood Light and Shadow; but what may be an excellence in a lower class of Painting, becomes a blemish in a higher; as the quick, spritely turn, which is the life and beauty of epigrammatick compositions, would but ill suit with the majesty of heroick Poetry.

To conclude; I would not be thought to infer from any thing that has been said, that Rules are absolutely unnecessary, but to censure scrupulosity, a servile attention to minute exactness, which is sometimes inconsistent with higher excellence, and is lost in the blaze of expanded genius.

I do not know whether you will think Painting a general subject. By inserting this letter, perhaps you will incur the censure a man would deserve, whose business being to entertain a whole room, should turn his back on the company, and talk to a particular person.

I am, Sir, &c.



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NUMB. 79. *Saturday, October 20, 1759.*

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*To the IDLER.*

SIR,

YOUR acceptance of a former letter on Painting, gives me encouragement to offer a few more sketches on the same subject.

Amongst the Painters and the writers on Painting, there is one maxim universally admitted, and continually inculcated. *Imitate Nature*, is the invariable rule; but I know none who have explained in what manner this rule is to be understood; the consequence of which is, that every one takes it in the most obvious sense,—that objects are represented naturally, when they have such relief that they seem real. It may appear strange, perhaps, to hear this sense of the rule disputed; but it must be considered, that if the excellency of a Painter consisted only in this kind of imitation,

Painting must lose its rank, and be no longer considered as a liberal art, and sister to Poetry; this imitation being merely mechanical, in which the slowest intellect is always sure to succeed best; for the Painter of genius cannot stoop to drudgery, in which the understanding has no part; and what pretence has the art to claim kindred with Poetry, but by its power over the imagination? To this power the Painter of genius directs his aim; in this sense he studies Nature, and often arrives at his end, even by being unnatural, in the confined sense of the word.

The grand style of Painting requires this minute attention to be carefully avoided, and must be kept as separate from it as the style of Poetry from that of History. Poetical ornaments destroy that air of truth and plainness which ought to characterize History; but the very being of Poetry consists in departing from this plain narration, and adopting every ornament that will warm the imagination. To desire to see the excellencies of each style united, to mingle the

Dutch with the Italian School, is to join contrarieties which cannot subsist together, and which destroy the efficacy of each other. The Italian attends only to the invariable, the great, and general ideas which are fixed and inherent in universal Nature; the Dutch, on the contrary, to literal truth and a minute exactness in the detail, as I may say, of Nature modified by accident. The attention to these petty peculiarities is the very cause of this naturalness so much admired in the Dutch pictures, which, if we suppose it to be a beauty, is certainly of a lower order, that ought to give place to a beauty of a superior kind, since one cannot be obtained but by departing from the other.

If my opinion were asked concerning the works of Michael Angelo, whether they would receive any advantage from possessing this mechanical merit, I should not scruple to say, they would lose, in a great measure, the effect which they now have on every mind susceptible of great and noble ideas. His works may be said to be all genius and soul; and why should they be loaded with



heavy matter, which can only counteract his purpose by retarding the progress of the imagination?

If this opinion should be thought one of the wild extravagancies of enthusiasm, I shall only say, that those who censure it are not conversant in the works of the great Masters. It is very difficult to determine the exact degree of enthusiasm that the arts of Painting and Poetry may admit. There may perhaps be too great an indulgence, as well as too great a restraint of imagination; and if the one produces incoherent monsters, the other produces what is full as bad, lifeless insipidity. An intimate knowledge of the passions, and good sense, but not common sense, must at last determine its limits. It has been thought, and I believe with reason, that Michael Angelo sometimes transgressed those limits; and I think I have seen figures by him, of which it was very difficult to determine, whether they were in the highest degree sublime or extremely ridiculous. Such faults may be said to be the ebullition, of Genius; but at least he had this merit,

that he never was insipid; and whatever passion his works may excite, they will always escape contempt.

What I have had under consideration is the sublimest style, particularly that of Michael Angelo, the Homer of Painting. Other kinds may admit of this naturalness, which of the lowest kind is the chief merit; but in Painting, as in Poetry, the highest style has the least of common nature.

One may safely recommend a little more enthusiasm to the modern Painters; too much is certainly not the vice of the present age. The Italians seem to have been continually declining in this respect from the time of Michael Angelo to that of Carlo Maratti, and from thence to the very pathos of insipidity to which they are now sunk; so that there is no need of remarking, that where I mentioned the Italian Painters in opposition to the Dutch, I mean not the moderns, but the heads of the old Roman and Bolognian Schools; nor did I mean to include in my idea of an Italian Painter, the Venetian

School, which may be said to be the Dutch part of the Italian Genius. I have only to add a word of advice to the Painters,—that however excellent they may be in painting naturally, they would not flatter themselves very much upon it; and to the Connoisseurs, that when they see a cat or a fiddle painted so finely, that, as the phrase is, *it looks as if you could take it up*, they would not for that reason immediately compare the Painter to Raffaele and Michael Angelo.

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NUMB. 82. *Saturday, November 10, 1759.*

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*To the IDLER.*

SIR,

DISCOURSING in my last letter on the different practice of the Italian and Dutch Painters, I observed that “the Italian Painter attends only to the invariable, the great, and general ideas, which are fixed and inherent in universal nature.”

I was led into the subject of this letter by endeavouring to fix the original cause of this conduct of the Italian Masters. If it can be proved that by this choice they selected the most beautiful part of the creation, it will shew how much their principles are founded on reason, and, at the same time, discover the origin of our ideas of beauty.

I suppose it will be easily granted, that no

man can judge whether any animal be beautiful in its kind, or deformed, who has seen only one of that species ; this is as conclusive in regard to the human figure ; so that if a man, born blind, were to recover his sight, and the most beautiful woman were brought before him, he could not determine whether she was handsome or not ; nor if the most beautiful and most deformed were produced, could he any better determine to which he should give the preference, having seen only those two. To distinguish beauty, then, implies the having seen many individuals of that species. If it is asked, how is more skill acquired by the observation of greater numbers ? I answer, that, in consequence of having seen many, the power is acquired, even without seeking after it, of distinguishing between accidental blemishes and excrescences which are continually varying the surface of nature's works, and the invariable general form which Nature most frequently produces, and always seems to intend in her productions.

Thus amongst the blades of grass or leaves of the same tree, though no two can be found exactly alike, the general form is invariable: A Naturalist, before he chose one as a sample, would examine many; since if he took the first that occurred, it might have, by accident or otherwise, such a form as that it would scarce be known to belong to that species; he selects as the Painter does, the most beautiful, that is, the most general form of nature.

Every species of the animal as well as the vegetable creation may be said to have a fixed or determinate form, towards which Nature is continually inclining, like various lines terminating in the center; or it may be compared to pendulums vibrating in different directions over one central point: and as they all cross the center, though only one passes through any other point, so it will be found that perfect beauty is oftner produced by nature than deformity; I do not mean than deformity in general, but than any one kind of deformity. To instance in a particular part of a feature; the line that forms a ridge

of the nose is beautiful when it is straight ; this then is the central form, which is oftener found than either concave, convex, or any other irregular form that shall be proposed. As we are then more accustomed to beauty than deformity, we may conclude that to be the reason why we approve and admire it, as we approve and admire customs and fashions of dress for no other reason than that we are used to them ; so that though habit and custom cannot be said to be the cause of beauty, it is certainly the cause of our likeing it : and I have no doubt but that if we were more used to deformity than beauty, deformity would then lose the idea now annexed to it, and take that of beauty ; as if the whole world should agree, that *yes* and *no* should change their meaning ; *yes* would then deny, and *no* would affirm.

Whoever undertakes to proceed further in this argument, and endeavours to fix a general criterion of beauty respecting different species, or to shew why one species is more beautiful than another, it will be required from him

first to prove that one species is really more beautiful than another. That we prefer one to the other, and with very good reason, will be readily granted; but it does not follow from thence that we think it a more beautiful form; for we have no criterion of form by which to determine our judgment. He who says a swan is more beautiful than a dove, means little more than that he has more pleasure in seeing a swan than a dove, either from the stateliness of its motions, or its being a more rare bird; and he who gives the preference to the dove, does it from some association of ideas of innocence which he always annexes to the dove; but if he pretends to defend the preference he gives to one or the other by endeavouring to prove that this more beautiful form proceeds from a particular gradation of magnitude, undulation of a curve, or direction of a line, or whatever other conceit of his imagination he shall fix on, as a criterion of form, he will be continually contradicting himself, and find at last that the great Mother of Nature will not be subjected to such narrow rules. Among the various reasons why we prefer one part of



her works to another, the most general, I believe, is habit and custom ; custom makes, in a certain sense, white black, and black white ; it is custom alone determines our preference of the colour of the Europeans to the Ethiopians, and they, for the same reason, prefer their own colour to ours. I suppose nobody will doubt, if one of their Painters were to paint the Goddess of Beauty, but that he would represent her black, with thick lips, flat nose, and woolly hair ; and, it seems to me, he would act very unnaturally if he did not : for by what criterion will any one dispute the propriety of his idea ! We, indeed, say, that the form and colour of the European is preferable to that of the Ethiopian ; but I know of no other reason we have for it, but that we are more accustomed to it. It is absurd to say, that beauty is possessed of attractive powers, which irresistibly seize the corresponding mind with love and admiration, since that argument is equally conclusive in favour of the white and the black philosophers.

The black and white nations must, in

respect of beauty, be considered as of different kinds, at least a different species of the same kind; from one of which to the other, as I observed, no inference can be drawn.

Novelty is said to be one of the causes of beauty. That novelty is a very sufficient reason why we should admire, is not denied; but because it is uncommon, it is therefore beautiful? The beauty that is produced by colour, as when we prefer one bird to another, though of the same form, on account of its colour, has nothing to do with the argument which reaches only to form. I have here considered the word Beauty as being properly applied to form alone. There is a necessity of fixing this confined sense; for there can be no argument, if the sense of the word is extended to every thing that is approved. A rose may as well be said to be beautiful, because it has a fine smell, as a bird because of its colour. When we apply the word Beauty, we do not mean always by it a more beautiful form, but something valuable on account of its rarity, usefulness, colour, or

any other property. - A horse is said to be a beautiful animal; but had a horse as few good qualities as a tortoise, I do not imagine that he would then be deemed beautiful.

A fitness to the end proposed, is said to be another cause of beauty; but supposing we were proper judges of what form is the most proper in an animal to constitute strength or swiftness, we always determine concerning its beauty, before we exert our understanding to judge of its fitness.

From what has been said, it may be inferred, that the works of Nature, if we compare one species with another, are all equally beautiful, and that preference is given from custom or some association of ideas: and that, in creatures of the same species, beauty is the medium or centre of all its various forms.

To conclude, then, by way of corollary: if it has been proved that the Painter, by attending to the invariable and general ideas

of Nature, produce beauty, he must, by regarding minute particularities, and accidental discriminations, deviate from the universal rule, and pollute his canvass with deformity.

THE COURT

and that on the other hand, the  
 Court has held that under the  
 act, discrimination does not  
 exist in this case, and the  
 Court has held that the act is  
 not applicable.

A  
JOURNEY  
TO  
FLANDERS AND HOLLAND,  
IN THE YEAR MDCCLXXXI.

1911

1911

1911

1911

1911

A  
JOURNEY  
TO  
FLANDERS AND HOLLAND,

IN THE YEAR M DCC LXXXI\*.

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AT Ostend, where we landed, July 27, 1781, there are no pictures, and even Bruges affords but a scanty entertainment to a Painter; however, there are a few, which, though not of the

\* Our author, accompanied by Philip Metcalfe, Esq. left London on Tuesday, July 24, 1781, went to Margate, and embarked there for Ostend; proceeded from thence to Ghent, Brussels, Antwerp, Dort, the Hague, Leyden, Amsterdam, Dusseldorp, Aix-la-chapelle, Liege; returned to Brussels again; from thence to Ostend; landed at Margate, and arrived in London on Sunday, Sept. 16.

To Mr. Metcalfe he intended to have dedicated his account of this Tour, but he had only written the following introductory paragraphs:

“ I send you, put together in as much order as



## A JOURNEY TO

first rank, may be worth the attention of a traveller who has time to spare,

the little time I can spare from my business will permit, the Notes that I made abroad on the pictures that we saw together. I present them to you as properly your due; for if I had been accompanied by a person of less taste, or less politeness, they probably would not have been made. The pleasure that a mere *dilettante* derives from seeing the works of art, ceases when he has received the full effect of each performance; but the Painter has the means of amusing himself much longer, by investigating the principles on which the Artist wrought. To which ever of your good qualities I am to attribute your long and patient attendance, while I was employed in examining the various works which we saw, it merits my warmest acknowledgments. Nor is it an inconsiderable advantage to see such works in company with one, who has a general rectitude of taste, and is not a professor of the art. We are too apt to forget that the art is not intended solely for the pleasure of professors. The opinions of others are certainly not to be neglected; since by their means he received rules of art may be corrected: at least, a species of benefit may be obtained, which we are not likely to derive from the judgment of painters; who being educated in the same manner, are likely to judge from the same principles, are liable to the same prejudices, and may sometimes be governed by the influence of an authority which perhaps has no foundation in nature." M.

## BRUGES.

IN the Cathedral.—The high altar; SEGERS.  
 the Adoration of the Magi, by Segers. This picture is justly considered as one of the best of that painter's works. The part which first obtrudes itself on your attention is one of the kings, who is placed in the front: this figure, notwithstanding its great fame, and its acknowledged excellence in many respects, has one great defect; it appears to have nothing to do with the rest of the composition, and has too much the air of a whole-length portrait. What gives it so much this appearance is, the eyes looking out of the picture; that is, he is looking at the person who looks at the picture. This always has a bad effect, and ought never to be practised in a grave historical composition, however successfully it may be admitted in ludicrous subjects, where no business of any kind, that requires eagerness of attention, is going forward.

BRUGES.  
 OTHO  
 VENIUS.

The second altar on the right from the door is the Nativity, by Otho Venius. Many parts of this picture bring to mind the manner of Rubens, particularly the colouring of the arm of one of the shepherds; but in comparison of Rubens it is but a lame performance, and would not be worth mentioning here, but from its being the work of a man who had the honour to be the master of Rubens.

Otho Venius published two books of Emblems, explained by prints of children: it was from him Rubens imbibed that predilection in favour of emblematical representation which has afforded so much subject for criticism; particularly his introducing them in the Luxemburgh gallery.

JOHN VAN  
 EYCK.

In the sacristy is a picture, painted by John Van Eyck, of the Virgin and Child, with St. George and other Saints; one of those figures which is dressed in white, and which undoubt-

edly was taken from the life, according to the custom of the painters of those times, has great character of nature, and is very minutely finished, though the painter was sixty-six years old when it was done; for the date on it is 1436. This picture claims perhaps more attention from its being painted by a man who has been said to be the first inventor of the art of painting in oil, than from any intrinsick merit in the work itself. However, his claim to this invention, which was first attributed to him by Vasari, and from his authority propagated in the world, has been justly disputed by the learned antiquarian Mr. Raspe, who has proved beyond all contradiction, that this art was invented and practised many ages before Van Eyck was born.

BRUGER.

The art is here in its infancy; but still having the appearance of a faithful representation of individual nature it does not fail to please. To a certain degree the painter has accomplished his purpose;

**BRUGES.** which is more than can be said of two heads by Rubens of St. Peter and St. Paul, in the same sacristy, which are neither a good representation of individual or general nature: however, each of these heads is inshrined in a rich tabernacle of silver, locked up, and shewn only on high festivals. The great reputation which Rubens has so justly acquired, is here extended to pictures slightly painted, and which perhaps he himself would be ashamed to acknowledge as his: they appear to have nothing to recommend them, but a tint of colour and lightness of pencil; a merit which indeed Rubens seldom wanted: they are insipid, without grace, dignity, or character of any kind.

#### CHURCH OF NOTRE DAME.

**MICHAEL  
ANGELO.**

THE Virgin and Christ (Bambino) in marble, said to be of Michael Angelo. It has certainly the air of his school, and is a work of considerable merit; it was a prize taken by a Dutch Corsair going from Civita Vecchia to Genoa.

GHEENT.

## GHEENT.—THE CATHEDRAL.

IN this great Church is the St. Ba-  
RUBENS.  
 von of Rubens. This picture was for-  
 merly the ornament of the high altar of  
 this cathedral, but was displaced to  
 make room for an ordinary piece of  
 sculpture. When Rubens was thus de-  
 graded, one may conclude his fame was  
 then not established: he had not been  
 dead long enough to be canonized, as he  
 may be said to be at present. It is now  
 placed in a chapel behind the great  
 altar. The saint is represented in the  
 upper part of the picture, in armour,  
 kneeling, received by a priest at the  
 door of a church; below is a man who  
 may be supposed to be his steward, giv-  
 ing money to the poor. Two women are  
 standing by, dressed in the fashion of  
 the times when Rubens lived; one  
 of them appears to be pulling off a  
 chain which falls from her neck, as if  
 she intended to follow the example  
 before her. This picture, for composi-  
 tion, colouring, richness of effect, and

**GHEENT.** all those qualities in which Rubens more particularly excelled, claims a rank amongst his greatest and best works. It is engraved by Pilsen.

**HUBERT and JOHN VAN EYCK.** In a chapel is a work of the brothers Hubert and John Van Eyck, representing the Adoration of the Lamb,—a story from the Apocalypse: it contains a great number of figures in a hard manner, but there is great character of truth and nature in the heads; and the landscape is well coloured.

**GERARD HONTHORST.** In the third Chapel on the right, is a picture of St. Sebastian, by Gerard Honthorst (1663). This picture is mentioned, not for any great excellence that it possesses, but from its being much talked of here: people fancy they see great expression of tenderness in the woman who is drawing the arrows from the Saint's body; but she appeared to me perfectly insipid, and totally without expression of any kind: the head of St. Sebastian is hard and disagree-

able; the body indeed is well drawn, and not ill coloured, and is the only part of the picture that deserves any commendation. GHENT.

### ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH.

IN this church is, or rather was, the famous crucifixion of Vandyck; for it is almost destroyed by cleaning. It is well known by the fine print of Bolswert, and it appears by what remains to have been one of his most capital works.

Vandyck has here introduced a most beautiful horse in an attitude of the utmost grace and dignity. This is the same horse on which he drew Charles the Fifth, which is in the gallery at Florence; the head of the Emperor he copied from Titian.

St. John's hand in this picture comes round the Virgin Mary's neck, and falls on the other shoulder. The first impression of Bolswert's plate has this



**GHENT.** circumstance ; but it was afterwards changed, being supposed to be too familiar an attitude.

**SEGERS.** Christ scourged, by Segers ; the arm finely drawn, and the body well coloured, but too large.

**LANG  
JAN.** St. Hubert, a well painted and well composed picture, by Lang Jan.

#### THE RECOLLETS.

**RUBENS.** THE high altar ; a profane allegorical picture by Rubens. Christ with Jupiter's thunder and lightning in his hand, denouncing vengeance on a wicked world, represented by a globe lying on the ground with the serpent twined round it ; this globe St. Francis appears to be covering and defending with his mantle. The Virgin is holding Christ's hand, and shewing her breasts ; implying, as I suppose, the right she has to intercede and have an interest with him whom she suckled. The Christ, which is ill drawn, in an attitude

affectedly contrasted, is the most un- <sup>GHEENT</sup>  
gracious figure that can be imagined: }  
the best part of the picture is the head of  
St. Francis.

Mary Magdalen expiring, supported <sup>RUBENS.</sup>  
by ill drawn angels, by Rubens; the  
saint herself old and disagreeable.

St. Francis receiving the Stimate, <sup>RUBENS.</sup>  
likewise by Rubens;—a figure without  
dignity, and more like a beggar: though  
his dress is mean, he ought surely to  
be represented with the dignity and  
simplicity of a Saint. Upon the whole  
Rubens would appear to no great  
advantage at Ghent, if it was not for  
the picture of St. Bavon.

#### ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH.

THE great altar, representing some <sup>N. ROOSE.</sup>  
history of this saint, is painted by  
N. Roose, a painter of no great merit;  
but this is far superior to any other of  
his works, which are plentifully dis-  
persed over Flanders. It is of a mellow

**GHENT.** colour, and has great force and brilliancy: it is illuminated by torch-light, but so well managed, as to have nothing of that disagreeable effect which Honthorst, Segers, Schalcken, and others, gave to their pictures, when they represented night-pieces.

**ROMBOUTS** St. Joseph advertised by an Angel, by Rombouts. The angel is an upright figure, and treads the air with great grace; his countenance is likewise beautiful, as is also that of the Virgin.

#### ALOST ST. MARTIN.

**RUBENS.** St. Rock interceding with Christ for the diseased of the plague, by Rubens. The composition is upon the same plan as that of St. Bavon at Ghent. The picture is divided into two parts; the Saint and Christ are represented in the upper part, and the effects of the plague in the lower part of the picture.—In this piece the grey is rather too predominant, and the figures have not that union with their ground which is generally so ad-

mirable in the works of Rubens. I <sup>GHEENT.</sup>  
 suspect it has been in some picture-  
 cleaner's hands, whom I have often  
 known to darken every part of the  
 ground about the figure, in order to make  
 the flesh look brighter and clearer ; by  
 which the general effect is destroyed.  
 There is a print from this picture, by P.  
 Pontius.

## BRUSSELS. ST. GUDULE.

CHRIST'S charge to Peter with two <sup>BRUSSELS.</sup>  
 of the Apostles. The characters heavy,  
 without grace or dignity ; the handling  
 on a close examination appears tame even  
 to the suspicion of its being a copy : the  
 colouring is remarkably fresh. The  
 name of Rubens would not stand high <sup>RUBENS.</sup>  
 in the world, if he had never produced  
 other pictures than such as this. On the  
 same pillar is a Pieta of B. Van Orlay, <sup>B. VAN  
ORLAY.</sup>  
 with six portraits of the family who  
 presented this picture to the church.  
 The old man who appears to be the father,  
 has great nature, but hard, as the whole  
 picture is in a dry gothick style.

BRUSSELS.

RUBENS.

## UNSHOD CARMALITES.

THE high altar; the Assumption, by Rubens. The principal figure, the Virgin, is the worst in the composition, both in regard to the character of the countenance, the drawing of the figure, and even its colour; for she is dressed, not in what is the fixed dress of the Virgin, blue and red, but entirely in a colour between blue and grey, heightened with white; and this, coming on a white Glory, gives a deadness to that part of the picture. The Apostles and the two women are in Rubens's best manner; the angels are beautifully coloured, and unite with the sky in perfect harmony; the masses of light and shade are conducted with the greatest judgment, and, excepting the upper part where the Virgin is, it is one of Rubens's rich pictures.

COPIES OF  
RUBENS.

Here are about the Church pretty good copies, making in all ten pictures, of that great work of Rubens, the Triumph of the Church. The originals were destroyed by fire, when the Prince's palace was burnt in 1731.

On the left side of the high altar, <sup>BRUSSELS</sup> Christ and St. Theresa with two an-<sub>RUBENS.</sub> gels; one supports her, and the other presents to her bosom a flaming arrow; neither are very angelical: the head of the saint is finely drawn and painted; the Christ is likewise well drawn for Rubens; but the effect is rather hard, proceeding from its being wrought up too highly: it is smooth as enamel, which takes off that suppleness which appears in his other works: this is certainly not in his best manner, though it seems to have cost him the most trouble.

In the sacristy is a fine portrait by <sup>RUBENS.</sup> Rubens.

#### CAPUCHINS.

THE high altar by Rubens: Christ <sup>RUBENS.</sup> dead, lying on the lap of the Virgin; two angels holding the lance; near is a St. Francis and St. Elizabeth with a handkerchief to her eyes. This was probably one of Rubens's best pictures, but it appears to have suffered much from cleaning; the mezzotints of

**BRUSSELS.** the flesh of Christ are quite blue, as is the linen: upon the whole it has the appearance of the coloured prints of Le Blond. The drapery of the Magdalen at the feet of Christ is execrable; the angels have been totally repainted. There are prints of this picture both by Pontius and Bolswert.

**VANDYCK.** On the pillar on the right hand near the choir is St. Antony of Padua, holding the Christ in his arms, by Vandyck; and on the left hand its companion, St. Francis: both those figures have great expression; but they are slightly painted, and certainly not intended for public pictures. Prints of these by Krafft.

#### ST. GERY.

**KOEBERGER.** THE entombing of Christ, by Koeberger, 1606: an admirable picture in the style of the Roman school. The character elegant, well drawn and coloured; the blue drapery of the Virgin is the only defective part; it is ill folded, and the colour does not harmo-

nize with the rest. This picture is <sup>BRUSSELS.</sup> equal to the best of Domenichino. I was much surprized to find such excellence in a painter of whom I knew little more than seeing a print of his portrait among Vandyck's heads. I have since seen more of his works, but none equal to this; which I would place in the first rank of all the pictures at Brussels.

The fascinating power of Rubens's pencil has prevented this picture from possessing such reputation as it undoubtedly deserves: simplicity is no match against the splendour of Rubens, at least at first sight; and few stay to consider longer. The best pictures of the Italian school, if they ornamented the churches of Antwerp, would be overpowered by the splendour of Rubens; they certainly ought not to be overpowered by it; but it resembles eloquence, which bears down every thing before it, and often triumphs over superior wisdom and learning.



BRUSSELS.  
 BERNARD.  
 VAN OR-  
 LAY.

In the first Chapel on the right hand, is the birth of Christ, by Bernard Van Orlay : it is a chapel belonging to this painter's family, in which they all lie buried. Under this picture is another, in which are portraits of himself and his family ; nine figures on their knees, as praying ; but these must have been painted by his descendants, who were likewise painters, the date on the picture being 1590 ; thirty years after Bernard's death. Both pictures are painted in the old dry manner ; but there is great truth in the countenance of the portraits, and the nativity shews it came from a good school, that of Raffaele ; there is a simplicity and earnestness in one of the shepherds, which is admirable.

In the second Chapel, a good picture  
 M. COXIS. of Christ mocked by the Jews, by M.  
 Coxis.

MR. DANOOT'S.

Among the private cabinets at Brussels, that of Mr. Danoot, the Banker,

claims particular attention. He has <sup>BRUSSELS.</sup> appropriated little more than one room of his house for pictures, and has therefore been very attentive in the choice of what he has admitted,

To mention only a few of the most <sup>RUBENS.</sup> striking:—Two sketches by Rubens; the Rape of the Sabines, and the women endeavouring to prevent the Roman and Sabine soldiers from joining battle: this last has more novelty, and is the most interesting of the two. The women are here placed between the two armies, some hanging on the soldiers' arms, others pressing the horses backward, and others holding up their infants at arms' length, and showing them to the soldiers, to excite their compassion. The whole composition is full of animation, to which the air of the horses, thus pressed backwards, does not a little contribute. Both these sketches are admirably composed, and in every respect excellent; few pictures of Rubens, even of his most finished

**BRUSSELS.** works, give a higher idea of his genius. All the parts are more determined than is usual in sketches. They are what I apprehend he put into the hands of his scholars, from which they advanced and carried on the great picture, which he afterwards retouched and finished.

**RUBENS.** Another sketch of the same master; the finding of Romulus and Remus.

**RUBENS.** A Child in a Cradle, with three women, by Rubens; the scene a landscape, the figures somewhat less than life. This picture has not so much force as his works in general, and appears not to have received his last touches.

**REM-  
BRANDT.** Rembrandt's portrait, by himself, half length, when he was old, in a very unfinished manner, but admirable for its colour and effect; his pallet and pencils and mahlstick are in his hand, if it may be so called; for it is so slightly touched, that it can scarce be made out to be a hand.

A Woman with a sprig of jessamy BRUSSELS.  
 in her hand, by Lionardo da Vinci. LIONARDO  
 DA VINCI.  
 There is beauty in the countenance,  
 but it is in a hard manner.—A small  
 picture by young Teniers, of Boors YOUNG  
 TENIERS.  
 shooting at a but or target; in his best  
 manner. His name and the date are  
 on it, which I took down to mark the  
 part of his life when he was in his  
 zenith of perfection: the date is 1645;  
 he was then 35 years old, being born  
 in 1610.

Another picture of old David Teniers, OLD DAVID  
 TENIERS.  
 which has a good landscape, but it has  
 not the neat and elegant touch of young  
 David; it seems to have proceeded  
 from a more clumsy workman.

#### PRINCE DE LIGNE'S.

THERE is nothing here worth atten-  
 tion, except a whole-length portrait of  
 John Count of Nassau, by Vandyck. VANDYCK.  
 The head of this picture is engraved  
 in Vandyck's book of portraits. The  
 character and drawing are admirable;

**BRUSSELS.** the face seems to have lost a little of its brilliancy: It is much in the manner of Lord Strafford's picture in the possession of the Duke of Grafton.

**VANDYCK,**  
**Or Copy.** A Picture of Minerva and Mercury, bridling or taming Pegasus. It appears to be a Vandyck, or a copy after him: as it hangs between two windows, I could not determine which was the case.

**VANDYCK.** A Pieta of Vandyck, in the manner of Rubens; the same as one at Dusseldorf, but not so good; and it is there disputed whether their picture is of Rubens or Vandyck. The Virgin's eyes are disagreeably red; the whole without beauty of any kind, except in regard to its colour.

**LUCA GI-**  
**ORDANO.** About half a dozen Luca Giordanos,

#### MR. ORION'S.

**D, RYC-**  
**KAERT.** A country town pillaged by soldiers, by D. Ryckaert. It is painted in a colder manner than I expected from the

sketch which I have in my possession in BRUSSELS  
colours.

A sketch by Rubens, of three saints RUBENS.  
on their knees: likewise two admirable  
sketches of the two ends of the cieling  
of the Banqueting-house \*; the middle  
part was in Lord Orford's collection,  
which is now in Russia.

A painter drawing after a plaister-  
figure of a child; perfect in its kind.

A Nativity, by Jordaens; a capricious JORDAENS.  
composition in the manner of Tintoret.

Many excellent small pictures of  
Teniers, Van Uden, Asselyn Crabbetje,  
and others.

He has two Rembrandts; The wrest- REM-  
BRANDT.  
ling of Jacob and the Angel, and a por-  
trait; but neither of them excellent.

\* These two sketches were afterwards purchased  
by our author. M.

MECHLIN.

My friend remarked, that Mr. Orion was almost the only gentleman who shewed his own pictures, that did not pester us by prating about their merit. He certainly has pictures which well deserve to be praised, but he left that part to us.

## MECHLIN.—THE CATHEDRAL.

RUBENS.

The Last Supper, by Rubens. The heads of the Apostles and style of drapery are in Rubens's best manner; but the picture is in bad condition, as it is mildewed: the Christ, the worst head. The principal figure is here, as is generally the case, the worst figure in the composition. Perhaps, this is unavoidable: it is here as in poetry; a perfect character makes but an insipid figure; the genius is cramped and confined, and cannot indulge itself in those liberties which give spirit to the character, and of course interest the spectator. It has been observed, that Milton has not succeeded in the speeches which he has given to God the Father, or to Christ,

so well as in those which he has put in <sup>MECHLIN.</sup> the mouths of the rebel angels.—Under the table is a dog gnawing a bone; a circumstance mean in itself, and certainly unworthy such a subject, however properly it might fill a corner of such a picture as the marriage at Cana, by Paul Veronese. Beside the impropriety, one does not see how the dog came by his bone, nothing of that kind being on the table; but the word SUPPER was excuse enough for Rubens, who was always glad of an opportunity of introducing animals into his pictures.

There is a print of this picture by Bolswert.

On one side hangs a small picture of <sup>RUBENS.</sup> Christ washing the Disciples' feet, and on the other a picture of the same size, of Christ entering Jerusalem, likewise by Rubens; they are both well composed, and that appears to be their whole merit.



MECHLIN.

There is a circumstance belonging to the Altar-piece, which may be worth relating, as it shews Rubens's manner of proceeding in large works. The person who bespoke this picture, a citizen of Mechlin, desired, to avoid the danger of carriage, that it might be painted at Mechlin; to this the painter easily consented, as it was very near his country-seat at Steen. Rubens, having finished his sketch in colours, gave it as usual to one of his scholars, (Van Egmont,) and sent him to Mechlin to dead-colour from it the great picture. The gentleman, seeing this proceeding, complained that he bespoke a picture of the hand of the master not of the scholar, and stopped the pupil in his progress. However, Rubens satisfied him that this was always his method of proceeding, and that this piece would be as completely his work as if he had done the whole from the beginning. The Citizen was satisfied, and Rubens proceeded with the picture, which appears to me to have no indications of neglect in any part; on the con-

trary, I think it *has been* one of his best <sup>MECHLIN</sup> pictures, though those who know this circumstance pretend to see Van Egmont's inferior genius transpire through Rubens's touches.

### RECOLLETS.

THE great altar, in the church of the Recollets, is Christ crucified between the two Thieves, by Vandyck. This, <sup>VANDYCK.</sup> perhaps, is the most capital of all his works, in respect to the variety and extensiveness of the design, and the judicious disposition of the whole. In the efforts which the thieves make to disengage themselves from the cross, he has successfully encountered the difficulty of the art; and the expression of grief and resignation in the Virgin is admirable. This picture, upon the whole, may be considered as one of the first pictures in the world, and gives the highest idea of Vandyck's powers: it shews that he had truly a genius for history-painting, if it had not been taken

**MECHLIN.** off by portraits. The colouring of this picture is certainly not of the brightest kind, but it seems as well to correspond with the subject as if it had the freshness of Rubens. St. John is a mean character, the only weak part in the picture, unless we add another circumstance, though but a minute one; the hair of the Magdalen, at the feet of Christ, is too silky, and indeed looks more like silk drapery than hair.—There is a print of the head of this Magdalen, to which is added a skull.

**VANDYCK.** The altar on the right, by Vandyck; St. Bonavent, supported by an angel, whilst another is giving him the Sacrament. The Priest at the altar is without dignity; he is looking over his shoulder, as if he was only satisfying his curiosity to see what they were about: the Saint is likewise poorly imagined, and makes but a despicable figure in comparison of the manner in which the same kind of subject has been treated by Domenichino and Agostino Caracci, in their pictures of

the communion of St. Jerome. The <sup>MECHLIN.</sup>  
 colouring is not brilliant; a reddish  
 colour being too predominant in the flesh,  
 particularly in the shadows. This, as  
 I have before observed, is the case with  
 many of Vandyck's pictures. A print  
 by Franciscus Vanden Wyngaerde.

#### THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN.

THE great Altar, the Adoration of the <sup>RUBENS.</sup>  
 Magi, by Rubens; a large and rich  
 composition; but there is a want of force  
 in the Virgin and Child: they appear of  
 a more shadowy substance than the rest  
 of the picture, which has his usual  
 solidity and richness. One of the Kings  
 holds an incense-vase. This circumstance  
 is mentioned to distinguish this picture  
 from the many others which Rubens has  
 painted of this subject. It is engraved  
 by L. Vostermans.

On the inside of one of the doors is <sup>RUBENS.</sup>  
 the Decollation of St. John the Baptist,  
 on the other St. John the Evangelist in  
 the cauldron of boiling oil. The figures,

MECHLIN. which are putting him into the cauldron, want energy, which is not a common defect of Rubens: the character of the head of the Saint is vulgar, which indeed in him, is not an uncommon defect. The whole is of a mellow and rich colouring. On the outside of those doors is John baptizing Christ, and St. John the Evangelist in the Isle of Patmos, writing the Apocalypse: both of these are in his best manner: the Eagle of St. John is remarkably well painted; the baptism is much damaged. Under these are three pannels, on which are the Nativity, the Crucifix, and the Resurrection. Though they are all of Rubens, they have very little merit, except an air of facility of hand. Of the Nativity there is a print by Vostermans, which appears as if engraved after a finished picture. Probably the drawing which the engraver made from the picture was corrected by Rubens: what seems to confirm this, is the print being dedicated by Rubens himself to his friend Petrus Venius: "Testem hanc ex animo," &c.

RUBENS.

Rubens was paid for these eight pictures <sup>MECHLIN.</sup> eighteen hundred Florins of Brabant, about 180 pounds English, as appears by the receipt preserved in the sacristy; and the whole was begun and finished in eighteen days.

#### AUGUSTINS.

IN the church of the Augustins was <sup>RUBENS.</sup> the famous picture by Rubens, of the Virgin and Christ, St. Catharine, St. Agnes, Christine Marguerite, and other female Saints; which was sold to Verhalst at Brussels, and bought at his sale by the Duke of Rutland, in whose possession it now is. A print of this picture by Jode,

#### ANTWERP.—THE CATHEDRAL.

ON entering the great door on the right, is the Last Judgment, said to be by B. Van Orlay, but I suspect it to be by some of his descendants: it is much inferior to what we saw of him at Brussels. On the folding-doors are the seven acts of Mercy; it has no excel-

B. VAN  
ORLAY.

**ANTWERP.** lence of any kind, to make amends for its extreme hardness of manner.

**KOEBER-  
GER.**

The altar of the Archers; St. Sebastian, by Koeberger. There are good parts in this picture, but it is not equal to his Pieta at Brussels: the boy in half shadow, who holds a bow and arrows, and the priest who holds an image in his hand, the face seen by a reflected light, are the best parts of the picture. The body of the Saint is well coloured, and in a broad manner. Two women's heads are introduced very awkwardly in the bottom of the picture.

#### THE CHAPEL OF ST. MICHAEL.

**F. FLORIS.** THE fall of the Angels by F. Floris, 1554; which has some good parts, but without masses, and dry. On the thigh of one of the figures he has painted a fly for the admiration of the vulgar; there is a foolish story of this fly being painted by J. Matsys, and that it had the honour of deceiving Floris.

THE CHAPEL BELONGING TO THE  
COMPANY OF ARQUEBUSE.

ANTWERP.

THE famous descent of the Cross; RUBENS.  
this picture of all the works of Rubens, is that which has the most reputation. I had consequently conceived the highest idea of its excellence; knowing the print, I had formed in my imagination what such a composition would produce in the hands of such a Painter. I confess I was disappointed. However, this disappointment did not proceed from any deficiency in the picture itself; had it been in the original state in which Rubens left it, it must have appeared very different; but it is mortifying to see to what degree it has suffered by cleaning and mending: that brilliant effect, which it undoubtedly once had, is lost in a mist of varnish, which appears to be chilled or mildewed. The Christ is in many places retouched, so as to be visible at a distance; the St. John's head repainted; and other parts, on a close inspection, appear to be chipping off, and ready to



ANTWERP fall from the canvass. However, there is enough to be seen to satisfy any connoisseur, that in its perfect state it well deserved all its reputation.

The composition of this picture is said to be borrowed from an Italian print: This print I never saw; but those who have seen it, say, that Rubens has made no deviation from it, except in the attitude of the Magdalen. On the print is written, "Peter Passer invenit; Hieronymus Wirix sculpsit."

The greatest peculiarity of this composition is the contrivance of the white sheet, on which the body of Jesus lies: this circumstance was probably what induced Rubens to adopt the composition. He well knew what effect white linen, opposed to flesh, must have, with his powers of colouring; a circumstance which was not likely to enter into the mind of an Italian painter, who probably would have been afraid of the linen's

hurting the colouring of the flesh, and <sup>ANTWERP.</sup> have kept it down of a low tint. And the truth is, that none but great colourists can venture to paint pure white linen near flesh; but such know the advantage of it: so that possibly what was stolen by Rubens, the possessor knew not how to value; and certainly no person knew so well as Rubens how to use. After all, this may perhaps turn out another *Lauder's* detection of plagiarism. I could wish to see this print, if there is one, to ascertain how far Rubens was indebted to it for his Christ, which I consider as one of the finest figures that ever was invented: it is most correctly drawn, and I apprehend in an attitude of the utmost difficulty to execute. The hanging of the head on his shoulder, and the falling of the body on one side, gives such an appearance of the heaviness of death, that nothing can exceed it.

Of the three Maries, two of them have more beauty than he generally

ANTWERP. bestowed on female figures; but no great elegance of character. The St. Joseph of Arimathea is the same countenance which he so often introduced in his works; a smooth fat face,—a very un-historical character.

The principal light is formed by the body of Christ and the white sheet; there is no second light which bears any proportion to the principal: in this respect it has more the manner of Rembrandt's disposition of light than any other of Rubens's works; however there are many little detached lights distributed at some distance from the great mass, such as the head and shoulders of the Magdalen, the heads of the two Maries, the head of St. Joseph, and the back and arm of the figure leaning over the Cross; the whole surrounded with a dark sky, except a little light in the horizon, and above the Cross.

The historical anecdote relating to this

picture, says, that it was given in ex-<sup>ANTWERP.</sup>change for a piece of ground, on which Rubens built his house; and that the agreement was only for a picture representing their patron, St. Christopher, with the Infant Christ on his shoulders. Rubens who wished to surprise them by his generosity, sent five pictures instead of one; a piece of gallantry on the side of the painter, which was undoubtedly well received by the Arquebusers; since it was so much to their advantage, however expensive to the maker of it.

All those pictures were intended to refer to the name of their patron Christopher.

In the first place, the body of Christ on the Altar is borne by St. John, St. Joseph of Arimathea, Mary Magdalen, &c.

On one side of the left door, is the Salutation of Mary and Elizabeth. The

ANTWERP. Virgin here bears Christ before he is born.

On the reverse of the same door is St. Christopher himself, bearing the Infant on his shoulders. The picture which corresponds with this on the other side, is the only one which has no reference to the word Christopher. It represents an Hermit with a lantern, to receive Christ when he arrives at the other side of the river. The hermit appears to be looking to the other side; one hand holds the lantern, and the other is very naturally held up to prevent the light from coming upon his eyes. But on the reverse of this door we have another Christopher; the Priest Simeon bearing Christ high in his arms, and looking upwards. This picture, which has not suffered, is admirable indeed, the head of the priest more especially, which nothing can exceed: the expression, drawing, and colouring, are beyond all description, and as fresh as if the piece were just painted.

The colouring of the St. Christopher <sup>ANTWERP.</sup> is too red and bricky, and the outline is not flowing. This figure was all that the company of the Arquebusers expected; but Rubens justly thought that such a figure would have made but a poor subject for an Altar.

There is a print of the Descent by Luc Vostermans, of the St. Christopher by Remy Eyndhout; of Simeon by P. Pontius: those which have a dedication to Gasp. Hubert are bad impressions, and retouched. The Visitation is engraved by P. de Jode. The Hermit has not been engraved.

On the side of the choir are the monuments of the two celebrated printers of the Netherlands, John Baptist Moretus and Martin Plantin; that of the former is ornamented with an admirable picture by Rubens, about half the size <sup>RUBENS.</sup> of life; Christ coming out of the Sepulchre in great splendour, the soldiers terrified, and tumbling one over the

**ANTWERP.** other: the Christ is finely drawn, and of a rich colour. The St. John the Baptist on the door is likewise in his best manner; only his left leg is something too large. On the other door is St. Barbara; the figure without character, and the colouring without brilliancy. The predominant colour in her dress is purple, which has but a heavy effect.

The monument of Plantin has for its ornament the last Judgment, by **BACKER.** correctly drawn, but without any skill in disposition of light and shadow.

#### THE CHAPEL OF THE SCHOOL-MASTERS.

**FRANCIS FRANCK.** CHRIST among the Doctors, by Francis Franck; called the young Franck. There are some fine heads in this picture; particularly, the three men that are looking on one book, are admirable characters; the figures are well drawn, and well grouped; the Christ is but a poor figure.

On a pillar opposite, and not far from <sup>ANTWERP.</sup> the Descent from the Cross, is the Adoration of the Magi. The Virgin and the infant Christ are admirable. It appears to be the work of B. Van Orlay. <sup>B. VAN ORLAY.</sup> On the doors on each side are portraits well painted, the woman especially. On one of the pillars is a picture of Rubens, <sup>RUBENS.</sup> which serves as a monument for the family of Goubau: He and his wife are represented, half length, at prayers, addressing themselves to the Virgin and Infant Christ: the old man is well painted the Virgin but indifferently.

#### CORDWAINERS' CHAPEL.

THE martyrdom of St. Crepin and Crepinianus, by Ambrose Franck, <sup>AMBROSE FRANCK.</sup> has some good heads, but in a dry manner.

#### THE CONFRERES DE L'ARBULETRE.

THE martyrdom of St. George, by <sup>SCHUT.</sup> Schut. It is well composed and well drawn, and is one of his best pictures; but the Saint has too much of that character which Painters have fixed for



**ANTWERP.** Christ. There is a want of brilliancy from its having too much harmony : to produce force and strength, a stronger opposition of colours is required.

Passing by the chapels in which are altars by Martin and Simon de Vos, and others, which have nothing worth attention, we come to

*The CHAPEL of the CIRCUMCISION.*

**QUINTIN  
MATSYS.**

WHERE is the famous work of Quintin Matsys, the blacksmith. The middle part is what the Italians call a Pieta ; a dead Christ on the knees of the Virgin, accompanied with the usual figures. On the door on one side is the daughter of Herod bringing in St. John's head at the banquet ; on the other, the Saint in the cauldron. In the Pieta the Christ appears as if starved to death ; in which manner it was the custom of the painters of that age always to represent a dead Christ ; but there are heads in this picture not exceeded by Raffaele, and indeed not unlike his manner of painting

portraits; hard and minutely finished. ANTWERP.  
 The head of Herod, and that of a fat man near the Christ, are excellent. The painter's own portrait is here introduced. In the banquet, the daughter is rather beautiful, but too skinny and lean; she is presenting the head to her mother, who appears to be cutting it with a knife.

#### THE ALTAR OF THE GARDENERS.

A Nativity, a large composition of FRANCIS FLORIS.  
 Francis Floris, and perhaps the best of his works. It is well composed, drawn, and coloured; the heads are in general finely painted, more especially St. Joseph, and a woman in the fore-ground.


A Pieta by Rubens, which serves as a RUBENS.  
 monument of the family of Michielsens, and is fixed on one of the pillars: this is one of his most careful pictures; the characters are of a higher style of beauty than usual, particularly the Mary Magdalen, weeping, with her hand clenched. The colouring of the Christ and

**ANTWERP.** the Virgin is of a most beautiful and delicate pearly tint, opposed by the strong high colouring of St. Joseph.

I have said in another place, that Rubens does not appear to advantage, but in large works; this picture may be considered as an exception.

**RUBENS.** The Virgin and Infant Christ on one of the doors is the same as one at Marlborough House. The Virgin is holding Christ, who stands on a table; the Infant appears to be attentively looking at something out of the picture: the vacant stare of a child is very naturally represented; but it is a mean ordinary-looking boy, and by no means a proper representation of the Son of God. The only picture of Christ in which Rubens succeeds, is when he represents him dead; as a child, or as a man engaged in any act, there is no divinity; no grace or dignity of character appears.

On the other door is St John, finely

coloured; but this character is likewise ANTWERP.  
vulgar. 


On the outside of the door are two RUBENS.  
pictures in black and white; one of a  
Christ, and the other the Virgin and  
Child; these, as well as the two above  
mentioned, by Rubens.

#### THE GREAT ALTAR.

THE Assumption of the Virgin. She RUBENS.  
is surrounded by a choir of angels;  
below are the Apostles, and a great num-  
ber of figures. This picture has not so  
rich an appearance in regard to colour as  
many other pictures of Rubens; pro-  
ceeding, I imagine, from there being  
too much blue in the sky: however, the  
lower part of the picture has not that  
defect. It is said to have been painted  
in sixteen days. The print is by Bols-  
wert.

#### ST. WALBURGE.

THE great altar of the Choir is the RUBENS.  
first publick work which Rubens exe-

**ANTWERP.** cuted after he returned from Italy. In the centre is Christ nailed to the Cross, with a number of figures exerting themselves in different ways to raise it. One of the figures appears flushed, all the blood rising into his face from his violent efforts; others in intricate attitudes, which, at the same time that they shew the great energy with which the business is done, give that opportunity which painters desire, of encountering the difficulties of the art, in foreshortening, and in representing momentary actions. This subject, which was probably of his own choosing, gave him an admirable opportunity of exhibiting his various abilities to his countrymen; and it is certainly one of his best and most animated compositions.

The bustle, which is in every part of the picture, makes a fine contrast to the character of resignation in the crucified Saviour. The sway of the body of Christ is extremely well imagined. The taste of the form in the Christ, as well

as in the other figures, must be acknow-<sup>ANTWERP.</sup>  
 ledged to be a little inclinable to the  
 heavy; but it has a noble, free, and  
 flowing outline. The invention of  
 throwing the Cross obliquely from one  
 corner of the picture to the other, is  
 finely conceived; something in the man-  
 ner of Tintoret: it gives a new and  
 uncommon air to his subject, and we  
 may justly add, that it is uncommonly  
 beautiful. The contrast of the body  
 with the legs is admirable, and not  
 overdone.

The doors are a continuation of the  
 subject. That on the right has a group  
 of women and children, who appear to  
 feel the greatest emotion and horroure at  
 the sight: the Virgin and St. John, who  
 are behind, appear very properly with  
 more resignation. On the other door are  
 the officers on horse-back; attending  
 behind them are the two thieves, whom  
 the executioners are nailing to the Cross.

It is difficult to imagine a subject

ANTWERP.

better adapted for a painter to exhibit his art of composition than the present; at least Rubens has had the skill to make it serve, in an eminent degree, for that purpose. In the naked figures of the Christ, and of the executioners, he had ample room to shew his knowledge of the anatomy of the human body in different characters. There are likewise women of different ages, which is always considered as a necessary part of every composition, in order to produce variety: there are, besides, children and horsemen; and to have the whole range of variety, he has even added a dog, which he has introduced in an animated attitude, with his mouth open, as if panting; admirably well painted. His animals are always to be admired: the horses here are perfect in their kind, of a noble character, animated to the highest degree. Rubens, conscious of his powers in painting horses, introduced them in his pictures as often as he could. This part of the work, where the horses are represented, is by far the best in regard to

colouring; it has a freshness which the ANTWERP. other two pictures want: but those appear to have suffered by the sun. This picture of the horseman is situated on the south-east side, whereas the others, being east and south-east, are more exposed: however, at present there is no longer danger, the fathers having taken the precaution to have a fixed window-blind, which the rays of the sun cannot penetrate.

The central picture, as well as that of the group of women, does not, for whatever reason, stand so high for colour as every other excellence. There is a dryness in the tint; a yellow okery colour predominates over the whole; it has too much the appearance of a yellow chalk-drawing. I mean only to compare Rubens with himself; they might be thought excellent even in this respect, were they the work of almost any other painter. The flesh, as well as the rest of the picture, seems to want grey tints, which is not a general defect



ANTWERP. of Rubens ; on the contrary, his mezzotints are often too grey.

The blue drapery, about the middle of the figure at the bottom of the Cross, and the grey colour of some armour, are nearly all the cold colours in the picture ; which are certainly not enough to qualify so large a space of warm colours. The principal mass of light is on the Christ's body ; but in order to enlarge it, and improve its shape, a strong light comes on the shoulder of the figure with a bald-head : the form of this shoulder is somewhat defective ; it appears too round.

Upon the whole, this picture must be considered as one of Rubens's principal works, and that appearance of heaviness which it has, when seen near, entirely vanishes when the picture is viewed from the body of the church, to which you descend from the choir by twenty stairs.

On the other side of the two doors, <sup>ANTWERP.</sup> which turn round, are likewise two pictures, by Rubens; St. Catharine with <sup>RUBENS.</sup> a sword, and St. Eloi with a female Saint and Angels, as usual finely painted; but the figure of St. Eloi appears too gigantick.

Of the elevation of the Cross and its appendages, there is a print in three sheets by Withous; of St. Eloi by Remoldus Eynhovedts, and of the St. Catharine by Bolswert.

In this church, on the left hand of the choir, is another picture by Rubens, of <sup>RUBENS.</sup> Christ after his resurrection sitting on his sepulchre, trampling on the symbol of death: it is a picture of no force of colouring, which possibly proceeds from its having been much damaged.— A print of this by Remoldus Eynhovedts:

ANTWERP.

THE CHURCH OF THE JACOBINES\*.

VANDYCK.

THE great altar, a crucifixion by Vandyck. St. Rosaria at the feet of Christ, and St. Dominick. A sepulchral lamp, and a flambeau reversed, are here introduced, to shew that Christ is dead : two little angels are represented on each side of the Cross, and a larger angel below. The two little ones look like embryos, and have a bad effect ; and the large angel is not painted with equal success, as many other parts of the picture. The shadows are too red, and the locks of the hair are all painted in a hard and heavy manner. For its defects ample amends is made in the Christ, which is admirably drawn and coloured ; and a breadth of light preserved over the body with the greatest skill ; at the same time, that all the parts are distinctly marked. The form and character are of a more elegant kind than those we see commonly of Rubens.

The idea of St. Rosaria closing her eyes

\* Nuns of the order of St. Dominick. R.

is finely imagined, and gives an uncommon and delicate expression to the figure.

The conduct of the light and shadow of this picture is likewise worth the attention of a Painter. To preserve the principal mass of light, which is made by the body of Christ, of a beautiful shape, the head is kept in half shadow. The under garment of St. Dominick and the angel make the second mass; and the St. Rosaria's head, handkerchief, and arm, the third.

The sketch for this picture is said to be within the convent, but I could not see it—A Print by Bolswert.

#### UNSHOD CARMELITES.

In a recess on the right, on entering the church, is St. Anne, and the Virgin with a book in her hand, by Rubens. Behind St. Anne is a head of St. Joachim; two angels in the air with a crown. This picture is eminently well coloured, especially the angels; the

**ANTWERP.** union of their colour with the sky is wonderfully managed. It is remarkable that one of the angels has Psyche's wings, which are like those of a butterfly. This picture is improperly called —St. Anne teaching the Virgin to read; who is represented about fourteen or fifteen years of age, too old to begin to learn to read. The white silk drapery of the Virgin is well painted, but not historical; the silk is too particularly distinguished, a fault of which Rubens is often guilty, in his female drapery; but by being of the same colour as the sky it has a soft harmonious effect. The rest of the picture is of a mellow tint.—A Print by Bolswert.

**RUBENS.** At an altar on the opposite little nich on the left, Christ relieving souls out of purgatory by the intercession of St. Therese. The Christ is a better character, has more beauty and grace, than is usual with Rubens; the outline remarkably undulating, smooth, and flowing. The head of one of the women

in purgatory is beautiful, in Rubens's <sup>ANTWERP.</sup> way; the whole has great harmony of colouring and freedom of pencil: it is in his best manner.—A Print by Bolswert.

The Altar in the choir, by Segers. SEGERS.  
The subject is the marriage of the Virgin; larger than life. This is one of his best pictures; much in the manner of Rubens.

On the left of the choir is a Pieta, by RUBENS.  
Rubens. The body of Christ is here supported by St. John, instead of the Virgin, who is stooping forward to kiss Christ's cheek, whilst the Magdalen is kissing his hand. Of this picture there is no print, though it well deserves to be engraved. Perhaps the subject is handled too much in the same manner as that in the church of the Capuchins at Brussels.

#### THE GREAT CARMELITES, OR SHOED CARMELITES.

ON the right, as you enter the choir, RUBENS.  
Christ lying dead on the lap of God the Father, by Rubens; on each side an

**ANTWERP.** angel, with the instruments of crucifixion. The Christ is foreshortened with great skill in drawing.—Engraved by Bolswert.

#### CHURCH OF THE FACONS (NUNS).

**VANDYCK.** IN a little chapel the Virgin and Infant Christ, by Vandyck; a priest kneeling; an angel behind directing his attention to the Virgin. The drapery seems to be by another hand. There is nothing in this picture very much to be admired.

#### ST. MICHAEL.

**RUBENS:** THE great altar, the Adoration of the Magi; a large and magnificent composition of near twenty figures, in Rubens's best manner. Such subjects seem to be more peculiarly adapted to the manner and style of Rubens: his excellence, his superiority, is not seen in small compositions.

One of the kings, who holds a cap in his hand, is loaded with drapery; his head appears too large, and upon the

whole he makes but an ungraceful figure; <sup>ANTWERP.</sup>  
 The head of the ox is remarkably well  
 painted.—Engraved by Lommeli.

On the left of the great altar is another <sup>RUBENS.</sup>  
 picture of Rubens, St. Gregory with the  
 Dove, dressed in his sacerdotal robes ;  
 behind him is St. George in armour ;  
 both noble figures ; and the female  
 saint, who is likewise in the front of  
 the picture, is, for Rubens, uncommonly  
 beautiful. Behind is St. Sebastian, and  
 other Saints ; and above are angels  
 bearing a picture in a frame, of the  
 Virgin and Child.—The print by Re-  
 moldus Eynhovedts.

Near this is a monument of Rubens's <sup>RUBENS.</sup>  
 brother Philip, with an inscription and  
 a portrait in oval, by Rubens.

In this church are many fine portraits  
 inserted in monuments.

St. Norbert receiving the Sacrament, <sup>SIMON DE  
 Vos.</sup>  
 by Simon de Vos ; in which are in-



**ANTWERP.** introduced a great number of portraits extremely well painted. De Vos was particularly excellent in portraits. There is in the poor-house in this city, his own portrait by himself, in black, leaning on the back of a chair, with a scroll of blue paper in his hand, so highly finished, in the broad manner of Correggio, that nothing can exceed it.

**ERASMUS  
QUELLI-  
NUS.**

On the right cross is an immense large picture, by Erasmus Quellinus, containing some good heads, and figures not ill drawn ; but it is an ill-conducted picture, and in bad condition.

#### THE MINIMES.

THERE is nothing curious in the church ; but in passing to the cloisters are forty pieces of glass pane, by Diepenbeke, of the life of St. Francis ; and in an adjoining room a crucifix of Jordaens, admirable for its colouring, and the expression is better than usual ; but the drawing of the limbs of Christ is defective.

## THE CHURCH OF THE JACOBINS.

THE altar of the choir is painted by RUBENS.  
 Rubens: the subject the same as one mentioned before in the church of the Recollects at Ghent: Christ lancing thunder on the world, the Virgin interceding; below are many saints, male and female, bishops and cardinals. Rubens acquired a predilection for allegories from his master, Otho Venius; but it may be doubted whether such fancies in a Christian church are not out of their proper place. St. Francis is here, as in the picture at Ghent, the best head. This picture has been much damaged, and St. Sebastian in particular has been repainted by some ignorant person: the sky has likewise been badly repaired. GOD the Father, who is leaning on a globe, has something majestick in the attitude.

A Council composed of saints, popes, RUBENS.  
 cardinals, and bishops, by Rubens, the same subject as Raffaele's, in the

**ANTWERP.** Vatican, called THE DISPUTE OF THE SACRAMENT. GOD the Father is represented alone in the distant sky; boy angels with labels.—Engraved by Snyers. The sky has been ill repainted, and does not harmonize with the rest of the work. The whole picture indeed seems to have suffered; for there is not that brilliancy which might be expected, nor indeed any extraordinary character of heads: the best is that immediately behind the bishops on the fore-ground.—A print by Snyers.

At an altar on the entrance to the choir, Christ carrying the cross; said to be one of the most early pictures of Vandyck. It is in many parts like the works of Rubens, particularly the figure with his back towards the spectator, which is well drawn.

The drapery of the Christ being dark, having become so probably by time, is scarcely at all seen, which makes the head look like that taken by St. Veronica.

This picture is much cracked, particularly the blue drapery of the Virgin, and the naked back of the figure above-mentioned.—A print by Alexander Voët.

The altar of the chapel of St. Dominick, a black picture by Caravaggio; the Virgin and Christ with St. Dominick, and other saints.

About the church are represented the mysteries of St. Rosaria, and other subjects painted by various painters; the best of these pictures are those by Rubens and Jordaens. The flagellation of Christ is by Rubens. This picture, though admirably painted, is disagreeable to look at; the black and bloody stripes are marked with too much fidelity; and some of the figures are awkwardly scourging with their left hand.—A print by Pontius.

The picture of Jordaens is the Crucifixion, with the Virgin, St. John, Mary

**ANTWERP.** Magdalen, and St. Elizabeth; much in the manner of Rubens.

The Adoration of the Shepherds. The light coming from Christ is said to be of Rubens, but there is nothing in the picture by which his manner can be with certainty recognized: there are parts which were certainly not painted by him, particularly the drapery of the Virgin.

#### ST. AUGUSTIN.

**RUBENS.** THE Altar of the Choir is by Rubens. From the size of the picture, the great number of figures, and the skill with which the whole is conducted, this picture must be considered as one of the most considerable works of Rubens.

The Virgin and Infant Christ are represented at one distance, seated on high on a sort of pedestal, which has steps ascending to it; behind the Virgin is St. Joseph. On the right is St. Catharine, receiving the ring from

Christ. St. Peter and St. Paul are in <sup>ANTWERP.</sup>  
the back-ground ; and on the left, on  
the steps, St. John the Baptist, with  
the Lamb and Angels. Below are St.  
Sebastian, St. Augustin, St. Laurence,  
Paul the Hermit, and St. George in  
armour. By way of link to unite the  
upper and the lower part of the pic-  
ture, are four female saints half way up  
the steps. The subject of this picture,  
if that may be called a subject where  
no story is represented, has no means  
of interesting the spectator : its va-  
lue therefore must arise from an-  
other source ; from the excellence of  
art, from the eloquence, as it may be  
called, of the artist. And in this  
the painter has shewn the greatest  
skill, by disposing of more than twen-  
ty figures, without composition, and  
without crowding. The whole ap-  
pears as much animated, and in mo-  
tion, as it is possible for a picture to  
be, where nothing is doing ; and the  
management of the masses of light and  
shade in this picture is equal to the

ANTWERP. skill shewn in the disposition of the figures.

There is a similar subject to this painted by Titian, which was in the church of St. Nicola de Fiari at Venice, where he has represented the same saints which are placed all on a line, without any connection with each other; and above is the Virgin and Infant, equally unconnected with the rest of the picture. It is so completely separated, that it has been since made into two distinct pictures; the lower part forming that which is now in the Pope's collection in the Capitol.

By the disposition, Titian has certainly saved himself a great deal of that trouble of contrivance which composition requires. This artless manner is by many called simplicity; but that simplicity, which proceeds either from ignorance or laziness cannot deserve much commendation. As ignorance cannot be imputed to Titian, we may

conclude it was inattention ; and indeed <sup>ANTWERP.</sup> he has sufficiently shewn that it did not proceed from ignorance by another picture of the same kind of subject in the church de Frari at Venice, where it is treated in a very different manner. Here the Virgin and child are placed on an altar, instead of a pedestal ; St. Peter with an open book leaning on the altar, and looking at St. George, and another figure, which is kneeling. On the other side is St. Francis looking up to Christ, and recommending to his protection a noble Venetian, with four other figures, who are on their knees. Nothing can exceed the simplicity and dignity of these figures. They are drawn in profile, looking strait forward in the most natural manner, without any contrast or affectation of attitude whatever. The figure on the other side is likewise in profile, and kneeling ; which, while it gives an air of formality to the picture, adds also to its grandeur and simplicity.



**ANTWERP.** This must be acknowledged to be above Rubens ; that is, I fear he would have renounced it, had it occurred. Rubens's manner is often too artificial and picturesque for the GRAND STYLE. Titian knew very well that so much formality or regularity, as to give the appearance of being above all the tricks of art, which we call picturesque, is of itself grandeur.

There is a quiet dignity in the composition of Titian, and an animation and bustle in that of Rubens ; one is splendid, the other is grand and majestic. These two pictures may be considered among the best works of those great painters, and each characterises its respective author. They may therefore be properly opposed to each other, and compared together. I confess I was so overpowered with the brilliancy of this picture of Rubens, whilst I was before it, and under its fascinating influence, that I thought I had never before seen so great powers exerted

in the art. It was not till I was remo-<sup>ANTWERP.</sup>  
ved from its influence, that I could  
acknowledge any inferiority in Rubens  
to any other painter whatever.

The composition of Titian is of that kind which leaves the middle space void, and the figures are ranged around it. In this space is the white linen that covers the altar; and it is for the sake of this white linen, I apprehend, that he has made an altar instead of a pedestal, in order to make the linen the principal light, which is about the middle of the picture. The second light is the Virgin, and Christ, and the heads of the figures.

The principal light in the lower part of Rubens's picture, is the body of St. Sebastian: that of the upper part is the light in the sky; in this point there is no apparent superiority on either side.

Of both these pictures there are prints;

ANTWERP. of Titian's picture the print is by Lefebvre, and the Rubens is engraved by Snyers, and by Remoldus Eynhovedts: in the first impression of that of Snyers, there are parts of the Virgin, and St. Catharine, and the lap of St. Augustin, which are unfinished,

One is so much used to anachronisms in church pictures, that it ceases to be an object of criticism. From the frequency of seeing pictures peopled with men who lived in different ages, this impropriety may habitually become less offensive: introducing however, St. John the Baptist, as an elderly man, in the same picture where Christ is still an infant, though it may be said to be a crime of less magnitude, not being so violent a breach of chronology, yet appears to the spectator even more unpardonable, perhaps from his being so often used to see them represented together as children,

VANDYCK. The altar on the left hand; St. Au-

gustin in ecstasy, by Vandyck. This <sup>ANTWERP.</sup> picture is of great fame, but in some measure disappointed my expectations: at least on just parting from the Rubens, the manner appeared hard and dry. The colouring is of a reddish kind, especially in the shadows, without transparency. The colours must have suffered some change, and are not now as Vandyck left them. This same defect of the red shadows I have observed in many of his pictures. The head of an elderly woman, said to be the saint's mother, is finely drawn, and is the best part of the picture; and the angel sitting on a cloud is the best of that group. The boy with the sceptre is hard, and has no union with the blue sky.

This picture has no effect, from the want of a large mass of light; the two angels make two small masses of equal magnitude.

The St. Augustin is drest in black,

**ANTWERP.** though in the print of P. de Jode (according to the usual liberty of these engravers after Rubens and Vandyck) it makes the principal light ; and a light is thrown on the other figures in the print, which are quite dark in the picture.

**JORDAENS.** An altar in the right aisle ; the martyrdom of St. Apollonius by J. Jordaens. There is nothing much to be admired in this picture, except the grey-horse foreshortened, biting his knee, which is indeed admirable. Jordaens' horses are little inferior to those of Rubens.

**JORDAENS.** On the sides of the church are hung many pictures of the inferior painters of the Flemish school ; the best are, two of J. Jordaens ; the LAST SUPPER, in which are some excellent heads in the manner of Rubens, and Christ praying in the garden ; but the Angels here are truly Flemish. There is likewise a

**BACKEREEL.** crucifixion by Backereel, which has some merit.

In the sacristy is a small crucifix by ANTWERP.  
Vandyck, well drawn, especially the  
head, which is a fine character.

## RECOLLETS.

THE altar of the choir is the famous RUBENS.  
crucifixion of Christ between the two  
thieves, by Rubens. To give animation  
to this subject, he has chosen the point  
of time when an executioner is piercing  
the side of Christ, whilst another with  
a bar of iron is breaking the limbs of  
one of the malefactors, who in his con-  
vulsive agony, which his body admirably  
expresses, has torn one of his feet from  
the tree to which it was nailed. The  
expression in the action of this figure is  
wonderful: the attitude of the other is  
more composed; and he looks at  
the dying Christ with a countenance  
perfectly expressive of his penitence.  
This figure is likewise admirable.  
The Virgin, St. John, and Mary the  
wife of Cleophas, are standing by  
with great expression of grief and

**ANTWERP.** resignation, whilst the Magdalen, who is at the feet of Christ, and may be supposed to have been kissing his feet, looks at the horseman with the spear, with a countenance of great horror: as the expression carries with it no grimace or contortion of the features, the beauty is not destroyed. This is by far the most beautiful profile I ever saw of Rubens, or, I think, of any other painter; the excellence of its colouring is beyond expression. To say that she may be supposed to have been kissing Christ's feet, may be thought too refined a criticism; but Rubens certainly intended to convey that idea, as appears by the disposition of her hands; for they are stretched out towards the executioner, and one of them is before and the other behind the Cross; which gives an idea; of her hands having been round it; and it must be remembered, that she is generally represented kissing the feet of Christ: it is her place and employment in those subjects. The good Centurion ought not to be forgotten, who is leaning

forward, one hand on the other, resting <sup>ANTWERP.</sup> on the mane of his horse, while he looks up to Christ with great earnestness.

The genius of Rubens no where appears to more advantage than here: it is the most carefully finished picture of all his works. The whole is conducted with the most consummate art; the composition is bold and uncommon, with circumstances which no other painter had ever before thought of; such as the breaking of the limbs, and the expression of the Magdalen, to which we may add the disposition of the three crosses, which are placed prospectively in an uncommon picturesque manner: the nearest bears the thief whose limbs are breaking; the next the Christ, whose figure is straiter than ordinary, as a contrast to the others: and the furthest, the penitent thief: this produces a most picturesque effect, but it is what few but such a daring genius as Rubens would have attempted. It is here, and in such compositions, we properly see



**ANTWERP.** Rubens, and not in little pictures of Madonnas and Bambinos. It appears that Rubens made some changes in this picture, after Bolswert had engraved his print from it. The horseman who is in the act of piercing the side of Christ, holds the spear, according to the print, in a very tame manner, with the back of the hand over the spear, grasping it with only three fingers, the fore-finger straight lying on the spear; whereas in the picture, the back of the hand comes under the spear, and he grasps it with his whole force.

The other defect which is remedied in the picture, is the action of the executioner, who breaks the legs of the criminal; in the print, both his hands are over the bar of iron, which makes a false action: in the picture the whole disposition is altered to the natural manner in which every person holds a weapon, which requires both hands; the right is placed over, and the left under it.

This print was undoubtedly done un-<sup>ANTWERP.</sup>der the inspection of Rubens himself. It may be worth observing, that the keeping of the masses of light in the print differs much from the picture: this change is not from inattention, but design: a different conduct is required in a composition with colours, from what ought to be followed when it is in black and white only. We have here the authority of this great master of light and shadow, that a print requires more and larger masses of light, than a picture.

In this picture the principal and the strongest light is the body of Christ, which is of a remarkable clear and bright colour; this is strongly opposed by the very brown complexion of the thieves, (perhaps the opposition here is too violent,) who make no great effect as light. The Virgin's outer drapery is dark blue, and the inner a dark purple; and St. John is in dark strong red; no part of these two figures is light in the picture, but the head and hands of the Virgin;

**ANTWERP.** but in the print they make the principal mass of light of the whole composition. The engraver has certainly produced a fine effect; and I suspect it is as certain, that if this change had not been made, it would have appeared a black and heavy print.

When Rubens thought it necessary in the print to make a mass of light of the drapery of the Virgin and St. John, it was likewise necessary that it should be of a beautiful shape, and be kept compact; it therefore became necessary to darken the whole figure of the Magdalen, which in the picture is at least as light as the body of Christ; her head, linen, arms, hair, and the feet of Christ, make a mass as light as the body of Christ: it appears therefore that some parts are to be darkened, as well as other parts made lighter: this consequently is a science which an engraver ought well to understand, before he can presume to venture on any alteration from the picture which he means to represent.

The same thing may be remarked in <sup>ANTWERP.</sup> many other prints by those engravers, who were employed by Rubens and Vandyck; they always gave more light than they were warranted by the picture: a circumstance which may merit the attention of engravers.

I have dwelt longer on this picture than any other, as it appears to me to deserve extraordinary attention: it is certainly one of the first pictures in the world, for composition, colouring, and what was not to be expected from Rubens, correctness of drawing.

On one side of the great altar is a <sup>RUBENS.</sup> small crucifix, painted likewise by Rubens, which is admirable.—A print by H. Sneyers.

In the same choir is another crucifixion <sup>F. FLORIS.</sup> by F. Floris, with a great number of figures, many of them portraits, in which there is great nature, especially in the women.

**ANTWERP:** The altar of St. Francis, painted by  
**RUBENS.** Rubens. The Saint is receiving the communion, accompanied with many of his order: he is nearly naked, without dignity, and appears more like a lazar, than a Saint. Though there are good heads in this picture, yet the principal figure being so disgusting, it does not deserve much commendation. A Print by Hendrick Sneyers.

**RUBENS.** The Virgin kneeling on a reversed crescent, crowned by God the Father and Christ; over her is the dove, below is a group of angels. There is nothing here to be admired, but what relates to colouring; the splendour of the light indeed, that is behind those three figures, is very striking.—A print by Paulus Pontius.

**VANDYCK.** A Pieta by Vandyck, with St. John, and two angels. This has been one of his most chaste pictures, but the colouring is gone. The expression of the Virgin is admirable, at least equal to

that of Annibale Caracci, in the Duke <sup>ANTWERP.</sup> of Orleans's collection: it conveys an idea that she is petitioning with an earnest agony of grief. St. John is shewing or directing the attention of an angel to Christ; the other angel is hiding his face.

The Virgin's drapery and the sky, being exactly of the same colour, has a bad effect; the linen is remarkably well folded.

Behind the great altar is the chapel of <sup>RUBENS.</sup> the family of the Burgo-master Rockox, the altar of which is St. Thomas's incredulity, by Rubens. The head of the Christ is rather a good character, but the body and arms are heavy:—it has been much damaged. On the inside of the two folding doors are portraits of the Burgo-master and his wife, half-lengths: his is a fine portrait; the ear is remarkably well painted, and the anatomy of the forehead is well understood. Her portrait has no merit but

**ANTWERP.** that of colour. Vandyck likewise has painted a portrait of Rockox, a print of which is in his book of heads of eminent men. It should seem that he was a great patron of the arts: he gave to this church the picture of the great altar, which has been already mentioned.

**VANDYCK.** Here is a whole length of Alexander Scaglia which appears to be of Vandyck. It is at too great a distance to determine with certainty in regard to its originality, I have seen a print of this picture.

#### CAPUCHINS.

**W. KOE-  
BERGER.** ON entering on the right hand is an altar by W. Koeberger; angels supporting a dead Christ. It has merit, but not equal to his picture at Brussels: the outline is not enough undulating or flowing.

**RUBENS.** The apparition of the Virgin to St. Francis by Rubens. St. Francis is on his knees receiving the Infant Christ from his mother: angels above, and another figure behind. The Virgin and Christ are

in a wretched hard manner, and the characters are vulgar: there is indeed nothing excellent in this picture but the head of St. Francis, and that is exquisite. The entire picture is engraved by Zoutman. There is a print of the head of St. Francis alone by Cor. Vischer.

ANTWERP.

In the following chapel is an altar by Backereel; the apparition of the Virgin appearing to St. Felix and another Friar. This is a successful imitation of Vandyck; the head of the Friar is excellent.

BACKEREEL.

The great altar is the same subject as that of the Recollets; Christ between the two thieves; this is likewise by Rubens.

RUBENS.

On each side hang two whole-lengths of St. Peter and St. Paul, not much to be admired on any account; they have not even harmony of colouring. St. Peter's yellow drapery does not unite sufficiently with its ground, which is of a cold colour; and that of St. Paul,


RUBENS.



ANTWERP. which is purple, unites too much with its ground, which is a blue sky: this gives a heavy appearance to the picture. Whenever one sees a picture of Rubens that wants union, it may be justly suspected that it has been in the hand of some picture-cleaner, by whom it has been retouched. These two figures are engraved in one print, by Rem. Eynhovedts.

#### ANNUNCIATION NUNS.

**RUBENS.** ST. JUSTUS, with two other figures, who appear astonished at seeing him with his head in his hands. Of this untoward subject Rubens has made an admirable picture, correctly drawn, and coloured in a more chaste manner than usual. The surprize of the two men is admirably expressed. The union between the figures and the ground is in the highest perfection. Some horsemen are seen at a distance in very spirited attitudes. Every part of this picture is touched in such a style, that

it may be considered as a pattern for ANTWERP.  
imitation.—Engraved by J. Witdonck. 

An altar ; St. Francis in ecstasy, by SEGERS.  
Segers. The head and attitude of the  
Saint are well imagined ; he is turning  
his head, as if he had been looking up  
to heaven ; but the eyes are closed.

Another altar ;—two angels, bearing LANGEN  
a linen cloth, on which is the face of JAN.  
Christ, called Veronica ; a good imita-  
tion of Vandyck, by Langen Jan.

#### THE CHURCH OF BEQUINAGE.

The great altar ; a Pieta, by Van- VANDYCK.  
dyck. The Christ is not, as usual,  
supported on the Virgin's knees ; Mary  
Magdalen is kissing his hand : St.  
John behind, as if bringing in a gar-  
ment. The Virgin's head is admirable  
for drawing and expression. The figure  
of Christ is likewise finely drawn,  
every part carefully determined, but  
the colouring of this figure, and indeed  
of the picture in general, is a little

**ANTWERP.** too cold; there is likewise something defective in one of the hands of the Virgin. I have the study which Vandyck made for the Christ.—There are too prints, by Pontius and Sneyers.

**JORDAENS.** A Crucifixion by J. Jordaens; one of his best coloured pictures. The head of the Christ is lost in the shade, which perhaps was not ill-judged, unless he could have succeeded better in the St. John and the Magdalen, which are abominable characters.

**RUCK-  
HORST,  
alias LAN-  
GEN JAN.** The Ascension by Ruckhorst, *alias*, Langen Jan; extremely well coloured, in the manner of Vandyck.

#### THE CHURCH OF ST. JAMES.

**HENRY  
VAN  
BALEN.** ON the first pillar on the right as you enter the great door, is the Resurrection, by Van Balen, in the style of Rubens; it is his best work: above are the portraits of himself and his wife.

**SCHUT.** A Pieta by C. Schut, well drawn and

coloured, something in the manner of <sup>ANTWERP.</sup>  
 Rubens.

Behind the choir is the chapel of the <sup>RUBENS.</sup>  
 family of Rubens. The subject of the  
 altar is the Virgin and infant Christ,  
 St. Jerome, St. George, Mary Magda-  
 len, and other Saints, male and female.  
 Under the character of St. George, it  
 is supposed, is Rubens's own portrait ;  
 and Mary Magdalen and the Saint near  
 her, are said to be the portraits of his  
 two wives. For effect of colours this  
 yields to none of Rubens's works, and  
 the characters have more beauty than is  
 common with him.

To a painter who wishes to become a  
 colourist, or learn the art of producing  
 a brilliant effect, this picture is as well  
 worth the studying as any in Antwerp ;  
 it is as bright as if the sun shone on  
 it.—There are two prints of this pic-  
 ture, one by P. Pontius, and the other  
 by Rem. Eynhovedts ; the last has more  
 of the effect of the picture.

**ANTWERP.** **VAN HEEMSEN.** The Last Judgment, by Van Heemsen. It has no effect from the figures not being disposed in groups, and from the light being equally dispersed over the picture. On the doors are portraits; on one side the father with four sons, on the other the mother with ten daughters, and a tall figure with a sword, probably St. Catharine. The old woman looks pleased, and is a very natural countenance; all of them are handsome and admirably drawn: but the manner is very dry, like that of Holbein. The old Gothick school succeeds much better in portraits than history; the reason is plain; imitating exactly what we see in nature, makes but a poor historical picture, but an admirable portrait.

#### THE ACADEMY OF PAINTERS.

**RUBENS.** We found here an Holy Family by Rubens, which is far from being one of his best pictures; it is that in which there is a parrot on the pedestal of a pillar, biting vine tendrils. By what

accident this picture came here I never ANTWERP.  
 heard: it is scarce worthy to be consi-  
 dered as a pattern for imitation, though  
 it must be acknowledged to be as well  
 as many others of Rubens, which are  
 dispersed about the world: its merit  
 consists solely in being well coloured.  
 It is not by such pictures Rubens ac-  
 quired his reputation.—A print by  
 Bolswert.

Here is a good portrait of a priest, VANDYCK.  
 by Vandyck, and the portraits of Fran- F. FLORIS.  
 cis Floris, and Quintin Matsys, by QUINTIN  
MATSYS.  
 themselves. There are likewise some  
 ordinary pictures of Otho Venius, Jor- OTHO  
VENIUS.  
JORDAENS:  
SCHUT.  
 daens, Schut, and other less consider-  
 able painters: the Academy therefore  
 is scarce worth seeing for any excel-  
 lency in works of art. Here is shewn  
 Rubens's chair with his name on it.

The Cabinets make but a very in-  
 considerable figure in Antwerp, in com-  
 parison of what is to be found in the  
 churches. Those of M. Peters and

**ANTWERP.** M. Dasch are two of the most considerable.

THE CABINET OF M. PETERS.

**RUBENS.** A ROMAN Charity by Rubens, in his very best manner: the woman who is suckling her father is one of his most beautiful heads, and it has likewise great expression.

**RUBENS.** The inside of a stable by Rubens, in which he has introduced the Prodigal Son feeding with hogs: the whole has too much of a monotony; there wants variety of colours.

**RUBENS.** The unbelieving Priest, and another figure, attending at the altar, by Rubens: it is about half-life; of great harmony of colouring.

**RUBENS.** A Chancellor of Brabant, and another half-length, by Rubens.

**VANDYCK.** Three whole-lengths by Vandyck.

A half-length portrait, by Vandyck, ANTWERP.  
of a lady gathering flowers: she is turn- VANDYCK.  
ing her back, and looking over her  
shoulder, with a very genteel air.

St. John preaching in the wilderness, MOLA.  
by Mola.

#### THE CABINET OF M. DASCH.

AT Mr, Dasch's is an admirable pic- RUBENS.  
ture of Rubens; the story of Seleucus  
and Stratonice. The languishing air of  
the son, who is lying on a bed, is emi-  
nently beautiful: the whole is well  
composed.

A woman with a black veil, and a RUBENS.  
gentleman, by Rubens; both fine por-  
traits, especially the woman.

Two Rembrandts, but not in his best REM-  
BRANDT.  
style.

Opposite to the Rubens, is a Jupiter VANDYCK.  
and Antiope, by Vandyck, (his first  
manner,) in perfect preservation. I



**ANTWERP** think it is impossible for colours to exceed this picture in brilliancy.

#### CABINET OF M. VAN HAVEREN.


**RUBENS.** M. VAN HAVEREN has an admirable portrait by Rubens, known by the name of Chapeau de Paile, from her having on her head a hat and feather, airily put on; it has a wonderful transparency of colour, as if seen in the open air: it is upon the whole a very striking portrait; but her breasts are as ill drawn as they are finely coloured.

**VANDYCK.** Its companion, though equally well painted, from not having the same advantage of dress receives no attention.

#### MR. STEVENS'S CABINET.

**RUBENS.** We must not forget a fine portrait of a gentleman by Rubens, which we saw at the house of Mr. Stevens. And at the house of

M. LE CHANOINE VAN PARYS,  
a portrait of Helena Forman, (Kitcat,)

by Rubens; it is beautifully coloured, ANTWERP.  
 but a painter would say tamely painted,   
 from the long continued lines of the eyes  
 and mouth: this however appears only  
 on a close inspection; for at a distance  
 it seems perfectly well drawn, and an  
 animated countenance; the hands are  
 across, or rather one over the other,  
 finely coloured and drawn; the ends of  
 the fingers a little too thick for a fine  
 hand: she is dressed in black with  
 slashed sleeves.

THE CABINET OF M. DIRXENS.

JUDAS betraying Christ, by Vandyck: VANDYCK.  
 it is in his first manner, but not equal to  
 others which I have seen of that age;  
 the colouring is disagreeable from being  
 too red.

AT MADAM BOSCHAERTS,

THE Rape of the Sabines, by Rubens, RUBENS.  
 is finely coloured and well composed.  
 This picture is to be sold, if any body  
 chooses to give for it 22000 guilders,

ANTWERP. about two thousand two hundred pounds.

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TAKING leave of Flanders, we bade adieu at the same time to History Painting. Pictures are no longer the ornament of churches, and perhaps for that reason no longer the ornament of private houses. We naturally acquire a taste for what we have frequently before our eyes. No great historical picture is put up, which excites the curiosity of the town to see, and tempts the opulent to procure as an ornament to his own house: nothing of this kind being seen, historical paintings are not thought of, and go out of fashion; and the genius of the country, which, if room were given it, would expand itself, is exercised in small curious high-finished cabinet pictures.

It is a circumstance to be regretted, by painters at least, that the protestant countries have thought proper to exclude

pictures from their churches: how far <sup>ANTWERP.</sup>  
this circumstance may be the cause that  
no protestant country has ever produced  
a history-painter, may be worthy of  
consideration.

When we separated from the Church of Rome, many customs, indifferent in themselves, were considered as wrong, for no other reason, perhaps, but because they were adopted by the Communion from which we separated. Among the excesses which this sentiment produced, may be reckoned the impolitick exclusion of all ornaments from our churches. The violence and acrimony with which the separation was made, being now at an end, it is high time to assume that reason of which our zeal seemed to have bereaved us. Why religion should not appear pleasing and amiable in its appendages, why the house of God should not appear as well ornamented and as costly as any private house made for man, no good reason I believe can be assigned. This truth is acknowledged,

**ANTWERP.** in regard to the external building, in Protestant as well as in Roman Catholic countries: churches are always the most magnificent edifices in every city: and why the inside should not correspond with its exterior, in this and every other Protestant country, it would be difficult for Protestants to state any reasonable cause.

Many other causes have been assigned, why history has never flourished in this country; but with such a reason at hand we need not look farther. Let there be buyers, who are the true Mæcenases, and we shall soon see sellers, vying with each other in the variety and excellence of their works. To those who think that wherever genius is, it must, like fire, blaze out, this argument is not addressed; but those who consider it not as a gift, but a power acquired by long labour and study, should reflect that no man is likely to undergo the fatigue required to carry any art to any degree of excellence,

to which after he has done, the world is ANTWERP.  
likely to pay no attention.

Sculpture languishes for the same reason, being not with us made subservient to our religion, as it is with the Roman Catholicks. Almost the only demand for considerable works of sculpture arises from the monuments erected to eminent men. It is to be regretted that this circumstance does not produce such an advantage to the art as it might do, if, instead of Westminster-Abbey, the custom were once begun of having monuments to departed worth erected in St. Paul's Cathedral. Westminster-Abbey is already full; and if the House of Commons should vote another monument at the publick expence, there is no place, no proper place certainly, in the Abbey, in which it can be placed. Those which have been lately erected, are so stuck up in odd holes and corners, that it begins to appear truly ridiculous: the principal places have been long occupied, and the difficulty of finding a

ANTWERP. new nook or corner every year increases.

While this Gothick structure is encumbered and overloaded with ornaments which have no agreement or correspondence with the taste and style of the building, St. Paul's looks forlorn and desolate, or at least destitute of ornaments suited to the magnificence of the fabrick. There are places designed by Sir Christopher Wren for monuments, which might become a noble ornament to the building, if properly adapted to their situations. Some parts might contain busts, some single figures, some groups of figures, some bas-reliefs, and some tablets with inscriptions only, according to the expence intended by him who should cause the monument to be erected. All this might be done under the direction of the Royal Academy, who should determine the size of the figures, and where they should be placed, so as to be ornamental to the building\*.

\* Our author considered the plan which he has here sketched, as likely to be extremely beneficial

HAGUE.

## THE HAGUE.

PASSING by Dort, Rotterdam, and Delft, where we saw no pictures, we proceeded to the Hague. The principal collection here is in the gallery of the Prince of Orange, in which are many excellent pictures, principally of the Dutch school.

## GALLERY OF THE PRINCE OF ORANGE.

HERE are many of the best works of WOUVERMANS. Wouvermans, whose pictures are well MANS.

to the Arts, and was so desirous that it should be carried into execution, that after it had been determined to erect a monument to Dr. Johnson in Westminster-Abbey, and a place had been assigned for that purpose, he exerted all his influence with his friends, to induce them to relinquish the scheme proposed, and to consent that the monument of that excellent man should be erected in St. Paul's; where it has since been placed—In conformity with these sentiments, our author was buried in that cathedral; in which, I trust, Monuments to him, and to his illustrious friend, Mr. Burke, will ere long be erected. M.



HAGURE

worthy the attention and close examination of a Painter. One of the most remarkable of them is known by the name of THE HAY-CART; another in which there is a coach and horses, is equally excellent. There are three pictures hanging close together in his three different manners: his middle manner is by much the best; the first and last have not that liquid softness which characterises his best works. Beside his great skill in colouring, his horses are correctly drawn, very spirited, of a beautiful form, and always in unison with their ground. Upon the whole, he is one of the few painters, whose excellence in his way is such as leaves nothing to be wished for.

REM-  
BRANT.

A study of a Susanna, for the picture by Rembrandt, which is in my possession: it is nearly the same action, except that she is here sitting. This is the third study I have seen for this figure. I have one myself, and the third was in the possession of the late Mr. Blackwood.

In the drawing which he made for this picture, which I have, she is likewise sitting; in the picture she is on her legs, but leaning forward. It appears very extraordinary that Rembrandt should have taken so much pains, and have made at last so very ugly and ill-favoured a figure; but his attention was principally directed to the colouring and effect, in which it must be acknowledged he has attained the highest degree of excellence.

HAGUE.

A picture of Dutch gallantry, by Mieris; a man pinching the ear of a dog which lies on his mistress's lap.

MIERIS.

A boy blowing bubbles.

MIERIS.

Two Vandeveldes.

VANDE-  
VELDE.

Two portraits, Kitcat size, by Rubens, of his two wives; both fine portraits, but Eleanor Forman is by far the most beautiful, and the best coloured.

RUBENS.

A portrait by Vandyck of Simon the

VANDYCK.

**HAGUE.** painter. This is one of the very few pictures that can be seen of Vandyck, which is in perfect preservation; and on examining it closely it appeared to me a perfect pattern of portrait-painting: every part is distinctly marked, but with the lightest hand, and without destroying the breadth of light: the colouring is perfectly true to nature, though it has not the brilliant effect of sun-shine, such as is seen in Rubens's wife; it is nature seen by common day-light.

**REM-  
BRANT.** A portrait of a young man by Rembrandt, dressed in a black cap and feathers, the upper part of the face overshadowed: for colouring and force nothing can exceed it.

**HOLBEIN.** A portrait by Holbein; admirable for its truth and precision, and extremely well coloured. The blue flat ground which is behind the head, gives a general effect of dryness to the picture; had the ground been varied, and made to harmonise more with the figure, this

portrait might have stood in competition <sup>HAGUE.</sup> with the works of the best portrait-painters. On it is written,—“Henry Chessman, 1533.”

A whole-length portrait of Charles the First, about a foot long, dressed in black, the crown and globe lying on the table, tolerably well painted by Henry Pott, a name I am unacquainted with :—<sup>HENRY POTT.</sup> the date on it 1632\*.

The flight into Egypt, by Vanderwerf; <sup>VANDERWERF.</sup> one of his best: the back-ground is much cracked, an accident not unfrequent in his pictures.

A conversation by Terburg, a woman <sup>TERBURG.</sup> sitting on the ground leaning her elbow

\* Henry Pott, according to Descamps, was of Harlem, and drew portraits of the King and Queen of England, and of the principal nobility; but at what time is not specified. Lord Orford, (ANECD. OF PAINT. iii. 293, 8vo.) suggest that he probably drew Charles II. in his exile; but the date here given shews that he was in England in the early part of his father's reign.

**HAGUE.** on a man's knee, and resting her head on her hand.

**TENIERS.** A kitchen by Teniers.

**OSTADE.** Two Ostades.

**RUBENS.** A landscape by Rubens; light and airy. It is engraved among the set of prints of Rubens's landscapes; it is that where two men are sawing the trunk of a tree.

**VANDYCK.** The Virgin and Christ, by Vandyck, coloured in the manner of Rubens; so much so, as to appear at first sight to be of his hand; but the character of the child shews it to be Vandyck's.

**POUSSIN.** Venus asleep on the bank of a canal, her reflection seen in the water; a satyr drawing off the drapery; two Cupids: she is lying with her back upwards.

**POTTER.** Cattle, finely painted by Potter, re-

markable for the strong reflection of one <sup>HAGUE.</sup>  
of them in the water :—dated 1648.

Two pictures of flowers and fruits <sup>BRUEGHEL</sup>  
with animals by Brueghel: one serves  
for a border to a bad portrait; the other  
to a picture of Rothenamer: the frames  
are much better than the pictures.

The inside of Delft church by Hoogest, <sup>HOOGEST.</sup>  
in which is represented the tomb of  
William Prince of Orange; it is painted  
in the manner of Dewit, but I think  
better :—dated 1651.

Fruit by De Heem; done with the <sup>DE HEEM.</sup>  
utmost perfection.

A portrait of a lady, with a feather in <sup>VANDYCK.</sup>  
her hand, by Vandyck; of which there  
is a print.

A woman with a candle, by Gerard <sup>GERARD  
DOW.</sup>  
Dow: engraved by Captain Baillie.

A woman writing, looking up, <sup>METZU.</sup>

**HAGUE.** and speaking to another person; by  
Metzu.

**JAN STEEN.** Here are many of Jan Steen, excellently well painted, but I think they have less character and expression than is usual in his pictures.

There are some large pictures which take up too much room in this small gallery, more than their merit gives them any claim to; among which is a very large picture of Adam and Eve, said to be of Andrea Sacchi, which has been so much repaired, that no judgment can be formed who is the author.

**SNYDERS.** A large hunting by Snyders, well painted, but it occupies too much space. His works, from the subjects, their size, and we may add, from their being so common, seem to be better suited to a hall or ante-room, than any other place.

#### THE HOUSE IN THE WOOD.

IN the house in the Wood, about a

mile out of town, we saw no pictures HAGUE.  
 except those in the hall, which is painted  
 on every side; and every recess and  
 corner has some allegorical story, by  
 Jordaens, Van Tulden, Lievens, OR JORDAENS.  
 VAN TUL-  
 DEN.  
 LIEVENS.  
 HON-  
 THORST.  
 Honthorst. The different hands that  
 have been here employed, make variety,  
 it is true; but it is VARIETY OF  
 WRETCHEDNESS. A triumphal entry,  
 by Jordaens, is the best, and this is but  
 a confused business; the only part which  
 deserves any commendation is, the four  
 horses of the chariot, which are well  
 painted: it is remarkable that the fore  
 leg of each of the horses is raised, which  
 gives them the formality of trained  
 soldiers.

## GREFFIER FAGEL.

CHARLES the First, the same as that H. POTT.  
 in the gallery of the Prince: to this is  
 added the Queen, and a child sitting on  
 the table; the child is admirable.

A man driving cattle.

BERGHEM.



**HAGUE.** A girl receiving a letter from an old  
**TERBURG.** woman.

**GERARD** A woman asleep, a man putting aside  
**Dow.** her handkerchief; another laughing.

**BROWER.** A family, by Brower.

**TENIERS.** A chymist, by Teniers.

**VANDYCK.** A portrait of a lady, by Vandyck.

The Greffier has likewise a large and choice collection of drawings, many of which were bought in England, as appears from the marks of Sir Peter Lely and Richardson; and those are in general much superiour to what he purchased from Baron Stosck.

**THE CABINET OF M. VAN HE-  
CHEREN.**

**OSTADE.** Two pictures by Ostade.

A Berghem.

Two of I. Steen.

HAGUE.

A Vanderheyden.

A Wouvermans.

Birds small, mushrooms and weeds. HONDER-  
KOOTER.

Flowers by Huysum, Mignon, and  
De Heem; the last is the best.

A skirmish, where there is a mill on  
fire; admirable. WOUVER-  
MANS.

A Vanderwerf.

A Metzù.

A sketch of Rubens; Christ carrying  
the Cross. RUBENS.

A Bega, and a Polemburg.

A figure in white sattin, by Terburg.

A Landscape, by Paul Potter; the  
animals admirably painted, the trees too  
much like wire. PAUL  
POTTER.

A Du Jardin.

AMSTER-  
DAM.

## AMSTERDAM.—THE STADTHOUSE.

VANDER  
HELST.

THE best picture in this house is painted by Vander Helst. It represents a company of trained bands, about thirty figures, whole-length; among which the Spanish Ambassador is introduced shaking hands with one of the principal figures. This is perhaps the first picture, of portraits, in the world, comprehending more of those qualities which make a perfect portrait, than any other I have ever seen: they are correctly drawn, both head and figures, and well coloured; and have great variety of action, characters and countenances, and those so lively and truly expressing what they are about, that the spectator has nothing to wish for. Of this picture I had before heard great commendations; but it as far exceeded my expectation, as that of Rembrandt fell below it. So far indeed am I from thinking that this last picture deserves its great reputation, that it was with difficulty I could persuade myself that it was painted by

Rembrandt: it seemed to me to have more of the yellow manner of Boll. The name of Rembrandt, however, is certainly upon it, with the date, 1642. It appears to have been much damaged, but what remains seems to be painted in a poor manner. There are here many more large pictures of the same kind, with thirty or forty heads in each; they are as old as the time of Holbein, in his manner, and many of them nearly as well painted. I wished to learn the names of the artists, as they are doubtless the works of painters well known in the history of the art; but I could get no information.

A Frize over one of the doors in chiaro oscuro, by De Witt, is not only one of the best deceptions I have seen, but the boys are well drawn; the cieling and side of the room in colours are likewise by him, but a poor performance. The academy of painting is a part of this immense building: in it are two admirable pictures, composed entirely of por-

AMSTER- traits: one by Rembrandt, and the other  
 DAM  
 REM- by Bartholomew Vander Helst. That of  
 BRANDT. Rembrandt contains six men dressed in  
 VANDER  
 HELST. black; one of them who has a book  
 before him, appears to have been reading  
 a lecture; the top of the table not seen.  
 The heads are finely painted, but not  
 superior to those of his neighbour. The  
 subject of Vander Helst is the society of  
 archers bestowing a premium: they  
 appear to be investing some person with  
 an order. The date on this is 1657; on  
 the Rembrandt 1661.

#### THE WHARF OFFICE.

VANDER- AT the office of the Commissary of  
 VELDE. the Wharfs is one of Vandervelde's most  
 capital pictures: it is about twelve feet  
 long; a view of the Port of Amsterdam,  
 with an infinite quantity of shipping.

#### SURGEONS' HALL.

REM- THE Professor Tulpius dissecting a  
 BRANDT. corpse which lies on the table, by Rem-  
 brandt. To avoid making it an object  
 disagreeable to look at, the figure is

but just cut at the wrist. There are AMSTER-  
DAM. seven other portraits coloured like nature itself, fresh and highly finished. One of the figures behind has a paper in his hand, on which are written the names of the rest: Rembrandt has also added his own name, with the date, 1672. The dead body is perfectly well drawn, (a little fore-shortened,) and seems to have been just washed. Nothing can be more truly the colour of dead flesh. The legs and feet, which are nearest the eye, are in shadow: the principal light, which is on the body, is by that means preserved of a compact form. All these figures are dressed in black,

Above stairs is another Rembrandt, of the same kind of subject; Professor REM-  
BRANDT. Deeman standing by a dead body, which is so much foreshortened, that the hands and the feet almost touch each other: the dead man lies on his back with his feet towards the spectator. There is something sublime in the character of the head, which reminds one of Michael

AMSTER- Angelo; the whole is finely painted, the  
DAM. colouring much like Titian.

THE CABINET OF MR. HOPE.

HONDER- Two swans, ducks, and peacocks;  
HOOTER. admirable.

I. STEEN. Merry making, two of the figures  
dancing.

WEENINX. A dead swan, and dead hare; perfect  
WEENINX. every way: beyond Hondecooter.

An excellent Vanderheyden.

A Du Jardin; like Potter, but better  
than that which hangs below it.

Two little beautiful Vanderveldes.

A Rothenamer.

OSTADE. Three figures, very natural: by  
Ostade.

GERARD A woman asleep; a figure tickling  
DOW. her nose; a man lighting his pipe; a  
lantern, and a woman with a candle,  
behind.

The Virgin in the clouds, surrounded with angels, by Vandyck. AMSTER-  
DAM.  
VANDYCK.

Cattle and a shepherd, by Albert Cuyt, the best I ever saw of him; and the figure is likewise better than usual: but the employment which he has given the shepherd in his solitude is not very poetical: it must, however, be allowed to be truth and nature; he is catching fleas or something worse. ALBERT  
CUYT.

A Vandervelde. VANDER-  
VELDE.

A Terburg. A lady playing on a guitar, dressed as usual in a white sattin petticoat, and a red gown edged with ermine. TERBURG.

A Wouvermans.—A Gabriel Metz. —A Berghem.—A Metz.

Dead game, small, by P. Gyzen; highly finished, and well coloured. GYZEN.

A Wouvermans, the best I ever saw. A gentleman and lady on horseback; he has an umbrella in his hand, and he WOUVER-  
MANS.



**AMSTER-  
DAM.** is talking to another horseman who has his hat off: a man before them playing on a bagpipe, followed by a man and woman dancing: behind at a distance, other figures dancing to another musician, who stands elevated against a great tree.

**A. VAN-  
DERVELDE** A Landscape by Adrian Vandervelde; very fine.

**VANDER  
HEYDEN.** A View of a church by Vander Heyden, his best; two black friars going up steps. Notwithstanding this picture is finished as usual very minutely, he has not forgot to preserve at the same time a great breadth of light. His pictures have very much the effect of nature, seen in a camera obscura.

The inside of the great church at Antwerp, by Peter Neefs.

**A. VAN-  
DERVELDE** A Landscape by Adrian Vandervelde; the outside of a garden: the highest and most successfully finished picture that perhaps there is in the world, of this painter; it is beautifully coloured, and

has vast force. The cattle are finely drawn, and in very difficult attitudes. AMSTER-  
DAM.


A view of Campo Vaccino, by Lingebach. LINGLE-  
BACH.

The death of Cleopatra, by Lairesse. LAIRESSE.  
Her figure is well drawn, and in an attitude of great grace; but the style is degraded by the naturalness of the white sattin, which is thrown over her. A woman lies dead at the feet of the bed. This picture is as highly finished as a Vanderwerf, but in a much better style, excepting the drapery, which is not equal to Vanderwerf. Vanderwerf painted what may be truly called drapery; this of Lairesse is not drapery, it is white sattin.

A dead stag, by Weenix. WEENIX.

An oyster-feast by J. Steen, in which is introduced an excellent figure of old Mieris, standing with his hands behind him. J. STEEN.

A woman reading a letter; the milk-woman who brought it, is in the mean METZU.

AMSTER-  
DAM.  time drawing a curtain a little on one side, in order to see the picture under it, which appears to be a sea-view.

BACK-  
HUYSEN. A large and capital picture of Backhuysen.

VANDER-  
WERF. Three pictures of Vanderwerf; a Magdalen, Lot and his daughters, Christ and St. Thomas. The drapery of St. Thomas is excellent; the folds long continued unite with each other, and are varied with great art.

G. Dow. A woman at a window with a hare in her hand; bright colouring, and well drawn: a dead cock, cabbage, and carrots, lying before her. The name of Gerard Dow is written on the lantern which hangs on one side. The space under the window is filled with the bas-relief of boys with a goat, which he so often painted, after Fiamingo. This part is at least equally well painted with the figure.

MIERIS. An old man by Mieris, with a glass of wine and shrimps on the table: a

woman behind, scoring the reckoning, AMSTER-  
DAM.  
a fiddle lying in the window.

Christ asleep in the storm, by Rem- REM-  
BRANDT.  
brandt. In this picture there is a great effect of light, but it is carried to a degree of affectation.

The Assumption of the Virgin, by VANDYCK.  
Vandyck; a faint picture, at least it appears so in comparison of those contiguous: it unluckily hangs near a Rembrandt. She is surrounded by little angels; one of them is peeping archly at you under a bundle of drapery, with which he has covered himself: this comicalness is a little out of its place. There is a print by Vorsterman.

#### THE CABINET OF M. GART.

THIS house is full of pictures, from the parlour to the upper story. We begin at the top.

Two fine pictures of Terburg; the TERBURG  
white sattin remarkably well painted.

**AMSTER-**  
**DAM.** He seldom omitted to introduce a piece  
of white sattin in his pictures. As I  
reprobated the white sattin in the picture  
of the death of Cleopatra by Lairesse,  
and make no objection here, it must be  
remembered that the subject of Lairesse's  
picture is heroick, and he has treated  
it in the true historical style, in every  
respect, except in his white sattin; but  
in such pictures as Terburg painted, the  
individuality and naturalness of the re-  
presentation makes a considerable part of  
the merit.

**WEENINX.** Dead swans by Weenix, as fine as  
possible. I suppose we did not see less  
than twenty pictures of dead swans by  
this painter.

**WOUVER-**  
**MANS.** A Harvest, by Wouvermans.

**VANDER-**  
**HEYDEN.** A Canal, by Vanderheyden, highly  
finished, and finely coloured.

**J. STEEN.** Snick and Snee, by Jan Steen.

A butcher's shop, an ox hanging up, opened, by Rembrandt: a woman looking over a hatch, so richly coloured, that it makes all the rest of the pictures seem dry.

The pillaging of a village by Turks, a soldier driving off the cattle; well composed and finely coloured.

A trumpeter at a window, by G. G. Dow; his face in shadow; his hand receives the principal light: admirably drawn and coloured.

St. Peter and St. Paul curing the lame man, by Eeckhout. Some parts of this picture are so exactly like Rembrandt, that a connoisseur might without disgrace at first sight mistake it for his.

An old woman with a large book before her, looking up at a bird in a cage, by Metz: one of the best of this master.

Travellers resting on the road, their

AMSTER- galled horses grazing by them: a Wou-  
DAM.  
vermans.

HONDE- Two Hondekoeters.  
KOETER.

VANDER- A conversation of portraits, by Van-  
HELST.  
derhelst.

VANDER- Cattle, by Adrian Vandervelde.  
VELDE.

JORDAENS. Bacchanalians, by Jordaens.

J. STEEN. Drinking and Gaming, by J. Steen,  
a large composition of about twenty  
figures, well drawn and coloured: one  
of the women who has thrown her leg  
over a bagpipe-player, has a great degree  
of beauty.

TENIERS. Two Teniers; guard-rooms.

A Paul Potter.

Another Jan Steen.

VAN DE Still-life, by Van de Hende, a won-  
HENDE.  
derful instance of patience in finishing,  
particularly a globe, on which is seen  
the map of Europe.

Flowers, by V. Huysum.

FLANDERS AND HOLLAND.

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A Bamboccio.

AMSTER-  
DAM.

An admirable portrait by Rubens.

A portrait, by Frank Hals.

A portrait, by Rembrandt.

THE CABINET OF MR. LE BRUN.

DEAD hare, &c. by Weenix.

Tobias taking leave of his father; his  
mother with a spinning-wheel.

VICTOR,  
*school of*  
RUBENS.

A fresh gale, by Everdingen; like  
Backhuysen, but the light mellow.

EVER-  
DINGEN.

A woman pouring milk from one  
vessel to another: by D. Vandermeere.

D: VAN-  
DERMEERE

Cattle, by Vander Does; admirable,  
with great facility.

VANDER  
DOES.

A nativity, by Polemberg.

POLEM-  
BERG.

A Linglebach, a Vanderheyden, and  
a Crabache.

A group of ships, by Vandervelde; a  
calm: admirable.

VANDER-  
VELDE.

Flower-pieces, by Rachael Roos.

RACHAEL  
ROSS.



AMSTER-  
DAM.BERKHEY-  
DEN.

A view of a country house, by Berkheyden : a little harder than Vanderheyden.

C. MA-  
SATTI.

St. John writing the Apocalypse ; two boy angels ; the Virgin in the clouds. It is a rare instance to see an Italian picture here.

TERBURG.

Portraits of Terburg and his wife, small whole-lengths.

J. STEEN.

A woman with a child sucking, a boy beating a drum ; behind, figures drinking : over a door is written—SALUS PATRIÆ, with Jan Steen's name in gold letters. There is great force in this picture.

WOUVER-  
MANS.

The pillaging of a village by Wouvermans.

P. HOOGT.

Inside of a room, with a woman and child. Its companion, a woman sweeping.

THE account which has now been given of the Dutch pictures is, I confess, more barren of entertainment, than I expected. One would wish to be able to convey to the reader some idea of that excellence, the sight of which has afforded so much pleasure: but as their merit often consists in the truth of representation alone, whatever praise they deserve, whatever pleasure they give when under the eye, they make but a poor figure in description. It is to the eye only that the works of this school are addressed; it is not therefore to be wondered at, that what was intended solely for the gratification of one sense, succeeds but ill, when applied to another.

DUTCH  
SCHOOL.

A market-woman with a hare in her hand, a man blowing a trumpet, or a boy blowing bubbles, a view of the inside or outside of a church, are the subjects of some of their most valuable pictures; but there is still entertain-

DUTCH  
SCHOOL.
}
 ment, even in such pictures : however uninteresting their subjects, there is some pleasure in the contemplation of the truth of the imitation. But to a painter they afford likewise instruction in his profession ; here he may learn the art of colouring and composition, a skilful management of light and shade, and indeed all the mechanical parts of the art, as well as in any other school whatever. The same skill which is practised by Rubens and Titian in their large works, is here exhibited, though on a smaller scale. Painters should go to the Dutch school to learn the art of painting, as they would go to a grammar school to learn languages. They must go to Italy to learn the higher branches of knowledge.

We must be contented to make up our idea of perfection from the excellencies which are dispersed over the world. A poetical imagination, expression, character, or even correctness of drawing, are seldom united with that

power of colouring, which would set off those excellencies to the best advantage: and in this, perhaps, no school ever excelled the Dutch. An artist, by a close examination of their works, may in a few hours make himself master of the principles on which they wrought, which cost them whole ages, and perhaps the experience of a succession of ages, to ascertain.

The most considerable of the Dutch school are, Rembrandt, Teniers, Jan Steen, Ostade, Brouwer, Gerard Dow, Mieris, Metzsu, and Terburg: these excel in small conversations. For landscapes and cattle, Wouvermans, P. Potter, Berchem, and Ruysdaal; and for buildings, Vanderheyden. For sea-views, W. Vandervelde, jun. and Backhuysen. For dead-game, Weenix and Hondekoeter. For flowers, De Heem, Vanhuysum, Rachael Roos, and Brueghel. These make the bulk of the Dutch school.

DUTCH  
SCHOOVL.

I consider those painters as belonging to this school, who painted only small conversations, landscapes, &c. Though some of those were born in Flanders, their works are principally found in Holland: and to separate them from the Flemish school, which generally painted figures large as life, it appears to me more reasonable to class them with the Dutch painters, and to distinguish those two schools rather by their style and manner, than by the place where the artist happened to be born.

Rembrandt may be considered as belonging to both or either, as he painted both large and small pictures.

The works of David Teniers, jun. are worthy the closest attention of a painter, who desires to excel in the mechanical knowledge of his art. His manner of touching, or what we call handling, has perhaps never been equalled: there is in his pictures that

exact mixture of softness and sharpness, which is difficult to execute. DUTCH  
SCHOOL.

Jan Steen has a strong manly style of painting, which might become even the design of Raffaele, and he has shewn the greatest skill in composition, and management of light and shadow. as well as great truth in the expression and character of his figures.

The landscapes of Ruysdaal have not only great force, but have a freshness which is seen in scarce any other painter. What excellence in colouring and handling is to be found in the dead game of Weenix,

A clearness and brilliancy of colouring may be learned by examining the flower-pieces of De Heem, Huysum, and Mignon; and a short time employed in painting flowers would make no improper part of a painter's study. Rubens's pictures strongly remind one of a nosegay of flowers, where all the

DUTCH  
SCHOOL. } colours are bright, clear, and trans-  
parent.

I have only to add, that in this account of the Dutch pictures, which is indeed little more than a catalogue, I have mentioned only those which I considered worthy of attention. It is not to be supposed that those are the whole of the Cabinets described: perhaps in a collection of near a hundred pictures, not ten are set down: their being mentioned at all, therefore, though no epithet may be added, implies excellence.

I have been more particular in the account of Mr. Hope's Cabinet, not only because it is acknowledged to be the first in Amsterdam, but because I had an opportunity (by the particular attention and civility of its possessors) of seeing it oftener, and considering it more at my leisure, than any other collection.

## DUSSELDORP GALLERY.

DUSSEL-  
DORP.  


THIS gallery is under the care of Mr. Lambert Kraye, who likewise is the director of the Academy.

The easy access which you have to this collection of pictures, seeing it is as often, and staying in it as long as you please, without appearing to incommode any body, cannot but be very pleasing to strangers, and very advantageous to the students in painting, who seem to have the same indulgence; for we found many copying in the gallery, and others in a large room above stairs, which is allotted for that purpose. I could not help expressing to Mr. Kraye the pleasure I felt, not only at the great conveniency with which I saw the gallery, but likewise at the great indulgence granted to the students. He said it was the Elector's wish to afford the most perfect accommodation to those who visit the collection: but in regard to the students, he took some credit to himself



DUSSEL-  
DORF.

in procuring for them that advantage. When he first asked the Elector's leave for students to copy the pictures in the gallery, the Prince refused; and the reason he assigned was, that those copies afterwards would be sold for originals, and thus, by multiplying, depreciate the value of the collection. Mr. Kraye answered, that those who could make such copies were not persons who spent their time in copying at all, but made originals of their own invention; that the young students were not likely to make such copies as would pass for originals with any but the ignorant; and that the mistakes of the ignorant were not worth attention; he added, that as his Highness wished to produce artists in his own country, the refusing such advantages to young students would be as unwise, as if a patron of learning, who wished to produce scholars, should refuse them the use of a library. The Elector acquiesced, and desired him to do whatever he thought would contribute to advance the art.

## FIRST ROOM.

The first picture which strikes the eye JORDAENS, on entering the gallery, is a Merry-making of Jordaens, which is by far the best picture I ever saw of his hand. There is a glow of colours throughout, and vast force; every head and every part perfectly well drawn: vulgar, tumultuous merriment was never better expressed; and for colouring and strength, few pictures of Rubens are superiour. There is a little grey about the women's dress; the rest are all warm colours, and strong shades.

Four whole-length pictures by Van-VANDYCK. dyck, all dressed in black; three men and one woman. They are all fine portraits, in his high-finished manner.

Christ with a cross, receiving the VANDYCK. four penitents, Mary Magdalen, Peter, David, and the penitent thief. This picture does no great honour to Vandyck; the head of the Magdalen is badly

DUSSEL-  
DORF. drawn, and David is but a poor character: he looks as much like a thief, as the thief here represented: the naked arm of Christ is badly drawn; the outline quick and short, not flowing: the only excellence which this picture possesses is the general effect, proceeding from the harmony of colouring.

CASP. DE  
CRAYER. Here is an immense picture of Gaspar de Crayer, mentioned not on account of its excellence in my own opinion, but from its being in such high estimation in this country; and it is certainly one of his largest works. Though it cannot be said to be defective in drawing or colouring, yet it is far from being a striking picture. There is no union between his figures and the ground; the outline is every where seen, which takes away the softness and richness of effect: the men are insipid characters, and the women want beauty. The composition is something on the plan of the great picture of Rubens in the St. Augustins at Antwerp: that is, the subject is of

the same kind, but there is a great difference indeed in their degree of merit. DUSSELDORP.

The dead and cold effect of this picture, as well as many others of modern masters in this gallery, sets off those of Rubens to great advantage. It would be a profitable study for a young painter to look from those pictures to Rubens, and compare them again and again, till he has investigated and fixed in his mind the cause and principles of such brilliant effects in one instance, and of failure (when there is failure) in the other.

Dead game, boar and stag-hunting, SNYDERS, DE VOS, FYTT, WEENINX. by Snyder, De Vos, Fytt, and Weenix: the Weenix is the most remarkably excellent.

“Take up thy bed and walk,” by VANDYCK. Vandyck, in the manner of Rubens. This picture appears to be painted about the time when he did that of the four penitents; it has the same defects and the same beauties.—A print by Pontius.

DUSSEL-  
DORP.  
VALEN-  
TINE. Soldiers playing at Moro; a duplicate  
of one in the gallery of the Duke of  
Rutland.

VANDYCK. A pieta, by Vandyck, in the manner  
of Rubens. Mr. Kraye is of opinion,  
that it is painted by Rubens: this dif-  
ference of opinion among connoisseurs  
shews sufficiently how much the first  
manner of Vandyck was like that of  
Rubens. He is almost the only instance  
of a successful imitation: however, he  
afterwards had a manner of his own.

St. John is blubbering in a very un-  
gracious manner. The attitude of the  
Christ would be admirable, if the head  
had not so squalid an appearance. The  
whole figure of Christ is equally light,  
which, with the help of the white linen  
on the Virgin's knee, makes a large  
mass of light: her head and the head of  
Mary Magdalen make the lesser lights.  
St. John's drapery, which is a light red,  
makes the light lose itself by degrees in  
the ground.

DUSSEL-  
DORP.

## SECOND ROOM.

IN the next room are three admirable VANDYCK. pictures by Vandyck; St. Sebastian, Susanna, and a Pieta. The first two were done when he was very young, highly coloured, in the same manner as the Jupiter and Antiope at Mr. Dasch's at Antwerp, a picture on the same subject in the possession of Lord Coventry, his own portrait at the Duke of Grafton's and the portrait of Rubens in my possession: he never afterwards had so brilliant a manner of colouring; it kills every thing near it. Behind are figures on horseback, touched with great spirit. This is Vandyck's first manner, when he imitated Rubens and Titian, which supposes the sun in the room: in his pictures afterwards he represented the effects of common day-light: both were equally true to nature; but his first manner carries a superiority with it, and seizes our attention, whilst the pictures painted in his latter manner run a risk of being overlooked.

**DUSSEL.**  
**DORP.**  
The Pieta is also finely coloured,  
(though not of that splendid kind,) cor-  
rectly drawn, and finished with the  
utmost care and precision.

**VANDYCK.** There are likewise three other pictures  
of Vandyck in this room; one of them  
is the Virgin and Child, and St. John;  
the Virgin looking down on the St. John,  
who is presenting his label to Christ.  
The two others are small pictures; the  
assumption of St. Rosalia, and the Vir-  
gin presenting St. Rosalia to the Trinity:  
both very indifferent performances.

**VANDYCK.** Two whole-length portraits of ladies.  
Of that in black the colours are flown;  
her face is whiter than her linen.

**AMOROSO.** A girl sleeping on the grown, by  
Amoroso; simple, and natural.

**GERARD**  
**Dow.** But the picture which is most valued  
here, and which gives name to the room  
is the Gerard Dow; a Mountebank  
haranguing from his stage to figures of

different ages, but I cannot add—of DUSSEL-  
DORP. different characters; for there is in truth no character in the picture. It is very highly finished, but has nothing interesting in it. Gerard Dow himself is looking from a window with his palette and pencils in his hand. The heads have no character, nor are any circumstances of humour introduced. The only incident is a very dirty one, which every one must wish had been omitted; that of a woman clouting a child. The rest of the figures are standing round, without invention or novelty of any kind. This is supposed to be the largest composition that he ever made, his other works being little more than single figures; and it plainly appears that this was too much for him,—more than he knew how to manage. Even the accessories in the back-ground are ill managed and disproportioned; a stump of a tree is too small, and the weeds are too large; and both are introduced with as much formality as if they were principal ob-



**DUSSEL-DORP.** jects. Upon the whole the single figure of the woman holding a hare in Mr. Hope's collection, is worth more than this large picture, in which perhaps there is ten times the quantity of work.

### THIRD ROOM.

**BAROCCI.** NOLI ME TANGERE, of Barocci. The figures have not much grace; the Magdalen looks as if she was scratching her head; it is, however, finely coloured. There is a print of this picture.

**RAFFAELLE.** A holy family, of Raffaelle: Christ and St. John attending to each other, the Virgin sitting on the ground looking at Elizabeth; St. Joseph behind with both hands on his staff; which all together make a very regular pyramid. The Virgin is beautiful, as are likewise the children: indeed the whole is to be admired; but the colouring has a disagreeable yellow cast: it is in his first manner.

An immense picture of the Ascension of the Virgin, by Carlo Cignani; heavy and in no point excellent: a proper companion for the large picture of Gaspard de Crayer.

DUSSELDORF.

CARLO CIGNANI.

Susanna and the two Elders, by Domenichino. She is sitting at a fountain, the two Elders are behind a balustrade; her head is fine, as are those of the old men; but it is upon the whole but a poor barren composition. There is as much expression in the Susanna as perhaps can be given, preserving at the same time beauty; but the colour is inclinable to chalk, at least it appears so after looking at the warm splendid colours of Rubens: his full and rich composition makes this look cold and scanty. She is awkwardly placed by herself in the corner of the picture, which appears too large for the subject, the canvas not being sufficiently filled.

DOMENICHINO.

Here are many Luca Giordanos, which are composed in a picturesque manner;

LUCA GIORDANO.

DUSSEL-  
DORF. and some very ordinary pictures of Paolo  
PAOLO VE- Veronese.  
RONESE.

LUCA GI-  
ORDANO.

At the further end are two pictu-  
resque compositions of Luca Giordano,  
the feeding of the Multitude, and the  
Elevation of the Cross ; where he has  
disposed of a vast mob of people with  
great skill, in Tintoret's manner ; and  
if they had his, or rather Paul Vero-  
nese's colouring, these would be con-  
sidered as very extraordinary pictures ;  
but there is here a want of briskness and  
brilliancy of colour : a kind of clay  
colour seems to predominate in his pic-  
tures. When one looks at Luca Gior-  
dano, and sees a work well composed,  
well drawn, and with good keeping,  
one wonders how he has missed being  
a great name.

TINTORET

A crucifixion of Tintoret, with a  
great number of figures, but ill com-  
posed, and full of small spots of light :  
parts of this picture, however, are not  
ill painted.

A fine portrait of Vesalius the Anatomist when young, by Tintoret. He has a skirrous bone in his left hand, the other holds a compass : he looks at the spectator with a most penetrating eye. It is apparently the same countenance as the engraved portrait prefixed to his works, but much younger.

DUSSELDORF.  
TINTORET

Christ putting in the Sepulchre, by Annibal Caracci. This appears to have been one of his best works : it is finely drawn and composed ; and the Christ is in graceful attitudes.

A. CARACCI.

Under this picture is an ECCE HOMØ, a head only ; said to be of Correggio ; but apparently of Domenico Feti. It should seem by this mistake that there is a resemblance in the manner of Domenico Feti to that of Correggio ; what there is, which is very little, lies in the colouring ; there is something of a transparent and pearly tint of colour in this head, but the character is much inferior to Correggio : it is in heads or

DOMENICO FETI.

DUSSEL-  
DORF.

small parts of pictures, only, that perhaps some resemblance may be discovered; in the larger works of Domenico Feti nobody can be deceived.

CARLO  
DOLCI.


A Carlo Dolci; Madonna and Bambino with a lily. This is one of his best works: the expression of the Virgin is very beautiful; the Christ, which is a little figure at length, though not excellent, is still better than his children generally are.

LUCA  
GIORDANO.

Two portraits dressed in rags, like beggars, by Luca Giordano, in imitation of Spagnolet's manner; well-painted. They are said to be his own and his father's picture. I have seen a portrait by Caravaggio, painted by himself, in the same style: it is difficult to find out the wit or humour of this conceit of being drawn in the character of beggars.

C. PROCAC-  
CINI.

A holy-family by Camillo Procaccini, his best; finely coloured; the Christ's head admirable.

St. Jerome, said to be by Paul Veronese, but certainly by Giacomo Bassan. 

DUSSELDORP.  
GIACOMO  
BASSAN.

#### FOURTH ROOM.

THE most distinguished pictures in this room are the Vanderwerfs, which are twenty-four in number. Three of them are as large as life; a Magdalen, whole-length, and two portraits. The Magdalen was painted as a companion to the St. John of Raffaele, but it was not thought even by his friends and admirers that he had succeeded: however, he certainly has spared no pains; it is as smooth and as highly finished as his small pictures; but his defects are here magnified, and consequently more apparent. His pictures, whether great or small, certainly afford but little pleasure. Of their want of effect it is worth a painter's while to enquire into the cause. One of the principal causes appears to me, his having entertained an opinion that the light of a picture ought to be thrown solely on the figures, and little or none on the ground or sky. This

DUSSELDORF. gives great coldness to the effect, and is so contrary to nature and the practice of those painters with whose works he was surrounded, that we cannot help wondering how he fell into this mistake.

His naked figures appear to be of a much harder substance than flesh, though his outline is far from cutting, or the light not united with the shade, which are the most common causes of hardness; but it appears to me that in the present instance the hardness of manner proceeds from the softness and union being too general; the light being every-where equally lost in the ground or its shadow: for this is not expressing the true effect of flesh, the light of which is sometimes losing itself in the ground, and sometimes distinctly seen, according to the rising or sinking of the muscles: an attention to these variations is what gives the effect of suppleness, which is one of the characteristics of a good manner of colouring.

There is in nature a certain proportion of bluntness and sharpness: in the medium <sup>DUSSEL-  
DORF.</sup> between those two extremes, the true and perfect art of imitating consists. If the sharp predominate, it gives a dry manner; if the blunt predominate, it makes a manner equally removed from nature; it gives what painters call woolliness and heaviness, or that kind of hardness which is found in those pictures of Vanderwerf.

In describing Vanderwerf's manner, were I to say that all the parts everywhere melt into each other, it might naturally be supposed that the effect would be a high degree of softness; but it is notoriously the contrary, and I think for the reason that has been given: his flesh has the appearance of ivory, or plaister, or some other hard substance. What contributes likewise to give this hardness, is a want of transparency in this colouring, from his admitting little or no reflexions of light. He has also the defect which is often found in Rembrandt; that of making his light only a



**DUSSEL-**  
**DORF.** single spot. However to do him justice,  
his figures and his heads are generally well drawn, and his drapery is excellent; perhaps there are in his pictures as perfect examples of drapery as are to be found in any other painter's works whatever.

**REM-**  
**BRANDT.** There are likewise in this room eight Rembrandts; the chief merit of which consists in his peculiarity of manner,—of admitting but little light, and giving to that little a wonderful brilliancy. The colouring of Christ in the Elevation of the Cross, cannot be exceeded; it is exactly the tint of Vandyck's Susanna in the other room; but whether the ground of this picture has been re-painted, or the white horse, which was certainly intended to make the mass of light broader, has lost its brightness, at present the Christ makes a disagreeable string of light.

In reality here are too many Rembrandts brought together: his peculiarity does not come amiss, when mixed with the performances of other artists of more

regular manners; the variety then may <sup>DUSSELDORP.</sup> contribute to relieve the mind, fatigued with regularity.


The same may be said of the Vanderwerfs: they also are too numerous. These pictures, however, tire the spectator for reasons totally opposite to each other; the Rembrandts have too much salt, and the Vanderwerfs too much water, on neither of which we can live. These Rembrandts are now engraving by ———. The storm at Mr. Hope's seems to belong to this set.

A portrait of a Gentlemen by Titian, <sup>TITIAN.</sup> a Kitcat: one hand a-kembo, the hand itself not seen, only a bit of the ruffle; the other, the left, rests on what appears to be his sword; he is looking off. This portrait has a very pleasing countenance, but is not painted with much facility, nor is it at all mannered; the shadows are of no colour; the drapery being black, and the ground being very near as dark as it, prevents the arm a-kembo

**DUSSEL-DORF.** from having a bad effect. It is no small part of our art to know what to bring forward in the light, and what to throw into shade.

**FLINK.** The portraits of Flink and his wife, said to be of Rembrandt, but I think, from the yellow bad taste of colouring, that they are rather by Flink himself.

**JORDAENS.** The rest of the pictures in this room are but ordinary, if we except a picture by Jordaens, of the Satyr blowing hot and cold, which is equally well painted with the feast above mentioned. He ought never to have attempted higher subjects than satyrs, or animals, or men little above beasts; for he had no idea of grace or dignity of character; he makes therefore a wretched figure in grand subjects. He certainly however, understood very well the mechanical part of the art; his works are generally well coloured, and executed with great freedom of hand.

Over the door, the tribute-money, by DUSSEL-  
DORP.  
Pietro Genöese : the characters as usual,   
wretched ; particularly St. Peter. It is PIETRO  
GENÖESE.  
wonderful by what fatality this painter  
finds his way into great collections : he  
has no merit in drawing or colouring,  
that is by any means sufficient to com-  
pensate for the meanness and vulgarity  
of his ideas.

A Susanna and the two Elders, the VANDYCK.  
same as the Duke of Devonshire's : this  
likewise appears original.

A Virgin and child, and St. Joseph, PIETRO DA  
CORTONA.  
by Pietro da Cortona, painted in guazzo ;  
the child is of a red brick colour, and  
the whole wants harmony.

The Assumption of the Virgin, said GUIDO.  
to be by Guido, but it is undoubtedly a  
copy. It has that regularity of compo-  
sition, which is frequent with Guido :  
two large angels and two little angels on  
each side, and two cherubims, regularly  
placed in the middle, under the Virgin's

**DUSSEL-DORF.** feet.<sup>m</sup> This formality is certainly a defect  
 in Guido, however it might become  
 other painters who have adopted a style  
 of more dignity.

**POLYDOR.** The upper part of three sides of this  
 room are surrounded with a continued  
 picture in chiaro-oscuro, as large as life,  
 said to be by Polydore; but it is in the  
 wretched taste of Goltzius.

#### FIFTH ROOM.

**RUBENS.** THE fifth room is furnished almost  
 entirely with the works of Rubens. On  
 the right hand, Silenus with satyrs; one  
 of Rubens's highest coloured pictures,  
 but not superior to that on the same  
 subject at Blenheim. The composition  
 of this varies in many points; the naked  
 Bacchante is here omitted, and there is  
 an addition of a female satyr lying with  
 her children drunk on the ground.

**RUBENS.** The companion is, Diogenes with a  
 lantern, looking for an honest man,  
 among a multitude of insipid half-length

figures: this is not in Rubens's best manner of painting.

DUSSEL-  
DORP.



The nativity, with many angels; admirably composed: the nearest shepherd is particularly well drawn and coloured. One of the angels, who has her arms crossed on her breast, with curled hair, like the Antinous, seems to be copied from Parmigiano: it is much out of Rubens's common manner.

Boys by Rubens, playing with or carrying a festoon of fruit, painted by Snyder; some of the boys the same as those in the banquetting-house: it is one of Rubens's best pictures both for colouring and drawing; it is indeed soft and rich as flesh itself.

Though the flowers are painted with all that beauty of colour which is in nature, yet Rubens has preserved such brightness and clearness in his flesh, though in contact with those flowers, as perhaps no other painter could

**DUSSEL-DORP.** have done. This picture is now engraving by Mr. Schimdz, who is an excellent artist, and there is no doubt of the print's being well done; but more than half its merit must be lost for want of Rubens's colour, though some of the boys, particularly that lying on the ground, are extremely well drawn.

We now come to the last four pictures of Rubens which are in this gallery, and which make a considerable part of it. Two of these represent the Last Judgment, and the other two the expulsion of the rebel angels.

**RUBENS.** The largest of these four is the Last Judgment, which almost fills the end of the gallery. There is nothing very interesting in this picture: perhaps there is too great a quantity of flesh to have an agreeable effect. Three naked women, and a naked man, join together to make the great mass of light of the picture. One of the women, who is

looking out of the picture, has for DUSSEL-  
DORP. that reason the appearance of a portrait, and is said to be one of Rubens's wives; and a figure rising out of a grave, in the foreground, is said to be his own portrait; but certainly neither of these suppositions is well founded.

The next large picture is, Michael RUBENS. combating the Fallen Angels.—Michael is but an ungraceful figure; his red mantle has but a heavy appearance; it seems as if it were only laid in flat, to be afterwards finished. The picture has certainly suffered by cleaning: there wants upon the whole a solidity of effect.

The next is called the small Last RUBENS. Judgment. As in the large picture the blessed are the most conspicuous, here the damned make in a manner the subject of the composition: the blessed are faintly represented at a distance in the upper part of the picture, near Christ and the Virgin Mary. This



**DUSSE-  
DORF.** picture is far superior to the large one  
on the same subject in every respect.

**RUBENS.** But there is another picture of the Fallen Angels, of the same size as this, which even exceeds it. It is impossible to form an adequate idea of the powers of Rubens, without having seen this picture: he seems here to have given a loose to the most capricious imagination in the attitudes and invention of his fallen angels, who are tumbling one over the other, "*with hideous ruin and combustion, down to bottomless perdition.*"

If we consider the fruitfulness of invention which is discovered in this work, or the skill which is shewn in composing such an infinite number of figures, or the art of the distribution of the light and shadow, the freedom of hand, the facility with which it seems to be performed, and what is still more extraordinary, the correctness and admirable taste of drawing of figures.

fore-shortened, in attitudes the most DUSSEL-  
DORP. difficult to execute, we must pronounce this picture to be one of the greatest efforts of genius that ever the art has produced.

### RUBENS'S ROOM.

HERE are three large pictures; Laban reconciled to his brother, the Ascension of the Virgin and the Cloven Tongues, (both fine compositions,) and St. Lawrence, the same as the print; the colouring of the latter appears raw.

The Battle of the Amazons, (not much larger than the print,) painted in varnish. The woman who lies dead at the bottom, with her head downwards, is beautifully coloured, in the manner of the women in the picture of fallen angels; and though not of a correct form, has a grand free open outline. This appears to be painted at the same time of his life, that he painted the fall of the angels, which is in his best manner: it is a pity that the date is not

DUSSEL- known. Its companion is Sampson and  
 DORP.  
 Dalila.

A small picture of the fall of St. Paul, much in the same style as his own picture. The horse of St. Paul is in a remarkable fine attitude, and there is great spirit and bustle through the whole picture. Tameless or insipidity is not the character of Rubens: in whatever he employs his figures, they do their business with great energy.

RUBENS. A Madonna and Bambino, by Ru-  
 and  
 BRUE- bens, with flowers by Brueghel, and  
 GHIEL. eleven boy angels surrounding the gar-  
 land, who are beautifully coloured,  
 equally brilliant with the flowers.

A landscape with a double rainbow quite across the picture, very slight: the varnish seems to be off this picture likewise.

A finished small picture of the St. Christopher, the same as on the door

of the descent from the Cross at Ant-  
werp.

DUSSEL-  
DORP.

Rubens and his wife, when he was a young man, for his portrait here appears not above two or three and twenty: his wife is very handsome, and has an agreeable countenance. She is by much the best part of the picture, which is rather in a hard manner.—The linen is grey: he was at this period afraid of white.

Over the door is a portrait of a lady, whole-length, with her hand on a dog's head; a gentleman behind: a boy (her son) by her side, with a hawk, and a dwarf behind the dog. This is called Lord and Lady Arundel, but certainly does not contain their portraits. The arms on the curtain have a lion and unicorn for supporters, and the Garter as a label under.

On the right side is Castor and Pollux, with two horses carrying away two

DUSSEL-  
DORF.  
women: it is a fine piece of colouring,  
but the composition too artful.


Its companion is, Fame crowning Mars: the Fame is too red, as well as the rest of the picture.

Seneca dying, copied from the statue: it is much to be suspected that this picture was not painted by Rubens. The companion to this is, the four repentant sinners coming to Christ.

The Battle of Senacherib is the companion to the fall of St. Paul. In this picture there is a great repose of shadow in large masses; the figures and horses are full of animation.

About ten portraits by Rubens: the best are, De Ney, a priest, with a skull in his hand, and Dr. Van Tulden in black, holding in his hand a book shut.

Rubens's wife, a head; the same as that at Marlborough house.

Philip the fourth of Spain, and his DUSSEL-  
DORF.  
Queen. 

On one of the window-shutters, (if VANDYCK. they may be so called,) which open inwardly, on purpose to hang small pictures on them, and turn back like doors, so as to place the pictures on them, in any light, is a portrait, (three quarters,) by Vandyck; dressed in black, looking off, with part of his right hand appearing, which holds his cloak. It is as finely drawn as that which we saw at the Prince of Orange's gallery, in as perfect preservation, and of a brighter tint; more like the colouring of Rubens: it is finished, like enamel; the nose and eyes remarkably finely drawn, and delicately marked. Mr. Kraye told me that there was a print of this portrait by Sandrart, and that he was a worker in silver.

An ECCE HOMO on another window JOHANNES  
DE HEMIS-  
SEN.  
by Johannes de Hemissen, dated 1544: not mentioned for its excellence, but be-

**COLOGNE.** cause we see many pictures of his, and particularly his children, which are attributed in every collection to Lionardo da Vinci.

### COLOGNE.

**RUBENS.** ST. PETER crucified with his head downwards, by Rubens; painted a little time before his death. The body and head of the Saint are the only good parts in the picture, which is finely coloured, (broad light and shade,) and well drawn; but the figure bends too suddenly from the thighs, which are ill drawn, or rather in a bad taste of drawing; as is likewise his arm, which has a short interrupted outline. The action of the malefactors has not that energy which he usually gave to his figures. Rubens in his letter to Geldorp expresses his own approbation of this picture, which he says was the best he ever painted: he likewise expresses his content and happiness in the subject, as being picturesque: this is likewise natural to such a mind as that of Rubens,

who was perhaps too much looking <sup>COLOGNE.</sup> about him for the picturesque, or something uncommon. A man with his head downwards is certainly a more extraordinary object than in its natural place. Many parts of this picture are so feebly drawn, and with so tame a pencil, that I cannot help suspecting that Rubens died before he had completed it, and that it was finished by some of his scholars,

This picture is of great fame, I suppose <sup>WEENINX.</sup> from the letter of Rubens, where he says, it was or would be his best work. We went from Dusseldorp to Cologne on purpose to see it ; but it by no means recompenced us for our journey. From Cologne we made an excursion to Bernsburgh, a hunting-seat of the Elector Palatine, which we found very different from what we had been taught to expect. The three rooms painted by Weenix, however excellent in their kind, are not better, nor even so good as what we had seen before of his hand, in



BERNS-  
BURGH.

the gallery of Dusseldorp. His figures as large as life, which he is fond of introducing, are very indifferent, if not bad. His dead game certainly cannot be too much admired; but a sample is enough: here is too much of it. His portraits are such as no one would hang up in his house, if they were not accompanied with his birds and animals.

The Frescos on the walls and ceiling are by Belluci Pellegrino, and other late painters, not worth a minute's attention. We saw a picture of the Slaughter of the Innocents, by old Brueghel, the same as one I had seen before in some part of Holland; and I have another myself. This painter was totally ignorant of all the mechanical art of making a picture; but there is here a great quantity of thinking, a representation of variety of distress, enough for twenty modern pictures. In this respect he is like Donne, as distinguished from the modern versifiers, who carrying no weight of thought, easily fall into that false gallop

of verses which Shakspeare ridicules in COLOGNE.  
“As you like it.”

There is the same difference between the old portraits of Albert Durer or Holbein, and those of the modern painters: the moderns have certainly the advantage in facility, but there is a truth in the old painters, though expressed in a hard manner, that gives them a superiority.

At Cologne, in the possession of one LE BRUN. of the family of Jabac, is the famous picture, by Le Brun, containing the portrait of Jabac, his wife, and four children\*. It is much superior to what I could conceive Le Brun capable of doing in the Portrait style. She is sitting on his left hand, with four children about her, and a greyhound, equally correct and well painted with the rest. Jabac himself is much in shadow, except the

\* This picture is now (1797) in the collection of Mr. Hope, late of Amsterdam. M.

**COLOGNE.** face. Le Brun is represented by his picture on a canvas which is placed on an easel: before him lie prints, drawings, port-crayons, and a large gold bust of Alexander. The portraits are equal to the best of Vandyck; but there is a heaviness in the effect of the picture, which Vandyck never had, and this is its only defect.

#### AT AIX LA CHAPELLE,

**RUBENS.** in the church of the Capuchins is the Adorations of the Shepherds, by Rubens: it appears to be much damaged, but it never was a very striking picture.— There is a print of it by ——. A Shepherdess, not a very poetical one, is making an offering of an hen's egg to the Virgin, having already given three eggs, which lie by the infant Christ, who is sucking the Virgin: neither of them take any notice of the shepherdess: if the Virgin may be said to be looking at any thing, it is at the egg in the woman's hand. A shepherd with his hand to his hat, as if going to pull it off, appears to

be well painted; and the ox is admirably well done. LIEGE.

St. Francis receiving the *stimata*, seems likewise to be by Rubens, but is not much to be admired.

### LIEGE.

IN the great church is the Ascension of the Virgin, by Lairesse. Parts of this picture are well painted, but it has no effect upon the whole, from the want of large masses. His manner is not open, and appears too restrained for large pictures. The same defect is observable in pictures of Poussin, where the figures are as large as life, and in those of Vanderwerf. We are creatures of habit, and a painter cannot change his habits suddenly; he cannot, like the fallen angels of Milton, increase or diminish at pleasure.

LOUVAIN.

## LOUVAIN

RUBENS. AUX DAMES BLANCHES,—The Adoration of the Magi, by Rubens; a slight performance. The Virgin holds the Infant but awkwardly, appearing to pinch the thigh. This picture is said to have been painted in eight days, and he was paid for it 800 florins; about 80l. English.—A print by Lauvers. The Virgin and Christ, and the principal of the Magi, are much the same as in my sketch, except that he kneels instead of standing.

In the church of St. Pierre are some pictures of the old masters; one said to be of Quintin Matsys; another, about the same age, representing some Saint, who appears to refuse a mitre, which is placed before him; a composition of near an hundred figures, many in good attitudes, natural and well invented. It is much more entertaining to look at the works of these old masters, than slight

common-place pictures of many modern painters.

CHARAC-  
TER OF  
RUBENS.

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### CHARACTER OF RUBENS.

THE works of men of genius alone, where great faults are united with great beauties, afford proper matter for criticism.—Genius is always eccentric, bold, and daring; which, at the same time that it commands attention, is sure to provoke criticism. It is the regular, cold, and timid composer, who escapes censure, and deserves no praise.

The elevated situation on which Rubens stands in the esteem of the world is alone a sufficient reason for some examination of his pretensions.

His fame is extended over a great part of the Continent, without a rival; and it may be justly said that he has enriched his country, not in a figurative sense only, by the great examples of art

CHARAC-  
TER OF  
RUBENS. } which he left, but by what some would  
think a more solid advantage, the wealth  
arising from the concourse of strangers  
whom his works continually invite to  
Antwerp, which would otherwise have  
little to reward the visit of a con-  
noisseur.

To the city of Dusseldorp he has been an equal benefactor. The gallery of that city is considered as containing one of the greatest collections of pictures in the world; but if the works of Rubens were taken from it, I will venture to assert, that this great repository would be reduced to at least half its value.

To extend his glory still further, he gives to Paris one of its most striking features, the LUXEMBOURG GALLERY \*: and if to these we add the many

\* This was written before France had been disgraced, and plundered, and desolated, by the unparalleled atrocities of those sanguinary and ferocious savages, who for seven years past have deluged

towns, churches, and private cabinets, where a single picture of Rubens confers eminence, we cannot hesitate to place him in the first rank of illustrious painters.

CHARAC-  
TER OF  
RUBENS.

that country with blood; while they have waged war against every principle that binds man to man: against all the arts and all the elegancies of life; against beauty, virtue, law, social order, true liberty, religion, and even humanity itself. The collection of the Luxembourg gallery, representing Henry the Fourth, Mary of Medicis, and their children, with all the splendour of royalty, has without doubt long since fallen a sacrifice to their barbarous rage, and shared the same fate with the fine statue of that monarch, which formerly stood on the Pont Neuf, and which has been battered to pieces.—The other great collection of pictures, however, of which Paris formerly boasted, that of the PALAIS ROYAL, has not suffered among the numerous works of art which have been destroyed; having been fortunately saved from their merciless fangs by the necessities and precaution of the owner, the detestable author and fomenter of their iniquities; who, happily for the world, though most cruelly, basely, and unjustly, so far as regards the perpetrators of the act, was some time since worried and mangled by those hell-hounds which he let loose against mankind.—Previously to



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Though I still entertain the same general opinion both in regard to his excellencies and his defects, yet having now seen his greatest compositions, where he has more means of displaying those parts of his art in which he particularly excelled, my estimation of his genius is of course raised. It is only in large compositions that his powers seem to have room to expand themselves. They really increase in proportion to the size of the canvas on which they are to be displayed. His superiority is not seen in easel pictures, nor even in detached parts of his greater works ; which are seldom eminently beautiful. It does not lie in an attitude, or in any peculiar expression, but in the general effect, in the genius

his being murdered by his fellow-regicides, the Duke of Orleans contrived to dispose of the whole of his great collection, which was sent to England. The Flemish part of it was sold in London in the year 1793, and the pictures of the Italian school are safely preserved in the same metropolis. M.

which pervades and illuminates the whole.

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I remember to have observed in a picture of Diatreci, which I saw in a private cabinet at Brussels, the contrary effect. In that performance there appeared to be a total absence of this pervading genius; though every individual figure was correctly drawn, and to the action of each as careful an attention was paid, as if it were a set Academy figure. Here seemed to be nothing left to chance: all the nymphs (the subject was the Bath of Diana) were what the ladies call in attitudes: yet, without being able to censure it for incorrectness or any other defect, I thought it one of the coldest and most insipid pictures I ever beheld.

The works of Rubens have that peculiar property always attendant on genius, to attract attention, and enforce admiration in spite of all their faults. It is owing to this fascinating power that

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the performances of those painters with which he is surrounded, though they have perhaps fewer defects, yet appear spiritless, tame, and insipid; such as the altar-pieces of Crayer, Schut, Segers, Huysum, Tyssens, Van Balen, and the rest. They are done by men whose hands, and indeed all their faculties, appear to have been cramped and confined: and it is evident that every thing they did was the effect of great labour and pains. The productions of Rubens, on the contrary, seem to flow with a freedom and prodigality, as if they cost him nothing; and to the general animation of the composition there is always a correspondent spirit in the execution of the work. The striking brilliancy of his colours, and their lively opposition to each other, the flowing liberty and freedom of his outline, the animated pencil with which every object is touched, all contribute to awaken and keep alive the attention of the spectator; awaken in him, in some mea-

sure, correspondent sensations, and make him feel a degree of that enthusiasm with which the painter was carried away. To this we may add the complete uniformity in all the parts of the work, so that the whole seems to be conducted, and grow out of one mind; every thing is of a piece, and fits its place. Even his taste of drawing and of form appears to correspond better with his colouring and composition, than if he had adopted any other manner, though that manner, simply considered, might be better: it is here as in personal attractions; there is frequently found a certain agreement and correspondence in the whole together, which is often more captivating than mere regular beauty.

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Rubens appears to have had that confidence in himself, which it is necessary for every artist to assume, when he has finished his studies, and may venture in some measure to throw aside the fetters of authority; to con-

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Beside the excellency of Rubens in these general powers, he possessed the true art of imitating. He saw the objects of nature with a painter's eye; he saw at once the predominant feature by which every object is known and distinguished; and as soon as seen, it

was executed with a facility that is astonishing: and let me add, this facility is to a painter, when he closely examines a picture, a source of great pleasure. How far this excellence may be perceived or felt by those who are not painters, I know not: to them certainly it is not enough that objects be truly represented; they must likewise be represented with grace; which means here, that the work is done with facility, and without effort. Rubens was, perhaps, the greatest master in the mechanical part of the art, the best workman with his tools, that ever exercised a pencil.

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This part of the art, though it does not hold a rank with the powers of invention, of giving character and expression, has yet in it what may be called genius. It is certainly something that cannot be taught by words, though it may be learned by a frequent examination of those pictures which possess this excellence. It is felt by very few

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Painters ; and it is as rare at this time among the living Painters as any of the higher excellencies of the art.

This power, which Rubens possessed in the highest degree, enabled him to represent whatever he undertook better than any other painter. His animals, particularly lions and horses, are so admirable, that it may be said they were never properly represented but by him. His portraits rank with the best works of the Painters who have made that branch of the art the sole business of their lives ; and of those he has left a great variety of specimens. The same may be said of his landscapes ; and though Claude Lorrain finished more minutely, as becomes a Professor in any particular branch, yet there is such an airiness and facility in the landscapes of Rubens, that a Painter would as soon wish to be the author of them, as those of Claude, or any other artist whatever.

The pictures of Rubens have this

effect on the spectator, that he feels himself in no wise disposed to pick out and dwell on his defects. The criticisms which are made on him are indeed often unreasonable. His style ought no more to be blamed for not having the sublimity of Michael Angelo, than Ovid should be censured because he is not like Virgil.

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However, it must be acknowledged that he wanted many excellencies, which would have perfectly united with his style. Among those we may reckon beauty in his female characters: sometimes indeed they make approaches to it; they are healthy and comely women, but seldom, if ever, possess any degree of elegance: the same may be said of his young men and children: his old men have that sort of dignity which a bushy beard will confer; but he never possessed a poetical conception of character. In his representations of the highest characters in the christian or the fabulous world, instead of something above humanity, which might fill the



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idea which is conceived of such beings, the spectator finds little more than mere mortals, such as he meets with every day.

The incorrectness of Rubens in regard to his outline oftner proceeds from haste and carelessness, than from inability: there are in his great works, to which he seems to have paid more particular attention, naked figures as eminent for their drawing as for their colouring. He appears to have entertained a great abhorrence of the meagre dry manner of his predecessors, the old German and Flemish Painters; to avoid which, he kept his outline large and flowing: this, carried to an extreme, produced that heaviness which is so frequently found in his figures. Another defect of this great painter is his inattention to the foldings of his drapery, especially that of his women: it is scarcely ever cast with any choice or skill.

Carlo Maratti and Rubens are in this

respect in opposite extremes; one discovers too much art in the disposition of drapery, and the other too little. Rubens's drapery, besides, is not properly historical; the quality of the stuff of which it is composed, is too accurately distinguished; resembling the manner of Paul Veronese. This drapery is less offensive in Rubens than it would be in many other painters, as it partly contributes to that richness which is the peculiar character of his style, which we do not pretend to set forth as of the most simple and sublime kind.

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The difference of the manner of Rubens, from that of any other painter before him, is in nothing more distinguishable, than in his colouring, which is totally different from that of Titian, Correggio, or any of the great colourists. The effect of his pictures may be not improperly compared to clusters of flowers; all his colours appear as clear and as beautiful: at the same time he has avoided that tawdry effect which one

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It would be a curious and a profitable study for a painter to examine the difference and the cause of that difference of effect in the works of Correggio and Rubens, both excellent in different ways. The preference probably would be given according to the different habits of the connoisseur : those who had received their first impressions from the works of Rubens would censure Correggio as heavy ; and the admirers of Correggio would say Rubens wanted solidity of effect. There is lightness, airiness, and facility in Rubens, his advocates will urge, and comparatively a laborious heaviness in Correggio ; whose admirers will complain of Rubens's manner being careless and unfinished, whilst the works of Correggio are wrought to the highest

degree of delicacy : and what may be advanced in favour of Correggio's breadth of light will by his censurers be called affected and pedantick. It must be observed that we are speaking solely of the manner, the effect of the picture ; and we may conclude, according to the custom in pastoral poetry, by bestowing on each of these illustrious painters a garland, without attributing superiority to either.

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To conclude ; I will venture to repeat in favour of Rubens, what I have before said in regard to the Dutch school,—that those who cannot see the extraordinary merit of this great painter, either have a narrow conception of the variety of art, or are led away by the affectation of approving nothing but what comes from the Italian school.

