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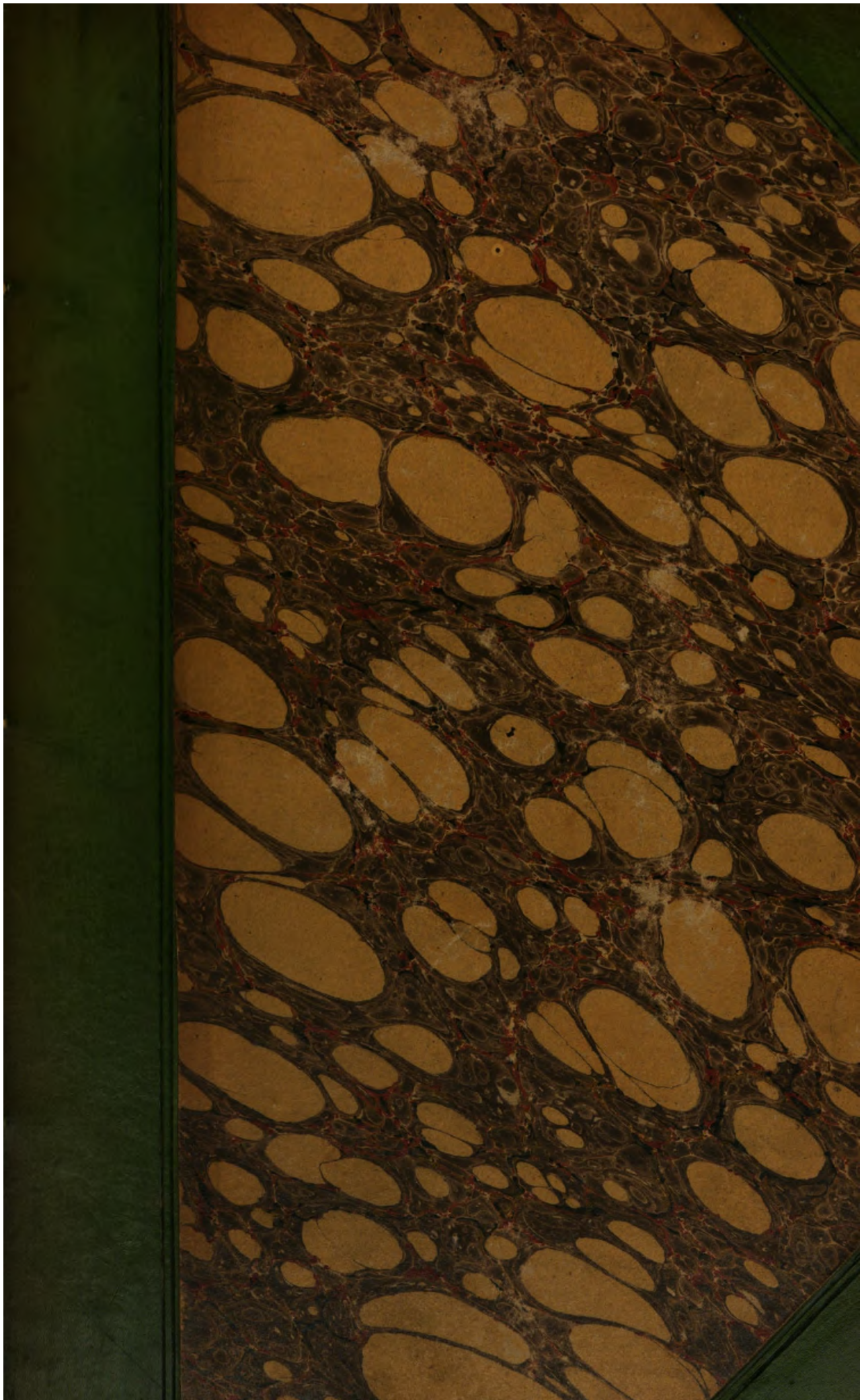
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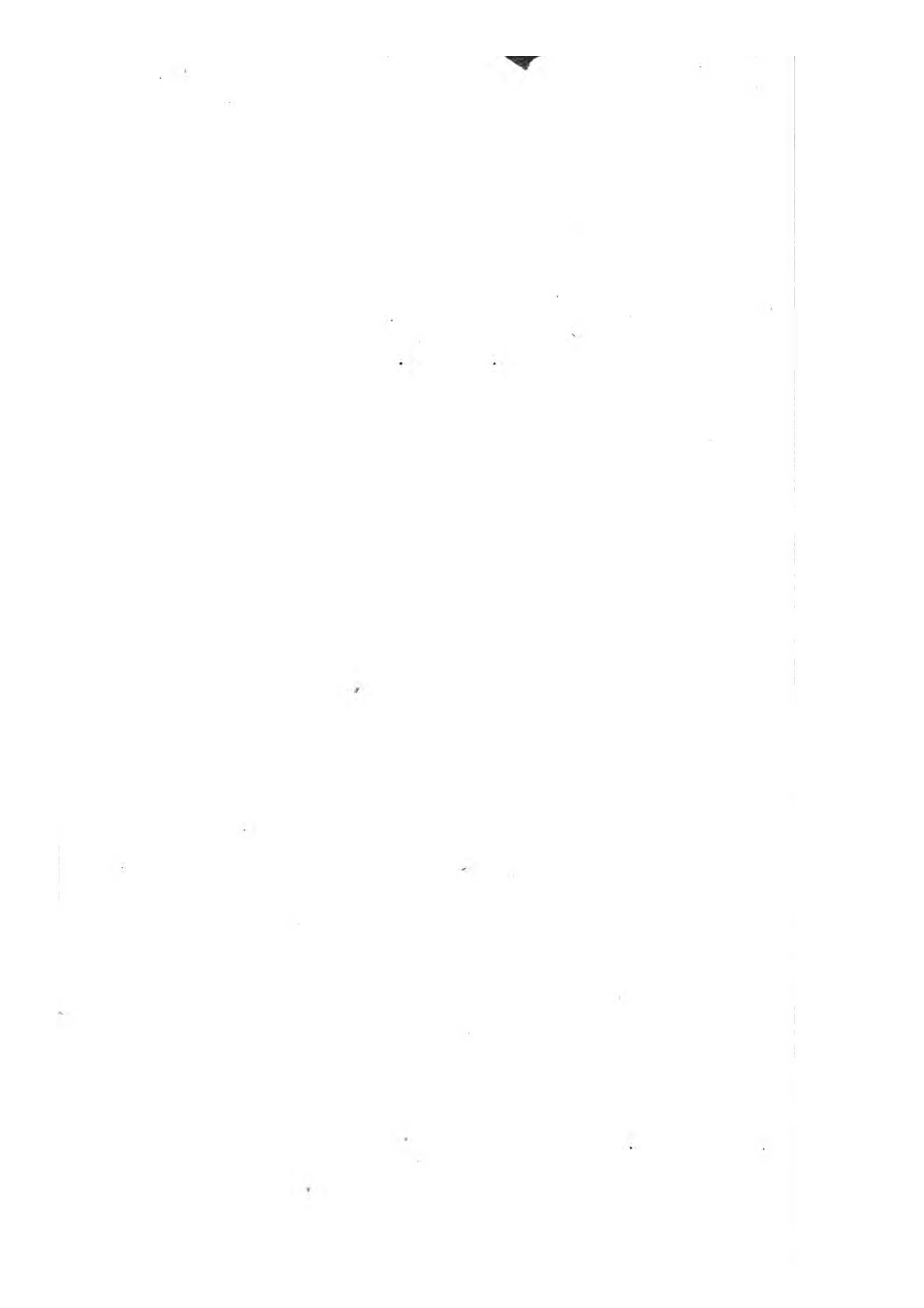
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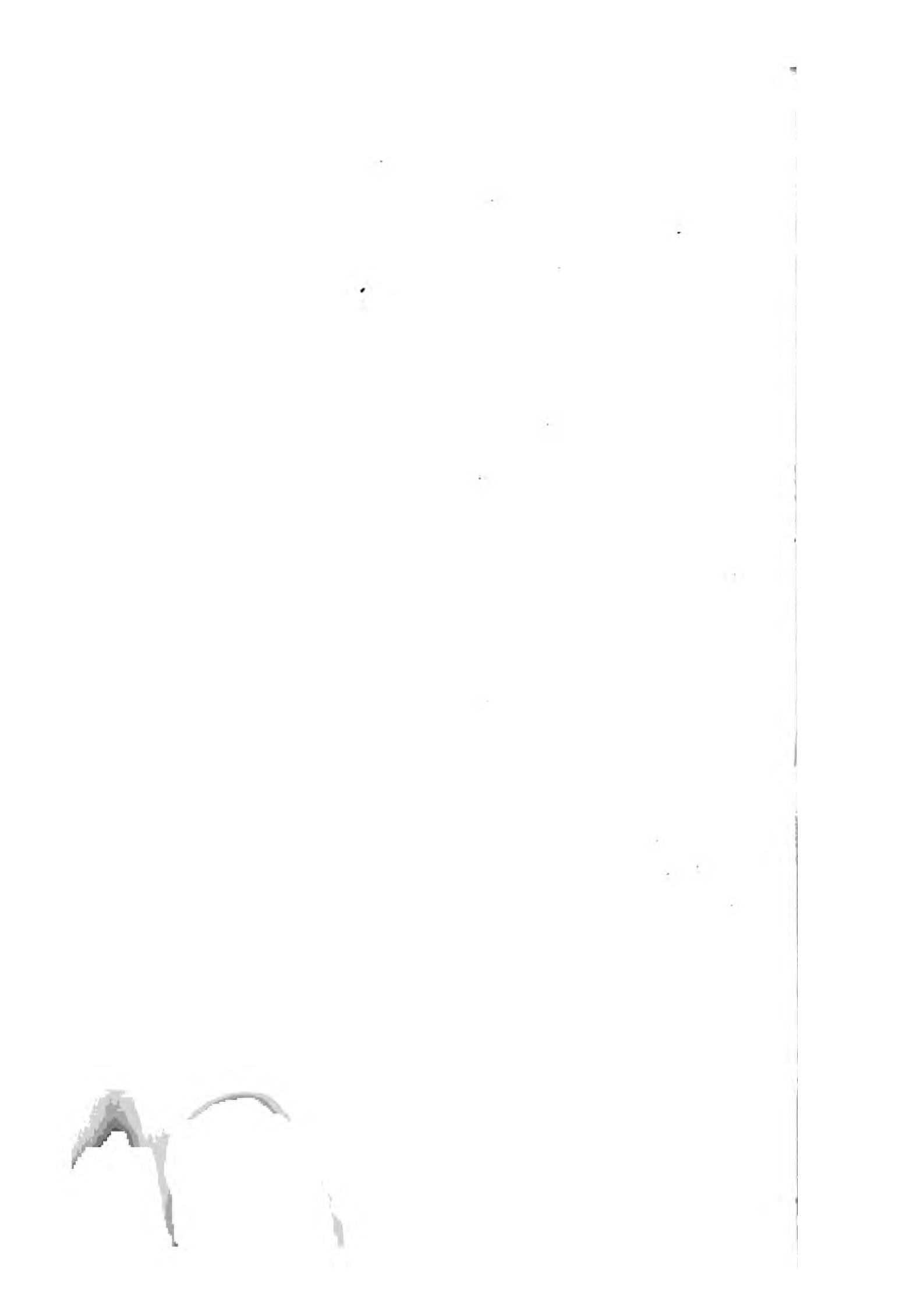
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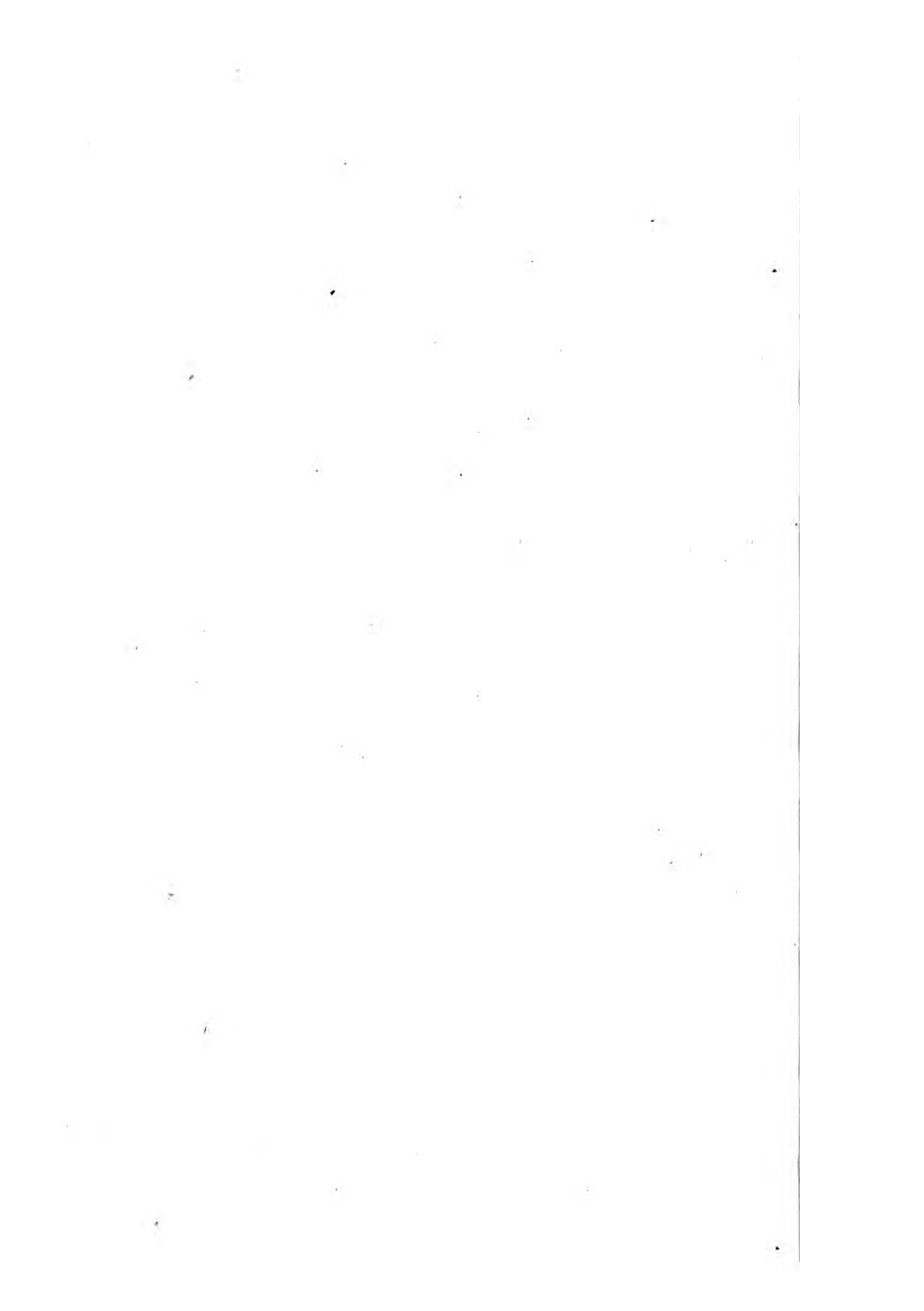


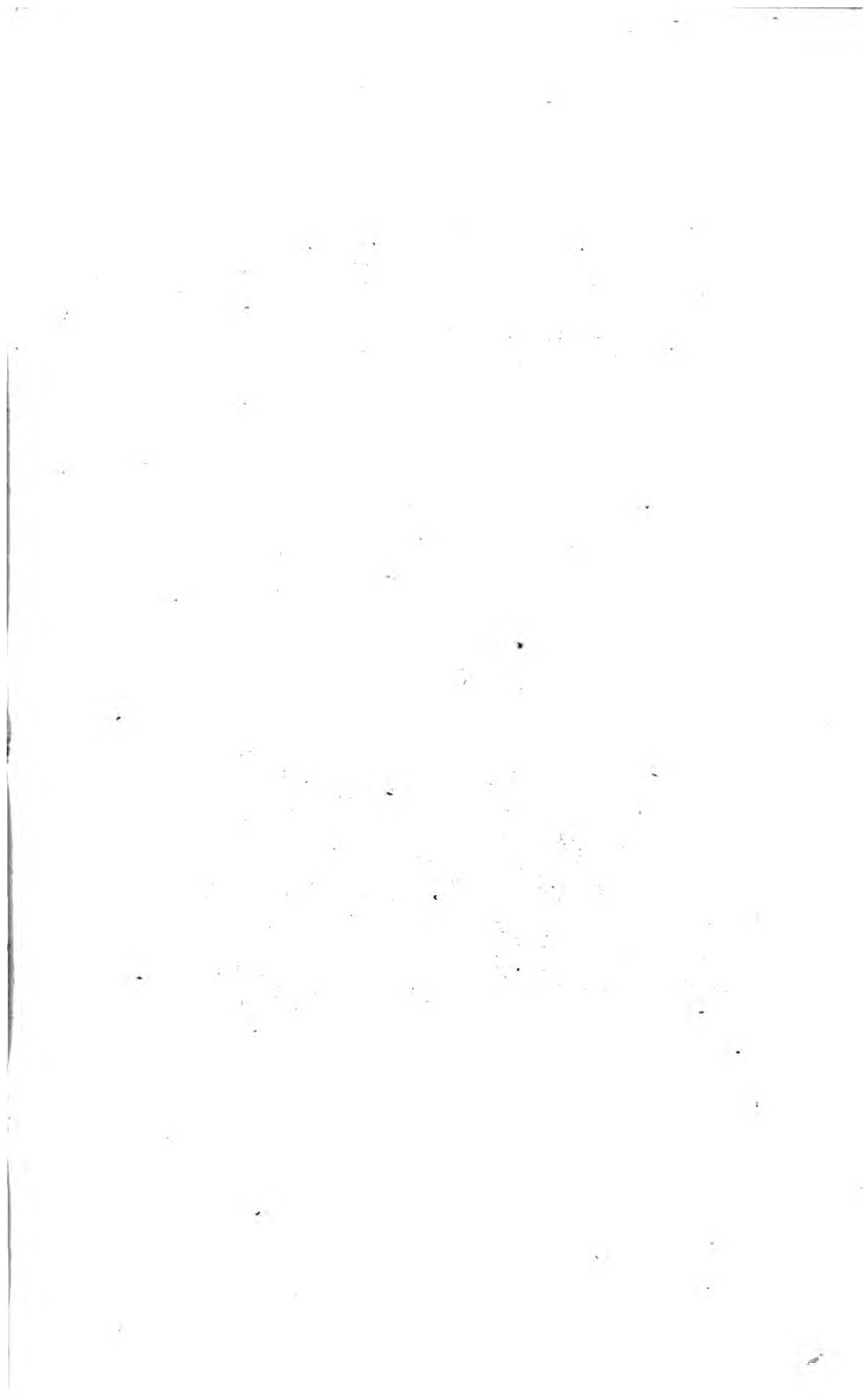


THE
L I F E
OF
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.
VOL. II.



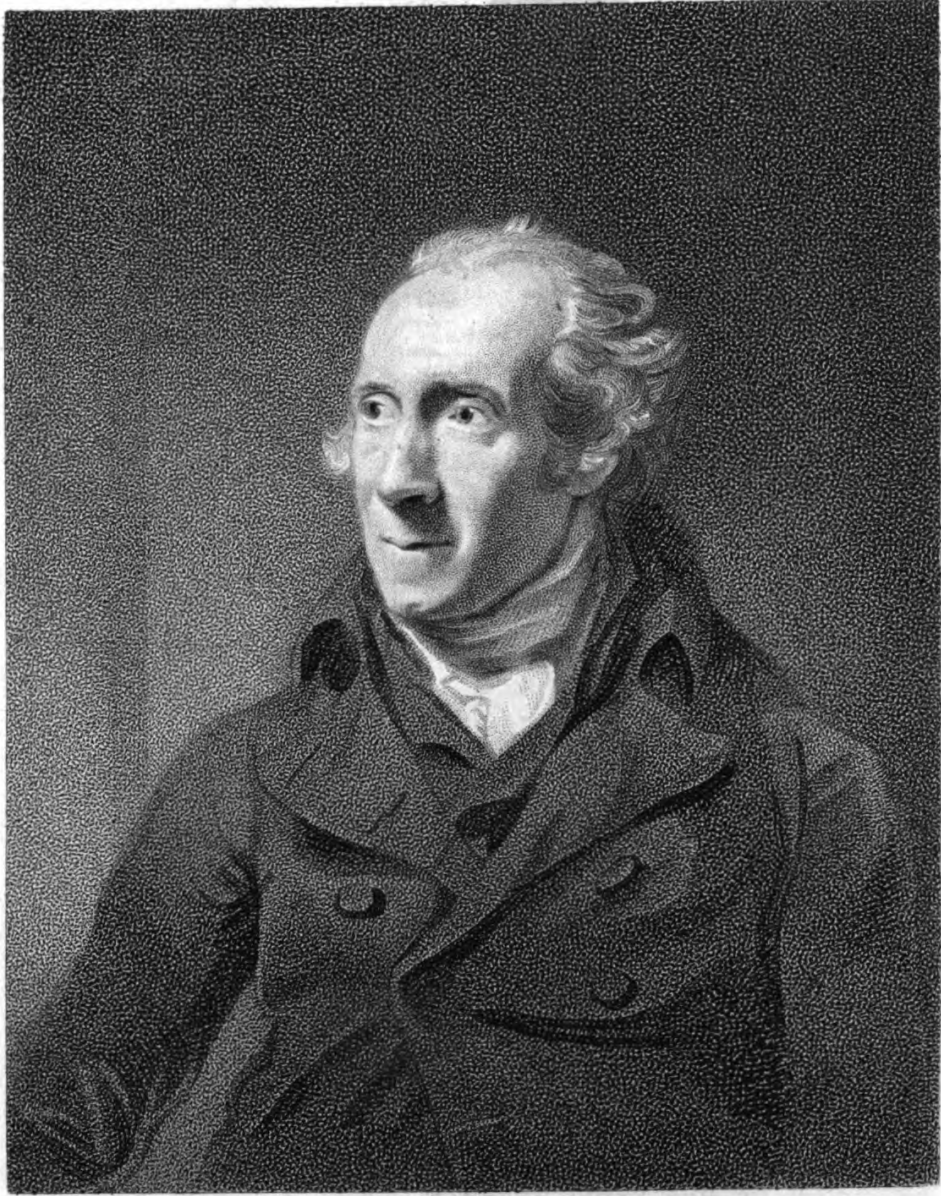












James Northcote Esq. R. A.

Engraved by Henry Meyer from an original Drawing by John Jackson.

THE
L I F E
OF
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS,

LL.D. F. R. S. F. S. A. &c.

LATE PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

COMPRISING

Original Anecdotes

OF MANY DISTINGUISHED PERSONS,
HIS CONTEMPORARIES;

AND A

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF HIS DISCOURSES.

BY

JAMES NORTHCOTE, ESQ. R.A.

THE SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND AUGMENTED.

IN TWO VOLUMES.



LONDON:

PRINTED FOR HENRY COLBURN, CONDUIT-STREET.

1819.



J. Gillet, Printer, Crown Court, Fleet Street.



To Mr. Northcote

London Sep. 3 1776

Dear Sir

I am very much obliged to you for
your kind remembrance of me and am very glad
to hear how you
wrote thank her for her present Joshua Reynolds

L I F E

OF

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

1775.

ÆTAT. 51.

IN the year 1775, or about that time, a new arrangement took place in Sir Joshua's favorite society, the Literary Club, which now changed its original plan of supping once a week, into dinner parties once a fortnight, during the parliamentary sessions.

In this year also, he paid a compliment to another club, of which he had long been a member; this was a present of a portrait of himself for the dining-room of the Dilletanti Society, held in Pall Mall. It is a three quarter length, and he appears in his own hair, and in a loose robe: it has since been engraved in mezzotinto by James Watson.

As most of the efforts of Reynolds's pencil deserve notice, I must not omit that the Dilletanti Club are still further indebted to his abilities, he having enriched the room of this society with many other portraits of its members, particularly two pictures, each of which contains a group of figures, something in the manner of Paul Veronese.

The first has the portraits of the Duke of Leeds, Lord Dundas, Constantine John Lord Mulgrave, Lord Seaforth, the Honourable C. Greville, Charles Crowle, Esq., and the Right Honourable Sir Joseph Banks, Bart., and K. B.

The other picture represents the persons of Sir William Hamilton, Sir Watkyn Williams Wynne, Bart., Richard Thompson, Esq., Sir John Taylor, Payn Galway, Esq., John Smith, Esq., and Spencer Stanhope, Esq.

This Society of Dilletanti has the merit of being, in some measure, the harbinger of all the others for the Encouragement of the Arts ; for although it was at first supposed to have been established upon political principles yet, a few years at least before Sir Joshua's introduction to it, the members had at last the good sense to alter its original objects (if ever they were such) and to turn their thoughts to the formation of a public academy. For this purpose they held some communications with the Society of Artists, then recently established ; but some jealousies about the

government and regulation of the proposed institution prevented any union from taking place.

This, however, did not discourage the Dilletanti members, who, without any apparent ostentation, silently directed their exertions in favour of the arts, and it must be acknowledged were certainly of considerable service.

It was in this year, (1775,) that they were first enabled, by the accumulation of a fund set apart for the purpose, to support a student at the Italian Capital, whilst engaged in his professional acquirements; since which they have sent out several classical travellers, and patronized some valuable classical productions of the press on Grecian Antiquities.

In this same year Reynolds painted that portrait of his friend Dr. Johnson, which represents him as reading and near-sighted. This was very displeasing to Johnson, who, when he saw it, reproved Sir Joshua for painting him in that manner and attitude, saying, "It is not friendly to hand down to posterity the imperfections of any man." But, on the contrary, Sir Joshua himself esteemed it as a circumstance in nature to be remarked as characterizing the person represented, and therefore as giving additional value to the portrait.

Of this circumstance Mrs. Thrale says, "I observed that he (Johnson) would not be known by posterity, for his defects only, let Sir Joshua do his worst:" and when she adverted to Sir Joshua's

own picture painted with the ear trumpet, and done in this year for Mr. Thrale, she records Johnson to have answered, "He may paint himself as deaf as he chooses; but I will not be *blinking Sam* in the eyes of posterity."*

It is evident, however, that Sir Joshua meant not to hurt his feelings: indeed, his general politeness and attention at all times, both to the comfort and to the foibles of his friends, are particularly exemplified in this year, even by a tri-

* A collection of portraits of the friends of Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, painted by Sir Joshua, ornamented the dining-room of their house at Streatham. These were all sold by public auction, on May 10th, 1816. The following is a list of the persons and the prices they fetched at the sale.

	£.	s.	d.
Portrait of Sir Joshua himself	128	2	0
Dr. Johnson	378	0	0
Baretti	86	2	0
Lord Sandys	36	15	0
Dr. Goldsmith	133	7	0
Dr. Burney	84	0	0
Lord Westcote	43	1	0
Arthur Murphy	102	18	0
David Garrick	183	15	0
Sir Robert Chambers	84	0	0
Edmund Burke	252	0	0
Miss Owen	31	10	0
Mrs. Piozzi and her daughter, } in one picture }	81	18	0
Sum Total	1625	8	0

Sir Joshua's price, at the time these portraits were painted, was thirty-five guineas each.

fling occurrence, described by Mr. Boswell; when being engaged together with that gentleman and Dr. Johnson to dine with Mr. Cambridge at his Twickenham villa, Sir Joshua being anxious to fulfil an engagement at Richmond, early in the day, set off by himself on horseback, *leaving his coach* for his friends, who were not ready to accompany him, in consequence of Johnson's *tardiness*.

On the arrival of the latter, and on his entering Mr. Cambridge's library, he immediately ran to the shelves, when Sir Joshua whispered to Boswell—"He runs to the books as I do to the pictures; but I have the advantage, as I can see more of the one than he does of the other."

In the latter part of the year 1775, he sent his portrait, painted by himself, in the dress of his University honours, to be placed in the Gallery of illustrious Painters at Florence, in consequence of his having been chosen a member of the Imperial Academy of that city, and in compliance with its regulations, by which, in return for the honour conferred, the newly elected member is required to present his portrait, painted by his own hand: a circumstance which has produced the most curious and valuable collection of portraits of eminent painters in the world.

The following inscription in Sir Joshua's own hand is on the back of the portrait, painted on a pannel of mahogany:—

“JOSHUA REYNOLDS, EQUES AURATUS,
 ACADEMIÆ REGIÆ LONDONI PRÆSES,
 JURIS CIVILIS APUD OXONIENSES DOCTOR;
 REGIÆ SOCIETATIS, ANTIQUARIÆ
 LONDINI SOCIUS.
 HONORARIUS FLORENTINAS APUD ACADEMIÆ IMPERIALIS
 SOCIUS, NEC NON OPPIDI NATALIS, DICTI PLIMPTON
 COMITAT. DEVON.
 PRÆFECTUS JUSTITIARIUS MORUMQUE CENSOR.”

This portrait has since been engraved by C. Townly : and also for the Italian edition of his discourses ; there is a print by Carlo Faucci from the drawing by Franco Corsi.*

I recollect Mr. S——, on his return from Italy, calling on Sir Joshua to inform him that he had seen his portrait in the gallery at Florence, and that when the Florentines expressed to him their high admiration of the excellence of this picture, he told them it was impossible for them to form any judgement of the painter’s ample abilities from seeing that single head : but could they only

* Portraits of Sir Joshua are almost innumerable, a great number by his own hand ; but there is only one marble bust of him, which was executed by Cirachi, an Italian sculptor.

This Cirachi was a young man of some ability, but of a turbulent spirit, and had been driven from every country which he had visited. When he left England, he went to France, where he soon got himself guillotined for being concerned in a conspiracy formed against the life of Buonaparte, by means of a horrid contrivance, which the French named the Infernal Machine.

see some of his more extensive compositions, their admiration would then be infinitely greater, as this portrait gave a very inadequate idea of the variety of his powers. There were, at the time, three young painters before this picture, employed in copying it.

The picture of a little strawberry girl, with a kind of turban on her head, was painted about this time, and he considered it as one of his best works; observing, that no man ever could produce more than about half a dozen really original works in his life, "and that picture," he added, "is one of mine." The picture was exhibited and repeated by him several times; not so much for the sake of profit, as for that of improvement: for he always advised, as a good mode of study, that a painter should have two pictures in hand of precisely the same subject and design, and should work on them alternately; by which means, if chance produced a lucky hit, as it often does, then, instead of working upon the same piece, and perhaps by that means destroy that beauty which chance had given, he should go to the other and improve upon that. Then return again to the first picture, which he might work upon without any fear of obliterating the excellence which chance had given it, having transposed it to the other. Thus his desire of excellence enabled him to combat with every sort of difficulty or labour. I have heard him say, that while he was engaged in paint-

ing a picture he never knew when to quit it, or leave off; and it seemed to him as if he could be content to work upon it the whole remainder of his life, encouraged by the hope of improving it: but that, when it was once gone from him, and out of his house, he as earnestly hoped he should never see it again.

It was in this year also, that Sir Joshua painted an admirable portrait of Mrs. Hartley, in the character of a gipsy with an infant at her back, and began another of her in the character of Jane Shore. She was much admired when she appeared on the stage; but it was more on account of the extraordinary beauty of her person, than for her professional talents as an actress: her features were of an excellent form, and her complexion very fair and clear; but as she herself once observed to Sir Joshua, to use her own innocent expression, "her face was as freckled as a toad's belly."

I well recollect, likewise, an excellent portrait which he painted about this period, of a gentleman who had acquired in India more money than intellect. From this picture a print was to be taken. The Nabob went into the country, whence he wrote to Sir Joshua on the subject. In this letter he says, "my friends tell me of the Titian tint and the Guido air, of course you will add them; but I leave it to your judgement whether it should be done before or after the print is taken." This letter I saw and read.

Numberless little anecdotes of this kind might be recorded ; I shall venture to mention a trifling one of the late Duchess of Cumberland, who sat to him about this time for her portrait, full length ; and I remember his being much diverted by her affected condescension, when she said, “ I come to your house to sit for my portrait, because I thought it would be much more convenient to you, as you would have all your materials about you and at hand.” He made her no answer, nor did he trouble himself to inform her, that there was no other way by which she could have had her portrait painted by him : indeed, the great Duke of Cumberland, and many others of the royal family, had not conceived it to be beneath their dignity to come to his house for the same purpose ; and formerly, as he observed, even the king himself, Charles the Second, always went to the houses of Lely and Kneller, whenever he sat for his portrait. However, great allowance must be made for those who are suddenly raised high beyond their expectation, as it not unfrequently has made even the wisest giddy.

Some portion of vanity indeed, ought to be pardoned in every one ; as the happiness of life so much depends upon it : for how could many of us endure our existence with any degree of patience if we saw ourselves as others see us ? Vanity has made many a happy mortal of such as, without it, might have been driven to the crime

of suicide. But kind, indulgent Nature, in the gift of this article is ever abundant, always bestowing it most amply where there is most need of its support ; for which we ought to be infinitely thankful, as it fills up all our mental emptiness with delight, and the mind is consoled under all its insufficiencies, or even corporeal imperfections, which, by its assistance, oftentimes assume the form of beauty to our own apprehension. Self-opinion is Nature's stratagem to keep all the world quiet ; and those who are so forlorn as to have no other flatterers, generally undertake that office for themselves, and perform its duties with more sincerity than those who do it for gain.

The admiration and fame that followed Reynolds, both as a man and an artist, could not fail to excite envy ; instances of which have been recorded ; in addition I may observe, that in the year 1775, Mr. Nath. Hone made an exhibition of several of his works, at a great room nearly opposite to Old Slaughter's Coffee-house, St. Martin's-lane. The collection contained between sixty and seventy paintings : among them were two which claimed particular notice. It seemed that the first idea of this exhibition owed its origin to pique, and something of envy in the artist towards Sir Joshua Reynolds, and this opinion is suggested by the following anecdotes.

In the exhibition of the Royal Academy, 1770, there was a picture painted by Mr. Hone, entitled

“Two Gentlemen in Masquerade:” they were represented as Capuchin Friars, regaling themselves with punch. When this picture was sent for admission, one of the personages was represented as squeezing a lemon, while the other was stirring the liquor with the crucifix at the end of his rosary: but the Council considered the latter circumstance as too indecorous to allow the picture’s being exhibited in that state; and the artist was requested to alter the crucifix. This request was complied with; but Mr. Hone was much offended, when, in truth, he ought rather to have been pleased with their having pointed out an impropriety, which might not have struck him upon the first idea of his picture. However, the desired alteration was made, and a ladle introduced, which he painted with a substance easily washed away; and the picture was again displayed at his own exhibition in its primitive state.

The other picture, which was the leading feature of his exhibition, represented an old man, half-length, the size of life, painted after the model from which Sir Joshua Reynolds had painted his Count Ugolino. This picture, which Mr. Hone called the Conjuror, was intended as a satire upon Sir Joshua’s method of composing his pictures. Yet Mr. Hone’s ridicule was not very apparent, for his figure represented little more than an old man, with a wand in his hand, performing incantations, by which a number of prints and sketches were made to float in the air, all of which

were representations of those originals from which Sir Joshua had taken the actions of the figures and groupes which he had introduced into some of his principal portraits.

As this picture, which did not display much vigour of mind, was evidently meant as an attack upon the President, the Council of the Royal Academy thought it prudent to exclude it from their exhibition, which again greatly displeased Mr. Hone; and he, like many others, disappointed in his private schemes, appealed to the public by an exhibition of his own.

Instead of trusting to my own temper in animadverting any further on such an attack on this great painter, I shall give a passage, and perhaps with more force, from the pen of a writer who, whatever his merits or demerits may be, cannot be accused of partiality for the subject of our biography. He says, speaking of Hone, "This gentleman should be almost exclusively arranged as a portrait painter, as he painted but two historical compositions. The first was a satire on monkish licentiousness; and the other was the exhibition of a *pictorial conjuror*, displaying his cleverness in the arts of deceiving the sight. This last performance was intended as an exposition of the manœuvring, in respect to attitudes, which was so attributable to Sir Joshua Reynolds. This vindictive effort was sent by its parent to the annual exhibition; but was rejected by the Academi-

cians with becoming scorn, as the issue of a little mind, and powers of fancy most scandalously directed :”—a keenness of rebuke which has well employed the pen of the author.

In addition I may observe, that Mr. Hone did not seem to recollect, that, whenever Sir Joshua availed himself of any of the merits of his predecessors in art, it was done in a manner that all must approve of, and such as the following circumstance may serve to explain, by showing, that he generally had in view the adding, to the first invention, much more than he borrowed from it.

Sir Joshua had in his collection a most excellent little sketch or study, by Rembrant, of a Susanna going down the steps of the bath ; this picture possessed, in the highest degree, the charms of colour, light and shade, and an exquisite expression, in the female figure, of silent, timid apprehension, in the attitude of listening ; but, at the same time miserably deficient in every requisite towards beauty, grace, elevation of character, or elegance of form. I have heard Sir Joshua lament to see the defects of this picture, which possessed so many perfections, and I often heard him say, he would copy it in its excellencies, and attempt to make the figure of Susanna, as much as was in his power, what it ought to have been in the original—still preserving the fine expression.

Had he done this, such a combination of two great painters would have produced almost a perfect work.

“ Sir Joshua has been accused of plagiarism, for having borrowed attitudes from ancient masters. Not only candour, but criticism, must deny the force of this charge. When a single posture is imitated from an historic picture, and applied to a portrait in a different dress, and with new attributes, this is not plagiarism, but quotation ; and a quotation from a great author, with a novel application of the sense, has always been allowed to be an instance of parts and taste, and may have more merit than the original. When the sons of Jacob imposed on their father by a false coat of Joseph’s, saying, ‘ Know now whether this be thy son’s coat or not ? ’ they only asked a deceitful question : but that interrogation became wit, when Richard the First, on the Pope reclaiming a bishop whom the King had taken prisoner in battle, sent him the prelate’s coat of mail, and, in the words of Scripture, asked his holiness whether THAT was the coat of his son or not ?—Are not there humour and satire in Sir Joshua’s reducing Holbein’s swaggering and colossal haughtiness of Henry the Eighth, to the boyish jollity of Master Crewe ? Sir Joshua was not a plagiarist, but will beget a thousand. The exuberance of his invention will be the grammar of future painters of portraits.”—*Gentleman’s Magazine.*

In the course of this year, Sir Joshua had finished his well-known picture of "Venus chiding Cupid." It was done for Sir Brooke Boothby, who in 1794 sold it to Sir Thomas Bernard.

Boswell, about this time, records an observation of Dr. Johnson's, which was highly descriptive of Sir Joshua's placidity and evenness of disposition; not an overstrained stoicism, but that happy equability which proceeds both from mind and disposition. Whilst conversing on melancholy, Johnson said, that "some men, and very thinking men too, have not these vexing thoughts. Sir Joshua Reynolds is the same all the year round."

A character of the Honourable Mrs. P., written by Sir Joshua, was published in the newspapers of the day, and the printer had taken the liberty of altering a word in it, to make it, as he thought, much better, but which Sir Joshua thought made it much otherwise. In speaking of this afterwards to the late Caleb Whiteford, Sir Joshua complained of the absurd alteration, and said it had quite destroyed the simplicity of the whole; when Whiteford made the comparison of a pot of broth over the fire, into which a lump of soot falls from the chimney, and the whole mess is spoiled.

What the word was which the printer expunged I do not know; but the character here inserted is in its original form.

Character of the Honourable Mrs. P. by Sir Joshua Reynolds, December 21st, 1775.

“ The death of this Honourable Lady, was occasioned by a stroke of the palsy, which happened soon after her lying-in of a daughter ; of this she appeared to be recovering ; but receiving a second stroke, and soon after that a third, it put an end to the life of one of the most valuable of women.

“ Her amiable disposition, her softness and gentleness of manners, endeared her to every one that had the happiness of knowing her : her whole pleasure and ambition were centered in a consciousness of properly discharging all the duties of a wife, a mother, and a sister ; and she neither sought for, nor expected, fame out of her own house. As she made no ostentation of her virtues, she excited no envy ; but if there had existed so depraved a being as to wish to wound so fair a character, the most artful malignity must have searched in vain for a weak part. Her virtues were uniform, quiet and habitual ; they were not occasionally put on ; she wore them continually ; they seemed to grow to her and be a part of herself ; and it seemed to be impossible for her to lay them aside or be other than what she was. Her person was eminently beautiful ; but the expression of her countenance was far above all beauty that proceeds from regularity of features only. The gentleness and benevolence of her disposition were so naturally impressed on every look and

motion, that without any affected effort or assumed courtesy, she was sure to make every one her friend that had ever spoke to her, or even seen her.

“ In so exalted a character it is scarce worth mentioning her skill and exact judgement in the polite arts: she seemed to possess, by a kind of intuition, that propriety of taste and right thinking, which others but imperfectly acquire by long labour and application.”

At the time when I was a student at the Royal Academy, I was accidentally repeating to Sir Joshua the instructions on colouring I had heard there given by an eminent painter who then attended as visitor. Sir Joshua replied, that this painter was undoubtedly a very sensible man, but by no means a good colourist; adding, that there was not a man then on earth who had the least notion of colouring; “ we, all of us,” said he, “ have it equally to seek for and find out, as at present it is totally lost to the art.”

Strong objections were, certainly, often made to Sir Joshua's process or mode of colouring; but perhaps the best answer to all these is in the following anecdote.

One of these critics, who passed for a great patron of the art, was complaining strongly to a judicious friend of Sir Joshua's “ flying colours,” and expressing great regret at the circumstance, as it prevented him from having his picture painted

by the President. To all this his friend calmly replied, that he should reflect that any painter who merely wished to make his colours stand, had only to purchase them at the first colour shop he might come to; but that it must be remembered that "every picture of Sir Joshua's was an experiment of art made by an ingenious man,—and that the *art advanced by such experiments, even where they failed.*"

In fine, what Gainsborough said of the President is strictly true: that in his opinion Sir Joshua's pictures in their most decayed state were better than those of any other artist when in their best.

I once humbly endeavoured to persuade Sir Joshua to abandon those fleeting colours, lake and carmine, which it was his practice to use in painting the flesh, and to adopt vermilion in their stead as infinitely more durable; although not, perhaps, so exactly true to nature as the former. I remember he looked on his hand and said "I can see no vermilion in flesh." I replied, "but did not Sir Godfrey Kneller always use vermilion in his flesh colour?" when Sir Joshua answered rather sharply, "What signifies what a man used who could not colour. But you may use it if you will!"

It is to be observed, however, that Sir Joshua made use of vermilion himself in all his latter works; finding by experience the ill effects of lake and carmine in his early productions.

If any other apology were necessary for Sir Joshua's mode of practice, it may be found in his own words, in one of the fragments, as preserved by Mr. Malone; there he says, "I was always willing to believe that my uncertainty of proceeding in my works, that is, my never being sure of my hand, and my frequent alterations, arose from a refined taste, which could not acquiesce in any thing short of a high degree of excellence. I had not an opportunity of being early initiated in the principles of *Colouring*: no man indeed could teach me. If I have never been settled with respect to colouring, let it at the same time be remembered, that my unsteadiness in this respect proceeded from an inordinate desire to possess every kind of excellence that I saw in the works of others, without considering that there are in colouring, as in style, excellencies which are incompatible with each other: however, this pursuit, or indeed any other similar pursuit, prevents the artist from being tired of his art. We all know how often those masters, who sought after colouring, changed their manner; whilst others, merely from not seeing various modes, acquiesced all their lives in that with which they set out. On the contrary, I tried every effect of colour, and by leaving out every colour in its turn, showed every colour that I could do without it. As I alternately left out every colour, I tried every new colour; and often, as is well known, failed. The

former practice, I am aware, may be compared by those whose first object is ridicule, to that of the poet mentioned in the Spectator, who in a poem of twenty-four books, contrived in each book to leave out a letter. But I was influenced by no such idle or foolish affectation. My fickleness in the mode of colouring arose from an eager desire to attain the highest excellence. This is the only merit I can assume to myself from my conduct in that respect."

Whilst thus speaking of Reynolds' practice, I shall add something further with respect to his theory. In particular, it was Sir Joshua's opinion, that if the vegetable colours (which are infinitely the most beautiful) were enclosed by varnish from the external atmosphere, they would not fade; however, what he proposed as the remedy was still worse than the disease, as the colour would still fade, added to which the varnish itself would crack.

Yet, from experience, he must have been well aware of the pernicious consequences of some of the nostrums (if I may so call them) that he often made use of, as I well remember, he was much displeased with a young painter, who showed him a picture in which experimental mixtures, composed of wax and varnishes of divers sorts, had been used; and afterwards, speaking of him to me, he said, "That boy will never do any good, if they do not take away from him all his gallipots of

varnish and foolish mixtures:" nor would he suffer me, during the whole time I resided in his house, to make use of any other materials than the common preparations of colour, just as we have them from the hands of the colourman; and all varnishes, and every kind of experiment, were strictly prohibited. Likewise all his own preparations of colour were most carefully concealed from my sight and knowledge, and perpetually locked secure in his drawers; thus never to be seen or known by any one but himself. In his own practice, however, he would venture on whatever experiment was recommended to him by any adviser that came in his way; and when he was at any time accused of having spoiled many of his portraits, by trying experiments upon them, he answered, that it was always his wish to have made these experiments on his fancy pictures, and if so, had they failed of success, the injury would have fallen only on himself, as he should have kept them on his hands; but that he was prevented from practising thus, by his being at the time perpetually employed in painting portraits; and therefore obliged to make his trials on those, as eagerness in the pursuit of excellence was, in him, uncontrolable.

It was of advantage to the old school of Italian painters, that they were under the necessity of making most of their colours themselves, or at least under the inspection of such as possessed

chymical knowledge, which excluded all possibility of those adulterations to which the moderns are exposed. The same also was the case in England, till the time of Sir Godfrey Kneller, who when he came to this country, brought over a servant with him, whose sole employment was to prepare all his colours and materials for his work. Kneller afterwards set him up as a colour-maker for artists; and this man's success, he being the first that kept a colour-shop in London, occasioned the practice of it as a trade.

Sir Joshua was ever careful about procuring unadulterated articles of every sort, and has often desired me to inform the colour-man, that he should not regard any price that might be demanded, provided the colours were genuine.

In his investigations also into the secrets used by the old painters, he was indefatigable. I remember once, in particular, a fine picture of Parmegiano, that I bought by his order at a sale, which he rubbed and scoured down to the very pannel on which it had been painted, so that at last nothing remained of the picture. Speaking to him of the extraordinary merits of Titian, I asked him, if he thought there ever would be in the world a superior in portrait-painting? he answered, that he believed there never would—that to procure a real fine picture by Titian, he would be content to sell every thing he possessed in the world, to raise the money for its purchase; adding,

with emphasis, "I would be content to ruin myself."

So desirous was Sir Joshua to arrive at excellence, that I have known him to work days and weeks on his fancy subjects, on which he could practice every experiment at pleasure, while numbers of his portraits remained unfinished, for the completion of which the most earnest solicitations were made; and when he also well knew, he should have received his price for them the moment they were sent home. Such was his delight in working on those fancy subjects that he was thus content to indulge it even at the expence of his immediate interest.

But it was not to experiments on his own colouring alone, that Sir Joshua trusted for gaining experience; for he actually tried experiments with several capital ancient paintings of the Venetian School, in order, if possible, to ascertain their grounds, to trace their process in laying on, and to analyze the chymical mixture of their various tints. This circumstance has been noticed by Mr. Malone, and is very just—an experiment too, conducted at an immense expence, for each painting thus investigated was, of course, totally destroyed.

Sir Joshua's early and continued success is, however, very well delineated by himself in one of those fragments already mentioned, where he says, "I considered myself as playing a great game, and,

instead of beginning to save money, I laid it out faster than I got it, in purchasing the best examples of art that could be procured; for I even borrowed money for this purpose. The possessing portraits by Titian, Vandyke, Rembrandt, &c., I considered as the best kind of wealth. By studying carefully the works of great masters, this advantage is obtained; we find that certain niceties of expression are capable of being executed, which otherwise we might suppose beyond the reach of art. This gives us a confidence in ourselves, and we are thus incited to endeavour at not only the same happiness of execution, but also at other congenial excellencies. Study, indeed, consists in learning to see nature, and may be called the art of using other men's minds. By this kind of contemplation and exercise we are taught to think in their way, and sometimes to attain their excellence. Thus, for instance, if I had never seen any of the works of Corregio, I should never perhaps have remarked in nature the expression which I find in one of his pieces; or if I had remarked it, I might have thought it too difficult or perhaps impossible, to be executed."

It must have been reasons such as these which could ever induce him to make a copy from any master, and only when he desired to possess himself of some peculiar excellence which another possessed before him; and when he did condescend to copy, its degree of correctness may be

judged of by an instance which I heard himself relate. The Chevalier Vanloo, the eminent portrait painter, being in England, in the year 1765, one day when he paid a visit to Sir Joshua, boasted of his great knowledge in the works of the different famous painters, saying he could not be deceived or imposed upon by a copy for an original. Sir Joshua then shewed him a head of an old woman which he had copied from one by Rembrandt, and without letting him into the secret asked his opinion upon it. The French painter, after a very careful inspection into it, said he could pronounce that it was undoubtedly an original picture by Rembrandt!

Of Sir Joshua's paintings, any accident that befel them seems of sufficient importance to be recorded. In a small room next to his own painting room, there were a great number of those portraits which had been rejected and were left upon his hands; round the sides of this room were shelves, on which were placed large heads, casts from the antique, and at a great height, for the room was lofty; and over these hung some old portraits by Lely and others. In this room as I was one day busily employed in painting a drapery to one of his portraits,* I suddenly heard a noise as if something had fallen, when looking up

* It was the portrait of Robinson, Archbishop of Armagh, with a hat on his head.

to the place, I saw that one of those pictures by Lely had dropt from its nail, and falling on the shelf, and thence forward, threw down two or three very large plaister heads. I had but a moment to get up in the corner of this little room, when the whole fell down on the floor, just where I had been at work, with a violence that would certainly have proved fatal to me, had I not got in time out of the way, as a moment would have been too late. The easel was knocked down, together with the picture on which I was at work, and driven with violence through five or six of those unfortunate rejected portraits, as they happened to be placed one before the other, whilst the floor was covered with the fragments of the broken plaister heads which were dashed to pieces by the fall. The great noise which this made alarmed even Sir Joshua, although deaf, and brought him into the room in a hurry to know what was the matter, when he stared with surprize to behold the wreck; but soon calmly smiled at a misfortune, which, indeed, did not require reparation.

On another morning, when Sir Joshua was quietly employed in his studies, he was much annoyed by a visit from a fire-man, who demanded five pounds for having brought the first fire-engine to his house, supposed to have been on fire. At first it was difficult to account for this mistake; but the truth is this, Sir Joshua in cleaning out a gallipot with spirits of turpentine had flung

some of it into the fire, which made a sudden blaze and appeared at the top of the chimney of his painting room ; for that being a very low chimney, a very small flame would soon appear at its top. The room was a separate building from the house ; but the parish regulations were absolute. He was obliged to pay the demand awarded by law.

As I have hinted at the subject of his draperies having been frequently executed by the hands of his scholars, it is but just to remark in this place, that the whole together of the picture, was at last his own, as the imitation of particular stuffs is not the work of genius, but is to be acquired easily by practice, and this was what his pupils could do by care and time more than he himself chose to bestow ; but his own slight and masterly work was still the best.

No painter like Sir Joshua knew how to make his drapery answer the purpose of enriching his figures, as may be seen in his excellent portrait of General Tarlton ; for though the figure is merely in a close jacket, yet, by making it unite, in a certain degree, with the flags in the back ground, it assumes a richness unexampled : others may have done the same by accident, in him it was principle.

Further, in respect to this part of the subject, I remember once when I was disposing the folds of drapery with great care on the lay figure, in order to paint from it into one of his pictures, he re-

marked that it would not make good drapery if set so artificially, and that whenever it did not fall into such folds as were agreeable, I should try to get it better, by taking the chance of another toss of the drapery stuff, and by that means I should get nature, which is always superior to art.

Besides the assistance which Sir Joshua had from his pupils, as usual with painters who are much occupied, he also employed Peter Toms to paint drapery for him, who was considered as the most perfect auxiliary in that department of painting that existed in his time. He had been a pupil of Hudson, was a Royal Academician, and son of Mr. Toms the engraver, and had practised some time in Ireland as a portrait painter.

Peter Toms was certainly a very good drapery painter, and, as I have observed, was frequently employed by Sir Joshua and others in that part of their pictures; but the manner of Toms's penciling did not exactly harmonize with the style of Sir Joshua's heads, as it was heavy and wanted freedom, so that his work had too much the appearance of having been done with a stamp, as the paper-hangings for rooms are executed. Sometimes he misunderstood Sir Joshua's intention in the picture; once in particular, in a full length portrait of a lady, instead of painting her in a rural habit, as Sir Joshua had designed, he had turned it into a dress of state. When Sir Joshua saw the picture, he expostulated with Toms, and told

him that it would not do by any means, and, in short, that he must paint it all over again. Toms refused, saying he had worked upon the drapery till his heart ached, and he could do no more to it; adding "you ought to be more explicit when you give the pictures into my hands." Sir Joshua said the drapery did not accord with the head. Toms answered, "that is because your heads are painted on a diminished scale." When Sir Joshua, mistaking him, in a great alarm cried out, "What! do you say that I paint in a little manner? did you say mine is a little manner?" "No," replied Toms, "but I say that your heads are less than the life."

Toms afterwards became very poor, and, it is said, died a violent death by his own hands.

In the year 1775, Sir Joshua finished the picture of Lady Cockburn with her three children in one group, and sent it to the Royal Academy. When it was first brought into the room, in order to its being exhibited, all the painters then present were so struck with its extraordinary splendour and excellence, that they testified their approbation of it by suddenly clapping with their hands.

I observed that at the commencement of this picture, the whole group of figures was so placed on the canvas, as to throw all the principal light too much on one side of the composition, which gave it a very awkward appearance, and created a great difficulty, as it required much consideration

to overcome the defect. After many trials, Sir Joshua at last, with true judicious management, illumined the vacant space in the canvas behind the figures, by an opening of most exquisitely coloured landscape in the back ground, which, together with a red curtain, and the gay plumage of a macaw, soon rendered it one of his most happy compositions. On this picture he has marked his name within the embroidered edge of the garment, in the same manner as on the portrait of Mrs. Siddons; and these two are the only pictures in which he has ever done so.

I recollect an anecdote, which helps to prove how difficult he found it ever to satisfy himself in his work, and how desirous he was to make it nearer perfection, even after the best judges were content: for at this time he had painted an excellent head of the Duchess of Leinster, sister to the Duke of Richmond; and when Edmund Burke saw the picture, he exclaimed, "What a beautiful head you have made of this lady! it is impossible to add any thing to its advantage." But Sir Joshua was not satisfied, and answered with much feeling, "It does not please me yet; there is a sweetness of expression in the original which I have not been able to give in the portrait, and therefore cannot think it finished."

Indeed, Sir Joshua was not at all liable to be misled, or even moved, by either praise or flattery from those persons in his presence. He has often

remarked that every man is surrounded by his own little circle of admirers, who, influenced by friendship or interest, &c., frequently bestow on him unqualified praise. "But if we desire to learn the real truth," he added, "our view must be extended, and observation and enquiry made of what is thought and said by the world beyond this little and partial set of courtiers."

The Clown in *Shakespeare's Twelfth Night* says, he is the worse for his friends, because they praise him, and make an ass of him; but his foes tell him plainly he is an ass. So that by his foes he profits in the knowledge of himself, and by his friends he is abused.

At the time that Gibbon's Roman History was published, it was the fashion to admire it exceedingly. Edmund Burke conversing with Sir Joshua upon that work, said, "he had just then been reading it, that he disliked the style of writing, that it was very affected, mere frippery and tinsel."

I have mentioned these opinions of Burke's, particularly with respect to Gibbon's History; and in that opinion Burke was not singular; this eminent author, so admired by many, did not please all the judges of literature. Porson, the well-known Greek scholar, was lamenting to a friend that so large a portion of his own youthful time had been spent in acquiring the Greek language. "If I had a son," said he, "to educate, I would make him study his native language, and

I would give him, as his task every morning, a sufficient portion of the pages of Gibbon for him to translate into plain English.”*

Sir Joshua was fond of introducing animals or birds occasionally into his compositions, and these he painted with great spirit and life. At one time he kept a very fine eagle which was chained to its perch in the back area of the house: when this bird died, I took the body and suspended it by strings so as to give it an action as if it was alive, with its wings spread, intending to paint a picture from it for myself. But when Sir Joshua saw me about it he seemed pleased, and told me to do it as well as I was able; and when I had finished

* Gibbon used to call frequently on Sir Joshua; and one morning, when I was in the adjoining room, I overheard the conversation, as those who spoke to Sir Joshua were obliged to speak rather in a loud voice on account of his deafness. I remember Gibbon related that a friend of his had, some little time before, bought an old casket, which contained many drawers, when, on making a very strict search into it, he had discovered one secret drawer, which had not been perceived by its latest possessors, and in this drawer he had the good luck to find several pieces of very old gold coin, amounting to five times the price he had given for the casket; but this was not all, he found, also curiously wrapt up in a piece of paper, a very old fashioned ring for the finger, and on the paper was written, “This is the very ring that Queen Elizabeth gave secretly to the Earl of Essex, and which ring he was to send to her at any time of his distress, as a token of his sincerity and attachment to the Queen.”

The sequel of this ring is well known, and that Essex did send it by a traitorous lady, who never delivered it to her Majesty.

the work to the best of my power, he took the picture and the bird into his own painting room, and in about a quarter of an hour gave it such touches of animation as made it truly fine, though executed with a bad light, for I remember it was late in the day when he did it, having been the night before at a masquerade, which had occasioned his remaining very long in bed that day.

In this year it was that Mr. Doughty was placed under the tuition of Sir Joshua. William Doughty was a native of Yorkshire, and recommended to the notice of Sir Joshua by the Rev. Mr. Mason. He remained about three years in the house of Sir Joshua as his pupil, and at that time, by the desire of Mr. Mason, and for him, painted the portrait of Gray the poet by description, (as Gray was dead,) and the help of an outline of his profile, which had been taken by lamp-light when he was living, and therefore must have been very exact; and this now remains as the only portrait of Gray. It has been engraved for the frontispiece of his works, and sculptured on his monument. Mr. Mason was the particular friend of Gray, and the editor of his works after his death, and also the patron of Doughty.

On Doughty leaving Sir Joshua he went to Ireland but did not succeed, although highly recommended by his master as well as his patron, and also possessing greater ability than his more fortunate rivals. He then returned to London exceed-

ingly dispirited, from whence he took shipping for Bengal in 1780 ; but before he left England had married one Margaret Joy, a servant girl in Sir Joshua's house ; she also accompanied him when he left England. Having been captured by the combined squadrons of France and Spain, and carried to Lisbon, he there closed his mortal career. In 1778 he had exhibited a three-quarter length of his patron which possessed considerable merit ; and he scraped some excellent mezzotinto portraits, among which, those of the Rev. Mr. Mason and Dr. Johnson were the most perfect. His widow continued in the determination of her voyage to India, where she had friends, but died just on her arrival at Bengal.

The following little circumstance, as it serves to shew the kind disposition of Sir Joshua, I may be allowed to mention, although it relates so much to my own concerns.

The latter end of the year 1775 was now arrived, when it only wanted a few months of five years, that I had been with him, and when I also approached the 29th year of my age ; and I thought it high time for me to do something for myself at so late a period in the life of a pupil, having been prevented by many causes from beginning my studies as a painter in early youth. I therefore thought it proper to give Sir Joshua notice of my intentions some months before my departure ; this however, was a task very disagreeable to me, and

I deferred it from day to day, but at last determined, and going to him one morning in the month of December, when he was alone in his painting room, I began by saying that at the end of May next it would be five years since I first came to his house. Sir Joshua, with a gentleness in his manner, said, that he thought that was full sufficient, and that I was now well able to do for myself. I then replied, that I was very sensible of the obligation I owed him, and that I would stay any time longer he should think proper, if I could be of any service to him. Sir Joshua said by no means, as I had already done him much service; I answered, that I feared I had not been of so much assistance to him as I wished, but that it was solely from want of power, and not inclination. Sir Joshua was so obliging as to say, that I had been very useful to him, more so than any scholar that had ever been with him: and he added, "I hope we shall assist each other as long as we live," and that "if I would remain with him until the month of May he should be very much obliged to me, as I could be very useful to him;" I answered, that I intended it, and during that time wished to work as much as it was in my power for his service, and thus the conversation ended.

1776.*

ÆTAT. 52.

ON the 12th of May, 1776, I took my leave of Sir Joshua Reynolds, to take my chance in the world, and we parted with great cordiality ; he

* In the beginning of the year 1776, Sir Joshua went to the Theatre to see Garrick perform the part of Sir John Brute, the last time he ever appeared in that character, and it was the general opinion that he never acted it better. So great was the crowd, that although I got into the theatre myself that night, yet it was with considerable difficulty.

In this year's Exhibition was a fine head of Garrick, by Sir Joshua, painted for Mrs. Thrale, and the last portrait of that great actor done by Reynolds.

Mr. Garrick had made a visit to Italy in the year 1763, and returned in 1765 ; and at the time he was in Rome, he sat for his portrait to that eminent Italian painter Pompeo Battoni, which picture, I am informed, is now in the possession of Sir Richard Kaye. At the same time, he also sat for his bust to Mr. Nollekens the sculptor, who was then at Rome, on his studies in that art.

Mr. Garrick's foible, the desire of praise, has often been remarked ; and one day, when sitting to Nollekens, he was very inquisitive to know what was said of him by his countrymen at the English Coffee-house in that city : when Nollekens gravely answered, " Indeed, I heard somebody speaking very highly in your praise, as high as possible ;" " Ah ! ah !" said Garrick with great quickness, " Pray who was it—who was it spoke so highly in my praise ?" " Why, it was yourself," answered Nollekens. " Ah, d——d vulgar ! that 's St. Giles's wit," replied Garrick.

Garrick's sitting room in his house in town, had a door so made, as to appear when shut, precisely like the other part of

said I was perfectly in the right in my intentions, and that he had been fully satisfied with my conduct whilst I had been with him ; also, that he had no idea that I should have staid with him so long, “ but now,” added Sir Joshua, “ to succeed in the art, you are to remember that something more is to be done than that which did formerly ; Kneller, Lely, and Hudson, will not do now.” I was rather surprized to hear him join the former two names with that of Hudson, who was so evidently their inferior as to be out of all comparison.

It was impossible to quit such a residence as Sir Joshua's without reluctance, a house in which I had spent so many happy hours, and although perfectly satisfied in my own mind that what I did in this respect was right, and that it was high time for me to be acting for myself on the stage of life, yet to leave that place, which was the constant resort of all the eminent in every valuable quality, without an inward regret, was not in my power. It is a melancholy reflection even at this moment, when one considers the ravages a few

the room, and of course not easily to be found but by those who had been used to it. One day a tailor came to him on business, which being finished, the tailor bowing and intending to leave the room was unable to find the door, searching all round the room in vain, and affording much amusement to Garrick, whom I heard relate this circumstance myself, when he was in Sir Joshua's painting room, which had a door of a similar kind.

short years have made in that unparalleled society which shone at his table, now all gone!

As this event was a considerable era in my life when I was no longer to be an inmate as one of the family of Sir Joshua Reynolds, I may be suffered to make a pause, and indulge my thoughts in the pleasing recollection of many little circumstances and matters of observation which occurred during the space of five years; therefore as a kind of summing up, and closing of this period, I shall record in this place several matters, perhaps pleasing only to myself, from the lively remembrance they raise in my mind of those happy years of my life.

Of the political sentiments of Sir Joshua at that time I may merely state, that during the contest between England and America, so strongly was it the opinion of many persons that we should conquer them in the end, that Sir Joshua, who thought the contrary, actually received five guineas each from several gentlemen under a promise to pay them in return one thousand pounds if ever he painted the portrait of General Washington in England, and which he was not to refuse to do in case the General should be brought to him to that intent.

One day at dinner with Sir Joshua and his sister, Miss Reynolds, I remarked to her that I had never seen any picture by Jervas, which was rather extraordinary, as he was a fashionable pain-

ter in his day; she said, "Nor I neither, I wonder how that should be. I do not know that I ever saw one;" then addressing Sir Joshua, she said, "Brother, how happens it that we never meet with any pictures by Jervas the painter?" when he answered very briskly, "because they are all up in the garret."

In so saying, he alluded to the destiny of bad portraits, which, in the succeeding generation, are thus treated with neglect and contempt.

Miss Black was at this time an eminent teacher of crayon painting amongst the ladies of quality, who frequently brought their performances for Sir Joshua's inspection; and I have heard him observe of Miss Black's scholars, that their first essays were better than their last.

Implying that Miss Black's interference in the work diminished as her scholars advanced.

Another anecdote (perhaps curious to painters,) Sir Joshua used to relate, which he heard from Mr. Jonathan Richardson the portrait painter.

When Richardson was a very young man, in the course of his practice he painted the portrait of a very old lady, who, in conversation at the time of her sitting to him, happened to mention, that when she was a girl about sixteen years of age, she sat to Vandyke for her portrait. This immediately raised the curiosity of Richardson, who asked an hundred questions, many of them unimportant: however the circumstance which seemed

to him as a painter, to be of the most consequence in the information he gained was this: she said, she well remembered, that, at the time when she sat to Vandyke, for her portrait, and saw his pictures in his gallery, they appeared to have a white and raw look, in comparison with the mellow and rich hue which we now see in them, and which time alone must have given to them, adding much to their excellence.

Of the truth of this anecdote, I am well convinced from my own experience: as before I came to London, I had seen no others of Sir Joshua's paintings than those which had been mellowed by a considerable space of time, which had given them a richness of hue; so, that when I first saw his gallery in London, I well recollect my surprize and disappointment at the sight of the raw, crude, fresh appearance of his new pictures, which from these causes alone, seemed to me by no means equal to those I had before seen and so much admired.

Upon one occasion, Mr. Edmund Burke, when in conversation with Sir Joshua, remarked to him the peculiar advantages which certain situations gave to those who chose to make use of them; "for instance, you, Sir Joshua, from your character and the opportunities you have by your profession of being so much in private with persons of the highest rank and power, at moments, also, when they are at leisure and in good humour,

might obtain favours from them which would give you a patronage almost equal to that of a prime minister."

"There is some truth in what you say," answered Sir Joshua, "but how could I presume to ask favours from those to whom I became known only by my obligations to them?"

One instance, however, I may record, wherein he prudently deviated from his general rule of conduct in behalf of a young clergyman, his near relative, for whom he was induced to ask a favour. It was from the Marquis, then Viscount Townshend, who was appointed Lord-lieutenant of Ireland. Sir Joshua by a letter to Lord Townshend, then in London, requested from him the gift of any living he might think proper to bestow on this young man, who at that time was unprovided for. The very same morning on which Lord Townshend received Sir Joshua's letter, he came instantly to him, and, in the most gracious manner, assured him that he felt great pleasure in the opportunity Sir Joshua had put in his power of testifying his friendship for him, and that he should most certainly remember him on the first occasion that might offer to serve him. Accordingly, very shortly after, he bestowed on this young clergyman a deanery in Ireland.

The earnest desire which Sir Joshua had to render his pictures perfect to the utmost of his ability, and in each succeeding instance to surpass the

former, occasioned his frequently making them inferior to what they had been in the course of the process ; and when it was observed to him, “ That probably he never had sent out to the world any one of his paintings in as perfect a state as it had been,” he answered, that he believed the remark was very just ; but that, notwithstanding, he certainly gained ground by it on the whole, and improved himself by the experiment : adding, “ If you are not bold enough to run the risk of losing, you can never hope to gain.”

With the same ardent wish of advancing himself in his art, I have heard him say, that whenever a new sitter came to him for a portrait, he always began it with a full determination to make it the best picture he had ever painted ; neither would he allow it to be an excuse for his failure to say, “ The subject was a bad one for a picture ;” there was always nature, he would observe, which, if well treated, was fully sufficient for the purpose.

In the short fragment inserted in his Memoir by Mr. Malone, he expresses himself thus, much to the same purport : “ My success and continual improvement in my art, (if I may be allowed that expression) may be ascribed, in a good measure, to a principle which I will boldly recommend to imitation ; I mean a principle of honesty : which, in this, as in all other instances, is, according to the vulgar proverb, certainly the best policy. I always endeavoured to do my best. Great or vul-

gar, good subjects or bad, all had nature ; by the exact representation of which, or even by the endeavour to give such a representation, the painter cannot but improve in his art."

It was one of Sir Joshua's favorite maxims, that all the gestures of children are graceful, and that the reign of distortion and unnatural attitude, commences with the introduction of the dancing master. He delighted much in marking the dawning traits of the youthful mind, and the actions and bodily movements even of infants ; and it was by these means that he acquired the ability which enabled him to pourtray children with such exquisite happiness, truth, and variety. A circumstance, as related by himself, occurs to my remembrance, which may serve to prove the truth of the above observation, as well as to shew how watchful his mind was to catch instruction wherever it was to be gained.

Sir Joshua being in company with a party of ladies and gentlemen, who were viewing a nobleman's house, they passed through a gallery of portraits, when a little girl, who belonged to one of the party, attracted the particular attention of Sir Joshua by her vivacity and the sensible drollery of her observations ; for whenever the company made a stand, to look at each portrait in particular, the child, unconscious of being observed by any one, imitated, by her actions, the air of the head, and sometimes awkward effect of the ill disposed

position of the limbs in each picture ; and this she did with so much innocence and true feeling, that it was the most just and incontrovertible criticism that could be made on the picture.

We may perceive, by this instance, that those parts of the art which are its essentials, and the most difficult to accomplish with tolerable success, namely, grace, ease of attitude, and expression, are qualities which lie open to the knowledge and judgement of the most simple and untaught persons, in a much greater degree than to the half-learned connoisseur.

Sir Joshua, with true genius, disdained not to draw instruction either from the rudest teachers or from infantine simplicity ; in confirmation of which, in one of his manuscript fragments, I find the following observations, which well correspond with the above.

“ I cannot but think that Appelles’s method of exposing his pictures for public criticism was a very good one. I do not know why the judgement of the vulgar on the mechanical parts of painting should not be as good as any whatever : for instance, as to whether such or such a part be natural or not. If one of those persons should ask why half the face is black, or why there is such a spot of black, or snuff, as they will call it, under the nose, I should conclude from thence that the shadows are thick, or dirtily painted, or that the shadow under the nose was too much resembling

snuff, when, if those shadows had exactly resembled the transparency and colour of nature, they would have no more been taken notice of than the shadow in nature itself. Yet I have seen painters lift up their eyes at such observations, and wrapping themselves up in their own conceit, complain of the want of connoissance in the world in order to value their works as they deserve, never suspecting the fault to be wholly in themselves.

“ A painter should nevertheless take care not to condescend too far, and sacrifice his taste to the judgement of the multitude ; few of those are capable of giving a good judgement in regard to the delicacy of expression.”

Of his sentiments on other subjects unconnected with the practice of art, there are many that come to my recollection ; in particular, when I related to him that old Mr. James Ferguson, the astronomer, was offered the Fellowship of the Royal Society, without solicitation or expense, yet when informed of it, asked “ what he should gain by it ?” and the answer was, that it was an honour conferred on him gratuitously, for which others were very willing to pay ; “ Ah,” said Mr. Ferguson, “ I do not want honour, I want bread !” Sir Joshua observed, that the obtaining of honours was the means of obtaining bread.

Sir Joshua would not willingly admit of any excuse by way of palliating a bad performance.

Once, on my shewing a landscape to him, painted by a friend of mine, an amateur in the art, he said it was very badly done, and asked me if I did not think the same. When I endeavoured to make some apology for my friend, by saying he had not had the advantage of instruction, he answered rather quickly, "What signifies that? In this manner you may excuse any thing, however bad it may be."

In one of his manuscripts, speaking of Michael Angelo, he says, "For such a superior genius, while wrapt in wonder and amazement at his own ideas, to be surly, even to his superiors is excusable; but for such as degrade human nature, and transform them in their representations into monkeys, to imitate this peevishness, and give themselves such airs, is the very excess of the ridiculous."

He observes, "that any miserable artist who had failed in his profession as a painter, from want of ability, and had afterwards, from necessity, turned picture dealer, was always considered, by pretended connoisseurs, as well as by a great part of the world, as a much better judge of the art than the most successful artist."

He again remarks, that "it is very possible for a whole nation to have a peculiarity of manners which shall be condemned by their neighbours, so that what is politeness in one country shall be deemed foppery in another. Sir Godfrey Kneller

and Sir Peter Lely, who were mannerists and admired in England, are despised in France and Italy; but Vandyke's pictures, which are truth itself, and the result of a close attention to nature, are admired by the whole world."

I once observed to Sir Joshua, that a certain insignificant person of our acquaintance had frequent assemblies at his house, which were attended by persons of the very highest rank, and that it was surprising how he could induce them to come to him; when Sir Joshua, who knew the world much better than I ever shall, set me right by saying, "If you will but provide suitable entertainment for them, you may easily have for your visitors whoever you choose to invite, from the highest to the lowest."

The many trifles which I have here related, I fear make me liable to the censure of my judicious reader, and most of those trifles probably had much better have been omitted; but as it is all truth, and several of the circumstances are worth preserving, I was, as I have before observed more than once, unwilling to make myself the judge, by a selection, and, therefore, have risked the danger of giving too many, lest I should have fallen into the worse fault of giving too few: and I have also an apology for what I have done, and which I here give in the very words of that great prelate, Secker, in his tenth sermon, where he has the following passage, "Rabbi David Kimchi, a noted Jewish

commentator, who lived about five hundred years ago, explains that passage in the first psalm, '*His leaf also shall not wither,*' from Rabbins yet older than himself, thus: that *even the idle talk* (so he expresses it,) *of a good man ought to be regarded;* the ost superfluous things, he saith, are always of some value."

I shall, therefore, boldly proceed on such authority, even if my good reader be fatigued by my relating those minute and petty matters, but which have dwelt in my memory from the time I left the house of Sir Joshua, and which, probably, appear more important to my mind, as I have before observed, than they can to another, from their connection with that period of my youth.

It was an opinion of his, that as it is impossible for us to do hurt to the dead, therefore we may hold up their imperfections to view, as an example for others to avoid the like, and by this means to do good to the living. If we owe regard (says Johnson) to the memory of the dead, there is yet more respect to be paid to knowledge, to virtue, and to truth.

On speaking to him concerning a friend of his, who was dying of a lingering disease, for which he was sensible there was no possible cure, it was remarked of this person, that his situation seemed to excite in him the utmost degree of impatience and terror, and that he appeared like a criminal under sentence of death. Sir Joshua observed,

“That we are all under sentence of death ; but that his warrant was signed.”

It was an observation of his, that it had a bad tendency to look at works worse than our own, as it might make us too easily content with our own productions, or else deaden our ardor for the art itself. The exact reverse to this is the consequence from viewing fine pictures.

It was his opinion, that it never did a painter much credit to have no other pictures than his own in a collection, as it became tiresome to the spectator from the want of variety, and also, because the painter's peculiar defects became more conspicuous by seeing them so often repeated.

It may be remarked how well his own works stood this trial, when collected together after his death, and exhibited in Pall-Mall in 1813.

Sir Joshua used to say, that he could instruct any boy that chance should throw in his way, to be able in half a year to paint a likeness in a portrait ; but to give a just expression and true character to the portrait was infinitely difficult and rare to be seen, and when done was that which proved the great master : and of Velasquez the celebrated Spanish painter, of whose great powers he thought so favorably, he said, “What we are all attempting to do with great labour, he does at once.”

A friend of his was relating to him the ill success of an indifferent painter in the country, who,

by his caricature likenesses, enraged his sitters, and more especially the ladies, as much as if he had really made them, in their own persons, as ugly as they were in their portraits, and this he observed seemed to be carrying their anger too far.

“Why you know,” said Sir Joshua, “he has given it under his hand that they are so.”

A very bad picture, which by the possessor was thought to be of great value, was offered to him for his purchase, and the price demanded for it, most absurdly, was two hundred guineas; when he answered with some degree of impatience, “Why not two thousand!”

One day, at dinner time, Sir Joshua brought into the parlour, in his hand, a portrait of Rubens. When Miss Reynolds, with some eagerness demanded if it was an original by Rubens, Sir Joshua asked why she should doubt it? adding “I suppose you thought that a real Rubens could not come into the house with so little noise.”

In conversation once with Sir Joshua, he said to me in the way of advice, that “He who would arrive at eminence in his profession should confine his whole attention to that alone, and not do as many very sensible men have done, who spend their time in acquiring a smattering and general kind of knowledge of every science, by which their powers became so much divided, that they were not masters of any one.” I said hastily, “That is exactly my own father.” He replied, “And it was mine also.”

A young painter who was showing his performance to him in order to have his opinion and instruction upon it, when the faults were pointed out to him, excused himself by saying he had committed the error by following the dictates of his employer whom he wished to please. Sir Joshua would not allow such a reason to be any palliation of his faults, adding, "It is you who are to understand your own business, and not your employer." Yet he would never willingly offer advice, unless he perceived the mind of the person, who asked it, was earnestly engaged on the subject; otherwise, he said it was lost labour, and that instruction went in at one ear and out at the other.

Sir Joshua used to say, that it was a bad custom to talk of or even divulge the subject of your intended work, as it had the tendency to lessen your ardor in the execution of it.

The following observations by Sir Joshua Reynolds, were the result of many conversations, or from fragments written by himself.

"It is not to be supposed that those works, which have stood the test of the wisest and severest ages, have in reality nothing of intrinsic value, but owe the long possessing of fame to a hit of fortune, to the humour or tame obsequiousness of a long succession of admirers. Such an opinion is too bold an attempt upon the reason of mankind, and he that holds it must either be possessed of divine

wisdom, or be much of a fool. By invincible arguments, to demonstrate the mistakes of the learned world in all its errors which have continued for ages, requires a soul of divine perspicuity, (Newton's was such,) clear from those incumbrances that have misguided and obscured the perceptions of other mortals. To oppose a single capricious opinion to the collected force of long established authority, looks like some hero in a play, or the knight errant in a romance, who with his two arms alone routs whole thousands."

"Raffaelle did not think that pictures ought to be considered as merely ornamental furniture. If that alone had been the intent and end of painting, how many painters would be his superiors! He intended to move the passions, to inspire the spectators with the love of virtue and of noble actions; consequently his pictures are not to be slightly passed over, but must be dwelt upon; and the longer this is done, the deeper the impression will be made."

"When a grace is said to be snatched beyond, or contrary to the rules of art, it is nevertheless a truth; for it may be contrary to one rule, but subservient to another more comprehensive. For instance, Raffaelle, in the figure of Christ in the Transfiguration, has made such lines as are contrary to the general rules; but they are agreeable to a more extensive rule; that of being natural, simple, unaffected, and of more energy. It breaks, indeed,

through one rule to approach nearer to another of greater consequence."

"It is possible we should have seen greater variety of thoughts, and more extraordinary conceptions in the works of painters, if they were left to themselves, and did not follow each other like sheep."

"Too much attention to other men's thoughts, by filling the mind, extinguishes the natural power, like too much fuel on fire."

"The human mind cannot at once recollect all the rules of art, or if it could, would still not know how to apply them without practice; it must be by repeated acts that the habit is settled of doing right without reflecting on rules."

"A painter, who vaunted himself upon the great learning and knowledge he had in his profession, produced a picture which he boasted was painted according to the severity of the rules of his art. The connoisseurs flocked to see it; and when, contrary to his expectations, they remained silent, he is astonished at people's blindness and want of taste, pities their ignorance, and complains how little merit is regarded in those days. "I do not wonder at all," says a friend to whom he had made his moan, "at the ill success of your piece, in which you boast to have followed the rigor of the rules of art; when you have neglected the first and most essential of them, which is to have feeling or genius for the art."

“ When a poet would represent a man inflamed by passion, to put a simile in his mouth he knows would be contrary to the rules of poetry, because it would be unnatural. But, suppose the poet truly felt the passion he would represent at the time he was writing upon it, (which most certainly Shakespeare did,) he would never look about for a simile, it would inevitably cause the passion to languish. Thus we see that rules are founded on nature, consequently a poet who felt his subject properly would have very little occasion for rules.”

“ Homer’s Iliad was first written, then Aristotle drew his rules of an epic poem.”

“ Genius begins where rules end. When a painter is master of every rule that is already found out, let one rule more be added ; that is, not to be confined by any, but to think for himself.” *Hippocrates’ Advice.*

“ Squareness has grandeur ; it gives firmness to the forms : a serpentine line, in comparison, appears feeble and tottering.”

“ A firm walk or step is grand. A light step may be genteel.”

“ A straight avenue is grand ; a serpentine line elegant.”

“ One class alone cannot possess all excellencies.”

“ Fashion sometimes adopts one, sometimes the other.”

“Perfection partakes equally of all.”

“In passing our judgement, we are to consider the class to which the subject belongs.”

“In all these cases, as you approach the one kind of excellence you retreat from the other; you cannot join the two together without weakening the effect of each.”

“The great delight of mankind is to strike with surprise.”

“All games of recreation are an imitation of enmity.”

“Portraits, as well as written characters of men, should be decidedly marked, otherwise they will be insipid.”

“The younger pupils are best taught by those who are in a small degree advanced in knowledge above themselves, and from that cause proceeds the peculiar advantage of studying in academies.”

“In painting prefer truth before freedom of hand.”

“Grandeur is composed of straight lines.”

“Genteelness and elegance of serpentine lines.”

“A firm and determined manner is grand, but not elegant.”

“Genteelness is not being crowded, especially if there is a fullness at the same time.”

“Air is a single moment of any action.”

“Simplicity is an exact medium between too little and too much.”

“Grace is the medium of motion, beauty is the medium of form, and genteelness the medium of the fashion.”

“Beauty consists in a fitness to the end proposed”

“Ornament is the medium between wanting what is necessary, and being over-furnished,”

“Ornament ought to arise only from the right ordering of things. *Orno* is Latin for ‘to furnish.’”

“Manner in painting is like peculiarity of behaviour; though it may please a few, the bulk of mankind will condemn it.”

“The only wages a real genius thinks of in his labour, is the praise of impartial judges.”

“A good portrait painter may not be capable of painting history.”

“But an historical painter for certain has the ability to paint portrait.”

“The great principle of being happy in this world is not to regard or be affected with small things.”

“No man relishes an evening walk like him whose mind has been employed the whole preceding day.”

“Polite behaviour and a refined address, like good pictures, make the least show to ordinary eyes.”

“Humility is not to despise any thing, especially mankind.”

“Magnanimity is not to be disturbed at any thing.”

“A man is a pedant who, having been brought up among books, is able to talk of nothing else. The same of a soldier, lawyer, painter, &c.”

“ Natural, is that which is according to the common course of things. An ugly face is not according to the common course of things, consequently an ugly face is an unnatural face.”

“ The character of a nation is perhaps more strongly marked by their taste in painting, than in any other pursuit, although more considerable; as you may easier find which way the wind sits by throwing up a straw in the air than any heavier substance.”

“ Rules are very necessary to, but will never make, a painter.

“ They should be used as servants, and subject to us, not we to them.”

“ There are some landscape painters, who the more they work on their trees, render them the less like the objects of their imitation.”

“ Real greatness is that which presents less by far to the sense than to the imagination.”

“ Greatness causes admiration, oftentimes astonishment.”

“ There is a certain majesty in simplicity, which is far above all the quaintness of wit.” *Pope.*

“ A certain degree of pride, enough to take off any timourousness, and enable him to depend on the force of his own genius, is a necessary qualification in a painter.”*

“ True sublimity consists more in the natural and simple than in the pompous and swelling.”

* Our own opinion that we shall succeed, is that often which gives us success in the most difficult undertakings.

“The very foundation of the art of painting is invention; and he who most excels in that high quality must be allowed to be the greatest painter, in what degree soever he may be surpassed by others in the more inferior branches of the art.”

“The painter who knows his profession from principles, may apply them alike to any branch of the art, and succeed in it.”

“Every painter has some favourite branch of the art which he looks for in a picture; and in proportion as that part is well or ill executed, he pronounces his opinion upon the whole. One artist looks for colouring, another for drawing, another for handling; an independent spectator looks for expression.”

“Never give the least touch with your pencil till you have present in your mind a perfect idea of your future work.”

“Paint at the greatest distance possible from your sitter, and place the picture near to the sitter, or sometimes under him, so as to see both together.”

“In beautiful faces keep the whole circumference about the eye in a mezzotinto, as seen in the works of Guido and the best of Carlo Maratti.”*

“Look at the object from which you are painting, with your eye-lids half closed, which gives breadth to the object, and subdues all the little unimportant parts.”

* An expression of modesty softens the eye, and improves the beauty of the face while it discovers that of the mind.

“ The difference between the Roman and the Venetian manner of painting their draperies is, that the former has always broad lights ; the latter only catches of light, and consequently more natural, more silky, but not so noble.”

“ It surprises the ignorant in art when they hear it said, that such drapery in a picture as seems to them not to be an exact imitation of individual nature, is yet better than that which is so natural, that (to use their own words,) it looks as if you could take it up. I would ask such persons, whether in an heroic poem (to that style in painting I allude,) they look upon those expressions which are the most familiar to be the best ? Expressions, however proper of themselves, yet, by being too often in the mouths of the vulgar, contract a meanness. It is the same in respect to the accompaniments in a picture ; therefore the painter carefully avoids introducing into his pictures those utensils which are familiar, and seen by us every day, even so to drapery : or when forced to adopt them, then they are drawn after a form of his own composing, or else taken from antique models. He therefore objects to such drapery as would be called natural ; he seeks only the order of the folds, that they are large, and of a noble cast ; that they mark out the parts they cover, and flow sweetly into each other, and conduct the eye with satisfaction from one fold to another, without offensive crossings or affected contrasts.”

“ The great painter, as well as the poet, founds his work on general nature ; but in the style of Watteau, Lancret, &c. ; on the contrary, the more natural the drapery is represented the better it is.”

“ Raffaelle and Rembrandt both imitated nature ; with this difference, that the first showed what she had that was most beautiful, noble, and simple : the other took her without selection, and without exactness. It is true we see nature in his figures, but we are sorry to say it is nature.”

“ It is necessary that a painter should have an elevated and sublime comprehension of things ; which is to be acquired by being intimately acquainted with the noblest characters of the ancients.”

“ There is a bombast in painting as well as in poetry, and it is divided from the true sublime by a thin partition. Hence it often happens that when the painter thinks he has given his figure the air of a hero, or the poet made him, as he conceives, speak like one, they are no more the true representations of either, than Ancient Pistol, or the player, who, in order to act the great hero, endeavoured to look as big as he could, and strutted about the stage till he was hissed off by his judicious audience.”

“ Some painters imagine the sublime to consist in overstrained and forced attitudes ; thus quitting as much as possible every easy and natural air and action.”

“Others, on the contrary, by imitating nature too closely, and without choice, have made their figures appear mean and inelegant. The first manner is the most prevalent, and indeed by much the easiest attained; as the other extreme requires some attention to nature.”

“Those pompous airs, however, are more imposing, and make a greater show, and strike the eye of a raw and ignorant beholder far more than the simple natural manner.”

“The same principle is applicable also to colouring: as colours, raw and gaudy, give most delight to the eye of the vulgar.”

“In painting, as in architecture, the very essence and perfection of the grand style is simplicity; not to be too much encumbered with little ornaments, which produce no effect at a distance, but only make a confused heap of littlenesses.”

“On the contrary, a picture should be composed of few and large parts, which fill the eye distinctly.”

“Large parts and few are the foundation of a grand gusto.”

“A simplicity of taste may descend into clownishness and poverty of invention; so also a richness and redundancy of invention may run into wildness, a romantic kind of richness and magnificence, like the descriptions to be met with only in romances: the consequence of which is, that you behold them without the least emotion.”

“**Œconomy and frugality have a relationship to taste, in not being too prodigal of rich ornaments or gay draperies.**”

“**Endeavour to look at the subject or sitter from which you are painting as if it was a picture ; this will in some degree render it more easy to be copied.**”

“**In painting consider the object before you, whatever it may be, as more made out by light and shadow than by its lines.**”

“**When a painter becomes fond of talking, he had better put a padlock on his mouth, because those who can be admired for what they say will have less desire to be admired for what they can do ; and as the former is so much easier performed with applause than the latter, it will more frequently be adopted : it being the nature of mankind to get as much commendation as they can acquire, and by the easiest means.**”

Of talkers he adds, “**They read, study, and look at pictures, with no other view than of qualifying themselves for talking on the subject ; their knowledge goes no further : so that an ingenious man may sometimes by chance hear a profitable sentence from them, though it really is of no kind of service to themselves. They are like the bird that brings home meat in her beak for her young, but never tastes it herself.**”

“**Those talkers foolishly think, that if they have acquired a reputation by their tongue, it is**

sufficient for them ; so do not care to struggle with the laborious part, that of endeavouring to practice what they so fluently deliver.”

“ A student should begin his career by a careful finishing, and making out the parts ; as practice will give him freedom and facility of hand : a bold and unfinished manner is commonly the habit of old age.”

The following are some of his observations on drawing :

“ Take care to give your figure a sweep or sway.”

“ Outlines in waves, soft, and almost imperceptible against the back ground.”

“ Never make the contour too coarse.”

“ Avoid also those outlines and lines which are equal, which make parallels, triangles, &c.”

“ The parts that are nearest to our eye appear more enlightened, deeper shadowed, and better seen.”

“ Keep broad lights and shadows, and also principal lights and shadows.”

“ Where there is the deepest shadow it is accompanied by the brightest light.”

“ Let nothing start out, or be too strong for its place.

ON PAINTING A HEAD.

“ Let those parts which turn or retire from our eye be of broken or mixed colours, as being less distinguished and nearer the borders.”

“ Let all your shadows be of one colour ; glaze them till they are so.”

“ Use red colours in the shadows of the most delicate complexions, but with discretion.”

“ Contrive to have a skreen with red or yellow colour on it, to reflect the light on the shaded part of the sitter’s face.”

“ Avoid the chalk, the brick-dust, and the charcoal, and think on a pearl and a ripe peach.”

“ Avoid long continued lines in the eyes, and too many sharp ones.”

Notwithstanding that Reynolds, in the course of a long life, had judged it prudent, for his own use and reference, to make so many memorandums of his floating ideas on the subject of his profession, yet it was impossible for any man to have thought upon the arduous labours of that profession with more modesty. Indeed, when Lord Monboddo, once discoursing with him, said, that he thought the profession of painting must require great exertion of mind and arduous study, Sir Joshua, with his accustomed modesty, answered, “ that he did not think it deserved the name of study, as it was no more than that degree of employment for the mind which fully occupies it without fatigue : and probably for this reason, was more conducive to the happiness of the individual, than the practice of any other profession.”

I think that, when Sir Joshua made this answer

he did not recollect the various knowledge and great invention which is required by those who have made the ample field of historical painting their study and pursuit. It was rather the speech of a mere portrait painter; for, at other times, I have heard him confess the great difficulty it was to him to paint history, from the want of practice in that department; which, to execute in its utmost perfection, requires more knowledge than has ever been possessed by any one man.

It was his opinion, that the population of London was no more than just sufficient to afford a reputable maintenance for eight painters only, and this number to include all the different branches of the art. What would he now say when more than eight hundred come forward and claim a maintenance, and their number is every day increasing?

I shall now resume my narrative.

In Sir Joshua's seventh discourse, delivered on the 10th December, as usual, in this year, his object was to prove the existence of a real standard of taste; this he considered as absolute as one for corporeal beauty, and as an immutable truth in itself, although, at the same time, it did not preclude the existence of certain variable and secondary truths, differing according to circumstances, in their influence as well as in their stability, and therefore particularly requiring the artist's close attention.

At the commencement of this oration, he again recommended *industry* most strenuously to the students; but with this happy distinction, that it was not “the industry of the *hands*, but of the *mind*.” He then marked the precise definition of the art itself, which, though “not a divine *gift*, so neither is it a mechanical trade;” considering its foundation as resting on solid science, but still insisting that practice, although essential to perfection, would never arrive at its aim unless directed by a judicious principle.

As great learning is not absolutely necessary for a painter, he recommended his youthful hearers not to be terrified at the want of it, but still to keep in mind that a certain degree of cultivation, such as was in their power, was nevertheless essential; and he therefore pointed out the propriety of being tolerably conversant with the poets, even in English, so as to imbibe a poetical spirit, of adopting a habit of acquiring and digesting ideas, and of obtaining some knowledge of that part of philosophy which gives an insight into human nature, as connected with the manners, characters, passions, and affections; in short that a painter “ought to know *something* concerning the mind, as well as a *great deal* concerning the body of man”—a truth which he more fully exemplified in another part of the discourse, saying, that, “in fact, as he who does not know himself, does not know others, so it may be said,

with equal truth; that he who does not know others, knows himself but very imperfectly.”

For this great end, he recommended reading as the recreation of leisure hours; and that the student (agreeable to his own custom) should supply what partial and desultory reading cannot afford, by the conversation of learned and ingenious men, which he considered as the best of all substitutes for those who have not the means or opportunities of deep study.

Of these studies, and of this conversation, added Sir Joshua, the desire and legitimate offspring is a power of distinguishing right from wrong; which power, when applied to works of art, he considered to be that which the world calls “Taste.” He then proceeded to examine, whether *Taste* is so far beyond human reach as to be unattainable with care, or so very vague and capricious that no care ought to be employed about it.

To follow him through this investigation would be far beyond my proposed limits; though it may be noticed, that he laid it down as an axiom, that although *Genius* and *Taste*, in their common acceptance, appear to be very nearly related, as “the difference lies only in this, that genius has superadded to it a habit or power of execution: or we may say, that taste, when this power is added, changes its name and is called genius,—still is the popular opinion most absurd, that they may both claim an entire exemption from the re-

straint of rules ; that their powers are intuitive ; and that, under the name of genius great works are produced, and under the name of taste an exact judgement is given, without our knowing why, and without our being under the least obligation to reason, precept, or experience.”

After speaking of taste in general, he applied it to the art in its various particulars, observing, that it is reason and good sense which rank and estimate every art, and every part of that art, according to its importance, from the painter of animated, down to inanimate, nature ; but he protested against any man who shall prefer the inferior style, saying, that it is his taste ; for here taste has nothing, or, at least, ought to have nothing, to do with the question—“ he wants not taste, but sense and soundness of judgement.”

In avoiding one extreme of opinion, however, Sir Joshua did not commit the frequent error of adopting its opposite ; but still acknowledged that a part of taste does not absolutely belong to the external form of things, but is addressed to the mind, and actually depends on its original frame, or, as he expressed himself, “ the organization of the soul ; I mean the imagination and the passions”—but then he contended, that the principles of these are as invariable as the former, and are to be known and reasoned upon in the same manner, by an appeal to common sense deciding upon the common feelings of mankind.

In his enthusiasm for the art itself, Sir Joshua never lost sight of its highest advantages in its bearing upon the minds of mankind wherever it was cultivated; and in this very discourse he noticed, that it has been often observed, that the good and virtuous man alone can acquire this true or just relish even of works of art; an opinion which he considered as well founded, when we reflect that the same habit of mind which is acquired by our search after truth in the more serious duties of life, is only transferred to the pursuit of lighter amusements; that the same disposition, the same desire to find something steady, substantial, and durable, on which the mind can lean, as it were, and rest with safety, actuate us in both cases; and, as he adds, that the subject only is changed, but that we pursue the same method in our search after the idea of beauty and perfection in each; “of virtue, by looking forward beyond ourselves to society, and to the whole; of arts, by extending our views in the same manner to all ages and all times.”

The truths with which he closed this brilliant discourse are too important to mankind in general not to be repeated here; for Sir Joshua always had the power, as well as the desire, of rendering art useful to morals. “The true spirit of philosophy,” said he, “by giving knowledge, gives a manly confidence, and substitutes rational firmness in the place of vain presumption. A

man of real taste is always a man of judgment in other respects ; and those inventions which either disdain, or shrink from, reason, are generally, I fear, more like the dreams of a distempered brain, than the exalted enthusiasm of a sound and true genius. In the midst of the highest flights of fancy or imagination, reason ought to preside from first to last, though I admit her more powerful operation is upon reflection !”

1777.

ÆTAT. 53.

OF the year 1777 I have little to record concerning Sir Joshua from my own knowledge, as, at that time, I was not in London. A poetical epistle, about this period, had been printed, addressed to him, in which, whilst praising a portrait of Lord Amherst, the poet says something about the fleetness of his colours, when he good-humourly observed, in answer, that it must be acknowledged then, that he came off with flying colours.

This poem, in addition to its mixture of praise, and of a certain portion of implied censure, also offered Sir Joshua some advice, recommending to him the further painting of Burke and Garrick ; a hint which was totally unnecessary both to the wishes and the genius of the artist and the friend.

1778.

ÆTAT. 54.

In 1778 Sir Joshua published his Seven Discourses, with a Dedication to his Majesty, of which it was aptly said at the time, that it was a model to dedicators, and a hint both to writers and painters, that a portrait may be well drawn, without being varnished, and highly coloured without being daubed.

The most prominent feature in it runs thus:—
“ The regular progress of cultivated life is from necessaries to accommodations, from accommodations to ornaments.

“ By your illustrious predecessors were established Marts for Manufactures, and Colleges for Science ; but for the Arts of Elegance, those Arts by which Manufactures are improved and Science refined, to found an Academy was reserved for your Majesty.

“ Had such patronage been without effect, there had been reason to believe that nature had, by some insurmountable impediment, obstructed our proficiency ; but the annual exhibitions, which your Majesty has been pleased to encourage, show that only encouragement had been wanting.

“ To give advice to those who are contending for royal liberality, has been, for some years, the duty of my station in the Academy ; and these

Discourses hope for your Majesty's acceptance, as well intended endeavours to excite the emulation which your notice has kindled, and to direct those studies which your bounty has rewarded.

“ *Sint Mæcenates non deerunt Marones.*”—

I think it has already been observed, that at all the times when Sir Joshua delivered his discourses to the Royal Academy, the audience was very numerous, being composed of the learned and the great, as well as those engaged in the study of the arts.

A gold medal was presented once in every two years by the Royal Academy, as a prize for the best historical picture, to be painted by a student of the Academy.

A young painter who had made several different designs for the composition of the story he was about to execute in order to his becoming a candidate, brought his sketches to Sir Joshua, to consult with him and have his opinion as to which was the best in point of sentiment, or most clear in explaining the history.

Sir Joshua's answer was to this effect: “ You may choose whichever you please; it will turn out precisely the same; you are to recollect that your picture is to be judged of by painters only. It will be the manual execution of the work, and that alone which will engross the atten-

tion of Artists, and the degree of merit displayed in that part of the art is what will determine them in their election of the candidate for the prize.

“ It is no matter how long or how short the time may have been in which you have done the work ; or with how much difficulty, or with how much ease you have accomplished it. The result alone is to be considered.”

This is quite consistent with some observations in the fragments preserved by Mr. Malone, where he says, “ My principal labour was employed on the whole together ; and I was never weary of changing, and trying different modes and different effects. I had always some scheme in my mind, and a perpetual desire to advance. By constantly endeavouring to do my best, I acquired a power of doing that with spontaneous facility, which at first was the effort of my whole mind ; and my reward was threefold ; the satisfaction resulting from acting on this first principle, improvement in my art, and the pleasure derived from a constant pursuit after excellence.”

In this year he painted one of his best portraits of Dr. Johnson, who observes of it in a letter to Mrs. Thrale, “ I have twice sat to Sir Joshua, and he seems to like his own performance. He has projected another in which I am to be busy ; but we can think of it at leisure”—and in a subsequent epistle, he adds, “ Sir Joshua has finished my picture, and it seems to please every body, but I shall wait till I see how it pleases you.”

In this strict intimacy so long kept up with Dr. Johnson, Sir Joshua seems to have considered himself as enjoying both pleasure and advantage; and upon one occasion, whilst conversing with a friend upon the strictness with which Johnson inculcated to all his acquaintance the importance of perpetual vigilance against the slightest degree of falsehood, he observed that the effect had been, that all who were of his *school* were distinguished for a love of truth and accuracy, which they might not have possessed in the same degree, if they had not been acquainted with Johnson.

Sir Joshua's regard for the memory of his departed friend Goldsmith is properly recorded by Boswell in a conversation which took place at this period, at a dinner party at his house. When talking of the "Traveller" he said, "I was glad to hear Charles Fox say, it was one of the finest poems in the English language." Mr. Langton then asked, "Why were you glad? you surely had no doubt of this before?" to which Johnson added, "No; the merit of the *Traveller* is so well established, that Mr. Fox's praise cannot augment it, nor his censure diminish it;" when, with great modesty, Sir Joshua replied, "But his friends may suspect they had too great a partiality for him."

Speaking of this conversation afterwards, Johnson seemed to display some little jealousy at Sir Joshua's friendship with the heads of a party to which his own politics were inimical, for he said,

“ Yes, Sir, I knocked Fox on the head, without ceremony. Reynolds is too much under Fox and Burke at present. He is under the *Fox Star* and the *Irish Constellation*. He is always under some planet ;” —but the truth is, that Sir Joshua never attempted to borrow light from any political or scientific luminary, however brilliant ; for, to carry on the metaphor, ’twas his own powerful attraction that brought him into the same sphere with such illustrious persons.

Soon after Mr. Boswell, talking of a phrase of Garrick’s, who called Lord Camden a “ little lawyer,” at the time he was boasting of his acquaintance, Johnson said, “ Well, Sir, Garrick talked very properly. Lord Camden was a *little lawyer* to be associating so familiarly with a player ;” on which, Sir Joshua observed, and with great truth, “ that Johnson considered Garrick to be, as it were, his *property*, and that he would allow no man either to blame or to praise Garrick in his presence, without contradicting him.”

Another conversation about this time, recorded by Mr. Boswell, is so descriptive of Sir Joshua’s mild, yet persevering manner, in argumentative, yet friendly discourse, that I should not feel myself at liberty to omit it.

Whilst dining at General Paoli’s, the subject of wine drinking was introduced, which Sir Joshua defended, and Boswell at that time drinking water in imitation of Johnson, the latter exclaimed,

“ Boswell is a bolder combatant than Sir Joshua : he argues for wine without the help of wine ; but Sir Joshua with it.” Sir Joshua replied, “ But to please one’s company is a strong motive ;” when Johnson, then supposing the whole company to be a little elevated, exclaimed, “ I won’t argue any more with you, Sir : you are too far gone ;” to which he mildly answered, “ I should have thought so indeed, Sir, had I made such a speech as you have now.” On this Johnson drew himself up, blushing, as Boswell describes it, and said, “ Nay, don’t be angry, I did not mean to offend you.”

Sir Joshua then observed, “ At first the taste of wine was disagreeable to me ; but I brought myself to drink it, *that I might be like other people*. The pleasure of drinking wine is so connected with pleasing your company, that altogether there is something of social goodness in it.” As this touched upon Johnson’s own peculiarity he felt it, and, though inaccurately, complained that it was only saying the same thing over again.

On another occasion Sir Joshua shewed his habit and facility of judging of character, for whilst conversing about Johnson in his absence, Boswell said, that his power of reasoning was very strong, and that he had a peculiar art of drawing characters, which was as rare as good portrait painting. “ Yes, replied Sir Joshua, he is undoubtedly admirable in this ; but in order to mark the charac-

ters which he draws, he overcharges them, and gives people more than they really have, whether of good or bad."

Another proof of Sir Joshua's nice discrimination of character is seen in the distinction he makes between true politeness and the affectation of it, and clearly given by him in the instance of two noblemen, to whom he paid a morning visit on a Sunday. The first that he paid his respects to received him with extraordinary affected condescension, and seemed very desirous to please, talked to him the whole time on nothing but his art, in order to give him a fair opportunity of appearing to the most advantage, and observed to him, that he had requested the pleasure of this visit on a Sunday that he might not occasion his losing that time which, on other days, could be so much better employed.

After quitting this nobleman, he paid his next visit to another, (I think it was Lord Chesterfield,) who unlike the first, received him with the same freedom as if he had been his equal, never once spoke upon the subject of art, nor observed that Sunday was the day of rest for the laborious; but discoursed on the news and the occurrences of the day, and on such other topics as a gentleman of education is supposed to be acquainted with, and no word escaped him that denoted his recollection of any difference in their stations.

This anecdote was related to me by Sir Joshua

himself many years after the occurrence, as an instance that had struck him very forcibly as a fine contrast.

The perspicuity and clearness of Sir Joshua's judgement were evident in all his conversation, and another little instance is thus given in his own words from a fragment written in his own hand.

“ Josiah Tucker, Dean of Gloucester, at a meeting of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, said, that he thought a pin-maker was a more useful and valuable member of society than Raffaele.

“ This is an observation of a very narrow mind; a mind that is confined to the mere object of commerce, that sees with a microscopic eye but a part of the great machine of the economy of life, and thinks that small part which he sees to be the whole. Commerce is the means, not the end, of happiness or pleasure: the end is a rational enjoyment of life, by means of arts and sciences; it is, therefore, the highest degree of folly to set the means in a higher rank of esteem than the accomplished end. It is as much as to say that the brick-maker is a more useful member of society than the architect who employs him. The usefulness of the brick-maker is acknowledged, but the rank of him and the architect are very different. No man deserves better of mankind than he who has the art of opening sources of intellectual pleasure and instruction by means of the senses.”

It is not to be understood from this anecdote that Sir Joshua was apt to over-rate the degree of his profession in respect to its rank in society. The following circumstance will show how just a view he had of its comparative importance.

Sir Joshua Reynolds had as great a portion of enthusiasm for his art, as any man can have for the study which he may have adopted; and, indeed, without this stimulus nothing great or difficult can be accomplished: yet he was totally free from that weakness so commonly found among professional men, of over-rating either the rank, value, or importance of his profession. He felt it as a duty to excel in the department which he had undertaken: he relied upon it entirely, as his great source of support and honour, his bulwark and preserver; but he did not expect or require, as a thing of course, that others should see it in the same view: it was of high consequence to him; but not equally so to *them*. The plank that saves a man from drowning becomes to him of more value than a first-rate man of war, yet he does not expect that others should look on it as of the same degree of importance. Hence Sir Joshua always considered this professional kind of mania as a species of pedantry, and thought a certain eminent professor of the science of music very absurd who, when he related a circumstance of three great musicians having been introduced at the court of a prince, said "these three great *personages* were

presented," a term only applicable to persons of high rank in society.

It has often been remarked that the king never commissioned Sir Joshua for a single picture ; indeed he never sat to him but once, when his portrait was painted by him for the Royal Academy.

Soon after that picture was finished, Sir Joshua went down on a visit to Dr. Warton at Winchester College, where he was particularly noticed by their Majesties, who were then making a tour through the summer encampments, having taken Winchester in their route.

In Dr. Warton's biography, some of the particulars of this visit are entered into ; his house being stated at that period to have been filled with men, some of whom were of high and acknowledged talents ; amongst others, in addition to Sir Joshua, were the late Lord Palmerston, Messrs. Stanley and Warton, and Mr. Garrick ; a whimsical accident is stated to have occurred to the latter at one of the reviews, and which Sir Joshua afterwards recounted with great humour.

At one of those field-days in the vicinity, Garrick found it necessary to dismount, when his horse escaped from his hold and ran off ; throwing himself immediately into his professional attitude he cried out, as if on Bosworth field. " A horse ! a horse ! my kingdom for a horse ! "

This exclamation, and the accompanying attitude, excited great amazement amongst the sur-

rounding spectators, who knew him not ; but it could not escape his Majesty's quick apprehension, for it being within his hearing, he immediately said, " Those must be the tones of Garrick ! see if he is not on the ground." The theatrical and dismounted monarch was immediately brought to his Majesty, who not only condoled with him most good humouredly on his misfortune, but flatteringly added, " that his delivery of Shakespeare could never pass undiscovered."

Of further incidents relative to art, connected with the biography of Sir Joshua during this year, I have to mention, that Mr. Score, a native of Devonshire, was his pupil about this time, and that on the 10th of December, as usual, the President delivered his eighth discourse.

In this he laid it down as a truth, that all the principles both of painting and poetry have their foundation in the human mind ; that novelty and contrast, however necessary, must still become defects, if carried to excess ; and that even simplicity itself might be overstrained.

These points he generally illustrated, as emanating from the mind itself, by stating, that as variety reanimates the attention, which is apt to languish under a continual sameness, so novelty makes a more forcible impression on the mind, than can be produced by the representation of what we have often seen before, whilst contrast stimulates the power of comparison by opposition.

All this he considered so obvious as not to require proof; but at the same time he very judiciously added, that the mind, though an active principle, has likewise a disposition to indolence; and though it loves exercise, loves it only to a certain degree, beyond which it is very unwilling to be led, or driven. From this, then, he inferred, that the pursuit of novelty and variety may be carried to excess; for whenever variety entirely destroys the pleasure arising from uniformity and repetition, and whenever novelty counteracts and shuts out the pleasure arising from old habits and customs, they must then oppose, in too great a degree, the indolence of our disposition, so that the mind can only bear, with pleasure, a small portion of novelty at a time.

This position he exemplified further, by observing, that when the objects are scattered and divided into many equal parts in any composition, the eye is thereby perplexed and fatigued, from not knowing where to rest, where to find the principal action, or where is the principal figure; for when all are making equal pretensions to notice, all are in equal danger of neglect. “The expression which is used very often on these occasions is, *the piece wants repose*; a word which perfectly expresses a relief of the mind from that state of hurry and anxiety which it suffers, when looking at a work of this character.”

Sir Joshua then proceeded to illustrate his sub-

ject by a critical review of both painters and poets, and took occasion, before closing, to introduce that excellent note on Macbeth, already noticed.

I recollect a circumstance about this time, which shews his openness to conviction, and his readiness to correct whatever he found amiss in his own works. A young artist of the name of Powell, who was much employed in copying Sir Joshua's pictures in a small size, in oil colours, and which he executed with much accuracy and taste, amongst others, copied the great picture of the Marlborough family now at Blenheim castle, which Sir Joshua had just finished; and when Powell produced the copy for his inspection, he surprized him by finding much fault with the effect of the back ground, although it was an exact imitation of the original picture. Powell fatigued by the labour he had already bestowed, protested he could make it no better, but Sir Joshua quieted his alarm, by assuring him it was with his own original that he was offended, not with the copy: and accordingly altered it afterwards upon mature reflection.

This Mr. Powell had borrowed a beautiful picture by Sir Joshua of a child, the face in shadow, to make a copy from it. When he had finished his copy and was taking the picture home, a young gentleman in the street, in flourishing about the stick which he carried in his hand, by accident struck the picture, when a large part of the face and hand of the painting dropped from the

canvass, to the utter astonishment and dismay of poor Powell, who was totally unable to repair the damage.

1779.

ÆTAT. 55.

IN the year 1779 Sir Joshua devoted his abilities to partly ornamenting of the new apartments in Somerset-house, by executing a picture for the handsome ceiling of the library. In the centre is *Theory* sitting on a cloud. In her hand she holds a scroll with an inscription, "Theory is the knowledge of what is truly nature," a definition quite in unison with the general principle so ably maintained by the painter throughout his discourses.

It is an obvious remark, that the point of view in which paintings on ceilings can be seen, is by no means favourable to the general effect; this difficulty has, however, been surmounted, in some degree, by the discriminating skill of Sir Joshua, and his judicious choice of his subject, to which he has imparted the most graceful lightness, representing her rather as hovering over the head of the spectator, than as fixed on any permanent seat.

In addition to this elegant specimen of his art, are the two royal portraits, in the council-room, of their present Majesties; the King being represented on his coronation chair, as at the performance of that ceremony, and his consort also,

adorned with all the paraphernalia of regal costume and state.

This year terminated the mortal career of Garrick, whose fame will, however, last long. He had continued to act on the stage until a late period of his life; and it being remarked to Sir Joshua as rather extraordinary, that this Roscius of the British drama should still undergo so much fatigue after his fortune was made, and his fame established, he observed, with great knowledge of human nature, "That it was necessary for Garrick to do so, in order to preserve his popularity, and to keep up his importance with the great, who soon neglect and forget those who cease to be the town talk, however eminent they may have been," so much does fashion govern the world.

On Mr. Garrick's demise, a monody was written by Mr. Sheridan* to his memory; in which he very

* Since the publication of the first edition, we have also witnessed a monody on the admired orator himself; of whom I recollect that immediately after his marriage with Miss Linley, Sir Joshua invited them to dinner, together with a large company, with a full hope that he should gratify his guests with a song from so famous a performer, and accordingly had procured a fine toned piano-forte in perfect order for the purpose: when lo! to his great mortification, on hints being given that a song from her would be received as a great gratification and favour, Mr. Sheridan answered that Mrs. Sheridan, *with his assent*, had come to a resolution never again to sing in public company—Sir Joshua repeated this next day in my hearing with some degree of anger, saying "what reason could they think I had to invite them to dinner, unless it was to hear her sing, for she cannot talk?"

elegantly shews, that the fame of the orator and the actor must be nearly as evanescent as those exertions on which it was founded, if not aided by the poet or the painter, whose works also have a better chance of immortality. In this production he paid Sir Joshua the compliment of placing his efforts in apposition with those of Raffaele himself.

“ Whate’er of wonder Reynolds now may raise,
Raffaele still boasts contemporary praise ;
Each dazzling light, and gaudier bloom subdu’d,
With undiminished awe his works are view’d :
E’en Beauty’s portrait wears a softer prime,
Touch’d by the tender hand of mellowing time.”

In this year Sir Joshua raised his price to fifty guineas for a head size, which he continued during the remainder of his life : his rapidly accumulating fortune was not, however, for his own sole enjoyment ; he still felt the luxury of doing good, and had many objects of bounty pointed out to him by his friend Johnson, who, in one of his letters in this year to Mrs. Thrale, inquires, “ Will master give me any thing for my poor neighbours ? I have had from *Sir Joshua* and Mr. Strahan.”

1780.

ÆTAT. 56.

THE year 1780 is particularly noticeable, as that in which the Academy first began to exhibit

at Somerset-house ; their apartments in that building having recently been finished for their reception.

On this occasion the critics of the day seemed to consider themselves as arrived at a new era in the arts, or, at least, in the annals of the Academy itself, thus by the Sovereign's munificence established in a superb edifice, supposed to be well calculated for all the purposes of the Society : and I find the two following criticisms which were written upon that occasion.

One of them is in an address to his Majesty, prefixed to a "Candid Review of the Exhibition," where it is said, that "The excellence to which the arts have arisen calls particularly on the attention of the world. The progress of the Academy has been so rapid, that, though this is only the 12th year of its existence, it has already made Britain the seat of Arts, and in painting, sculpture, and engraving, it rivals, if it does not excel, all the other schools in Europe. In all ages the progress of the arts to excellence has been slow and gradual ; but it is the singular merit of the Royal Academy of Britain, that it has broke through the fetters with which similar institutions have heretofore been confined, and by one rapid stride has attained the pre-eminence of all competitors."

In opposition to this, a writer in the London Courant observes, that "an establishment bearing the sanction of royal patronage, and committed to

the direction of a genius like that of Sir Joshua Reynolds, whose works, the acknowledged patterns of grace and expression, conduce not more to excite emulation, than his lectures serve to instruct the students in the solid principles of design and composition, might have been presumed to have exerted such effects of British genius in the sublimer branches of the arts, as might almost have rivalled the exquisite sculpture of Ancient Greece and Rome, or the finished paintings of the Roman, Florentine, and Flemish schools; but in Sculpture, as well as in History, Painting, and Landscape, we cannot but perceive a mortifying disparity in the best of these pieces, in the late exhibition, when placed in competition with the works before mentioned."

This wise critic, it seems, expected that painters would start up as mushrooms do, and thrive under as small a portion of attention, but he ought to have known that the Arts are not to be raised by the numbers, however great, who only gaze on them, and do no more.

Sir Joshua's offerings to the Exhibition this year consisted of his historical portrait of Miss Beauclerc in the character of Spencer's Una, and of his emblematical figure of Justice, then drawn as a model for the window which Mr. Jarvis was painting at Oxford; to these were subjoined his portraits of the historian Gibbon, of Lady Beaumont, of Lord Cholmondeley, and of the present

Duke of Gloucester. The receipts of this year's exhibition exceeded the sum of 3000*l*.

Sir Joshua in addition to these pictures thus exhibited, also painted for the Royal Academy that portrait of Sir William Chambers which they now possess.

It was in this year also that he painted that portrait of himself, a half length, now in the Royal Academy, and which has a cap, and the gown of his honorary degree at Oxford. In this picture is introduced the bust of Michael Angelo, whose works he always contemplated, and spoke of, with enthusiasm: this is nearly the same dress in which he has represented himself in several others, one of them sent to Florence, and another, a three-quarter, in the possession of the Duke of Rutland.

That Reynolds was as willing to give advice to others, as to profit from the humblest hints, is evident from his conduct towards Mr. Pocock, the present eminent marine painter, who, in 1780, sent his first attempt in oil colours, to him, at the same time desiring to have his candid opinion upon the picture, and, if he thought proper, that it might be exhibited at the Royal Academy exhibition. To this he received the following answer.

To N. Pocock, Esq.

Leicester Fields, May 4th, 1780.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ Your picture came too late for the exhibition. It is much beyond what I expected from a first

essay in oil colours: all the parts separately are extremely well painted; but there wants a harmony in the whole together; there is no union between the clouds, the sea, and the sails. Though the sea appears sometimes as green as you have painted it, yet it is a choice very unfavourable to the art; it seems to me absolutely necessary in order to produce harmony, and that the picture should appear to be painted, as the phrase is, from one palette, that those three great objects of ship-painting should be very much of the same colour as was the practice of Vanderveelde, and he seems to be driven to this conduct by necessity. Whatever colour predominates in a picture, that colour must be introduced in other parts; but no green colour, such as you have given to the sea, can make a part of a sky. I believe the truth is, that, however the sea may appear green, when you are looking down on it, and it is very near—at such a distance as your ships are supposed to be, it assumes the colour of the sky.

“ I would recommend to you, above all things, to paint from nature instead of drawing; to carry your palette and pencils to the water side. This was the practice of Vernet, whom I knew at Rome; he then shewed me his studies in colours, which struck me very much, for that truth which those works only have which are produced while the impression is warm from nature: at that time he was a perfect master of the character of water,

if I may use the expression, he is now reduced to a mere mannerist, and no longer to be recommended for imitation, except you would imitate him by uniting landscape to ship-painting, which certainly makes a more pleasing composition than either alone.

“ I am, with great respect,

“ Your most humble and obedient servant,

“ JOSHUA REYNOLDS.”

This letter contains much excellent advice as well as observation; but why Sir Joshua should say of the harmony of Vandewelde, that he seems to be driven to this conduct from necessity in any instance, is to me inexplicable; or, as if there could be any other reason than that of a nice observation of nature. Vandewelde was an exquisite imitator of nature, and therefore his pictures have harmony. To say that nature is out of harmony, is a contradiction in terms, and of course nonsense. If at any time we imagine that we see nature out of harmony, we may rest assured that the defect is in ourselves, and not in nature; and in respect to Vandewelde, it is my opinion, that, as a colourist, for his truth to nature, and harmony of effect, he has never been surpassed by the professors of any department in art.

In this year, too, he delivered two discourses, the first of which took place on the 16th of October, on the opening of the Academy at their present apartments.

His object in this oration was a general one, to impress upon the minds of his audience, a full conviction of the advantages resulting to society from the cultivation of intellectual pleasures ; and here he most forcibly inculcated that “ the estimation in which we stand with 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 pursuits, 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.” He concluded with an elegant eulogium on *Refinement of Taste*, most truly saying, that if it does not lead directly to purity of manners, it 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 !”

Though the hospitable urbanity of Sir Joshua Reynolds was always directed to the promotion of social and friendly intercourse among his inti-

mates, yet it sometimes happened, as in all mixed societies, that altercations would arise. One incident, which took place at his house in this year, deserves notice, as it also relates to two men of great importance in the literary world.

All the friends both of Johnson and Warton lamented the unhappy disagreement between them, which almost at once put a period to a warm and long continued friendship of many years. The whole particulars were only known to the parties themselves; but one of the company who overheard part of the wordy conflict, begins his account by stating Johnson as saying, "Sir, I am not used to be contradicted;" to which Dr. Warton replied, "Sir, if you were, our admiration could not be increased, but our love might." On the interference of the gentleman who overheard this, the dispute ceased, but a coolness always existed afterwards, which, I find stated, was increased by many trifling circumstances that, without the intervention of this contest, might have passed unnoticed by either party.

The very various classes of different companies that were to be met with at Sir Joshua's table has not been improperly remarked by Mr. John Courteney, in a biographical sketch of his own life, although the volume contains but little else that is extraordinary or amusing: in page 77 he observes, that "Mr. Boswell was a favourite of Sir Joshua Reynolds. His table was frequented

by men of the first talents, who met with mutual complacence and good-humour. Politics and party were never introduced. Literary subjects were discussed with good sense, taste, and fancy, without pedantic, tiresome dissertations. Wit and humour occasionally enlivened the festive board; but story-telling, premeditated *bon-mots*, and studied witticisms, were not tolerated for a moment. Sir Joshua was excellently calculated for promoting lively rational conversation. His mind was active, perpetually at work. He aimed at originality, and threw out observations and sentiments as new, which had been often discussed by various authors; for his knowledge was principally acquired by conversation, and therefore superficial. However, he was a most pleasing, amiable companion; his manners easy, conciliating, and unaffected. He had great good sense, and an exquisite correct taste; and if his ideas were not always new, they were often set off by liveliness of imagination; and his conversation abounded in pleasing and interesting anecdotes.

“ There was something singular in the style and œconomy of his table, that contributed to pleasantry and good-humour; a coarse inelegant plenty, without any regard to order and arrangement. A table, prepared for seven or eight, was often compelled to contain fifteen or sixteen. When this pressing difficulty was got over, a deficiency of knives and forks, plates, and glasses

succeeded. The attendance was in the same style; and it was absolutely necessary to call instantly for beer, bread, or wine, that you might be supplied before the first course was over. He was once prevailed on to furnish the table with decanters and glasses at dinner, to save time, and prevent the tardy manœuvres of two or three occasional undisciplined domestics. As these accelerating utensils were demolished in the course of service, Sir Joshua could never be persuaded to replace them. But these trifling embarrassments only served to enhance the hilarity and singular pleasure of the entertainment.

“ The wine, cookery, and dishes were but little attended to; nor was the fish or venison ever talked of, or recommended. Amidst this convivial, animated bustle amongst his guests, our host sat perfectly composed, always attentive to what was said, never minding what was eat or drank, but left every one at perfect liberty to scramble for himself. Temporal and spiritual peers, physicians, lawyers, actors, and musicians, composed the motley groupe, and played their parts without dissonance or discord.

“ At five o'clock precisely dinner was served, whether all the invited guests were arrived or not. Sir Joshua was never so fashionably ill-bred as to wait an hour, perhaps, for two or three persons of rank or title, and put the rest of the company out of humour by this invidious distinction.”

What occasioned the inconveniences, as remarked by Mr. Courteney, was his frequently inviting many of those who happened to call on him at the moment, and of which the servants had no previous intimation, as no card of invitation had been sent to them. Another cause of this irregularity, was, that having no competent house-keeper, the management was left almost wholly to the servants, as he was too much occupied in his profession to lend it a thought himself after he had given a general order for a dinner party ; however, it may be remarked, that notwithstanding those inconveniences, none ever refused to partake of them or appeared not to esteem it both an honour and pleasure to be at his table, from the highest to the lowest.

This mixture of company calls to my remembrance a remark of a well-known character upon that subject.

A large company being invited to dine at Sir Joshua's, Mr. Dunning, afterwards Lord Ashburton, was one, and chanced to be the first person of the company who came. On entering the room, he said, " Well, Sir Joshua, and who have you got to dine with you to-day ? for the last time I dined with you in your house, the assembly was of such a sort, that by G—— I believe all the rest of the world were at peace, for that afternoon at least."

This observation was by no means ill applied ; for as Sir Joshua's companions were chiefly com-

posed of men of genius, they were often disputatious, and apt to be vehement in argument.

I have mentioned an anecdote of the late Lord Ashburton, to which I may add, that * at another

* As the Literary Club has been often noticed in the *Memoirs*, I shall give extracts from two letters, written in this year, as they convey a clear idea of the peculiar splendour of the Society at that period.

“ Mr. Jones (afterwards Sir William) to the Bishop of St. Asaph.

MY LORD,

November 23, 1780.

“ Had I not been prevented, by particular business, from writing to your lordship on Tuesday evening and yesterday, I would have informed you before, that we had done ourselves the honour (and a very great one we shall ever esteem it) of electing your lordship a member of our Club. The election was, of course, unanimous, and it was carried with the sincere approbation and eagerness of all present. I am sorry to add, that Lord Camden and the Bishop of Chester † were rejected. When bishops and chancellors honour us with offering to dine with us at a tavern, it seems very extraordinary, that we should ever reject such an offer: but there is no reasoning on the caprice of men. Of our Club, I will only say, that there is no branch of human knowledge, on which some of our members are not capable of giving information, and, I trust, that, as the honour will be our's, so your lordship will receive some pleasure from the company, once a fortnight, of some of our first writers and critics, as well as our most virtuous senators and accomplished men. I think myself highly honoured in having been a member of this society near ten years, and chiefly, in having contributed to add such names to the number of our friends, as those of your Lordship and Lord Althorpe.

“ The Bishop of St. Asaph to Mr. (afterwards Sir William) Jones.

“ DEAR SIR,

November 27th.

“ You was prevented by Sir Joshua Reynolds in your kind intentions of giving me the earliest notice of the honour you have done me. I believe Mr. Fox will allow me to say, that the ho-

† Dr. Beilby Porteus.

time Dunning, in conversation with Sir Joshua, mentioned to him, on seeing Lord Mansfield's portrait in the gallery, the high estimation in which he held that nobleman's great abilities; saying that, during all the early part of his own studies, he made it a matter of the first consequence always to attend at the courts of law, where Lord Mansfield was to speak, and with the same eagerness, he added, "as you, Sir Joshua, would desire and delight to see the finest picture by Titian or by Raffaele."

Lord Mansfield sat to Sir Joshua for that excellent portrait which has since been engraved by Bartolozzi. In the progress of painting this picture, Sir Joshua one day asked him his opinion of it, and if he thought it was a likeness. When his lordship replied, that it was totally out of his power to judge of its degree of resemblance, as he had not seen his own face in any looking-glass, during the last thirty years of his life; for his servant always dressed him and put on his wig which therefore rendered it quite unnecessary for him to look at himself in a mirror.

nour of being elected into the Turk's Head Club is not inferior to that of being the representative of Westminster or Surrey. The electors are certainly more disinterested, and I should say they are much better judges of merit, if they had not rejected Lord Camden and chosen me.

"I flatter myself with the hopes of great pleasure and improvement in such society as you describe, which is the only club of which I ever wished myself a member."

Count D'Adhemar, some time ambassador from the former court of France, when in England, had two portraits at his house in London—one of the late unfortunate Queen of France, and the other of her favorite lady, Madame de Polignac; these were by the hand of Madame Le Brun, the most esteemed artist of France for portraits.

When D'Adhemar left England, his house was publicly shewn at the sale of his furniture: the nobility flocked to see those two portraits; and it became the fashion to admire them, and to speak of them with the utmost extravagance of praise. But an eminent English painter of the time, who did not coincide with the popular opinion, has thus ludicrously described the excellencies of Madame Le Brun's merits:—

“ Where burnish'd beads, silk, satin, laces, vie,
In leaden lustre with the gooseberry eye;
Where broad cloth breathes, to talk where cushions strive,
And all, but Sir, or Madam, looks alive !”

These portraits Sir Joshua also went to see, and soon after, when I paid him a visit, I found him with Mr. Merry, the poet, discoursing on the merits of these very pictures. As I had not conceived that it was worth any painter's trouble to go to see them, I had not gone; but was glad when I found that he had seen them, that I might have the opinion of so great a judge.



I said "Pray what do you think of them Sir Joshua?"

"That they are very fine," he answered.

"How fine?" I said.

"As fine as those of any painter," was his answer.

"As fine as those of any painter, do you say? do you mean living or dead?"—

When he answered me rather briskly, "Either living or dead."

I then, in great surprize, exclaimed, "Good G — ! what, as fine as Vandyke?"

He answered tartly, "Yes, and finer."

I said no more, perceiving he was displeased at my questioning him.

I mention the above circumstance to shew his disinclination to oppose the popular opinion, or to say any thing against the interest of a cotemporary artist: as it was not his intention to mislead me, but only to put a stop to my enquiries.

There are, in succession, meteors of fashion which we see suddenly rise and as suddenly fall; with respect to these, it is but policy that established professors should be silent, or, if obliged to speak, that what they say should be only an echo of the public voice. To stem the torrent of applause is impossible—to give even a candid opinion would be to incur the charge of envy, and therefore it would not be received as truth. The world must be left to find out its own errors; and

when this happens, which always soon follows extravagant and improper praise, the object of former public admiration is frequently not only denied even its just claims, but cruelly attacked with all the rage of disappointment, and condemned never to raise its head again.

Much, however, of what an artist says, on such a subject, might perhaps better be distinguished by the manner than by the matter. It cannot be supposed, that a liberal mind would be the pander to ignorance or prejudice. The wise then will understand; and fools cannot be led further astray.

On subjects where Sir Joshua was not afraid of being misunderstood, his manner was always to speak his sentiments plainly; and I recollect that, soon after my return from Italy, I described to Sir Joshua one of the pictures by Raffaele, in the Vatican, which, in respect to its bold and accomplished expression, appeared to me to be the finest I had ever seen. It is that of the miracle of Bolzena, in which we find pure nature, unparalleled simplicity, and decided expression. The subject represents a miracle, said to have happened either at Orvieto or Bolzena to a priest who, being incredulous of the doctrine of transubstantiation, saw the Host miraculously dissolved into blood, before his eyes, as he celebrated mass.

In the countenance of the priest, Raffaele has placed the whole power of his art, and his whole dependance for the explanation of the subject: as

this sceptic seems not to have moved or altered his position on the sight of the miracle, but remains just in the same state as he would have done if nothing extraordinary had happened; and this appears the most natural manner for him to act in, as the best means to conceal, from the surrounding spectators, the heinousness of his former infidelity, which had occasioned this miracle to bring him to a sense of his wickedness: an inferior artist would undoubtedly have thrown him into some violent and obvious action of astonishment, that the vulgar would have understood and admired; but Raffaelle has depended solely on the character and expression in the face.—The priest is still on his knees, with the napkin, which contained the sacred Host, in his hand; when, unfolding it, he discovers the wafer dissolved into a cross of blood. This figure, although young and handsome in person, yet, in point of character, has the countenance of a bad man, or a scoundrel, and his face, red with shame and confusion, clearly shews the fright and inward conviction so strange and awful an appearance had occasioned in his mind.

When I had finished describing this picture to Sir Joshua, and expressed the delight it gave me, I was surprised to hear him say, that it was only my own imagination that had made it out so distinctly; as it could not possibly be expressed so evidently as I had conceived it to be.

There are several prints of the picture although very indifferent ones; however, by referring to

them, it may still be seen whether I have been just in my description of it or not.

Sir Joshua's backwardness, at yielding faith to any flight of enthusiasm on the subject of this picture, ought not to be considered as arising from an unwillingness to do critical justice to the merits of Raffaele, but from a kind of caprice at the moment: neither could he always preserve his own works from the attacks of caprice, envy, or ignorance.

In this year, and for several successive ones, Sir Joshua was busily employed on his designs for the celebrated painted window, in New College Chapel at Oxford, consisting of seven compartments in the lower range, each twelve feet high and three wide, and containing the allegorical figures of the four cardinal, and three christian virtues; viz. Temperance, Fortitude, Justice, Prudence, Faith, Hope, and Charity. In all of these, the figures are accompanied by their several attributes; and they are all single, except the centre one, where Charity is represented by a groupe, which, as described by a critic, deserves especial notice for the expression of the various persons introduced, whilst the "fondling of the infant, the importunity of the boy, and the placid affection of the girl, together with the divided attention of the mother, are all distinguishably and judiciously marked with a knowledge of character for which the great artist who gave this design is so justly celebrated."

Above this, on a grand scale of ten feet by eighteen, is the *Nativity*, a composition including thirteen figures, and in this, it has been well observed, that Sir Joshua has great advantages over Corregio, who, in his famous *Notte*, introduces no light in the painting but that which proceeds from the infant Saviour. The idea is not the invention even of Corregio, but certainly grand, and has been most judiciously *adopted*, for a transparency, by Sir Joshua, who cannot be said to have *copied* it, as his execution, both in *manner* and *circumstance*, gives it the effect of novelty; and, from the transparent medium on which it was ultimately to be seen, it would be light actually proceeding through that part from whence the fancy of the painter supposes it to emanate. Sir Joshua's design of this picture has more resemblance to a *Nativity* by Hannibal Carrache than to the *Notte* of Corregio.

This latter design was sold to the late Duke of Rutland for 1200 guineas,* those of the Cardinal Virtues are now in the possession of the Marchioness of Thomond.

The final execution, of copying this picture on the window, was entrusted to Mr. Jervis, whose portrait, as well as that of Sir Joshua himself, is introduced in the larger compartment; they are represented as shepherds.

* This picture for which it is said the duke had been offered £10,000., was burnt at the fire at Belvoir Castle, Oct., 1816, with many others painted by Sir Joshua.

Mr. Jervis originally practised in Dublin, as a painter on glass; but his friends pointing out to him the superior advantages which might arise from a residence in London, he proceeded to that capital, and was employed both by Sir Joshua and Mr. West in the transmission of their works from canvass to be preserved on glass, at Oxford, Windsor, and Greenwich.

With respect to the grand work, which is noticed with great and due praise both by Dr. Warton and Mr. Thomas Warton, I may also be permitted to add some of Sir Joshua's own observations, as contained in a letter preserved by Mr. Malone in his work.

It seems that it had been at first intended to distribute the various figures in different parts of the chapel; but this Sir Joshua very judiciously opposed, and prevailed on the parties concerned to have the west window prepared for the reception of the whole by an alteration of the stone work. In a letter, written about two years previous to this, he had observed, "Supposing this scheme to take place, my idea is to paint, in the great space in the centre, Christ in the Manger, on the principle that Corregio has done it, in the famous picture called the *Notte*; making all the light proceed from Christ. These tricks of the art, as they may be called, seem to be more properly adapted to glass-painting than any other kind. This middle space will be filled with the

Virgin, Christ, Joseph, and angels; the two smaller spaces on each side I shall fill with the shepherds coming to worship; and the seven divisions below with the figures of Faith, Hope, Charity, and the Four Cardinal Virtues; which will make a proper rustic base, or *foundation* for the support of the Christian Religion. Upon the whole, it appears to me, that chance has presented to us materials so well adapted to our purpose, that if we had the whole window of our own invention and contrivance, we should not probably have succeeded better.”

The execution of this window, soon after, drew forth the following address, which is too poetic to be passed over :

“ Ah! stay thy treach’rous hand, forbear to trace
 Those faultless forms of elegance and grace!
 Ah! cease to spread thy bright transparent mass
 With Titian’s pencil, o’er the speaking glass!
 Nor steal, by strokes of art, with truth combin’d,
 The fond illusions of my wayward mind!
 For long enamour’d of a barb’rous age,
 A faithless truant to the classic page,
 Long have I lov’d to catch the simple chime
 Of minstrel harps, and spell the fabling rhyme;
 To view the festive rites, the knightly play,
 That deck’d heroic Albion’s elder day;
 To mark the mould’ring halls of barons bold,
 And the rough castle, cast in giant mould;
 With Gothic manners, Gothic arts explore,
 And muse on the magnificence of yore.
 “ But chief, enraptur’d, have I lov’d to roam,
 A ling’ring votary, the vaulted dome,

Where the tall shafts, that mount in massy pride,
 Their mingling branches shoot from side to side ;
 Where elfin sculptors with fantastic clew,
 O'er the long roof their wild embroid'ry drew ;
 Where Superstition, with capricious hand,
 In many a maze the wreathed window plann'd,
 With hues romantic ting'd the gorgeous pane,
 To fill with holy light the wondrous fane ;
 To aid the builder's model, richly rude,
 By no Vitruvian symmetry subdued ;
 To suit the genius of the mystic pile :
 Whilst, as around the far retiring aisle
 And fretted shrines, with hoary trophies hung,
 Her dark illumination wide she flung,
 With new solemnity, the nooks profound,
 The caves of death, and the dim arches frown'd.
 From bliss long felt unwillingly we part ;—
 Ah ! spare the weakness of a lover's heart !
 Chace not the phantoms of my fairy dream,
 Phantoms that shrink at Reason's painful gleam !
 That softer touch, insidious artist, stay,
 Nor to new joys my struggling breast betray !
 " Such was a pensive bard's mistaken strain. - -
 But oh ! of ravish'd pleasures why complain ?
 No more the matchless skill I call unkind
 That strives to disenchant my cheated mind.
 For when again I view thy chaste design,
 The just proportion and the genuine line ;
 Those native portraitures of Attic art,
 That from the lucid surface seem to start ;
 Those tints that steal no glories from the day,
 Nor ask the sun to lend his streaming ray ;
 The doubtful radiance of contending dyes,
 That faintly mingle yet distinctly rise ;
 'Twixt light and shade the transitory strife ;
 The feature blooming with immortal life ;
 The stole in casual foldings taught to flow,
 Not with ambitious ornaments to glow ;
 The tread majestic, and the beaming eye
 That, lifted, speaks its commerce with the sky :

Sudden, the sombrous imag'ry is fled,
 Which late my visionary rapture fed :
 Thy powerful hand has broke the Gothic chain,
 And brought my bosom back to truth again :
 To truth, whose bold and unresisted aim
 Checks frail caprice, and fashion's fickle claim ;
 To truth, whose charms deception's magic quell,
 And bind coy fancy in a stronger spell.

“ Ye brawny prophets, that in robes so rich,
 At distance due, possess the crisped niche ;
 Ye rows of patriarchs that, sublimely rear'd,
 Diffuse a proud primeval length of beard ;
 Ye saints, who, clad in crimson's bright array,
 More pride than humble poverty display ;
 Ye virgins meek, that wear the palmy crown
 Of patient faith, and yet so fiercely frown ;
 Ye angels, that from golden clouds recline,
 But boast no semblance to a race divine ;
 Ye tragic tales of legendary lore,
 That draw devotion's ready tear no more ;
 Ye martyrdoms of unenlightened days,
 Ye miracles, that now no wonder raise ;
 Shapes that with one broad glare the gazer strike !
 Kings, bishops, nuns, apostles, all alike !
 Ye colours, that th' unwary sight amaze,
 And only dazzle in the noontide blaze ;
 No more the sacred window's round disgrace,
 But yield to Grecian groupes the shining space,
 Lo ! from the canvass Beauty shifts her throne,
 Lo ! Picture's powers a new formation own !
 Behold, she prints upon the crystal plain,
 With her own energy, th' expressive stain !
 The mighty master spreads his mimic toil
 More wide, nor only blends the breathing oil ;
 But calls the lineaments of life complete
 From genial alchemy's creative heat ;
 Obedient forms to the bright fusion gives,
 While in the warm enamel Nature lives.
 Artist ! 'tis thine, from the broad window's height,
 To add new lustre to religious light :

Not of its pomp to strip this ancient shrine,
But bid that pomp with purer radiance shine :
With arts unknown before, to reconcile
The willing Graces to the Gothic pile."

In this, the concluding passage is justly applicable to Mr. Jervis, who so dexterously executed the mechanical part of Sir Joshua's exquisite designs ; and thus gave to the great master's work a *degree* of immortality, which may *perhaps* outlive the *canvass*.

With respect to this so justly admired Nativity, at New College chapel, Oxford, a weak critic, at the time, pointed out what he conceived to be an error of Sir Joshua, in his treatment of the subject, as follows :—

"He tells us" (alluding to Sir Joshua's remarks, in his journey to Flanders and Holland) "that, except in ludicrous subjects, none of the personages of the picture ought to be represented as looking out of it—his Nativity, therefore, according to this rule, is a ludicrous subject, as Joseph is looking at the spectator, and pointing to the infant."

This critic does not seem to understand the strict propriety of this action. Joseph is not to point out the holy child to those persons represented in the picture, who are supposed to come prepared to adore it. He looks *out* of the picture on the world, and directs them to behold their Redeemer.

Thus we see, that the finest inventions may be thrown away when addressed to a vulgar mind.

The second discourse delivered this year, on the 11th of December, was the tenth in succession; and in this Sir Joshua, stepping out of what may strictly be termed his own line of art, investigated the objects, form, and character of Sculpture, which he considered as possessing but one style; he also noticed the ineffectual attempts of sculptors, of the present day, to improve the art, arising partly from the costume of modern times not being so well suited to execution as that of the classic ages.

He commenced by explaining his reasons for not having sooner noticed this particular branch of art, on the principle that Painting is much more extensive and complicated than Sculpture, and affords, therefore, a more ample field for criticism; and consequently, as the greater includes the less, the leading principles of sculpture are comprized in those of painting. The former he considered as an art of much more simplicity and uniformity than the latter, as it cannot with propriety, or the best effect, be applied to many subjects; the objects of its pursuit being comprized in two words, *Form* and *Character*, which qualities can be presented in one manner, or in one style, only.

He then noticed, that the sculptors of the last age, not having attended sufficiently to the dis-

crimination of the several styles of painting, have been led into many errors; so that when they endeavoured to copy the picturesque effects, contrasts, or petty excellencies of whatever kind, which not improperly find a place in the inferior branches of painting, they doubtless imagined themselves improving and extending the boundaries of their art by this imitation; but, on the contrary, Sir Joshua was of opinion, that they were in reality, violating its essential character, by giving a different direction to its operations, and proposing to themselves either what is unattainable, or at best a meaner object of pursuit. "The grave and austere character of Sculpture," says he, "requires the utmost degree of formality in composition; picturesque contrasts have here no place; every thing is carefully weighed and measured, one side making almost an exact equipoise to the other: a child is not a proper balance to a full grown figure, nor is a figure sitting or stooping a companion to an upright figure."

He further laid it down as a principle, that the excellence of every art must consist in the complete accomplishment of its purpose, but that all false imitations of nature, arising from a mean ambition of producing a picturesque effect or illusion of any kind, thereby degrading that grandeur of ideas which the art ought to excite, must be strictly guarded against. This he exemplified in a familiar manner, by observing, that if the busi-

ness of Sculpture were only to administer pleasure to ignorance, or a mere entertainment to the senses, then the Venus de Medicis might certainly receive much improvement by colour; “but the character of Sculpture makes it her duty to afford delight of a different, and, perhaps, of a higher kind—the delight resulting from the contemplation of perfect beauty; and this, which is in truth an intellectual pleasure, is in many respects incompatible with what is merely addressed to the senses, such as that with which ignorance and levity contemplate elegance of form.”

In the progress of this discourse, Sir Joshua stated some other truths which are of that general tenor and import to deserve a place here. “What *Grace* is,” said he, “how it is to be acquired or conceived, are in speculation difficult questions; but *causa latet, res est notissima*: without any perplexing inquiry, the effect is hourly perceived. I shall only observe, that its natural foundation is correctness of design; and though grace may be sometimes *united* with incorrectness, it cannot *proceed* from it.”

Another observation may be no less interesting and important to the general reader. “It may be remarked, that Grace, Character, and Expression, though words of different sense and meaning, and so understood when applied to the works of painters, are indiscriminately used when we speak of Sculpture. This indecision we may expect to

proceed from the undetermined effects of the art itself; those qualities are exhibited in Sculpture, rather by form and attitude, than by the features, and can therefore be expressed but in a very general manner.”

The happy manner which Sir Joshua possessed of drawing moral reflections from the excellencies of art, and of thereby extending the usefulness of his instruction, was exemplified in his conclusion, when he observed, that there is no circumstance which more distinguishes a well regulated and sound taste, than a settled uniformity of design, where all the parts are compact, and fitted to each other, every thing being of a piece. “This principle extends itself to all habits of life, as well as to all works of art.” From these general grounds, then, he drew his inference that the uniformity and simplicity of the materials, on which the sculptor labours, prescribe bounds to his art, and teach him to confine himself to a proportionate simplicity of design.

1781.

ÆTAT. 57.

SIR JOSHUA'S exertions for the exhibition in 1781, were principally confined to three paintings, of which Dr. Beattie thus observes in a letter written from London in the May of that year, “The exhibition of pictures is the best of the kind I

have seen. The best pieces, in my opinion are, Thais (with a torch in her hand); the Death of Dido; and a Boy, supposed to be listening to a wonderful story; these are by Sir Joshua Reynolds." I do not, indeed, insert this criticism as a support to Sir Joshua's fame, but rather for the purpose of noticing a fact, not generally known, that Sir Joshua's *literary* aid was not neglected by his *literary friends*; a fact completely at variance with those critics who have thought proper to deny him the merit of writing his own discourses; and which is proved by a passage in a letter of Beattie to the Duchess of Gordon.

Beattie was at this very period preparing his "Essay on Beauty" for the press, and in this he seems evidently to have consulted Sir Joshua; for in a letter to the Duchess of Gordon he says, "However, one must keep one's word; and as your Grace desired to see this Essay, and I promised to send it, (as soon as I could get it transcribed,) I send it accordingly. I should not give you the trouble to return it, if I had not promised a reading of it to Sir Joshua Reynolds."

Sir Joshua, indeed, seems to have been applied to by his friends on all occasions; and by none oftener than by Dr. Johnson, particularly for charitable purposes.

Of this there is an instance, in a note of Johnson's, preserved in his life, too honourable to him to be here omitted.

“ TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ It was not before yesterday that I received your splendid benefaction. To a hand so liberal in distributing, I hope no one will envy the power of acquiring. I am, Dear Sir,

“ Your most obliged and most humble servant,
“ *June 23, 1781.* “ SAM. JOHNSON.”

A few days afterwards, Johnson received from Miss Frances Reynolds (a lady for whom he was always known to have had a very high regard,) a copy of a work written by her, privately printed, but never published, called an “ Essay on Taste.” In return for this he sent her the following letter :

“ TO MRS. FRANCES REYNOLDS.

“ DEAREST MADAM,

“ There is, in these few pages, or remarks, such depth of penetration, such nicety of observation, as Locke or Pascal might be proud of. This I desire you to believe is my real opinion.

“ However, it cannot be published in its present state. Many of your notions seem not to be very clear in your own mind ; many are not sufficiently developed and expanded for the common reader: it wants every where to be made smoother and plainer.

“ You may, by revisal and correction, make it a very elegant and a very curious work.

“ I am, my dearest dear,

“ Your affectionate and obedient servant,

“ SAMUEL JOHNSON.”

“ *Bolt Court, June, 28; 1781.*”

Having mentioned this work written by Miss Reynolds, and submitted to Dr. Johnson, for his opinion respecting its publication, it may not be uninteresting if a few specimens of it are here inserted.

“ A fine tragedy, in the reading, is like a fine drawing by a great master; but when exhibited on the stage, seems as if it had been coloured by a vulgar hand to make it appear natural.”

“ A man, subject to anger, is, beyond all comparison, to be preferred to him who is never angry.”

“ The fine arts comprehend all that is excellent in the moral system, and, at the same time, open every path that tends to the corruption of moral excellence.”

“ Without the liberal arts the human powers rest below their proper line of cultivation; with them, they transgress too far beyond it.”

“ The fine arts are the proper amusements of the virtuous, but probably were never brought to any great degree of excellence by the virtuous, unless the actuating motive was necessity.”

“ The love of fame, of wealth, and of power are, in general, the grand incentives to the practice of the fine arts, and at the same time the greatest impediments to their improvement.”

“ The liberal arts, perhaps, never arrive at any degree of excellence in any nation in which the influence of wealth and luxury have previously prevailed ; for their fundamental principles are the *virtues*.”

“ The fine arts (particularly painting) are as mirrors reflecting the charms of nature, which few are capable of seeing in nature herself.”

“ Bashfulness denotes strong sensibility, and seems to waver between pride and humility.”

“ Dress is the strong indication of the moral character.”

“ Benefits strengthen the ties of virtuous friendship ; but where there is a deficiency of virtue, generally have a contrary effect.”

“ A family, reared in indigence, is often rich in reciprocal affections ; but affluence gives to hirelings those tender offices which endear parents, children, brothers, and sisters to each other.”

“ To lead the fashion indicates little merit, not to follow it still less.”

“ Love probably never exists without admiration. Bruyere observes, that none pass from friendship to love ; probably because a thorough acquaintance, which fixes friendship, extinguishes admiration.”

“ Patience originates either from philosophy or from religion ; and therefore may be said to be the offspring of pride or of humility.

“ True politeness cannot be the concomitant of a weak or a vicious mind.”

“ The love of praise, in a female breast, should never transcend the domestic sphere ; perhaps the most perfect feminine mind habitually aims at nothing higher than an exemption from blame.”

“ There is always something respectable in the object that excites the strongest ridicule, otherwise it would want the contrast which makes it ridiculous.”

As we are speaking of Miss Frances Reynolds, it brings to my recollection her once mentioning an intimate friend of her's, a lady of great virtue, integrity, and prudence, although but of a common degree of intellect, of whom she said, “ I do not consider Mrs. — as a person of much power of mind, yet, in any difficulty, if I ask her advice, that which she gives is always sure to be right, although she cannot give the reason.”*

The reason seems to be, that this lady always acted from the accumulated experience of the world, which, with her, became a rule of conduct like instinct ; but she never ventured to act much

* Miss Frances Reynolds, sister to Sir Joshua, died at her house in Queen's Square, St. James's Park, at the advanced age of eighty years, on the first of November, 1807.

from her own suggestions, because she apprehended her own weakness.

On the contrary, it too often happens, that when we ask the advice of a genius, his fertile imagination is his own director, and his mind suggests a thousand brilliant ideas, totally new, but which never having had their effects proved by trial, may very probably lead to difficulties if adopted. Those who follow the beaten path of the world are therefore more likely to go safely through it than those who are led into a new road by the greatest genius.

The fate of genius is uncertain; like gaming, it may lead to riches, or to poverty and wretchedness.

I remember a speech of the Rev. Lawrence Sterne, when he was informed that a friend of his, a man of great capacity, had married his maid-servant; "Ah!" said he, "I always thought my friend, Mr. — was a man of genius; as none but a genius would have done so."

To return to the subject of the Exhibition of this year, I may remark, that this picture of *Thais* gave rise, but very unjustly, to some attempts at scandalous anecdote. In a periodical work of the time, it was noticed that this picture was highly admired; that the painter had caught the very spirit of the heroine, and that she seemed rushing from the canvass to destroy Persepolis.

The critic then observed, that there was an anecdote hanging on this picture, which was cir-

culated by the enemies of Sir Joshua when he exhibited it; but this the writer very properly refused to give credit to, as a thing derogatory to Sir Joshua's general conduct and feelings. . . . " The whisper insisted that the face of this picture was painted for the famous Emily Bertie, that she paid him seventy-five guineas down, and was to pay him the like sum when the picture was finished, which she was unable to do ; the picture remained with Sir Joshua some time, when he, finding it not called for, took it into his head to metamorphose Emily Bertie into Thais, and exhibit her to the world in her proper character, rushing with a torch to set the Temple of Chastity on fire." He then adds, that " the truth of the matter is, Sir Joshua has now got the picture of the lovely Emily in his collection, and Thais has no kind of connexion with it, except that of two faces in a small degree resembling each other." To which I can add, from my own knowledge, that the whole story is an entire fabrication of folly; for Sir Joshua never painted any person of the name of Emily Bertie. The portrait in the character of Thais was painted in the year 1776, the head only, on a whole length canvass, from a beautiful young girl who was known by the name of Emily Coventry ; she afterwards accompanied a gentleman to the East Indies, and there died young.

The picture was not finished till the year 1781, and then sold to Mr. G——for one hundred gui-

neas ; it is now in the possession of the Earl of Dysart, and is particularly excellent.

The other, a picture of *Dido*, was much admired, and drew immense crowds to the Exhibition, exciting the applause not only of Englishmen, but of the most judicious foreigners, by the beauty of the countenance and the extreme richness of the colouring.

In the month of July, 1781, Sir Joshua set off, in company with his friend Mr. Metcalf, for the Continent, with the intention of examining the various celebrated productions of the Dutch and Flemish schools.

The two friends left London on the 24th, and proceeded in a post chaise for Margate, where they embarked for Ostend, and from the latter place they took the route of Ghent, Brussels, and thence to Mechlin, at which city Sir Joshua paid particular attention to the altar-piece in the cathedral, the work of Rubens, and of which he related an anecdote illustrative of that artist's manner of proceeding in his large works. This anecdote has been given more at length in the notes written by himself on the various productions of the pencil seen in this tour, published in his works, and which, indeed, were taken with the intention of drawing up a sketch of the tour for the press, but this he never proceeded further in than the writing a few introductory paragraphs ad-

dressed to his companion to whom he meant to dedicate it.

It seems that a citizen of Mechlin having bespoke this picture for the cathedral, was anxious to avoid the danger of its removal, and therefore requested Rubens to paint it in the church, to which he assented, as his own country seat at Stein was in the vicinity of that city. He, as usual, completed his sketch in colours, and intrusted one of his scholars, of the name of Van Egmont, with the task of dead colouring the canvass for the great picture at Mechlin, from this sketch.

The person who bespoke it, on receiving notice of this circumstance, immediately stopped Van Egmont's labours, exclaiming that he had engaged for a picture from the hand of the master and not of the scholar. However, as Sir Joshua adds, 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 contrary, I think it *has been* one of his best pictures, though those who know this circumstance pretend to see Van Egmont's inferior genius transpire through Rubens' touches."

From Mechlin, the travellers proceeded to Antwerp, and having seen almost every thing curious

in Flanders, set off for Holland, where they visited Dort, the Hague, thence to Leyden, and Amsterdam, from whence they made a short excursion into Germany, crossing the Rhine near Dusseldorf, at which latter place Sir Joshua records a curious pictorial anecdote.

Being much pleased with the easy access to the famous Dusseldorf Gallery, and with the liberty of staying in it as long as he chose, and also with the extreme facilities afforded to students, many of whom he found copying in the gallery, and others in a large room, above stairs, expressly allotted for that purpose, Sir Joshua mentioned his great satisfaction at this liberal arrangement to the keeper, Mr. Kraye; but this gentleman informed him that although it was the Elector's wish to afford the most perfect accommodation to *visitors*, yet in regard to the students, he took some credit to himself; for when he first asked the Elector's permission for their copying the pictures, that prince refused the boon, asserting, that the copies would be offered for sale as originals, which multiplication would deteriorate the value of his collection. To this unfounded objection, Mr. Kraye answered, that painters capable of taking such copies as might pass for originals, were not likely to do so, as their time was fully occupied on originals of their own, and that the copies of the young students could not hurt his originals, as they could only impose upon the ignorant

whose opinions were below his Highness's attention. To this he added the very forcible argument, that if the Elector wished to produce artists in his own country, the refusal of such advantages to the student would be most unwise, and exactly on a parity with a person who should pretend to be a patron of literature, and yet in his attempts to produce scholars should refuse them the use of a library. To reasoning so plain and simple, the Elector must have been stupid indeed if he had refused assent, and Mr. Kraye had *carte blanche* accorded to him in favour of the youthful pupils.

From Dusseldorf, the two friends proceeded for Aix-la-Chapelle, and Liege; thence by the way of Brussels to Ostend, where they re-embarked, and landing at Margate, arrived, on Sunday the 16th of September, at the metropolis.

Whilst at Antwerp, Sir Joshua had taken particular notice of a young man of the name of De Gree, who had exhibited some considerable talents as a painter. His father was a taylor, and he himself had been intended for some clerical office, but as it is said by a late writer, having formed a different opinion of his religion than was intended, from the books put into his hand by an Abbé who was his patron, it was discovered that he would not do for a priest, and the Abbé therefore articted him to Gerrards of Antwerp. Sir Joshua received him, on his arrival in England, with much kindness, and even recommended to him most strongly.

to pursue his profession in the metropolis; but De Gree was unwilling to consent to this, as he had been previously engaged by Mr. Latouche to proceed to Ireland. Even here Sir Joshua's friendly attentions did not cease, for he actually made the poor artist a present of fifty guineas to fit him for his Hibernian excursion, the whole of which, however, the careful son sent over to Antwerp for the use of his aged parents.

I have not been able to procure any further information respecting Reynolds' pictorial tour, but I cannot omit some good observations, written in a fragment of an intended dedication to the friend who was his companion in the journey to Flanders and Holland.

“The pleasure,” he says, “that a mere dilettanti 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.

———“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, the received rules of art may be corrected: at least a species of benefit may be obtained, which we are not likely to de-

rive 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."

About this time Mr. Opie came first to settle in London, accompanied by his friend Dr. Wolcot, when the novelty and originality of his manner in his pictures, added to his great abilities, drew an universal attention from the connoisseurs, and he was immediately surrounded and employed by all the principal nobility of England. I remember that Sir Joshua himself compared him to Carra-vagio.

However, it is curious to observe the changes which frequently happen in the course of a very short period, and if we oftener made this the subject of our reflection, remembering *that good or bad* fortune cannot be eternal, it would have a great tendency to check our vanity in prosperity, and give us consolation even in situations apparently the most forlorn : for, in a very little space of time, that capricious public who had so violently admired and employed Opie, when he first appeared, and was a novelty among them, and was, in reality, only the embryo of a painter, yet, when he had proved himself to be a real artist, left him with disgust because he was a novelty no longer. They now looked out for his defects alone, and he be-

came in his turn totally neglected and forgotten; and instead of being the sole object of public attention, and having the street, where he lived, so crowded with coaches of the nobility as to become a real nuisance to the neighbourhood, so, as he jestingly observed to me, that he thought he must place cannon at his door to keep the multitude off from it, he now found himself as entirely deserted as if his house had been infected with the plague.—Such is the world!

He, afterwards, by painting some fine historical pictures for the Shakspeare gallery, &c., became again the object of moderate attention and employment, gained by his own shew of merit; but not like the first onset, for the world are never infatuated twice by the same object.

It was an observation made to me by old Mr. Wilton, the statuary, that he thought Sir Joshua Reynolds was the only eminent painter that had been able to call back the public to himself after they had grown tired of him, and which he had done more than once. This Vandyke could not accomplish; but when he was deserted in England, as one who had been too long the object of attention, went over to Paris in hope to gain employment there; yet even there he was no novelty: and, it not answering his expectations, he returned to England, where he soon after died, which leaves it uncertain what would have been the consequence had he survived.

Yet certain it is, that Sir Joshua was not much employed in portraits after Romney grew into fashion, although the difference between those painters was so immense. For the world, as we in general term it, is in this respect just like a child that will fling away the most valuable jewel after having become familiar with it, to grasp at a toy however worthless, if it has but novelty to recommend it.

We have to regret that Mr. Opie died at an early period of his life, and before he had time fully to make the trial of winning a second time the capricious world to appreciate justly those abilities, which will ever rank him among the first of English painters.

I knew him very well; and I shall take the liberty to insert in this place the following character, which I wrote immediately on his death, and which is my true opinion of him.

“ JOHN OPIE, Esq., R. A.

“ Professor of Painting to the Royal Academy.

“ Died April 9th, 1807.

“ A man whose intellectual powers, and indefatigable industry in their cultivation, rendered him at once an honour to the country from which he originated, and an example of imitation to mankind.

“ Born in a rank of life in which the road to eminence is rendered infinitely difficult, unas-

sisted by partial patronage, scorning, with virtuous pride, all slavery of dependence, he trusted alone for his reward to the force of his natural powers, and to well directed and unremitting study ; and he demonstrated, by his works, how highly he was endowed by nature with strength of judgement and originality of conception. His thoughts were always new and striking, as they were the genuine offspring of his own mind ; and it is difficult to say if his conversation gave more amusement or instruction.

“ The toil or difficulties of his profession were by him considered as matter of honourable and delightful contest ; and it might be said of him that he did not so much paint to live, as live to paint.

“ As a son he was an example of duty to an aged parent. He was studious yet not severe ; he was eminent yet not vain : his disposition so tranquil and forgiving, that it was the reverse of every tincture of sour or vindictive ; and what to some might have appeared as roughness of manner, was only the effect of an honest indignation towards that which he conceived to be error.

“ How greatly have we cause to lament that so much talent, united to so much industry, perseverance, and knowledge, should have been prematurely snatched from the world, which it would have delighted with its powers, and benefited by its example !”

J. N.

Of the opinion of connoisseurs concerning Sir Joshua, we may form some idea from the numerous compliments which were paid him, at this crisis.

Mr. Nichols in his life of Hogarth, whilst speaking of that artist's attempt to paint a *Sigismunda*, which should surpass that of Corregio now at the Duke of Newcastle's at Clumber Park, says that, "to express a sorrow like that of *Tancred's* (Sifredi's) daughter, few modern artists are fully qualified, if we except, indeed, Sir Joshua Reynolds, with whose pencil Beauty in all her forms, and the Passions in all their varieties, are equally familiar."

The *London Courant* in the same year also speaks of "Sir Joshua Reynolds, whose works, the acknowledged patterns of grace and expression, conduce not more to excite emulation, than his lectures serve to instruct the students in the solid principles of design and composition." To which I may justly add some observations from a Preface to *Imitations of Drawings*, by Mr. Rogers, in which it is expressed "how happy it is for the Academy to have for its first President a genius who feels, and is sensible of the necessity of enlarging the ideas of youth, by placing before them the works of the great masters; who teaches them to disregard the tinsel of the last age, but eagerly to search after the rich ore of that of Leo X., and who directs them in the proper method of bringing the golden fleece out of Italy into his Majesty's dominions."

1782.

ÆTAT 58.

WITH such a fame, particularly among the eminent for talents, it is not surprising that all the friends of Sir Joshua were much alarmed at a slight paralytic affection which, after an almost uninterrupted course of good health for many years, attacked him at this period. This was but slight, however, and its effects were completely removed in the space of a few weeks, to the great happiness of all who knew him, but perhaps of none more than Dr. Johnson, who wrote him the following letter on the occasion.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I heard yesterday of your late disorder, and should think ill of myself if I had heard of it without alarm. I heard likewise of your recovery, which I sincerely wish to be complete and permanent. Your country has been in danger of losing one of its brightest ornaments, and I of losing one of my oldest and kindest friends : but I hope you will still live long, for the honour of the nation ; and that more enjoyment of your elegance, your intelligence, and your benevolence, is still reserved for,

“ Dear Sir,

“ Your most affectionate, &c.

“ SAM. JOHNSON.”

Brightelmstone, Nov. 14, 1782.

It was not, however, to his partial friends alone that Sir Joshua was dear : for in this very year we find him praised by an universal satirist ; one who, with original humour, had magnified the most unimportant actions of royalty into foibles, and foibles into follies ; it is unnecessary to add the name of Peter Pindar, who was indeed an excellent critic on art, and amused himself occasionally in landscape painting, and was therefore the better qualified to judge of the excellencies of Sir Joshua.

In his Lyric Odes of this year, he has several allusions to the President of the Academy.

“ Close by them hung Sir Joshua’s matchless pieces’—
Works ! that a Titian’s hand could form alone—
Works ! that a Rubens had been proud to own.”

And again in his Farewell Odes, nearly of the same date, he advises a painter to

“ Be pleased like Reynolds to direct the blind,
Who aids the feeble faltering feet of youth ;
Unfolds the ample volume of his mind,
With genius stor’d and Nature’s simple truth.”

Exclaiming also in another part—

“ Lo, Reynolds shines with undiminish’d ray !
Keeps, like the bird of Jove, his distant way :
Yet, simple Portrait strikes too oft our eyes,
Whilst History, anxious for his pencil, sighs.”

To the foregoing on the subject of art, I take

the liberty to add some other lines by the same well-known poet, and which have never before appeared in print.

ADVICE TO YOUNG PAINTERS. BY PETER PINDAR.

Study Sir Joshua's works, young men ;—
 Not pictures only, but his pen :
 Who, when Cimmerian darkness whelm'd our isle,
 Appear'd a comet in his art ;—
 Bid nature from the canvass start,
 And with the Graces bade that canvass smile.

Could Titian from his tomb arise,
 And cast on Reynolds' art his eyes,
 How would he heave of jealousy the groan !
 Here possibly I may mistake ;
 As Titian probably might take
 The works of our great master for his own.

As a further proof of the high opinion which Dr. Wolcot entertained of Sir Joshua's merits, I shall give an extract from a letter of his to a friend.

“ As nothing affords you a higher treat than something relative to Reynolds, be informed then of what will excite your envy.

“ I lately breakfasted with him at his house in Leicester-fields. After some desultory remarks on the old masters, but not one word of the living artists (as on that subject one can never obtain his real opinion), the conversation turned on Dr. Johnson. On my asking him how the club, to which he belonged, could so patiently suffer the

tyranny of this overbearing man, he replied, with a smile, that the members often hazarded sentiments merely to try his powers in contradiction.

“ I think I in some measure wounded the feelings of Reynolds, by observing that I had often thought that the Ramblers were Idlers, and the Idlers Ramblers, (except those papers which he (Reynolds) had contributed; and further, that Johnson too frequently acted the reverse of gipsies:—“ The gipsies,” said I, “ when they steal the children of gentlefolks, conceal the theft by beggarly disguises, whereas Johnson often steals common thoughts, disguising the theft by a pomp of language.

“ Happening to be in company with Dr. Johnson, and observing to him that his portrait by Reynolds was not sufficiently dignified: prepared with a flat contradiction, he replied, in a kind of bull-dog growl, “ No, Sir!—the pencil of Reynolds never wanted dignity nor the Graces.”

“ It is a lucky thing for an artist to be possessed of the favour of the fashionable world; fortune then shows no objection towards a co-operation with his labours.—Reynolds avails himself of this circumstance; and in spite of rivals and a too great mortality of colours, stands his ground like a Hercules, and defies envy, hatred, and malice; in short, all the virulent attacks made on his performances.”

Such praises, from such an author, may well be considered as sincere and genuine.

Sir Joshua was sufficiently recovered from his late illness to give his usual discourse on the 10th of December, the objects of which, at this period, were the investigation of Genius, and the proof that it refers to the forming of general ideas only, and consists principally in the comprehension of a grand whole.

The generally received opinion of the worth of Genius, he exemplified by the position that it was the height of every artist's ambition, who, so long as he could procure the addition of the supposed possession of this quality to his name, will always patiently bear any imputation of incorrectness, of carelessness, and in short, of any other defect.

The extravagant length to which this desire may be sometimes carried, he instanced by saying that some go such lengths as to trace its indication in absolute faults, not only excusing such faults on account of genius, but actually presuming genius from their existence.

As this discourse was more specifically addressed to artists than to the world in general, I shall not examine it further than to introduce his definition of genius as applied to a painter; where he says, "this Genius consists, I conceive, in the power of expressing that which employs your pencil, whatever it may be, as *a whole*; so that the general effect and power of the whole may take possession of the mind, and for a while suspend the consideration of the subordinate and particu-

lar beauties or defects.”—In addition to which, he concluded his discourse, by stating, that “the great business of study is, to form a *mind*, adapted and adequate to all times and all occasions; to which all nature is then laid open, and which may be said to possess the key of her inexhaustible riches.”

1783.

ÆTAT. 59.

IN the beginning of this year the Academy suffered a very considerable loss in the death of its able and active keeper; and one to whom the Institution, in a great degree, owed its establishment. The demise of Mr. Moser, the first person who held the office in the Royal Academy, was honoured by Sir Joshua, in a public testimonial to his memory, which was inserted in the newspapers of the day: the character is justly given by his sincere friend; and as it relates to the arts, as well as to the subject of our Memoir, cannot, with propriety, be omitted.

It is now given, (says Mr. Malone,) from a copy in Sir Joshua's hand-writing.

Jan. 24, 1783.

“Yesterday died, at his apartments in Somerset-place, George Michael Moser, Keeper of the Royal Academy; aged seventy-eight years. He

was a native of Switzerland, but came to England very young, to follow the profession of a chaser in gold, in which art he has been always considered as holding the first rank. But his skill was not confined to this alone; he possessed an universal knowledge in all branches of painting and sculpture, which perfectly qualified him for the place that he held in the Academy, the business of which principally consists in superintending and instructing the students, who draw or model from the antique figures.

“ His private character deserves a more ample testimony than this transient memorial. Few have passed a more inoffensive, or, perhaps, a more happy life; if happiness, or enjoyment of life, consists in having the mind always occupied, always intent upon some useful art, by which fame and distinction may be acquired. Mr. Mosser's whole attention was absorbed, either in practice, or something that related to the advancement of art. He may truly be said, in every sense, to have been the father of the present race of artists; for long before the Royal Academy was established, he presided over the little societies which met first in Salisbury-court, and afterwards in St. Martin's-lane, where they drew from living models. Perhaps nothing that can be said will more strongly imply his amiable disposition, than that all the different societies with which he has been connected, have always turned their eyes

upon him for their treasurer and chief manager; when, perhaps, they would not have contentedly submitted to any other authority. His early society was composed of men whose names are well known in the world; such as Hogarth, Rysbrach, Roubiliac, Willis, Ellis, Vanderbank, &c.

“ Though he had outlived all the companions of his youth, he might, to the last, have boasted of a succession equally numerous; for all that knew him were his friends.

“ When he was appointed Keeper of the Royal Academy, his conduct was exemplary, and worthy to be imitated by whoever shall succeed him in that office. As he loved the employment of teaching, he could not fail of discharging that duty with diligence. By the propriety of his conduct he united the love and respect of the students; he kept order in the Academy, and made himself respected, without the austerity or importance of office; all noise and tumult immediately ceased on his appearance; at the same time there was nothing forbidding in his manner, which might restrain the pupils from freely applying to him for advice or assistance.

“ All this excellence had a firm foundation: he was a man of sincere and ardent piety, and has left an illustrious example of the exactness with which the subordinate duties may be expected to be discharged by him whose first care is to please God.

“ He has left one daughter behind him, who has distinguished herself by the admirable manner in which she paints and composes pieces of flowers, of which many samples have been seen in the exhibitions. She has had the honour of being much employed in this way by their Majesties, and for her extraordinary merit has been received into the Royal Academy.”

This year Mr. Lowe,* the painter, was very much distressed that a large picture which he had painted was refused to be received into the Exhibition of the Royal Academy; and as he was intimate with, and much befriended by, Dr. Johnson, he immediately applied to him to use his interest with Sir Joshua in order to procure its admittance, on which Johnson sent the following letter to Sir Joshua Reynolds, which letter I have seen, and another to Mr. Barry, who at that time was one of the council.

“ TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

“ SIR,

“ Mr. Lowe considers himself as cut off from all credit and all hope, by the rejection of his pic-

* Mr. Lowe was a natural son of the late Lord Sutherland, from whom he had an annuity. He was much esteemed by Dr. Johnson, who bequeathed him a legacy, and stood to one of his children as godfather. He was sent to Rome by the patronage of the Royal Academy, in consequence of his having gained the gold medal in 1771; and died, at an obscure lodging in Westminster, September 1793. Mr. Lowe was much dissatisfied with the small sum of fifty pounds a year while at Rome from the

ture from the Exhibition. Upon this work he has exhausted all his powers, and suspended all his expectations: and certainly, to be refused an opportunity of taking the opinion of the public is, in itself, a very great hardship. It is to be condemned without a trial.

If you could procure the revocation of this incapacitating edict, you would deliver an unhappy man from great affliction. The council has sometimes reversed its own determinations; and I hope that, by your interposition, this luckless picture may be got admitted.

“ I am, &c.,

“ SAM. JOHNSON.”

April 12, 1783.

“ TO JAMES BARRY, ESQ.

“ SIR,

“ Mr. Lowe’s exclusion from the Exhibition gives him more trouble than you and the other gentlemen of the council could imagine or intend. He considers disgrace and ruin as the inevitable consequence of your determination. He says, that some pictures have been received after rejection; and if there be any such precedent, I earnestly entreat that you will use your interest in his favour. Of his work I can say nothing: I pretend not to judge of painting; and this picture I never

Royal Academy, and the expenses of his journey paid; and when Sir Joshua said that he knew from experience that it was sufficient, Lowe pertly answered, “ that it was possible for a man to live on guts and garbage.”

saw : but I conceive it extremely hard to shut out any man from the possibility of success ; and therefore I repeat my request, that you will propose the re-consideration of Mr. Lowe's case ; and if there be any among the council with whom my name can have any weight, be pleased to communicate to them the desire of, Sir,

“ Your most humble Servant,

April 12, 1783.

“ SAM. JOHNSON.”

Such intercession was too powerful to be resisted ; and Mr. Lowe's performance was admitted at Somerset-house, and exhibited there in an empty room. The subject was the Deluge, at that point of time when the water was rising to the top of the last uncovered mountain. Near to the spot was seen the last of the antediluvian race, exclusive of those who were saved in the ark of Noah. This was one of those giants, then the inhabitants of the earth, who had still strength to swim, and with one of his hands held aloft his infant child. Upon the small remaining dry spot appeared a famished lion ready to spring at the child and devour it. Mr. Lowe told Boswell that Dr. Johnson said to him, “ Sir, your picture is noble and probable.” “ A compliment, indeed,” said Mr. Lowe, “ from a man who cannot lie, and cannot be mistaken.”

In this speech of Mr. Lowe's we may perceive how easily and readily vanity or conceit can give

flattery to itself. That Johnson would not lie we will admit ; but, in his own letter to Barry he allows an ample field for mistake, as he confesses he knows nothing of the art, and that he had never seen the picture. I saw the picture myself when it was exhibited in an anti-room in the Academy, and then thought it had been much better for Mr. Lowe if he had complied with the first decree of the council ; for if the conception of the picture had been good, as Dr. Johnson insinuates, yet the execution of it was execrable beyond belief. Johnson was also mistaken in saying it was like condemning without a trial. On the contrary, Mr. Lowe had been tried, and by the fairest jury, that of his peers, those of the same profession ; and the world confirmed their decision to be just, as the picture, when shewn in public, was universally condemned.

This Mr. Mauritius Lowe was the pupil of Mr. Cipriani, but improved little under his tuition. He was also admitted a student of the Royal Academy among the first of those who entered that insitution. In this situation he made very slender advances in the art, being too indolent and inattentive to his studies to attain any excellence. But it is remarkable, that he was the person who obtained the gold medal first offered by the Royal Academy to the student who should produce the best historical picture. The subject given was Time discovering Truth.

If it be asked, how Mr. Lowe, though deficient as an artist, could obtain the medal? it may with truth be said, that he owed his success to the partiality of the Italian gentlemen, members of the Academy, who voted for him at the solicitation of Mr. Baretti, for whom Mr. Lowe had been a very favourable evidence on his trial in the year 1769: for it is very certain that Lowe's was not the best of the pictures offered for the premium.

Of this year's Exhibition Dr. Johnson gives some particulars in a letter to Mrs. Thrale, thus:

“On Saturday I dined, as is usual, at the opening of the Exhibition. Our company was splendid, whether more numerous than at any former time I know not. Our tables seem always full. On Monday, if I am told truth, were received at the door, one hundred and ninety pounds, for the admission of three thousand eight hundred spectators. Supposing the show open ten hours, and the spectators staying, one with another, each an hour, the rooms never had fewer than three hundred and eighty jostling against each other. Poor Lowe met with some discouragement; but I interposed for him, and prevailed.”

But Johnson's manners were actually so very uncouth, that he was not fit to dine in public; I remember the first time I ever had the pleasure to dine in company with him, which was at Sir Joshua's table, I was previously advised not to seem to observe him in eating, as his manner was very

slovenly at his meals, and he was very angry if he thought it was remarked.

The uncouth manner in which he fed himself was indeed remarkable. I well recollect when dining once at Sir Joshua's with him, he scalded his mouth by hastily and as awkwardly eating some of a beef steak pye when too hot; this, however, he passed off with a smile, saying that "beef steak pye would be a very good thing if it would ever be cold."

Mr. Barry seems at this period to have given vent to some of his spleen against Sir Joshua Reynolds, by a publication which is thus noticed by Dr. Johnson in a letter to Mrs. Thrale, on the 1st of May.—"Mr. Barry's exhibition was opened the same day, and a book is published to recommend it, which, if you read it, you will find it decorated with some satirical strictures on Sir Joshua Reynolds and others. I have not escaped. You must, however, think with some estimation of Barry for the comprehension of his design."

This attack of Barry's certainly arose from that morbid state of his own mind which made him often quarrel with his best friends, and which was perhaps heightened, at the present moment, by an idea that Sir Joshua's influence in the Academy was not in his favour.

If Sir Joshua's influence in the Royal Academy was great, it was most commonly justly exerted, and yet not always answerable to his desire: for I

remember to have heard him say, that although he was nominally king of the Academy, Sir William Chambers was the vice-roy over him; and at another time he said, "Those, who are of some importance every where else, find themselves nobody when they come to the Academy." However, from his station it was concluded that he had great influence, and on that supposition, on the following day after Johnson's note to Mrs. Thrale, we find the former soliciting the President's interest in favour of his friend Mr. Cruikshanks as candidate for the anatomical professorship: but his exertions in this instance, it is well known, were inefficacious.

" TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

" DEAR SIR,

" The gentleman who waits on you with this is Mr. Cruikshanks, who wishes to succeed his friend, Dr. Hunter, as Professor of Anatomy in the Royal Academy. His qualifications are very generally known, and it adds dignity to the institution that such men are candidates. " I am Sir,

" Your most humble servant,

May 2d, 1783.

" SAM. JOHNSON."

Johnson, though confessedly ignorant of painting, seems however to have still been much interested in the success of the Academy, whose exhibitions were now arriving at a great pitch of perfection. In a note, written on the 8th of May, he says,

“ The exhibition prospers so much, that Sir Joshua says it will maintain the Academy: he estimates the probable amount at £3000.”

While Mr. Barry was engaged in his great work at the Adelphi Rooms, Mr. Penny resigned his situation of professor of painting in the Royal Academy, of which he had been possessed from the foundation of the institution, when Mr. Barry offered to fill the vacant chair and was elected to it in 1782. But he was not over diligent in preparing for the duties of his office; on which account Sir Joshua Reynolds made some remarks upon his conduct, to which Barry answered with great violence, saying, “ If I had no more to do in the composition of my lectures than to produce such poor flimsy stuff as your discourses, I should soon have done my work, and be prepared to read.” It is said this speech was delivered with his fist clenched in a menacing posture.”

Barry gave his first lecture March 2, 1784.

In this situation his turbulent disposition began to express itself. His lectures very soon became mere vehicles of invective and satire against the principal Academicians, and most pointedly against Sir Joshua, who was reduced by it to so awkward a situation in his chair as an auditor, that he was obliged at last either to appear to be asleep or to absent himself from the place. After the death of Sir Joshua, he bestowed high praise on him and great abuse on those who were still alive, till at length a regular charge was preferred against him,

and it was found to be absolutely necessary to dismiss him from the office of lecturer, and also from the Royal Academy in 1799.

Sir Joshua used to say that, as many of Barry's discoveries were new to himself, so he thought they were new to every body else.

Barry should have considered, that if it is a good thing to be wise, it is a very bad thing to think we are so.

But it appears by Barry's own confession many years afterwards that he both relented and repented of his absurd conduct towards Sir Joshua. When speaking of the gift which Burke made him of his pamphlet, entitled "On the cause of the present discontents," Barry says, "by the significant manner in which he gave it I have often thought since, that he wished, and meant me to read and consider, with due attention, the opinion he had formed of his own hopes and prospects; and how little reason I should have to expect him to be my stickler in any difference which might arise (and which he saw rising) between me and Sir Joshua, to whom, as he has often told me (and as has since appeared to the public by Sir Joshua's will,) he was under very considerable pecuniary obligations, and even at the very time he was obliging me in a similar way. Had I then rightly considered the matter, or had he ventured to be a little more explicit, my precipitate estrangement could not have taken place. But his acquaintance with

Sir Joshua Reynolds was of longer standing than his acquaintance with me; I was a continued trouble and expence to him, and could no longer bear the thought of continuing to render his house unpleasant by my frequent bickerings with Sir Joshua, who, to say the truth, acted somewhat weakly with respect to me; and, on the other side, I was myself much to blame with respect to him: my notions of candour and liberality between artists who were friends, were too juvenile, and romantically strained too high for human frailty in the general occurrences of life. Disappointed in not finding more in poor Sir Joshua, I was not then in a humour to make a just estimate of the many excellent qualities I might have really found in him. But there is nothing rightly appreciated without that comparison with other things of the same nature, which time and long experience only can enable us to make."

In the life of Barry, page 257, vol. i., will be found an anonymous letter to him, containing criticisms on painting as well as on poetry, and on his works at the Adelphi. It is, in my opinion, one of the most excellent critiques I ever met with. Barry appears not to have suspected who was the author of it: but the writer of his life says, "It seems to be, from every mark of internal evidence, the production of Burke."

My own opinion is, that it is a combination of the talents of Burke and Sir Joshua Reynolds;

for there are opinions contained in it that none but a painter could have given, and which are likewise the very opinions of Sir Joshua: there are also other parts in it evidently by Burke, and which none but himself could have written. Therefore, no doubt remains in my mind as to its authors, to both of whom it does equal honour: nay, Barry himself seems to have felt very grateful for the friendly advice contained in it, and was very solicitous to discover the enlightened author, but in vain.

As this letter contains so many of the genuine opinions of Sir Joshua, together with many exquisite and useful precepts for young artists, I cannot forego my desire to give the following extracts from it. At the same time, I have presumed to point out the different parts which have been done by each individually, according to my own firm belief: but this is only matter of opinion; others may think differently. Many parts of it appear to me to have been done in conjunction.

However, at any rate, it contains too good a lesson to be omitted in an artist's book, whoever may be its author. It seems but natural that Burke should ask the assistance of Sir Joshua in the affair, as it was always his desire to do every thing in his power for Barry's advantage; and he was also convinced that Sir Joshua could afford him much serviceable advice, of which he here seems to have availed himself.

“ The painter who wishes to make his pictures (what fine pictures must be) nature elevated and improved, must first of all gain a perfect knowledge of nature as it is ; before he endeavours, like Lysippus, to make men as they ought to be, he must know how to render them as they are ; he must acquire an accurate knowledge of all the parts of the body and countenance : to know anatomy will be of little use, unless physiology and physiognomy are joined with it, so that the artist may know what peculiar combinations and proportions of features constitute different characters, and what effect the passions and affections of the mind have upon these features. This is a science which all the theorists in the world cannot teach, and which can only be acquired by observation, practice, and attention. It is not by copying antique statues, or by giving a loose to the imagination in what are called poetical compositions, that artists will be enabled to produce works of real merit : but by laborious and accurate investigation of nature upon the principles observed by the Greeks, first to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with the common forms of nature ; and then, by selecting and combining, to form compositions according to their own elevated conceptions. This is the principle of true poetry, as well as of painting and sculpture. Homer and Shakespeare had probably never seen characters so strongly marked as those of Achilles and Lady

Macbeth ; at least we may safely say that few of their readers have, and yet we all feel that these characters are drawn from nature, and that if we have not seen exactly the same, we have seen models or miniatures of them. The limbs and features are those of common nature, but elevated and improved by the taste and skill of the artist. This taste may be the gift of nature, the result of perfect organization, and the skill may be acquired by habit and study ; but the ground-work, the knowledge of limbs and features, must be acquired by practical attention and accurate observation. And here, Sir, that portrait-painting which you affect so much to despise, is the best school that an artist can study in, provided he studies it, as every man of genius will do, with a philosophic eye, not with a view merely to copy the face before him, but to learn the character of it, with a view to employ in more important works what is good of it, and to reject what is not. It was in this view that the great painters of the Roman and Bolognese schools collected such numbers of studies of heads from nature, which they afterwards embellished and introduced in their pictures, as occasion required. Hence that boundless variety which is observable in their works.”—(*The above by Sir Joshua.*) *Vide his Preface to Ralph's Catalogue.*

“ I do not mean to recommend to the historical painter to make his works an assemblage of cari-

catures, like those of Hogarth and some of our present artists ; but as there is scarcely any character so insipid that a Shakspeare or a Fielding would not have been able to discover something peculiar in, so there is scarcely any countenance so vacant, but that there are some trifling features which may be of use to a skilful and ingenious artist ; though it seldom or ever happens that any character of countenance is sufficiently strong and perfect to serve of itself for the hero of a poem or picture, until it has been touched and embellished by the fostering hand of the poet or the painter.”

—(*Sir Joshua.*)

“ Portrait painting may be to the painter what the practical knowledge of the world is to the poet, provided he considers it as a school by which he is to acquire the means of perfection in his art, and not as the object of that perfection.

“ It was practical knowledge of the world which gave the poetry of Homer and Shakspeare that superiority which still exists over all other works of the same kind ; and it was a philosophic attention to the imitation of common nature (which portrait-painting ought to be,) that gave the Roman and Bolognese schools their superiority over the Florentine, which excelled so much in theoretic knowledge of the art.”—(*Sir Joshua.*)

“ I entirely agree with you, that the rage of the inhabitants of this country for having their phizzes perpetuated, whether they are worthy of it or not,

is one great obstacle to the advancement of art ; because it makes that branch more profitable than any other, and therefore makes many men of great talents consider it as the ultimate object of their art, instead of the means of that object. But there is another error on the contrary side not less fatal, which is the contempt our young artists are apt to entertain for the lower detail of nature, and the forward ambition which they all have of undertaking great things before they can do little ones—of making compositions before they are acquainted sufficiently with the constituent parts.”

—(*Burke.*)

“ We are told that many ancient artists bestowed their whole lives upon a single composition —We are not to suppose that these great artists employed so many years in chipping one block of marble, but that the greatest part of the time was employed in studying nature, particularly the vast and intricate branches of physiology and pathology, in order to enable them to execute perfectly the great works which they had conceived.”—(*Sir Joshua.*)

“ It is not enough to know the forms, positions, and proportions of the constituent parts of the animal machine, but we should know the nice changes that are produced in them by the various affections of the mind, as grief, agony, rage, &c. ; without this we may produce splendid compositions and graceful figures, but we shall never ap-

proach that perfection to which the ancients arrived : a perfection to which I fear the very constitution of modern society is an insurmountable obstacle. Such a minister as Pericles might perhaps overcome it ; but, considering the present system of education, it is scarcely possible that such a one should appear. To distinguish between what is good and what is bad falls to the lot of many, but to distinguish between what is barely good and what is truly excellent falls to the lot of few ; and it very rarely happens that any of these few are kings and ministers, who are able and willing to reward an artist for giving up his whole time to one object, which he must do if he means to make it truly excellent.”—(*The above by Burke.*)

“ There is another erroneous principle which seems to have crept into your book, which is extremely general in the present age, and is a principal cause of our faulty taste. This is the confounding greatness of size with greatness of manner, and imagining that extent of canvass or weight of marble can contribute to make a picture or a statue sublime. The only kind of sublimity which a painter or sculptor should aim at, is to express by certain proportions and positions of limbs and features, that strength and dignity of mind, and vigour and activity of body, which enable men to conceive and execute great actions : provided the space in which these are represented is large

enough for the artist to distinguish them clearly to the eye of the spectator, at the distance from which he intends his work to be seen, it is large enough. A space which extends beyond the field of vision only serves to distract and mislead the eye, and to divide the attention. The representation of gigantic and monstrous figures has nothing of sublimity either in poetry or painting, which entirely depends upon expression. When Claudian describes a giant taking a mountain on his shoulders, with a river running down his back, there is nothing sublime in it, for there is no great expression, but merely brute strength; but when Homer describes Achilles advancing to the walls of Troy, clad in celestial armour, like the autumnal star that brings fevers, plagues, and death, we see all the terrible qualities of that hero rendered still more terrible by being contrasted with the venerable figure of Priam standing upon the walls of Troy, and tearing his white hair at sight of the approaching danger. This is the true sublime; (*he must mean in poetry, for it would not be very sublime in painting;*) the other is trick and quackery. Any madman can describe a giant striding from London to York, or a ghost stepping from mountain to mountain; but it requires genius, and genius experienced in the ways of men, to draw a finished character with all the excellencies and excesses, the virtues and infirmities of a great and exalted mind, so that by turns we admire the

hero and sympathize with the man—exult and triumph in his valour and generosity, and shudder at his rage, and pity his distress. This is the Achilles of Homer; a character every-where to be seen in miniature; which the poet drew from nature, and then touched and embellished according to his own exalted ideas. Had he drawn him with great virtues and great abilities, without great passions, the character would have been unnatural, and of course uninteresting; for a vigorous mind is necessarily accompanied with violent passions, as a great fire with great heat. The same principle which guided Homer should guide the painter in studying after nature. He should attempt to copy, and not to create; and when his mind is sufficiently stored with materials, and his hand sufficiently exercised in art, then let him select and combine, and try to produce something superior to common nature, though copied from it. But let him not imagine, that because he can produce great things, he can therefore produce good things, or that when he has covered a great extent of canvass with bold and hasty sketches, he has produced a fine picture, or sublime composition. Such works, compared with the beautiful and animated compositions of the Bolognese school, put me in mind of Claudian's battle of the giants, compared with Virgil's battle of the bees. In the former all the objects are vast, but the action and expression extravagant and absurd, and

the whole cold and uninteresting. In the latter the objects are minute, but the action and expression bold and animated, and the whole together, warm, clear, and spirited."—(*The above by Burke.*)

"I have seen a large cartoon, copied from a little picture of the vision of Ezekiel by Raffaele, in which the copyist thought, without doubt, to expand and illustrate the idea of the author; but by losing the majesty of the countenances, which makes the original so sublime, notwithstanding its being in miniature, his colossal copy became ridiculous, instead of awful."—(*The above by Sir Joshua.*)

"It is with great concern I have observed of late years this taste for false sublime gaining ground in England, particularly among artists. I attribute it in a great measure to certain compositions, which have been extolled by interested prejudices, and admired by credulous ignorance, for no other reason than because they were not understood. Few readers take the trouble of judging for themselves; so that when a work is ushered into the world with great pomp, and under the sanction of great names, its real merits are examined only by a few, the generality being content to admire, because it is the fashion to admire. If the work under these circumstances be pompous and unmeaning, its success is sure, as its pomp dazzles and its vacancy puzzles, both which are admirable ingredients to procure respect. This I think is

the true way to account for the applause and admiration that have been given to those miserable rhapsodies published by Macpherson under the name of Ossian. They were ushered into the world with great pomp, as the production of an ancient bard, and recommended by the respectable authority of Dr. Blair, aided by all the national prejudice of the Scotch. Few, therefore, were willing to allow that they disliked them, and still fewer bold enough to declare their dislike openly. Hence they have been received by many as standards of true taste and sublimity, which the author modestly declared them to be. The consequence of this was the corrupting all true taste, and introducing gigantic and extravagant tinsel for easy dignity and natural sublimity. I attribute this false taste to these poems, because I see so many artists who have been working from them, all of whose works are tainted with it; and indeed it can hardly be otherwise, as the poems themselves (for so they are improperly called,) are nothing but a confused compilation of tinsel and fustian, such as any one might write who had impudence enough to publish. Fashionable authors have great influence upon the taste of a nation: Seneca and Lucan certainly corrupted that of the Romans; and Homer as certainly formed that of the Greeks. Before his time, Sidon was the country of the arts, as himself frequently mentions; but as soon as that spirit of true taste, elegance, and sublimity, which

he had breathed into them, began to operate, they infinitely surpassed all other nations."—(*The above by Burke.*)

Great as was the genius of Burke, it was impossible for him to have written the foregoing criticism on the art without the powerful assistance of Reynolds.

In the month of June, this year, Johnson sat for his picture to Miss Reynolds, and speaking of this performance in a letter to Mrs. Thrale, he says, "yesterday I sat for my picture to Miss Reynolds, perhaps for the tenth time, and I sat near three hours with the patience of *mortal born to bear*; at last she declared it quite finished, and seems to think it fine."

This instance may serve to show that perseverance was the rule and practice of Sir Joshua's school; for I have known himself, on some occasions, require as many sittings and as long at each time.

Much as Johnson admired Miss Reynolds's talents, however, he did not compliment her upon that production; but, when finished, told her it was "Johnson's grimly ghost;" and as the picture was afterwards to be engraved, he recommended as an appropriate motto, that stanza from the old ballad of William and Margaret, "In glided," &c.*

* The abovementioned portrait of Dr. Johnson, three quarters length, was painted in oil of the size of the life, and is now in

Miss Reynolds at first amused herself by painting miniature portraits, and in that part of the art was particularly successful. Sir Joshua having painted a child of the Duke of Marlborough's, Miss Reynolds copied it in miniature, and presented it to the duke, who in return sent her a gold snuff box.

In her attempts at oil painting, however, she did not succeed, which made Reynolds say jestingly, that her pictures in that way made other people laugh and him cry; and as he did not approve of her painting in oil, she generally did it by stealth. Once she was making a copy from a very fine picture, which he had made of a Nymph and Bacchus, painted from a girl named Miss Hill. Whilst Miss Reynolds was working upon this copy, she heard her brother suddenly coming into the library in which she was working, when she, in great haste endeavouring to hide the picture, by accident threw it down, and by the fall caused a considerable part of the face and neck of the portrait to drop from the canvass, to the great surprize and annoyance of them both.

We see that Dr. Johnson was accustomed to speak the plain truth, by what he said to Miss Reynolds on his portrait, and that he never condescended to give an equivocal answer to any question; of which the following is an instance.

the possession of John Hatsell, esq., in Cotton Garden, Westminster.

A lady of his acquaintance once asked him how it happened that he was never invited to dine at the tables of the great ?

He replied, " Because, Madam, great lords and ladies do not like to have their mouths stopped !"

Perhaps his abstinence from wine might have induced him to decline many invitations, from a wish not to appear singular ; for Sir Joshua informed a friend that he had never seen Dr. Johnson intoxicated by hard drinking but once, and that happened at the time they were together in Devonshire, when one night after supper Johnson drank three bottles of wine, which affected his speech so much that he was unable to articulate a hard word which occurred in the course of his conversation. He attempted it three times but failed, yet, at last accomplished it, and then said, " Well Sir Joshua I think it is now time to go to bed."

I apprehend he afterwards made a vow to abstain from wine entirely, as I recollect that once when I dined in his company at Sir Joshua's table, Miss Reynolds offered to help him to some bread pudding, but he asked if there was any wine in the sauce, and being answered that there was, he refused it.

In the autumn of this year, a great and important political change was taking place in the Netherlands by the Emperor's order, particularly by the suppression of the greatest part of the religious and

monastic institutions, which was expected to cause the sale of a great number of Rubens's best paintings. Many persons went over to examine them, and amongst the rest Sir Joshua; and he took both Brussels and Antwerp in his route: but I do not possess any specific knowledge of this trip, except that he made some further excellent observations, which are among the best of his criticisms, and highly illustrative of the merits of Rubens, that prince of Flemish painters.

Mr. Malone has preserved some of his observations at this period, and he says, that Sir Joshua on his return from his first tour in 1781, thought that his own works seemed to want force, but that on viewing the paintings of Rubens a second time, even they appeared much less brilliant than on a former inspection. This circumstance he was at first unable to account for, until he recollected, that when he first saw them he had his note book in his hand, for the purpose of writing down some remarks, which he considered as the reason of their now making a less vivid impression in this respect than they had before done; for by the eye passing immediately from the white paper to the picture, the colours derived uncommon richness and warmth; though for want of this foil they afterwards appeared comparatively cold.

But, as he has also remarked, on his return the first time, that his own pictures wanted force, and it was observed that he painted with more depth

and brilliancy of colour afterwards, is it not more probable that the difference of the impression he felt from the sight of Rubens's pictures was owing to his having accustomed his eye in the mean time to a greater force and richness in his own works? or, at any rate, this must have assisted to increase the impression he felt.

Notwithstanding this nice discrimination and discernment of Sir Joshua, as an instance of the fallibility of memory respecting his own works, I cannot omit relating a circumstance rather curious, of his having totally forgotten one of his own performances—a full length portrait of a lady and her young son, painted by him in the early part of his life, but after his return from Italy. This was brought to me many years after the lady's death, to make a copy from it; and in the mean time, Sir Joshua accidentally calling at my house, saw the picture, and very gravely asked me who it was painted by. I answered, "They tell me it was by yourself." He then said, rather quickly, "Why, what have you been doing to it?" I replied that I had done nothing to it. Then, looking again at the picture, he said, "Why, I do not think it is very bad." I answered, "I think it is very fine, especially the head of the child:" and this was really the truth.

Sir Joshua, at another time, observed to me, of an admired genius in the art, that he grew worse instead of better, and seemed to have lost himself

in his careless execution and deficiency in finishing his works ; but added, “ It is not an uncommon case with those even who strive to improve in their profession ; he is, perhaps, trying experiments ; and if so, will in time come round again, probably better than ever.”

It was an established opinion of Sir Joshua’s, that if his painting a person’s portrait was limited to a short space of time, by accidental circumstances, it seldom did any injury to the work ; since it tended to produce a degree of exertion in him, that operated with as good an effect on the picture as he could have given to it had his time been unlimited.

Speaking to Sir Joshua of the abilities of a late eminent artist, I remarked that, if to his actual merits he had conjoined only one other quality, he would have been a very great painter. He replied, “ that it was ever the case ; for the want of one small requisite quality in addition destroyed the claim to perfection of even the greatest men.”

Sir Joshua this year executed several admired portraits ; but in the midst of his professional engagements he still found leisure to attend to literary pursuits, and to subjoin some very elaborate notes, consisting principally of practical observations and explanations of the rules laid down, to that translation of Du Fresnoy’s Art of Painting by Mr. Mason, which was published at this period. These

notes are in the third volume of his works, as published by Mr. Malone.

It appears, indeed, if the world owe any thing to Mr. Mason for this production, that they are also partly indebted for it to Sir Joshua, as it had long lain in manuscript unfinished, in Mr. Mason's library, and was only at length brought forward in consequence of his having requested a sight of it, and then freely making an offer of illustrating it in the manner he has done, which renders the work invaluable.

One professional anecdote which Sir Joshua mentions in these notes, of his own practice, deserves notice here.

Speaking of Paul Veronese, Tintoret, and the other painters of the Venetian School, he says, "When I was at Venice, the method I took to avail myself of their principles was this. When I observed an extraordinary effect of light and shade in any picture, I took a leaf out of my pocket book, and darkened every part of it in the same gradation of light and shade as the picture, leaving the white paper untouched, to represent the light, and this without any attention to the subject, or to the drawing of the figures. A few trials of this kind will be sufficient to give the method of their conduct in the management of their lights. After a few experiments, I found the paper blotted nearly alike: their general practice appeared to be, to allow not above a quarter of the picture

for the light, including in this portion both the principal and secondary lights; another quarter to be kept as dark as possible; and the remaining half kept in mezzotint, or half shadow. Rubens appears to have admitted rather more light than a quarter, and Rembrandt much less, scarce an eighth; by this conduct Rembrandt's light is extremely brilliant, but it costs too much—the rest of the picture is sacrificed to this one object. That light will certainly appear the brightest which is surrounded with the greatest quantity of shade, supposing equal skill in the artist.

“By this means you may likewise remark the various forms and shapes of those lights, as well as the objects on which they are flung; whether a figure, or the sky, a white napkin, animals, or utensils, often introduced for this purpose only. It may be observed, likewise, what portion is strongly relieved, and how much is united with its ground; for it is necessary that some part (though a small one is sufficient) should be sharp and cutting against its ground, whether it be light on a dark, or dark on a light ground, in order to give firmness or distinctness to the work: if, on the other hand, it is relieved on every side, it will appear as if inlaid on its ground.

“Such a blotted paper, held at a distance from the eye, will strike the spectator as something excellent for the disposition of light and shadow, though he does not distinguish whether it is a

history, a portrait, a landscape, dead game, or any thing else; for the same principles extend to every branch of the art."

Having recorded some of Reynolds' notes illustrative of Mason's Translation of Du Fresnoy, it may also be noticed, that Sir Joshua, in another of the notes, has given, with great caution, the following opinion :

"The pre-eminence which Fresnoy has given to those three great painters, Raffaele, Michael Angelo, and Julio Romano, sufficiently points out to us what ought to be the chief object of our pursuit. Though two of them were either totally ignorant of, or never practised, any of those graces of the art which proceed from the management of colours, or the disposition of light and shadow; and the other (Raffaele) was far from being eminently skilful in these particulars: yet they justly deserve that high rank in which Fresnoy has placed them; Michael Angelo, for the grandeur and sublimity of his characters, as well as for his profound knowledge of design; Raffaele, for the judicious arrangement of materials, for grace, dignity, and the expression of his characters; and Julio Romano for possessing the true poetical genius of painting, perhaps in a higher degree than any other painter whatever.

"In heroic subjects it will not, I hope, appear too great a refinement of criticism to say, that the want of naturalness or deception of art, which

gives to an inferior style its whole value, is no material disadvantage: the Hours, for instance, as represented by Julio Romano, giving provender to the horses of the Sun, would not strike the imagination more forcibly from their being coloured with the pencil of Rubens, though he would have represented them more naturally: but might he not possibly, by that very act, have brought them down from the celestial state to the rank of mere terrestrial animals?"

Sir Joshua afterwards modestly adds, that, "in these things, however, I admit there will always be a degree of uncertainty. Who knows that Julio Romano, if he had possessed the art and practice of colouring like Rubens, would not have given to it some taste of poetical grandeur not yet attained to?"

"The same familiar naturalness would be equally an imperfection in characters which are to be represented as demi-gods, or something above humanity."

Sir Joshua further adds: "Though it would be far from an addition to the merit of those two great painters to have made their works deceptions, yet there can be no reason why they might not in some degree, and with a judicious caution and selection, have availed themselves of many excellencies which are found in the Venetian, Flemish, and Dutch schools, and which have been inculcated in this poem. There are some of them

which are not in absolute contradiction to any style; the preservation of breadth in the masses of colours; the union of these with their grounds; and the harmony arising from a due mixture of hot and cold hues, with many other excellencies not inseparably connected with that individuality which produces deception, would surely not counteract the effect of the grand style; they would only contribute to the ease of the spectator, by making the vehicle pleasing by which ideas are conveyed to the mind, which otherwise might be perplexed and bewildered with a confused assemblage of objects; they would add a certain degree of grace and sweetness to strength and grandeur. Though the merits of these two great painters are of such transcendency as to make us overlook their deficiency, yet a subdued attention to these inferior excellencies must be added to complete the idea of perfection."

Mr. Opie in answer to this, I think very justly, observes, "Can it be supposed that the Hours leading out the Horses of the Sun, painted by Julio Romano, would have been less poetical and celestial had they possessed more harmony, brilliancy, and truth of colouring? Yet this has been supposed, and by a writer whose name I revere, and whose works will be an honour to this country as long as taste and genius continue to attract admiration. But though I respect *him* much, I respect *truth* more, which I think will bear me

out in maintaining the contrary opinion. Celestial objects, according to our conceptions of them, differ from terrestrial ones, not in essence, but in beauty; not in principle, but in power; and our representations of them should possess all the splendour and effect, as well as all the vigour, spirit, and elevation of character possible. To a certain portion of spirit and character it was doubtless owing, that in *spite* of, and not by the aid of defects, Julio Romano's horses became the objects of admiration; and had this excellence been joined to the others with which they are always associated in our minds, the effect of the work must have been proportionally greater, and it would have consequently stood still higher in the scale of art.

“Such paradoxical opinions cannot be too closely examined, as they tend to arrest the progress of art, and prevent those attempts by which alone perfection must (if ever) be obtained. For what is perfection, but the complete union of all parts of the art; and if they are incompatible, what have we to hope for?”

At another time, Sir Joshua, in conversation, gave it as his opinion, that the cartoons of Raffaele are of a colour most proper for such subjects as they mean to represent; and that, was their colour a more exact imitation of nature, it would only vulgarise and render them more familiar to us, and lessen the impressive sublimity of their

effect. This, at first, seems to be very sound reasoning. But yet, I apprehend it not to be a just judgement, inasmuch as it pre-supposes, that in the absence of this natural and familiar colour its place is supplied by an unobtrusive visionary negative hue; and if such were indeed possible, the reasoning might be good: but, on the contrary, we find a colour positive and unnatural, and which obtrudes upon our minds the recollection of things still terrestrial and familiar, much more vulgar and degrading, and more destructive of the awful impression that is intended to be made, whilst the dusky hues of brick-dust and charcoal are forced upon our ideas from their similarity to the tints of the picture. Besides, we shall soon perceive, that if we raise the scene in our mind's eye, we shall have a sublime picture presented to us in a colour, still as far from that positive one of Julio Romano or Raffaele as it might be from common familiar nature, and without any similitude to coarse terrestrial substances, so as to break the illusion, or draw off our attention from the awful idea.

Sir Joshua seems not to have reasoned so wrong on the principle as he is unlucky in the instances he has given; as it is certain that a positive bad colour, proceeding from an inability in the painter in that part of the art, ought never to be received as a model of imitation under whatever high authority it may be found.

Pope, with Dryden's translation of Du Fresnoy corrected by Jervas, sent to that indifferent painter the well-known and most exquisitely poetical letter in which are these lines :

“ Smit with the love of sister Arts we came,
And met congenial, mingling flame with flame ;
Like friendly colours found them both unite,
And each from each contract new strength and light.
How oft in pleasing tasks we wear the day,
While summer suns roll unperceiv'd away ?
How oft our slowly growing works impart,
While images reflect from Art to Art ?
How oft review, each finding like a friend,
Something to blame, and something to commend ?”

So Mr. Mason, when he sent his translation of Du Fresnoy to his friend Sir Joshua Reynolds, thought it incumbent on himself also “ to mingle flame with flame ;” and thus Mr. Mason addresses the great painter :

“ Let friendship, as she caus'd, excuse the deed ;
With thee, and such as thee, she must succeed :
But what, if fashion tempted POPE astray,
The witch has spells, and JERVAS knew a day
When mode-struck belles and beaux were proud to come,
And buy of him a thousand years of bloom,
Even then I deem it but a venal crime ;
Perish alone that selfish sordid rhyme,
Which flatters lawless sway, or tinsel pride ;
Let black oblivion plunge it in her tide.”

This species of imitation is well described in one of Æsop's fables.

To return to the period of our narrative; it was said in a contemporary character of Reynolds, at this period, that he had so little of the jealousy of his profession, that when a celebrated English artist, on his arrival from Italy, asked him where he should set up a house, Sir Joshua told him that the next house to his own was vacant, and that he had found his own situation a very good one.*

It is also recorded as an instance of his prizing extraordinary merit, that when Gainsborough asked him but sixty guineas for his celebrated girl and pigs, yet being conscious in his own mind that it was worth more, he liberally paid him down one hundred guineas for the picture.

I also find it mentioned on record, that a painter of considerable merit having unfortunately made an injudicious matrimonial choice, was, along with that and its consequences, as well as an increasing family, in a few years reduced so very low, that he could not venture out without danger of being arrested, a circumstance which, in a great measure, put it out of his power to dispose of his pictures to advantage.

* A young painter who made a visit to his native town, after having studied in London, was well received there, and had his hands over full of work in portraits, but which he left abruptly from his great desire to make the tour of Italy. When he saw Sir Joshua in London, and related the circumstance to him, Reynolds blamed him for leaving such a harvest, saying "You should have staid as long as the rage lasted, and not have left it, as it cannot be recovered when once lost."

Sir Joshua having accidentally heard of his situation, immediately hurried to his residence, to inquire into the truth of it, when the unfortunate man told him all the melancholy particulars of his lot, adding that forty pounds would enable him to compound with his creditors.

After some further conversation, Sir Joshua took his leave, telling the distressed man he would do something for him, and when he was bidding him adieu at the door, he took him by the hand, and after squeezing it in a friendly way, "hurried off with that kind of triumph in his heart, the exalted of human kind only experience." whilst the astonished artist found that he had left in his hand a bank note for one hundred pounds.

Amongst other instances of Sir Joshua's liberality towards artists, may be recorded his reception and encouragement of the late Ozias Humphrey, the miniature painter, and a native of Devonshire. The circumstance happened, indeed, some years previous to the present date; but having been only recently favoured by a friend, with the perusal of a manuscript in Mr. Humphrey's own hand writing, I take pleasure in the introduction of it in this place, nearly in the writer's own words.

Though Mr. Humphrey had been for some time in the metropolis, so that Sir Joshua's person had been familiar to him at auctions and at every public place, his eminence making him an object of

attention to all students, yet he had never enjoyed any intercourse with him personally.

His character, however, for liberality and general favour, was so well established, that there seemed, to the youthful artist, to be no danger of a rebuff in venturing to call upon him, with a view to exhibit, and request the favour of his opinion of one or two miniatures which Mr. Humphrey had brought with him to town, from Bath, where he had practised for some time previous.

Sir Joshua received him, as he did every person, with singular courtesy and encouragement; commended the performances and was pleased to say that they were promising; then, enquired of him where he had painted them? and how he was situated?

Understanding that Mr. Humphrey had just come from Bath, he particularly enquired what had induced him to visit the metropolis? when Humphrey replied that he had come for the sole purpose of improvement. "What," Sir Joshua asked, "is your scheme of study, and what do you propose to do? to which the answer was that he was unacquainted with London, that the advantages which it contained were not specifically known to him, and therefore it had not yet been possible for him to fix upon any plan. "Do you mean to copy pictures?" said Sir Joshua; and the reply was, "Certainly, if I could procure any." Sir Joshua immediately said that

he had many of Vandyke and other great masters, and had also many of his own painting; adding that Mr. Humphrey was welcome to the use of any of them. The latter thanked Sir Joshua respectfully; and said that he should accept, with thankfulness, the favours he was disposed to shew him, by either copying any old picture which he might recommend to him, or one of Sir Joshua's in preference, if he had any that he could conveniently spare him.

Sir Joshua then observed, that he might copy any one of his own performances, if it was most agreeable; which, perhaps, might be as well, on account of the modern manner of treating and representing the subject of the day. This proffered favour, Sir Joshua kindly completed by desiring Mr. Humphrey to fix upon any picture he liked; but the latter declined choosing for himself, not only because he preferred Sir Joshua's judgement to his own, but from his apprehension that (unacquainted as he was with the characters of the time) he might perhaps fix upon one that could not, with propriety, be granted him. He therefore requested Sir Joshua to choose one for him, which was instantly complied with. In a short time the copy was finished, and carried to Sir Joshua, who, in the most liberal manner, declared his approbation, and said many encouraging things to the youthful artist, and recommended another picture to Mr. Humphrey; an historical head of

King Lear in the storm, which was finished and brought for inspection in three or four days, at which also Sir Joshua expressed surprize and admiration, declaring that it was superior to any thing he had seen in miniature, of modern painting, adding "this picture is so finely painted, that you must allow me to purchase it of you. What is your price?" Mr. Humphrey replied, that he had no price, that the approbation Sir Joshua had the goodness to express respecting it, could not be appreciated ; and was so unexpected and so gratifying that he wanted words to manifest his sense of it, and therefore he requested that Sir Joshua would increase the obligation by accepting the miniature. "That," said Sir Joshua, "I cannot do; but I must have the picture, in order to shew it, that I may be useful to you. What is your price?"

The youthful artist, after much hesitation, naming three guineas, "Oh!" exclaimed his patron, "that price is too little! I must and will give five guineas for it, which you must tell to every body, and let that be your price from this day forward." This discourse and encouragement animated the young painter almost to madness. Sir Joshua then enquired more particularly all the circumstances of his life, where he was born, and how he had passed his earliest years? And, when informed of his being a native of Devonshire, replied "I am glad to hear it; for I am from Devonshire myself." Mr. Humphrey, having said that his

mother was engaged in a considerable manufacture of Bath Brussels Lace, at Honiton, Sir Joshua obligingly remarked, "Vandyke's mother was engaged in a similar concern. I hope your success in life will be as honourable and as distinguished as Vandyke's was." To this he added, "It would be a sin, and highly imprudent for you to continue any longer at Bath, under so many comparative disadvantages. I advise you immediately to settle in town; and if you should live near me, I will do every thing I can to assist you."

Sir Joshua's advice was taken; and Mr. Humphrey enjoyed the advantage of it, finding every promise more than fulfilled.

Of such traits of benevolence certainly many other instances might be recorded, but I shall only mention two more.

When Zoffanii the painter came to England he was but little known in this country, and without a patron; but the very first picture which he exhibited in London was purchased by Sir Joshua at the price which Zoffanii demanded for it.

The picture represents a scene in the farce of the Alchymist, in which there is a most excellent portrait of Garrick in the character of Able Druggger, accompanied by those of Palmer and Burton. This picture Sir Joshua sold soon after to the Earl of Carlisle for twenty guineas above the price which he had given for it, and sent the advanced price immediately to Zoffanii, saying, "he thought he had sold the picture at first below its real value."

The clergyman, who succeeded Sir Joshua's father as master of the Grammar School at Plympton, at his decease left a widow, who after the death of her husband opened a boarding school for the education of young ladies. The teacher who assisted in this school had but few friends in situations to do her much service, and her sole dependence was on her small stipend from the school: hence she was unable to make a sufficiently reputable appearance in apparel at their accustomed little balls. The daughter of the school-mistress, her only child, and at that time a very young girl, felt for the poor teacher's pitiable insufficiency in the article of finery, but being unable to help her from her own resources devised within herself a mode by which it might be done otherwise.

Having heard of the great fame of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and his character for generosity and charity, recollecting also that he had formerly belonged to the Plympton school, she without mentioning a syllable to any of her companions addressed a letter to Sir Joshua, whom she had never even seen, in which she represented to him the forlorn state of the poor young woman's wardrobe, and begged the gift of a silk gown for her. Very shortly after they received a box containing silks of different patterns, sufficient for two dresses, to the infinite astonishment of the simple teacher, who was totally unable to account for this piece of good for-

tune, as the compassionate girl was afraid to let her know the means she had taken in order to procure the welcome present.

I mentioned the circumstance afterwards to Sir Joshua who assured me of its truth.

Sir Joshua was exceedingly willing at all times to lend pictures, prints, or drawings, or any thing in his possession, particularly to young artists; and he has sometimes been near losing them, by their being seized for rent, or from other circumstances to which the indigence of the borrowers rendered them liable. I do not think he ever denied any one who asked; he also readily gave his advice to all those who came to seek it, and they were frequently very numerous, insomuch as to take up his time, and make him occasionally rather tart in his answers, but not often. One instance I recollect of a young artist, who frequently took his pictures to him to have the faults pointed out, as well as those parts of them in which he was successful, in order to his improvement. This artist was desired by another young painter to introduce him to Sir Joshua, that he might have the like advantage, and accordingly they went together with their productions in their hands. The first showed his work, and received some commendations on it from Sir Joshua; when the second artist, who was considerably inferior in his practice to the first, with much awe and trembling humbly displayed his performance, which was the portrait of a female: but Sir Joshua, who

was very tenacious of his time, and had been too often annoyed by similar applications, hastily exclaimed to him, "What is this you have in your hand? You should not shew such things. What's that upon her head, a dish-clout?" The poor forlorn artist was so confounded at this first introduction, that he went home, and was literally not able to resume his palette and pencils for more than a month afterwards.

This circumstance was related to me by the artist who was the introducer; but I believe Sir Joshua was totally unconscious of the effect it had on the young man, or he never would have spoken in that manner.

One day when Sir Joshua called at my house, and saw the picture I was then painting, he objected to its colouring, saying I had made it too florid; I answered that Mr. — the painter had just before been with me, and had observed of that very picture that it was not sufficiently vivid in its colour: when Sir Joshua answered rather sharply, "Look at that painter's works, and thence you may estimate the value of his advice."

1784.

ÆTAT. 60.

In the year 1784, Sir Joshua had a decided pre-eminence at the Exhibition. His principal pic-

ture was the portrait of Mrs. Siddons, as the Tragic Muse, now the property of William Smith, Esq. M. P., from which a well known print has been taken ; this picture Sir Joshua valued at 1000 guineas. Barry observes of this portrait as follows. " Sir Joshua's portrait of Mrs. Siddons is, both for the ideal and executive, the finest picture of the kind, perhaps in the world. Indeed it is something more than a portrait, and may serve to give an excellent idea of what an enthusiastic mind is apt to conceive of those pictures of confined history, for which Appelles was so celebrated by the ancient writers ; but this picture of Mrs. Siddons or the Tragic muse was painted not long since ; when much of his attention had been turned to history."

The Fortune-teller, sold to the Duke of Dorset,* and a portrait of Miss Kemble, were in the same Exhibition.

* The Duke of Dorset loved and distinguished excellence amongst the professors of his own country, even whilst he was engaged in studying and collecting the chefs d'œuvre of foreign art. Indeed, he frequently denied himself common necessaries, for a person of his high birth and station, that he might indulge himself in the possession of the best modern pictures. Out of his small income, he paid four hundred guineas for the Ugolino, and when it was remarked that it was a large sum to pay for a modern production, " That may be true," replied the Duke, " but the picture affords me so much more pleasure than the money would, that I do not know how it could be better applied."

He likewise purchased the Gipsy Fortune-teller for three hundred guineas.

The last of these drew forth great applause from the numerous literary friends of that lady; and the following poetic tribute to the skill of Sir Joshua, may not be undeserving of insertion.

“ While hands obscene, at vicious grandeur’s call,
 With mimic harlots cloathe th’ indignant wall,
 Destructive snares for youthful passion spread,
 The slacken’d bosom, and the faithless bed,
 Thy pencil, *Reynolds!* innocently gay,
 To virtue leads by pleasure’s flowery way;
 In blushing honour decks the tim’rous bride,
 Or maid whose thoughts confederate Angels guide:
 For thy rare skill, to surface unconfined,
 Through every genuine feature pours the mind.
 Should the wild rage of other *Phrynes* compare
 With Corinth’s past the British drama’s fair,
 (Though art may Palmer’s vanish’d form deplore,
 And Satchell’s eyes unpictur’d beam no more)
 If firm duration crowns thy just design,
 Nor all its soft similitudes decline,
 In Kemble’s look chastis’d will yet be seen
 What one bright daughter of the stage has been
 Reserv’d though mingling with the loud, the vain,
 And uneduc’d where Syren pleasures reign.
 Where dames undone and social ruin smile,
 While echo’d scandal shakes a guilty pile.
 Pleas’d we behold, by thy congenial hand,
 In native charms embodied virtue stand;
 For vice can ne’er its odious traces hide,
 The glance of lewdness, or the swell of pride.
 Mark’d to be shunn’d, and stigmatis’d by fate,
 Since in each varied guise, of scorn or hate,
 O’er all the face its dire effusions shoot,
 As branches still are modell’d by the root.
 But, for our love when grace and merit vie,
 Attract the decent, check the lawless eye,

Th' instructive canvass moral worth excites,
 And *Reynolds* paints the lessons *Johnson* writes.
 Should time, whose force our hopes in vain withstand,
 Blast the nymph's face, and shake the painter's hand,
 Yet may these tints divide the fame they give,
 And art and beauty bid each other live!"

Another painting of Sir Joshua's was exhibited this year by the Society for promoting Painting and Design at Liverpool; which was a landscape containing a view on the Thames from his own villa on Richmond-hill. This has been engraved by Birch in his "Délices de la Grande Bretagne," and was one of the very few landscapes ever done by the subject of our biography.

In regular landscape painting his works are very scarce; there is, as I have been informed, one in the possession of Sir Brook Boothby, Bart., another in the collection of Lord Pelham, at Stanmer, and two he bequeathed to Sir George Baker, Bart. M. D. who attended the family; these are, of course, with the exceptions of those chaste and exquisite ones which so often form a back ground to his portraits.

Soon after this, Sir Joshua interested himself most strenuously for his friend Dr. Johnson, in order to procure an additional grant from the crown as an increase to his pension, thence to enable him to try the air of the south of France and Italy, for his declining health. Sir John Hawkins in his life of Johnson gives all the credit

of this negotiation, at least of its commencement, to Sir Joshua, whilst Mr. Boswell claims the merit of having written the first letter on the subject to Lord Thurlow, then Lord Chancellor.

The various details of the event have been so often related by Johnson's biographers, that I need not enter further on it than to say, that it met with Sir Joshua's cordial concurrence and assistance from the first, and was attended to by him with much assiduity during its progress, from his earnest wish for the welfare of his venerable friend.

This called forth Johnson's grateful acknowledgments; and he, from Ashbourne in Derbyshire, on the 9th of September, thus writes to Sir Joshua Reynolds:—

“Many words, I hope, are not necessary, between you and me, to convince you what gratitude is excited in my heart by the chancellor's liberality, and your kind offices. I have enclosed a letter to the chancellor, which you will be pleased to seal with a head* or any other general seal, and convey it to him; had I sent it directly to him, I should have seemed to overlook the favour of your intervention.”

On the death of Ramsay, the King's painter, in August of this year, Sir Joshua was sworn principal painter to his Majesty, to which a small salary is also annexed; but the emolument, of course, was not the object of Sir Joshua's ambition.

With respect to Sir Joshua's appointment to be principal painter to his Majesty, it may be added, that at this time, in the month of August, Sir Joshua received a letter from Dr. Johnson, who was then at Ashbourne, which not only shows his great attachment to Sir Joshua, but may be considered as having a reference to the above circumstance.

“ Having had, since our separation, little to say that could please you or myself by saying, I have not been lavish of useless letters.

“ Poor Ramsay ! on which side soever I turn, mortality presents its formidable frown. I left three old friends at Lichfield when I was last there, and have found them all dead. I no sooner lost sight of dear Allan, than I am told I shall see him no more. That we must all die we always knew ; I wish I had sooner remembered it. Do not think me intrusive or importunate if I now call, dear Sir, on you to remember it.”

In another letter, dated September, to Sir Joshua from Johnson, he says, “ I am glad that a little favour from the court has interrupted your furious purposes. I could not, in any case, have approved such public violence of resentment, and should have considered any who encouraged it, as rather seeking sport for themselves, than honour for you. Resentment gratifies him who intended the injury, and pains him unjustly who did not intend it. But all is now superfluous.”

To what event this last letter alludes is to me unknown; but most probably it refers to Sir Joshua's becoming painter to the King. I know that Sir Joshua expected the appointment would be offered to him on the death of Ramsay, and expressed his disapprobation with regard to soliciting for it; but he was informed that it was a necessary point of etiquette, with which at last he complied, and seems to have pleased Johnson by so doing, who again wrote, dated September 18th of this year—

“ I flattered myself, that this week would have given me a letter from you, but none has come. Write to me now and then, but direct to me next at Lichfield.

“ I have three letters this day, all about the balloon; I could have been content with one. Do not write me about the balloon, whatever else you may think proper to say.” A few days after he wrote—

“ October 2. I am always proud of your approbation, and therefore was much pleased that you liked my letter. When you copied it, you invaded the chancellor's right rather than mine. The refusal I did not expect, but I had never thought much about it, for I doubted whether the chancellor had so much tenderness for me as to ask. He, being the keeper of the King's conscience, ought not to be supposed capable of an

improper petition.—All is not gold that glitters, as we have often been told ; and the adage is verified in your place* and my favour : but if what happens does not make us richer, we must bid it welcome if it makes us wiser. I do not at present grow better, nor much worse ; my hopes, however, are somewhat abated, and a very great loss is the loss of hope, but I struggle on as I can.”

I trust I shall be pardoned for giving these extracts from Johnson's letters to Sir Joshua, as they throw light on the characters of both, and contain also the opinions of so considerable a judge of mankind as Dr. Johnson.

Boswell relates, that being in conversation with Sir Joshua Reynolds and Dr. Johnson, Sir Joshua said, that he took the altitude of a man's taste by his stories and his wit, and his understanding by the remarks which he repeated, being always sure that he must be a weak man who quotes common things with an emphasis as if they were oracles :—Johnson agreed with him ; and Sir Joshua having observed that the real character of a man was found out by his amusements, Johnson added, “ Yes, Sir, no man is a hypocrite in his pleasures.” I might also add, that much of a man's capacity

* Alluding probably to the place of King's painter ; which, since Burke's reforming the King's household expenses, had been reduced from £200 to £50 per annum.

and disposition may be discovered by his manner of laughing, and the matter he laughs at, without his speaking.

At another time, Sir Joshua, Dr. Johnson, and Mr. Boswell were dining together, and in the course of conversation, Boswell lamented that he had not been so happy as to have lived at that period which has been called the Augustan age of England, when Swift, Addison, Pope, &c., &c., flourished. Sir Joshua said, that he thought Mr. Boswell had no reason to complain, as it was better to be alive than dead, as those were whom he named. But Johnson laughing, said, "No, Sir, Boswell is in the right, as perhaps he has lost the opportunity which he might then have had, of having his name immortalized by being put into the *Dunciad*!"

It was the opinion of Dr. Johnson, that the concluding lines of the *Dunciad* were among the finest lines of Pope, and not inferior to those of any poet that ever existed.

It was a particular pleasure to Sir Joshua when he got into his hands any damaged pictures by some eminent old masters; and he has very frequently worked upon them with great advantage, and has often made them, both in effect and colour, vastly superior to what they had ever been in their original state. For instance, with respect to one picture by Velasquez, a full length portrait of Philip the Fourth of Spain when a boy. I well

remember, when I entered his painting-room one day, and saw this picture, he said to me, "See, there is a fine picture by Velasquez." I looked at it and greatly admired it, and with much simplicity said, "Indeed it is very fine; and how exactly it is in your own manner, Sir Joshua?" yet it never entered into my mind that he had touched upon it, which was really the fact, and particularly on the face.

The picture, also, of a Moor blowing a pipe or flute, by Velasquez, now at Southill, the seat of William Whitbread, esq., I bought for Sir Joshua at a picture sale by his desire. When he got it into his painting-room, he painted an entire new back ground to the picture, a sky instead of what was before all dark without any effect; but with this and some few other small alterations, it became one of the finest pictures I ever saw.

In this year Charles Catton, a Royal Academician, was, by rotation, become master of the Painter Stainers' Company of the city of London, and he was particularly ambitious of introducing his friend, and a man so celebrated as Sir Joshua Reynolds, to share in their corporate honours; accordingly the brothers voluntarily voted him the freedom of their company, which was presented to him when he dined at their hall on St. Luke's day, the patron saint of painters. This favor, so properly and well bestowed, he received with due respect. This civic compliment was accompanied

by a copy of verses in honor of their new brother citizen ; in which the Muses were invoked to celebrate his praise and an event so important.—A compliment, on the whole, which pleased Sir Joshua not a little.

The lines may be found in the Gentleman's Magazine for that year, page 854 ; they are not indifferently written ; a portion of taste is even displayed in some of the passages : but it is very possible that their dinner was still better than their poetry, and their respect more gratifying than either.

Sir Joshua now met with an irreparable loss in the demise of his friend, Dr. Samuel Johnson, who died on the 13th of December, 1784.

The particulars of this event have been so often recorded, that it would be superfluous to detail them here ; I may observe, however, that Mr. Boswell has justly stated, that the Doctor made three requests of Sir Joshua a short time previous to his death: one was to forgive him thirty pounds which he had borrowed of him ; another was, that Sir Joshua should carefully read the Scriptures ; and the last, that he should abstain from using his pencil on the sabbath day ; to all of which Sir Joshua gave a willing assent.

Johnson had appointed him one of the executors of his will, together with Sir William Scott and Sir John Hawkins ; a trust which he faithfully fulfilled : he also left him his great French Dic-

tionary, by Moreri, and his own copy of his folio English Dictionary, of the last revision, as a friendly testimony of remembrance; also a book from his library to Mrs. Frances Reynolds, sister to Sir Joshua.

What the feelings of Sir Joshua must have been on this occasion may be easily conceived, and it has been well described by Mr. Boswell in his dedication of his "Life of Johnson," some time afterwards. This dedication is at the same time so honorable to, and descriptive of, Sir Joshua, in many respects, that I trust I shall be excused for the insertion of part of it in this place.

Mr. Boswell says, "Every liberal motive, that can actuate an author in the dedication of his labours, concurs in directing me to you, as the person to whom the following work should be inscribed. If there be a pleasure in celebrating the distinguished merit of a contemporary, mixed with a certain degree of vanity, not altogether inexcusable, in appearing fully sensible of it, where can I find one in complimenting whom I can with more general approbation gratify those feelings? Your excellence, not only in the art over which you have long presided with unrivalled fame, but also in philosophy and elegant literature, is well known to the present, and will continue to be the admiration of future ages. Your equal and placid temper, your variety of conversation, your true politeness, by which you are so amiable

in private society, and that enlarged hospitality which has long made your house a common centre of union for the great, the accomplished, the learned, and the ingenious; all these qualities I can, in perfect confidence of not being accused of flattery, ascribe to you. If a man may indulge in an honest pride, in having it known to the world, that he has been thought worthy of particular attention by a person of the first eminence in the age in which he lives, whose company has been universally courted, I am justified in availing myself of the usual privilege of a dedication, when I mention that there has been a long and uninterrupted friendship between us. If gratitude should be acknowledged for favors received, I have this opportunity, my dear Sir, most sincerely to thank you for the many happy hours which I owe to your kindness—for the cordiality with which you have, at all times, been pleased to welcome—for the number of valuable acquaintances to whom you have introduced me—for the *noctes cœnæque Detm* which I have enjoyed under your roof. If a work should be inscribed to one who is master of the subject of it, and whose approbation, therefore, must insure it credit and success, the Life of Dr. Johnson is, with the greatest propriety, dedicated to Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was the intimate and beloved friend of that great man; the friend whom he declared to be the most invulnerable man he knew, with whom, if he should

quarrel, he should find the most difficulty how to abuse. You, my dear Sir, studied him, and knew him well. You venerated and admired him."

To this testimony of Boswell, it will certainly not be misplaced to add some few other observations of Johnson himself respecting his friend.

In one place, Boswell records that he much admired the manner in which Sir Joshua treated of his art, in his discourses to the Royal Academy. Of one remarkable passage, he said, "I think I might as well have said this myself;" and on another occasion, whilst Mr. Bennet Langton was sitting with him, he read one of them with great attention, and exclaimed, "Very well, Master Reynolds; very well indeed. But it will not be understood."

Johnson once observed, "I know no man who has passed through life with more observation than Reynolds;" and Boswell himself has very justly said, "that his philosophical penetration, and justness of thinking *were* not less known to those who lived with him, than his genius in his art is admired by the world."

I have, in more than one place, mentioned the high opinion of Dr. Johnson respecting his friend Sir Joshua, who in return had no less admiration of the powers and endowments of Johnson's mind: nor can it be considered otherwise than as adding dignity even to Johnson, when we find that Reynolds held him to be his master and preceptor, as

may be seen by a character he left of him, written with the intention of inserting it, by way of example, in some future discourse, but which he never lived to finish.

“No man,” he says, “like Johnson, had the faculty of teaching inferior minds the art of thinking: perhaps other men might have equal knowledge, but few were so communicative. His great pleasure was to talk to those who looked up to him. It was here he exhibited his wonderful powers. In mixed company, and frequently in company that *ought* to have looked up to him, many, thinking they had a character for learning to support, considered it as beneath them to enlist in the train of his auditors; and to such persons he certainly did not appear to advantage, being often impetuous and overbearing.’ The desire of shining in conversation was in him indeed a predominant passion; and if it must be attributed to vanity, let it at the same time be recollected, that it produced that loquaciousness from which his more intimate friends derived considerable advantage. The observations which he made on poetry, on life, and on every thing about us, I applied to our art; with what success, others must judge. Perhaps an artist in his studies should pursue the same conduct; and instead of patching up a particular work on the narrow plan of imitation, rather endeavour to acquire the art and power of thinking. On this subject I have often spoken;

but it cannot be too often repeated, that the general power of composition may be acquired; and when acquired, the artist may then lawfully take hints from his predecessors. In reality, indeed, it appears to me that a man must begin by the study of others. Thus Bacon became a great thinker by first entering into, and making himself master of the thoughts of other men."

It was a further remark of Sir Joshua's, that no man of modern times had so much occupied the attention of the nation after his death as Dr. Johnson. Few men, even the illustrious in their day, dwell long upon our minds after they cease to exist amongst us.

Johnson had so high an opinion of Sir Joshua's benevolence of disposition, that he said to him once with a smile, "Reynolds, you hate no person living. But I like a good hater."

It seems, by this speech, that Johnson conceived that a good hater, as he termed it, was one who could feel the strongest degree of attachment to those who were so fortunate as to gain their love, and also that it might proceed from a mind that made strong distinctions in character: but it is certainly a dangerous doctrine.

I remember, however, that I once heard Sir Joshua say, that he thought it a very bad state of mind to hate any man; but that he feared that he did hate Barry, and if so, he had much excuse, if excuse be possible. The hatred of such a man is

no trifling disgrace ; still, I am convinced that this sentiment never influenced his conduct towards him.

I may now remark that they lie side by side in the grave.

Three days before Johnson's decease, Sir Joshua delivered his twelfth discourse at the Academy, which was principally of professional import. He laid it down as a truism, that particular methods of study are of little consequence, and that little of the art can be taught.

The love of method he considered as often arising from a disposition to mental idleness, whilst, at the same time, he acknowledged, that "*Pittori improvisatori*," as he terms them, are apt to be careless and incorrect, and are very seldom either original or striking ; defects proceeding from their not paying the proper attention to the works of Nature and the great masters.

From some observations in the early part of this discourse, it seems as if its subject had been, in some measure, pressed upon Sir Joshua, or rather, perhaps, hinted to him ; for in taking a view of the "Method of Study," he expressly said, that all the necessary information had already been given in his former discourses, and that any other would merely consist of plausible but ostentatious amplification, and would therefore be totally useless. On this point he made an observation highly worthy of general notice in this *educating* age.

“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!”

Again he observed, “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.”*

Much interest was excited among the Dilletanti in the course of this year, by a discovery Sir Joshua made of an original painting of Milton, which he purchased for one hundred guineas, from a picture dealer, who had obtained it from a common furniture broker, who could not remember the time nor manner in which he came by it. In this portrait, the dress is black, with a band; the date 1653, and the painter's initials (S. C.) are marked upon it. On the back of it was a written memorandum, stating that this portrait had belonged to Deborah Milton, who was her father's amanuensis, and that, at her death, it was sold to Sir William

* Frequently, when young persons were introduced to Sir Joshua as wonderful lads of great genius, he used to ask if their fondness for Art was a real love for it or only the effect of idleness.

Davenant's family. It also stated, that the portrait was painted by Samuel Cooper, who was painter to Oliver Cromwell, at the time when Milton was Latin Secretary to the Protector, and that the poet and painter were nearly of the same age, Milton being born in 1608, and dying in 1674; and Cooper, being born in 1609, and dying in 1672; they being companions and friends till death parted them. It was also stated, that several encouragers and lovers of the Fine Arts at that time wanted this picture, particularly Lord Dorset, John Somers, esq., Sir Robert Howard, Dryden, Atterbury, Dr. Aldrich, and Sir John Denham.

Mr. Warton, who notices this portrait particularly in his edition of Milton, says that Lord Dorset was probably the lucky man, as this seems to be the very picture which Vertue wished Prior to seek for in Lord Dorset's collection; but in another place he adds, that it must be owned that this miniature strongly resembles Vandyke's picture of Selden in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, it being highly probable that Cooper should have executed a miniature of Selden as a companion to the heads of other heroes of the commonwealth. This inference, however, is equally applicable to the supposition of its being Milton's; and Sir Joshua Reynolds himself said of it, "The picture is admirably painted, and with such a character of nature, that I am perfectly sure it was a striking



likeness. I have now got a distant idea of the countenance of Milton, which cannot be got from any other than the one that I have seen. It is perfectly preserved, which shows that it has been shut up in some drawer; if it had been exposed to the light, the colours would, long before this, have vanished.”

A doubt having been started some years afterwards respecting the originality and authenticity of this miniature, a letter was inserted in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1791, in answer to one in a preceding number containing some strictures and expressing various doubts on the subject.

To these strictures and doubts, the letter was a very conclusive and argumentative reply; and as it is well known to have been the production of Sir Joshua's pen, and is not inserted in his works, I shall here give it a place.

“ MR. URBAN.

June, 15.

“ A correspondent in your last *Magazine*, p. 399, has made some strictures respecting the originality of the portrait of Milton, in the possession of Sir Joshua Reynolds, on which I beg leave to make some observations. That your readers may have a distinct view of the question, I shall transcribe the writing which is on the back of the picture.

“ ‘ This picture belonged to Deborah Milton, who was her father's amanuensis; at her death it

was sold to Sir William Davenant's family : it was painted by Mr. Samuel Cooper, who was painter to Oliver Cromwell at the time Milton was Latin Secretary to the Protector. The painter and poet were near of the same age, (Milton was born in 1608, and died in 1674; Cooper was born in 1609, and died in 1672;) and were companions and friends till death parted them. Several encouragers and lovers of the fine arts at that time wanted this picture, particularly Lord Dorset, John Somers, esq., Sir Robert Howard, Dryden, Atterbury, Dr. Aldrich, and Sir John Denham.'

" Your critic first observes, that Deborah Milton, dying in 1727, all those encouragers and lovers of the fine arts here mentioned, were dead long before that time. Secondly, he remarks, that the picture could not belong to the Dorset family in 1720, which belonged to Deborah Milton in 1727. He asks, likewise, what can be meant by the miniature having been sold to the family of Sir William Davenant, as the memorandum bears so late a date as 1727? These objections, I will suppose for the credit of the writer, would not have been made if he had seen the print, under which he would have found the following remark :

" The manuscript on the back of the picture appears to have been written some time before the year 1593, when Mr. Somers was knighted, and afterwards created Baron Evesham, which brings it

within nineteen years after Milton's death. The writer was mistaken in supposing that Deborah Milton was dead at that time; she lived till 1727, but in indigence and obscurity, married to a weaver in Spitalfields.

“ There is no reason to think (notwithstanding Mr. Warton's supposition, that Lord Dorset was probably the lucky man who purchased the picture,) that it ever was in Lord Dorset's possession. Vertue, indeed, had desired Prior to search in his Lordship's collection for this miniature, probably from the suggestion of Richardson, whose son Jonathan informed Sir Joshua Reynolds, that he had heard his father say, that there was somewhere a miniature of Milton, by Cooper, which, he was told, was a remarkable fine picture, but that he himself had never seen it. Perhaps Lord Dorset was thought likely to have been the possessor of this picture, because he formed a large collection of portraits of the most eminent men of his time, which are still to be seen at Knowle. I cannot avoid adding, that the present Duke, with equal respect to genius and talents, and with still more skill in the art, continues this plan; and to this collection of his ancestors has added the portraits of Dr. Johnson, Dr. Goldsmith, Mr. Garrick, and many others.—The third objection is easily answered: there is *no* date at all to the memorandum; and, so far from its bearing so late a date as 1727, it is very apparent it was written before the

year 1693, and that the writer of it was probably Sir William Davenant's son, who was at this time thirty-seven years old; and the picture may be supposed to be at that time wanted by Lord Dorset, John Somers, esq. &c. The critic says, 'I never had an opportunity of seeing the original miniature in question, and, unfortunately, the print by Miss Watson has never fallen in my way; but I should wish to know whether the *drop serene* be visible in it, as in Faithorne's drawing, and the bust. The date on the miniature is 1652, by which time Milton had become utterly blind.'

"In regard to the *drop serene*, we can assure your correspondent that it is not visible in the miniature, and that he is mistaken in saying that it is visible in the crayon picture by Faithorne; and that it is visible in the *bust*, as he affirms, is truly ridiculous. Milton himself says, that, though he had lost his sight, it was not perceptible to others; and that his eyes preserved their original lustre.

"The date on the picture is 1653, and not 1652. This inaccuracy is of no great consequence: but how did he know that there was any date at all, as he says he never saw the picture?

"That Deborah Milton recognized her father's picture, does not prove that she might not have been still more struck with the likeness of the miniature. One is at a loss to know upon what ground it is assumed (by a person who never saw the picture or the print,) that, if Faithorne's be

like, the miniature is not like; and still less can it be conceived why he thinks that 'the likeness in Sir Joshua's picture cannot be a striking likeness of Milton, whatever it may be of Selden.' How came Selden into his head? Here some suspicion arises that he has seen the picture and the print, a circumstance which he chooses to conceal, as the comment by Sir Joshua on the print would have prevented the parade of his criticism.

"The opinion of Sir Joshua Reynolds, in matters relating to his own profession, certainly ought to have some weight. He is not likely to be wanting in that skill to which every other artist pretends, namely, to form some judgement of the likeness of a picture without knowing the original. It appears that Sir Joshua told Warton, that he was perfectly sure that 'the picture in his possession was a striking likeness, and that an idea of Milton's countenance cannot be got from any of the other pictures.' Without being an artist, it is easily perceived that the picture of Faithorne does not possess that individuality of countenance which is in the miniature.

"There is something very perverse in believing that an ordinary, common-place portrait, painted by an engraver for the purpose of making a print from it, should be preferred, or be supposed to be more like, than the best picture of the first miniature painter, perhaps, that ever lived. Cooper possessed all the correctness, precision, and all

the attention to peculiarity of expression, which we admire in Vandyke; whereas Faithorne imitated, as well as he could, the lax and vicious manner then introduced by Sir Peter Lely, who, though upon the whole an ingenious artist, stands in the first of what the painters call *mannerists*. We may add, in regard to Faithorne, that, however he might be distinguished among his contemporaries, and since by the curious in old prints, his merit as an engraver (and much less as a painter,) were he now living, would not raise him above the rank of the common herd of artists. It does not appear that Deborah Milton, when Faithorne's picture was shewn to her, said any thing to confirm us in the opinion of its being so extremely like; she exclaimed, 'O Lord! that is the picture of my father.' She probably had seen the picture before, and it is even probable that she was present when it was painted; and, when she saw it again, she immediately recognized it, as she would have done her father's watch, buckles, or any other appendage to his person.

“ There is no doubt but that Milton sat to Faithorne for that crayon picture; the distinguishing features are the same as in the miniature; the same large eyelid, the same shaped nose and mouth, and the same long line which reaches from the nostril to below the corners of the mouth, and the same head of hair; but if the effect and expression of the whole together should be, as in

fact it is, different in the two pictures, it cannot, I should think, be difficult for us to determine on which side our faith ought to incline, even though neither possessed any strong marks of identity.

“ All the objections that have been made by your correspondent, I hope, have been answered, and some, perhaps, which the reader will think were scarcely worthy of an answer. There is no occasion to take notice of objections which are made in order to be confuted, namely, the pains the critic takes to obviate a supposition which nobody ever supposed, that the writer of the memorandum on the back might, by mistake, write *her* death instead of *his* death. This is to raise conjectures in order to triumph in their confutation !

“ Mr. Tyrwhitt, to whom the miniature was shewn at the Archbishop of York's table, and whose skill in matters of this kind is universally acknowledged, scouted the question which was there put to him, ‘ Whether he thought the manuscript was a late fabrication ;’ ‘ The orthography, as well as the colour of the ink, shews it to have been written a hundred years since.’ He then remarked the mistake of the writer in supposing that Deborah Milton was dead at the time he wrote ; and, though your correspondent thinks that this mistake is a sufficient reason for calling the whole a palpable fiction, we may reasonably oppose Mr. Tyrwhitt's opinion to that of your anonymous correspondent, of whom we may say,

if he had possessed a greater share of critical sagacity, he would have remarked, that even the mistake of supposing Deborah Milton to be dead when he wrote, shew it to be *not* what he calls it, a fiction. A man who deals in fiction takes care, at least, not to be easily detected. No man in these later days but knows that Deborah Milton lived till 1727, as that circumstance was made notorious to the world from Richardson's *Life of Milton*, and from the benefit play which was given to Deborah's daughter in the year 1752. I believe Richardson (who, as Dr. Johnson says, was one of Milton's fondest admirers,) was the first who made any inquiry after Milton's family, and found his daughter Deborah to be still living.

“ I cannot conclude without making one observation. Before a writer indulges himself in the self-congratulation of victory, or laughing at the slip which he fancies others have made, he should be sure of the steadiness of his own footing.

“ Your correspondent reprehends Tom Warton for his inaccuracy in historical points; he blames the aggravated immorality of the seller of the picture ‘ in imposing on so fair and worthy a man as Sir Joshua Reynolds;’ treating him as a *bon homme*, and the whole ‘ as a palpable fiction, drawn up by some person ignorant of history, who furnished out a tale with very scanty materials.’ Whether this was the case, the reader will, I imagine, not find it very difficult to determine.

R. J.

“ P. S. The progress of the picture seems to be this:—Milton dying insolvent, and Deborah Milton of course in great indigence, it is very improbable that she would keep to herself a picture of such value; it was therefore sold, as we suppose, to the author of the memorandum; and the account there given is probably such as he received from the seller of the picture, who, in order to raise its value, boasts how many great men had desired to have it. If to this it is urged, that it is too much to expect all those suppositions will be granted, we can only say, let the supposition be made of its being a forgery, and then see what insurmountable improbabilities will immediately present themselves. After all, the whole indulgence required is for the mistake respecting Deborah Milton’s death; and we may add, that the great object of inquiry, that it is an original picture of Milton by Cooper, is no way affected either by this or any other mistake that may be imputed to the writer of the memorandum.”

Liberal as Sir Joshua was to men of other professions, he was not wanting also to those of his own, as will appear from a very short note here introduced. I have not, indeed, scrupled to insert any original letters of Sir Joshua’s, although not containing matter of much importance, but merely because such articles are very rare from him, as he greatly disliked the employment of letter-writing, even when obliged to do it on business:

the following, however, contains something of advice. It was written to Mr. Charles Smith, an artist, at that time in the East Indies, where he was very successful in portraying some of the highest sovereigns of the East, from whom he received distinguished honours. He was the nephew of Mr. Caleb Whiteford.

London, Dec. 3, 1784.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I take this opportunity of returning you my sincere thanks for the present you was so obliging as to send me of the yellow colour, which is certainly very beautiful, and I believe will do very well in oil, though perhaps better with water.

“ I hope you meet with the success you so well deserve. I am only concerned that you are so much out of the way of making that improvement which your genius would certainly have enabled you to make, if you had staid in England. A painter who has no rivals, and who never sees better works than his own, is but too apt to rest satisfied, and not take what appears to be a needless trouble, of exerting himself to the utmost, pressing his genius as far as it will go.

“ I saw the other day, at Mr. Bromil’s, a picture of a child with a dog, which, after a pretty close examination, I thought my own painting;

but it was a copy, it seems, that you made many years ago. I am with great respect,

“ Your most obedient humble servant,
“ JOSHUA REYNOLDS.”

1785.

ÆTAT. 61.

At this period of his eminence, and in the year 1785, the Editor of a periodical publication came one morning to Sir Joshua while he was at breakfast. The purport of his visit was to collect particulars, in order to give some account of Sir Joshua's life in his magazine; but Reynolds being deaf, could not comprehend what it was he required: when the young lady, his niece, who was at the table, explained the business to him, by saying, “ Uncle, the gentleman wants your life; he comes for your life !”

But, for the execution of that friendly act of writing his life, he looked up to Burke, to Malone, or Boswell, as the distinguished authors who were to preserve his memory in an imperishable page. Little did he think it would ever fall to my lot to record his years thus imperfectly, or that those fostered friends of his would let him pass to the grave with such scanty notice; but let no man trust to what his favourites may do for his memory, when he himself is no more.

I think his chief dependence, with regard to writing his life, rested on Edmund Burke; of whom he had so high an opinion, that I have heard him say that even Dr. Johnson felt himself his inferior.

In this year, Sir Joshua painted that remarkable fine portrait of Mr. Joshua Sharpe, from which a mezzotinto print was taken by C. H. Hodges. This picture is particularly to be admired for its being a simple and accurate representation of the individual person, with a degree of truth that has never been surpassed by any painter that ever existed.

A friend of Sir Joshua's was remarking to him those peculiar excellences which gave the picture such high value, when Reynolds modestly answered, that it was no merit in him to do it, as it was only making an exact copy of the attitude in which the old man sat at the time, and as he remained still and quiet, it became a matter of no more difficulty in the representation than that of copying from a ham or any object of still life.

However, the merit of the artist was shown in his knowing the value of this simple and natural attitude, and in executing it with so much skill and precision.

In this year also he painted several very fine portraits, amongst which were those of the Duke of Orleans, who was afterwards guillotined, (this was one of his finest whole length pictures,) and

a very fine picture of the Duchess of Devonshire fondling her young child. They were in the exhibition of the following year, 1786, along with several others of his most celebrated pieces. Amongst these the Infant Hercules.

In this year the portrait of Sir Joshua, which was painted for, and afterwards in the possession of, Mr. Alderman Boydell, was executed by Mr. C. G. Stuart, an American, and for a time was placed in the Shakspear Gallery ; this is one of many which have been done, but was never engraved until 1802, by Messrs. Facius, in a small size.

The year 1785 was marked by several compliments to Sir Joshua's taste and genius.

Miss Hannah Moore, in her Poem on Sensibility, says,

“ To snatch bright beauty from devouring fate,
 And lengthen Nature's transitory date ;
 At once the critic's and the painter's art,
 With Fresnoy's skill, and Guido's grace impart ;
 To form with code correct the graphic school,
 And lawless fancy curb by sober rule ;
 To show how genius fires, how taste restrains,
 While what both are his pencil best explains,
 Have we not REYNOLDS ?”

To the merit of one of Sir Joshua's finest pictures produced this year, and exhibited, “ Love unloosing the Zone of Beauty,” the following poetic tribute was also paid.

“ Fann’d by the summer’s gentlest wind,
Within the shade a nymph reclin’d.
As on her neck they artless stray’d,
The zephyrs with her tresses play’d ;
A careless vest around her thrown
Was girded with an azure zone ;
Her figure shone replete with grace—
She seem’d—the goddess of the place.
The soothing murmur of the rill,
The plumed warbler’s tenderest trill,
The perfumed air, the flow’ry ground,
Spread a delicious langour round ;
Her swelling breast new tremors move,
And all her melting soul was love.
When Cupid saw her soft alarms,
And flew, insidious, to her arms ;
The little god she warmly prest,
And ruin, in his form, carest ;
For by indulgence hardy grown,
He sily loos’d her guardian zone.
But Virtue saw the sleight, and sigh’d—
‘ Beware, beware, fond nymph !’ she cried ;
Behold where yonder thorny flower,
Smiling in summer’s radiant hour,
With outstretch’d wing a painted fly,
In thoughtless pleasure flutters nigh,
Nor, heedless, sees, beneath the brake,
The jaws of a devouring snake.’
The nymph look’d up—with conscience flush’d,
And as she tied her zone, she blush’d.
It chanc’d that Genius, passing by,
Remark’d the scene with eager eye ;
Then, with the tint from Virtue stole,
With REYNOLDS’ pencil sketch’d the whole.”

In the autumn of this year, the great and long expected sale of pictures, collected from the dissolved monasteries and religious houses in Flan-

ders and Germany, commenced on the twelfth of September, and continued during the ensuing month.

A trip to Flanders, therefore, became quite fashionable amongst the lovers of the fine arts, who were all anxious to possess some of the exquisite specimens of the great Flemish masters. For this purpose Sir Joshua also made a tour to that country, and laid out upwards of one thousand pounds in purchases, many of which were of great value, and which I shall have occasion to notice further in a subsequent part of the Memoir.

1786.

ÆTAT. 62.

IN the exhibition of 1786, Sir Joshua did not produce any historical piece, nor even any composition of fancy, his time and thoughts being occupied on a great work, having had the honour of a commission from the Empress of Russia to paint an historical picture, in which he was at liberty as to subject, size, and price.

He debated long with himself on what subject to fix, which might be complimentary to the Empress; and at first I heard him say he would paint the procession of our great Queen Elizabeth, when she visited her camp at Tilbury, in the time of the threatened Spanish invasion; but at last he made choice of the infant Hercules overcoming the

serpents when in his cradle, as the most fit, in allusion to the great difficulties which the Empress of Russia had to encounter in the civilization of her empire, arising from the rude state in which she found it. This picture he finished. It was a large and grand composition ; and in respect to beauty, colour, and effect, was equal to any picture known in the world. The middle groupe, which received the principal light, was exquisite in the highest degree.

The following lines on this picture are an extract from an Ode, by John Taylor, esq., a man whose benevolence of heart, in addition to his genius, renders him valuable to those who have the advantage of knowing him.

Reynolds, thy pencil fix'd my wand'ring view,
 Supreme in genius—worthy all thy fame ;
 Thy magic touch to taste and nature true,
 Secures for immortality a name.

Aye—here's the vig'rous son of am'rous Jove,
 Fruit of sly transports with Amphytrion's wife,
 Whose cradled strength with twining monsters strove,
 And crush'd out, giant like, the venom'd life.

Ah ! Reynolds, why should portrait thee confine,
 Whose stroke can epic force at once impart,
 Whose canvass with Homeric fire can shine
 And blaze with all the true sublime of art.

I have understood that Sir Joshua told a friend that the attitude and expression of the prophet Tiresias, introduced in the groupe, were taken

from those in which he had occasionally seen his deceased friend Johnson. It may be so, for his eye and mind were always intent to seize and fix the passing truth; and perhaps the truest criticism that ever Dr. Beattie hazarded on Sir Joshua's works was with regard to this very picture, when he said, in a letter to Sir William Forbes, "Your account of Sir Joshua's new picture is very entertaining. It is an unpromising subject; but Sir Joshua's imagination will supply every thing."

When it was finished, and had been exhibited at Somerset House, it was sent to Russia to the Empress.

Whether this compliment was ever explained to her, or whether she was left to suppose it alluded to the fate of her husband, I do not know; however, soon after the picture arrived at St. Petersburg, Count Woronzow, the Russian Ambassador at the court of England, waited on Sir Joshua Reynolds to inform him that the picture he painted last year for the Empress of Russia had been received at St. Petersburg, with two sets of his Discourses, one in English, and the other in French, which, at the desire of her Imperial Majesty, had been sent with the picture.

At the same time, Count Woronzow delivered to Sir Joshua a gold box, enriched with the Empress's portrait, and very large-diamonds, &c., containing a most gracious writing by her Imperial Majesty's own hand. The Ambassador left also

with Sir Joshua a copy of the following letter, which his Excellency had received from the Empress with the said valuable present :

“ MONSIEUR LE COMTE WORONZOW,

“ I have read, and, I may say, with the greatest avidity, those Discourses pronounced at the Royal Academy of London, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, which that illustrious artist sent me with his large picture; in both productions one may easily trace a most elevated genius.

“ I recommend to you to give my thanks to Sir Joshua, and to remit him the box I send, as a testimony of the great satisfaction the perusal of his Discourses has given me, and which I look upon as, perhaps, the best work that ever was wrote on the subject.

“ My portrait, which is on the cover of the box, is of a composition made at my Hermitage, where they are now at work about impressions on the stones found there.

“ I expect you will inform me of the price of the large picture, on the subject of which I have already spoke to you in another letter.

“ Adieu—I wish you well.

(Signed) “ CATHARINE.”

“ *St. Petersburg, March 5, 1790.*”

The portrait mentioned in the imperial letter, was a basso relievo of her Majesty: and Sir

Joshua's executors afterwards received fifteen hundred guineas for the painting, which is now at St. Petersburg. An engraving in mezzotinto was taken from it before it left England; and another print from it was done in Russia, by an English artist, patronized by that court.

The Infant Hercules, when it appeared at the exhibition, was placed over the chimney;* it was thus the first picture which presented itself to view from the entrance of the room, and had the most splendid effect of any picture I ever saw. I well remember the remark made on it by Hodges the landscape painter, as he first noticed it in the Exhibition Room, when, from the extraordinary rich tone of colouring, warm and glowing in the extreme, he said, that "it looked as if it had been boiled in brandy."

Barry also gives a very judicious account of this picture, which I shall insert. Although Barry cannot rank very high as a practical painter, he

* This choice of a conspicuous situation was due to the president—but the advantages of official precedence were then even carried further; for before I became a member of the Royal Academy, I once complained to Sir Joshua that my pictures had been disposed of in the exhibition in very disadvantageous situations, which I thought was not right in a body who were the guardians and protectors of the rising Artists; when he answered that I was quite mistaken, for that it was the exhibition of the Royal Academy alone, the members of which were first to be accommodated, whilst those who were not of the Academy must take their chance of such places as remained unoccupied.

was still a very excellent critic on many parts of the art ; and as this capital work of Sir Joshua is now gone from us into a far distant country, and totally lost to this nation, to which in future it can only be known by prints and by description, I am the more inclined to preserve this record of it.

“ Nothing can exceed,” he says, “ the brilliancy of light, the force, and vigorous effect of his picture of the Infant Hercules strangling the serpents: it possesses all that we look for, and are accustomed to admire in Rembrandt, united to beautiful forms, and to an elevation of mind to which Rembrandt had no pretensions ; the prophetic agitation of Tiresias, and Juno enveloped with clouds, hanging over the scene like a black pestilence, can never be too much admired, and are indeed truly sublime. It is very much to be regretted that this picture is in the hands of strangers, at a great distance from the lesser works of Sir Joshua, as it would communicate great value and eclat to them. What a becoming and graceful ornament would it be in one of the halls of the city of London.”

Reynolds himself, on taking leave of it, previous to its departure for Russia, said to a friend, that “ there were ten pictures under it, some better, some worse.” Such was his earnest desire to obtain excellence, and his modest opinion of the uncertainty in his practice.

After Sir Joshua had finished the Hercules, he painted a very fine picture, in the same style of

colour, on a three-quarter canvass, of a girl sleeping, resting with her head on her arm. This was one of his richest performances, and was in the exhibition of the year 1787, when Mr. Opie and myself were the managers for arranging the pictures; but we found great difficulty in placing it, being so powerful in its effect that it seemed to annihilate every other picture that was near it, and the conspicuous part of the room that was before desirable was no longer so for any picture when seen near this.

One day about this time, I dined at Sir Joshua's, in company with several other persons, one of whom was Dr. French Lawrence; it was at the time of Mr. Hastings's trial before the House of Lords; and Lawrence, who was the intimate friend and worshipper of Edmund Burke, had that morning attended the trial in Westminster-hall, where Burke had made a very long speech, with which Lawrence was enraptured. He repeated parts of it, as examples of the highest possible degree of feeling and eloquence, particularly when, describing the mode of torture that had been inflicted on the innocent and unfortunate Indians, Mr. Burke had thus expressed himself:—"Those cruel executioners had not been content with using the common and usual instruments of torture, but, with a shocking ingenuity, had sought out with difficulty those pernicious weeds which Nature had sown in her fretful moments with

which to torment their body and increase their anguish."

I could not help saying that I thought this speech by far too studied and flowery to be expressive of much feeling, and that the orator seemed to be more occupied in displaying his own eloquence, than affected by the sufferings of those whose tale he told: for those who really feel are not apt to be so correct, so flowery, and so poetical; they trust only to the energy of Nature, which is still more eloquent, and always to be distinguished from that in which the orator attempts to show himself off. This remark immediately roused the Doctor's anger, and he answered in a rage, "It is you who want to show yourself off." I then appealed to Sir Joshua, and asked him if he did not think the speech was studied, affected, and without feeling, and he immediately agreed with me in opinion.

I have already noticed the verifying of the authenticity of Milton's picture by Sir Joshua, to which I may add a discovery nearly similar, which has been stated by an anonymous writer, who says, that in this year he was so fortunate as also to meet with a valuable head of Oliver Cromwell, which had long remained concealed from the prying eye of antiquarian research in the false bottom of a gold snuff-box; and which was ascertained to be the original head painted by Cooper, for the use of Simons the sculptor, who was then engaged

in modelling a resemblance of the Protector. It was particularly valuable in being the only picture which Cooper finished of the Protector Oliver; for though the artist had prevailed upon Cromwell to sit a second time, yet, some difference or dispute having taken place, this latter was never completed, but is in that state now, in the possession of Sir Thomas Frankland, a descendant from that extraordinary man.

It was said that the picture had been shewn to his Majesty: and upon that occasion it was smartly observed, "How much would Charles the First have valued that man who had brought *him* the head of Cromwell?"

In his thirteenth discourse, delivered this year, Sir Joshua's object was to shew, in illustration and explanation of his theory of Genius, that art is not merely imitation, but must be considered as under the direction of the imagination; after which he pointed out how far, and in what manner, painting, poetry, acting, even architecture and gardening, depart, or differ from nature.

Here he laid down what he esteemed as the highest style of criticism, and, at the same time, the soundest, in referring solely to the eternal and immutable nature of things; and this was, that any specific art, together with its principles, should be considered in their correspondence with the principles of other arts, or at least of such as address themselves primarily and principally to the

imagination. "When those connected and kindred principles," said he, "are brought together to be compared, another comparison will grow out of this; that is, the comparison of them all with those of human nature, from whence arts derive the materials upon which they are to produce their effects. When this comparison of art with art, and of all arts with the nature of man, is once made with success, our guiding lines are as well ascertained and established as they can be in matters of this description."

Some other truths, inculcated in this discourse, are of such high importance in general life, that I trust I shall be excused for giving a sketch of them; whilst, at the same time, they will display that deep thought which places Sir Joshua on a level, as a moralist, with the greatest philosophers; truths, too, not conceived in the silence of the closet, but extracted from human nature itself, in its various modifications, as they passed under his eye, or presented themselves in his daily intercourse with the ornaments of society.

He particularly noticed, that there is, in the commerce of life, as in art, a *sagacity* which is far from being contrary to right reason, and is superior to any occasional exercise of that faculty, which supersedes it, and does not wait for the slow progress of deduction, but goes at once, by what appears a kind of intuition, to the conclusion. A man, said he, endowed with this faculty, feels and

acknowledges the truth, though it is not always in his power, perhaps, to give a reason for it; because he cannot recollect, and bring before him, all the materials that gave birth to his opinion; for very many, and very intricate considerations may unite to form the principle, even of small and minute parts, involved in, or dependent on, a great system of things: though these, in process of time, are forgotten, the right impression still remains on the mind.

This impression, then, collected, we do not always know how, or when, he considered as the result of the accumulated experience of our life; and, therefore, this mass of collective observation, however acquired, ought to prevail over that reason which, however powerfully exerted on any particular occasion, will probably comprehend but a partial view of the subject. He, therefore, laid it down as a principle, that our conduct in life, as well as in the arts, is, or ought to be, generally governed by this habitual reason. It is our happiness, he added, that we are enabled to draw on such funds; if we were obliged to enter into a theoretical deliberation on every occasion, before we act, life would be at a stand, and art would be impracticable.

Speaking of "Imitation," he said that it is the *lowest style* only of arts, whether of painting, poetry, or music, that may be said, *in the vulgar sense*, to be naturally pleasing. "The higher

efforts of those arts, we know by experience, do not affect minds wholly uncultivated. This refined taste is the consequence of education and habit ; we are born only with a capacity of entertaining this refinement, as we are born with a disposition to receive and obey all the rules and regulations of society ; and so far it may be said to be natural to us, and no further."

His reasonings on the propriety of acting, and on the pleasures derived from it, are highly worthy the attention both of performers and the audience ; but they are too long even to give a slight sketch of them in this place : I shall therefore merely add his own conclusion to this discourse ; when he says, that " it is allowed on all hands, that facts and events, however they may bind the Historian, have no dominion over the Poet or the Painter. With us, History is made to bend and conform to this great idea of art. And why ? Because these arts, in their highest province, are not addressed to the gross senses ; but to the desires of the mind, to that spark of divinity which we have within, impatient of being circumscribed and pent up by the world about us. Just so much as our art has of this, just so much of dignity, I had almost said of divinity, it exhibits ; and those of our artists who possessed this mark of distinction in the highest degree, acquired from thence the glorious appellation of *Divine!*"

1787.

ÆTAT. 63.

WHEN Alderman Boydell projected the scheme of his magnificent edition of the plays of Shakspeare, accompanied with large prints from pictures to be executed by English painters, it was deemed to be absolutely necessary that something of Sir Joshua's painting should be procured to grace the collection ; but, unexpectedly, Sir Joshua appeared to be rather shy in the business, as if he thought it degrading himself to paint for a print-seller, and he would not at first consent to be employed in the work. George Stevens, the Editor of Shakspeare, now undertook to persuade him to comply, and taking a bank bill of five hundred pounds in his hand, he had an interview with Sir Joshua ; when, using all his eloquence in argument, he, in the mean time, slipt the bank bill into his hand ; he then soon found that his mode of reasoning was not to be resisted, and a picture was promised.

Sir Joshua immediately commenced his studies, and no less than three paintings were exhibited at the Shakspeare Gallery, or at least taken from that poet, the only ones, as has been very correctly said, which Sir Joshua ever executed for his illustration, with the exception of a head of King Lear, (done indeed in 1783,) and now in the possession

of the Marchioness of Thomond, and a portrait of the Hon. Mrs. Tollemache in the character of *Miranda*, in "The Tempest," in which *Prospero* and *Caliban* are introduced.

One of these paintings for the Gallery was Puck, or Robin Goodfellow, as it has been called, which, in point of expression and animation, is unparalleled, and one of the happiest efforts of Sir Joshua's pencil; though it has been said, by some cold critics, not to be perfectly characteristic of the merry wanderer of Shakspeare. It is now the property of Samuel Rogers, esq. *Macbeth*, with the Witches and the Cauldron, was another, and for this Mr. Boydell paid him one thousand guineas; but who is now the possessor of it I know not.

Much severe criticism was thrown out against his large picture of the scene in the tragedy of *Macbeth*; but my own opinion of this piece is, that the visionary and awful effect produced, both in the conception and execution of the back ground of this picture, is certainly without a parallel in the world—its novelty and its excellence bid defiance to all future attempts at rivalry. Had the figure of *Macbeth* been but equal in its requisite to this appalling scene, the picture would have stood without a companion on earth.

It recalls to my memory a picture by Titian, in a church at Venice, although the subject is very dissimilar; yet, like that of *Macbeth* in its effect,

it represents the martyrdom of St. Lawrence by torch-light : but, as that picture was in a bad condition when I saw it, it was difficult to descry its highest degree of excellence.

The third was Cardinal Beaufort, for which 500 guineas were paid ; now the property of the Earl of Egremont. Of this latter picture an artist of great genius always declared, that it united the local colouring of *Titian* with the *chiaro scuro* of Rembrandt ; this is a just criticism : and another critic has observed, “ this picture of the dying Beaufort is truly an impressive performance ; the general hue of the picture is consonant to Shakespeare’s awful scene — sober — grand — solemn. — The excruciating agony of guilt and fear that writhes each limb, and fastens his convulsive fingers on the bed-clothes, makes each spectator shudder — and the face of the dying Cardinal has that agonized and horrid grin described by the poet—

‘ See how the pangs of death do make him grin.’ ”

This last is common newspaper criticism, of which much was poured forth at the time ; for this picture, when exhibited, excited great attention, and gave rise to much critical controversy : and with respect to the demon at the pillow of the dying Cardinal, there have been many objections made : nay, Sir Joshua was most earnestly importuned to erase it, but knew better than to comply.

These objections require to be combatted in vindication of the illustrious author of the work, as he did not seem inclined to do it for himself, although he could have so amply refuted them.

It must be allowed, that the first business of an historical painter is to make his picture tell its story distinctly, clearly, and quickly; or else he can claim but little merit to himself above that which belongs to the mechanical part, the mere operation of his hand.

The peculiar and characteristic essence of this subject, the death of the wicked Cardinal Beaufort, is, that the dying man's agonies do not proceed from bodily pain, so much as from the horrors of a guilty conscience. This is a distinction in expression, of so nice a kind in respect to its being portrayed, that perhaps Raffaele himself would have found it difficult to execute it: yet this important article of information must of necessity be decidedly and distinctly pronounced, or the subject is not explained. Even Shakspeare himself, in his text, has thought it requisite to employ his imagery in order to make his intentions more surely to be understood, by making the King say —

“ Oh, thou eternal mover of the Heavens,
Look with a gentle eye upon this wretch!
Oh, beat away the busy meddling fiend
That lays strong siege unto this wretch's soul,
And from his bosom purge this black despair.”

How much more necessary, then, is it to the painter, whose powers, in this respect, are so much more limited, by not being able to explain those circumstances which are past?

However, we have a right to conclude, that Sir Joshua was doubtful of the power in himself, and perhaps of the power in the art also, to compass the difficulty of explicitly and distinctly giving the just and clear expression of guilt, in contradistinction to bodily pain; which was absolutely necessary to explain the story; an explanation which, if not quickly given, is not well given; for the essence of painting is to produce and effect an instantaneous impression on the spectator: the introduction of the demon, therefore, does this, and leads the mind to further inquiry, and to investigate the more hidden excellencies of the work, and prevents the possibility, even for a moment, of mistaking it for the representation of a man dying in a mere painful bodily disease.

Having stated the great objections which were urged to Sir Joshua against his introduction of the demon at the pillow of the dying Cardinal Beaufort, I now offer my own idea, that Sir Joshua has not erred in introducing this demon, but in the execution of his intention; for, had he given this fiend a visionary, mysterious, and awful appearance, no one would or could have questioned its usefulness in the composition: but, on the contrary, he has made the figure too palpable and

material, and much too vulgar and mean in the idea of its form. Nay, its distinctness is such, that, had it not been rendered unfit and improbable, from its hideousness, it might have passed or been mistaken for an attendant page or dwarf, instead of a terrible and supernatural agent.

The late Mr. Opie, in his lectures, has touched upon this same subject, and it is with much gratification that I give the opinion of this most able critic, as it is so consistent with my own.

“The varied beauties of this work,” he says, “might well employ great part of a lecture, but, at present, I shall pass them over, and attend only to what relates immediately to the question before us—the effect of the visionary devil, couched close, and listening eagerly behind the pillow of the dying wretch; which not only invigorates and clothes the subject in its appropriate interest and terror, but immediately clears up all ambiguity, by informing us that those are not bodily sufferings which we behold so forcibly delineated; that they are not merely the pangs of death which make him grin; but that his agony proceeds from those daggers of the mind—the overwhelming horrors of a guilty and awakened conscience. This was the point on which rested the whole moral effect of the piece; it was absolutely necessary to be understood, and could by no other means have been so strongly and perspicuously expressed. An expedient, therefore, at once necessary, so

consistent with the spirit of the subject, and so completely successful, far from being regarded as an unwarrantable license, is justifiable by all rules of sound criticism, and ought to be regarded as one of the most signal examples of invention in the artist."

Reynolds has been reprehended, by the critics, for having acted contrary to his own rules, laid down in his discourses, by introducing silk and velvet in this solemn historical picture of the death of Cardinal Beaufort; as he condemns the specification of individual stuffs in grand history: but surely he was perfectly justifiable in the introduction of silk and velvet in that picture, the subject of which may be considered as modern; and, as we are well assured that such draperies were then in use, and therefore required. Evidently he means to object to the practice of some of the best Flemish painters, who, representing the ascension of the Virgin into Heaven, surprize us when we behold her in a robe of white satin; or that of some of the French painters, who have clothed God the Father in a changeable silk!*

Whoever paints to the mind will eventually succeed; and no one must be discouraged in the

* So variable and humiliating is common opinion, that, in the same year that Sir Joshua received five hundred guineas from Alderman Boydell for this picture of the death of Cardinal Beaufort, his fine portrait of Nelly O'Brien was sold for ten guineas by public auction.

pursuit, because he meets with contradictory opinions as to the first and most alluring objects in his picture; as most persons, especially the uneducated, see differently: and to obey the capricious and unsettled humours of each, would be to sacrifice every thing that is just and noble in the art. An artist should calmly hear the opinions of all; but reserve it for the adoption of his future thought, how far he will or will not alter his design;—and he can scarcely hesitate too much, as the first thoughts are, generally speaking, more vigorous than those conceived and born afterwards, when the imagination and the judgment have been forced into action, and have generated ideas in obedience to the wishes of a cold observer.

It was proposed that Sir Joshua should also have executed the closet scene in Hamlet; but I believe it was never even begun.

I know it was not his desire to paint any circumstance in history of a complicated nature; his expression to me on that subject was, “That it cost him too dear.” His great pleasure was in those works of fancy in which might be shown beauty, expression, or character, in a single figure, or at most not more than two, and in those, when of his own choice, he was unrivalled by either ancient or modern artists.

How far it had ever been Sir Joshua’s intention to paint a scene out of the play of Hamlet, I do not know; but I remember, just about that time,

he repeated to me an observation of a great man on that very play.

The illustrious Charles Fox, conversing once with Sir Joshua Reynolds on the merits and demerits of Shakspeare, said it was his opinion, that Shakspeare's credit would have stood higher if he had never written the play of Hamlet.

This anecdote was told me by Sir Joshua himself.

I must confess, that my own opinion differs very much from this high authority. It seems to me, that, if there is one play of Shakspeare's which denotes genius above the others, it is that of Hamlet. Such an infinite and subtile discrimination of character, such feeling is displayed in it ; it is rendered so exquisitely interesting, yet without the help of a regular plot, almost without a plan ; so like in its simplicity to the progress of nature itself, that it appears to be an entire effusion of pure genius alone.

Mr. Sheridan related to Sir Joshua, that a small duodecimo volume had just been published, which professed by its title to contain the Beauties of Shakspeare. "I asked," said Mr. S. "when this little book was put into my hand, what was become of the other ten volumes ?"

Besides those historical scenes from Shakspeare which Sir Joshua executed for that truest and greatest encourager of English Art that England ever saw, the late Alderman Boydell, that gentle-

man, who revered merit of every kind wherever he found it, also employed Sir Joshua's pencil, as the greatest painter, to pourtray for him the greatest hero of his day, the late Lord Heathfield, of Gibraltar; and this exquisite portrait, when finished, was exhibited in his gallery in Pall Mall.

This picture, which Sir Joshua executed of Lord Heathfield, in the year 1787, was of such extraordinary merit, as to have silenced instead of exciting envy; assuredly, therefore, I shall be pardoned if I give Mr. Barry's opinion of this portrait. After having bestowed high praise on the full length portrait of Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse, he thus continues:—"And it is highly probable that the picture of Lord Heathfield, the glorious defender of Gibraltar, would have been of equal importance had it been a whole length; but even as it is, only a bust, there is great animation and spirit, happily adapted to the indications of the tremendous scene around him, and to the admirable circumstance of the key of the fortress firmly grasped in his hands; than which, imagination cannot conceive any thing more ingenious and heroically characteristic."*

* I cannot refrain recording a little anecdote as related by Lord Heathfield, at the time the painter was employed on the picture, whom he frequently diverted by some curious narrative, or amused by relating some droll anecdotes; one in particular, of a very rich Jew who resided in Prussia at the time of Frederick the Great, and was in high favour with his Majesty, and a very useful person to him. Certain apprehensions arising, however,

Barry's general remarks also appear to me to be very just and instructive, where he says, "Sir Joshua's object appears to have been to obtain the vigour and solidity of Titian, and the bustle and spirit of Vandyke, without the excesses of either; and in by far the greatest part of his portraits he has admirably succeeded."

The good offices of Sir Joshua through life were not confined to his intimate friends, but were often extended, particularly to professional men; one of whom in a great measure owed his success in the art to his advice, and to his recommendation of him, in this year, to the late Duke of Rutland, then setting out on his appointment to the viceroyalty of Ireland.

The person I allude to was a Mr. Pack, a native of Norwich, and who, from a fondness for the art, had copied many of Sir Joshua's paintings

in the Jew's mind, that a very wealthy subject was not in the most safe situation, while under an arbitrary sovereign, he resolved within himself to get out of the Prussian dominions, together with his property, as soon as he could accomplish it. But this he saw was not possible to be done till he had procured the King's consent. He, therefore, in the humblest and most cunning manner, wrote to Frederick to obtain his permission, alleging that both his health and affairs required his departure. But the more crafty King, who probably saw through his design, returned this short but affectionate answer—

“ My Dear Mordecai,

“ Nothing but death shall part us.

FREDERICK.”

with great accuracy, having been strongly recommended to him by a friend. Some time after this, Mr. Pack, who was a mercantile man, suffered considerably by his American connexions, and found it expedient to seek for support from that which he had practised before only as an amusement; and he was so successful in his Irish trip as to be tempted to risk his fate in London, where he afterwards practised with some little degree of fame.

This liberality of conduct, indeed, Sir Joshua practised frequently; and always candidly bestowed praise on his contemporaries, where due; and the following circumstance is an instance of it. One evening, at the Artists' Club, held at the Turk's Head, in Gerrard-street, Sir Joshua came into the room, having just before seen a very fine landscape, painted by Gainsborough, with which he had been exceedingly struck, from its extraordinary merit. He was describing its beauties to the members of the Club then present, and finished his eulogium by saying, "Gainsborough is certainly the first landscape painter now in Europe;" when the famous Richard Wilson, the landscape painter, who was one of the auditors of this high commendation, and who, from an excusable jealousy, felt himself offended, after begging leave to add also to this high character of Gainsborough, said, "Well, Sir Joshua, and it is my opinion that he is also the greatest portrait

painter at this time in Europe." Sir Joshua felt the rebuke, and immediately apologized for his inattention in making the observation in Wilson's company.

Notwithstanding this liberality towards Gainsborough, it was a notion held by Sir Joshua, and which I have heard him declare, "That it was impossible for two painters in the same department of the art to continue long in friendship with each other." This brings to my mind a geographical paradox, as it is called by Gordon in his Grammar, where he says, "There is a certain spot on this globe on which two men cannot stand at a time without quarrelling."

Of Gainsborough, he said, that he could copy Vandyke so exquisitely, that at a certain distance he could not distinguish the copy from the original, or the difference between them.

His manner he considered as peculiarly his own, and one producing great effect and force; and one day whilst examining a picture of his with considerable attention, he at length exclaimed, "I cannot make out how he produces his effect!"

Sir Joshua, at the solicitation of Gainsborough, sat one morning to him for his portrait, but being taken ill soon after this first sitting, he was obliged to go to Bath for the recovery of his health, and, at his return, sent to Gainsborough to inform him that he was ready to attend at any time he would appoint, in order to have the picture finished; but

Gainsborough never resumed the work, and therefore it was never completed: why he declined it is not known; probably because Sir Joshua had made no offer to return the compliment by engaging to paint the portrait of Gainsborough. But Sir Joshua never had such an intention, which I heard him declare.

1788.

ÆTAT 64.

No further intercourse took place between Reynolds and Gainsborough until the latter was on his death-bed, when his better feelings overcame his capriciousness, and he sent for Sir Joshua to thank him for the liberal manner in which he had always spoken of him in public and in private conversation.

Sir Joshua, indeed, had *proved* his opinion of his talents, by paying one hundred guineas for his well known picture of the "Girl attending Pigs."

Nothing can be more strongly expressive of Gainsborough's acknowledged goodness of heart, and of his ardent love for the profession, than the exclamation uttered whilst expiring—"We are all going to Heaven, and Vandyke is of the party!"

He was interred, on the 9th of August, in Kew Church-yard, with his name *alone* cut on his tomb-stone; Sir Joshua being one of the pall-bearers, together with Sir William Chambers, Mr. West

the present President, Mr. Meyers, and Messrs. T. Cotes, Sandby, and Bartolozzi. The ceremony was also attended by several other gentlemen eminent for abilities, particularly Mr. Sheridan, &c.

On pronouncing his eulogium, which took place this year at the usual delivery of the Discourse, Sir Joshua's praises were just, instructive, and eloquent.

The purport of the whole discourse, indeed, turned upon Gainsborough's character, together with his excellencies and defects; and, amongst other reasons for adopting this subject, he observed, that when we draw our examples from remote and revered antiquity, with some advantage undoubtedly in the selection, we expose ourselves to some inconveniencies, being, perhaps, led away too much by great names, and too much subdued by overbearing authority. He considered it, therefore, to be sometimes of service, that our examples should be near us; and be such as raise a reverence sufficient to induce us carefully to observe them, yet not so great as to prevent us from engaging with them in something like a generous contention.

With great justness Sir Joshua declared his opinion, that if ever this nation should produce genius sufficient to acquire for us the honorable distinction of an English School, then the name of Gainsborough will be transmitted to posterity, in the history of the art, among the very first of that ri-

sing name : and after shewing that he had owed much of his excellence to his love for the art, he expressed himself of him personally, with great candour in the following words:—" Of Gainsborough we certainly know that his passion was not the acquirement of riches, but excellence in his art ; and to enjoy that honourable fame which is sure to attend it.—That *he felt this ruling passion strong in death*, I am myself a witness. A few days before he died, he wrote me a letter to express his acknowledgments for the good opinion I entertained of his abilities, and the manner in which (he had been informed) I always spoke of him ; and desired he might see me once more before he died. I am aware how flattering it is to myself to be thus connected with the dying testimony which this excellent painter bore to his art. But I cannot prevail on myself to suppress, that I was not connected with him, by any habits of familiarity : if any little jealousies had subsisted between us, they were forgotten in those moments of sincerity ; and he turned towards me as one who was engrossed by the same pursuits, and who deserved his good opinion by being sensible of his excellence. Without entering into a detail of what passed at this last interview, the impression of it upon my mind was, that his regret at losing life, was principally the regret of leaving his art ; and more especially as he now began, he said, to see what his deficiencies were ; which, he said,

he flattered himself, in his last works, were, in some measure, supplied."

The remainder of this discourse, the fourteenth, was dedicated to a comparison of Gainsborough with some other landscape painters, and it contains many most judicious observations, alike useful to the critic and the artist.

I must also remark, that Sir Joshua was by no means scrupulous of openly confessing the gratification he received from whatever species of art or ingenuity came to his knowledge. He was a prodigious admirer of the invention and striking effect of the Panorama in Leicester-fields, and went repeatedly to see it. He was the first person who mentioned it to me, and earnestly recommended me to go also, saying it would surprise me more than any thing of the kind I had ever seen in my life; and I confess I found it to be as he had said.*

About this time, a most eminent dramatic character had composed an excellent poem, which he purposed dedicating to Sir Joshua, and accordingly called on him one morning, and read it to him. When Sir Joshua, probably conceiving that praise of his professional powers would be most gratifying to the performer, said, with much simplicity,

* Sir Joshua, when going on a visit to Sir Abraham Hume, at his country residence at Wormleybury, was much pleased by the strict propriety of an inscription on a sign at a farrier's shop which he saw on the road, which says—

“Horses shod agreeable to Nature,
“And according to Art.”

“ I can scarcely pass my judgment on the poem ; you have read it so extraordinary well, that perhaps any poetry so read would appear fine.”— The author put the poem into his pocket, soon took his leave, and was not so well pleased as to dedicate his work to Sir Joshua after this species of compliment.

To compliment any man on those particular talents which the world has acknowledged he possesses, is to him but faint praise, especially when he pants for fame in another department ; as it has been observed of Cardinal Richlieu, that those who wished to gain his favour succeeded best when they pretended to be enraptured with his poetry, and said nothing of his political powers.

I cannot omit giving an observation which Sir Joshua made on Plymouth, in the immediate neighbourhood of his birth place. He remarked that we had the fewest admirers of pictures and prints in Plymouth of any town of its size that he knew of, and asked me if we had a bookseller at Plymouth.

There was too much truth in this remark, as there never has been seen a print of value exhibited in any of the shops in that place.

It was about this period (though I cannot recollect the exact date) that Sir Joshua was persuaded by Mr. Boswell to attend an execution of criminals on the scaffold in the front of Newgate. The particular inducement at this time was, that one

of the persons who was to suffer had formerly lived as servant in Mr. Thrale's family, and was now condemned to death for robbery. When this unfortunate man came upon the platform he quickly recognised Sir Joshua, (whom he had frequently attended at Mr. Thrale's,) and made him a humble bow, though thus on the very verge of existence.

Sir Joshua was attacked in the daily papers on this occasion, and accused of a want of proper feeling in attending to behold such awful sights: as it was observed, that of Mr. Boswell it might have been expected, but in a man of the elegant and refined mind of Sir Joshua, it was extraordinary.

But surely an artist may be excused for once even if he had gone to satisfy his curiosity; if we reflect that he is one whose business it is to study the human countenance, under all its varieties of expression, it becomes, in fact, almost a duty on him, however terribly it may operate on his feelings at the moment; as he there surveys persons in the most awful circumstances possible, and such as are to be found scarcely any where else, except where personal danger would justly preclude scientific observation.

Sir Joshua's general feelings may also be sketched from the following anecdote.

Mr. Copley, the painter, on his return from Switzerland, where he had been on a visit, was

relating to Sir Joshua, at a meeting of the members of the Royal Academy, what he had seen abroad that was curious ; and, amongst other matters, said he had been in company with Werter's Charlotte ; but Sir Joshua not comprehending whom he meant, Copley explained ; when Sir Joshua replied, " I am ashamed to say that I have never read the story of Werter and Charlotte." I then said that I thought it would have been more proper for him to have been ashamed if he had read it, as it was a novel, and only fit reading for young girls. He tartly answered, that I was in the wrong ; for that it was his place to have read that which every person else had read.

Of the many portraits of Sir Joshua himself, by his own hand, the last which he painted was executed this year ; it is a three quarter length, with spectacles, representing him familiarly, as in common domestic life. Of this picture there are several duplicates : one in the possession of the Duke of Leeds ; but his niece, the Marchioness of Thomond, possesses the original.

The well known satirical and descriptive production, called " Modern Characters from Shakspeare," was published this year. The passages, from the *Winter's Tale* and *Timon*, applied to Sir Joshua, are so well selected, that I cannot refuse them a place here.

The first was—" That rare master, who, had he himself eternity, and could put breath into his work, would beguile nature of her custom." The

second—"Admirable! how this grace speaks his own standing! what a mental power this eye shoots forth! how big imagination moves in this lip!" To the dumbness of the gesture one might interpret—I'll say of it—

"It tutors Nature: artificial strife
Lives in these touches livelier than life."

1789.

ÆTAT. 65.

I COME now to a most unfortunate era in the life of this great artist, when he encountered a heavy dispensation, the heaviest that could befall a professional man, the partial loss of his sight.

Mr. Malone, whose intimacy with Sir Joshua, at the time, enabled him to be perfectly correct in his statement, says, that he for the first time perceived this failure in the month of July, whilst giving nearly the last finishing to a portrait of the present Marchioness of Hertford. This of course, was the last female portrait which he ever painted; for, finding it difficult to proceed, he immediately desisted, and in a few months afterwards he totally lost the use of his left eye, notwithstanding all the care of the most skilful practitioners in the branch of surgery applicable to such cases.

Amongst the last of his portraits of men, were those of Messrs. Windham and Cholmondeley, of Lord Macartney, never finished, and of Mr. Fox.

I mention these circumstances particularly in

this place, because he now found it absolutely necessary to abstain from the use of his pencil, lest his remaining eye should also be affected; a determination which cost him great pain, and required great resolution to adhere to, as it deprived him of his best and dearest source of enjoyment, though he still ventured to read a little, or to listen to others; nor did he find himself deprived of the society of his friends, his misfortune not having affected his equal mind so much as to render him peevish or discontented. Indeed, like a philosopher, he endeavoured to console himself by the pleasures left him, more than to lament the loss of those of which he was deprived.

The mental sufferings of Sir Joshua, under the failure of his sight, were, perhaps, greater than he was willing to acknowledge; and he who, during his former life, had been perpetually and earnestly employed in works destined to delight the world, and add, in part, to the immortality even of the illustrious, when represented as he could represent them, being now prevented, by the unavoidable infirmities of human nature, from occupying himself in those studies that had raised his name so high, was reduced to fill up the tedious lingering hours, by such humble amusements, as could afford any consolation in a state to him so new.

Part of his attention was, in consequence, bestowed upon a little tame bird, which like the favourite spider of the prisoner in the Bastille,

served to pass away a lonely hour: but this proved also a fleeting pleasure; for on a summer morning, the window of the chamber being, by accident or carelessness, left open, the little favourite took his flight, and was irrecoverably lost, although its master wandered for hours in the square before the house in hopes to reclaim it, yet in vain.

The late Mr. Ozias Humphries was then frequently with him; and by accident he, one day, read a newspaper to him at his house in Leicester Square, when Sir Joshua appeared to be much gratified. Mr. Humphries, considering that Miss Palmer, Sir Joshua's niece, the present Marchioness of Thomond, was then in the country, thought that to read the newspapers to him daily, might not be unacceptable; he therefore resolved, though unostentatiously, to do this, and as he himself always breakfasted in St. James's Street at eight o'clock, he had finished and was in time to be with his friend before nine, Sir Joshua's breakfast hour. This he never omitted to repeat, for a considerable time till the return of his niece, when she performed that office as she had usually done. But Sir Joshua Reynolds, who, from feeling, knew what would be gratifying to an artist, provided that two fresh pictures of his numerous and valuable collection, should be placed daily in succession in his drawing room (as he was pleased to express it) for their mutual consideration and benefit:—thus contriving to reward him tenfold

for the trifling civility of reading to him the daily papers.

Being, as I have observed, in a great degree become dependent on others for his amusements, the pleasures he required were of an intellectual kind, and of these pleasures, he found many in the friendly intercourse of the *Literary Club*, which, however, was, in some measure, interrupted by the politics of that period, if we are to judge from a letter of Sir William Jones to Sir Joseph Banks, written in the latter end of this very year: "I wish politics at the devil; but hope, that when the King recovered, Science revived. It gives me great pain to know, that *party*, as it is called, (I call it *faction*, because I hold party to be grounded on principles, and faction on self-interest,) has found its way into a Literary Club, who meet reciprocally to impart and receive new ideas. I have deep-rooted political principles, which the law taught me; but I should never think of introducing them among men of science: and if, on my return to Europe, ten or twelve years hence, I should not find more science than politics in the club, my seat in it will be at the service of any politician who may wish to be one of the party."

Sir William Jones, however, did not live to return; nor did Sir Joshua, indeed, mingle in those debates to which he alludes, but preserved the same friendly tenor of conduct and suavity of manners to his associates there, that he exercised

towards all men in private life: for politics never amused him nor ever employed his thoughts a moment.

His kindness of manner and readiness to oblige were particularly exemplified by a little incident which happened this year, thus noticed by Mr. Dayes, the artist, who says, "Malice has charged him with avarice; probably from his not having been prodigal like too many of his profession. His offer to me proves the contrary. At the time that I made the drawings of the King at St. Paul's, after his illness, Reynolds complimented me handsomely on seeing them, and afterwards observed, that the labour bestowed must have been such, that I could not be remunerated from selling them; but if I would publish them myself, he would lend me the money necessary, and engage to get me a handsome subscription among the nobility."

Sir Joshua acted with benevolence and justice in this offer to assist industry.

Of all charities, that of *employing* the poor is the most charitable, and best patronage. It is in a manner to double the obligation by lessening it; it being more grateful to any man to put him in a capacity of relieving himself, than to make him a pensioner to others. It is turning a bounty into a reward, and promoting industry. For industry is the heir apparent to bounty; poverty but the presumptive heir.

1790.

ÆTAT. 66.

AN unhappy difference now took place between the President and the Royal Academy, which made considerable noise, and has often been related by various writers, according (in some measure) to the feelings which they had in the business. I shall endeavour, however, to state the whole affair as impartially as possible; but according to my own conception of the business, which is very well told by an obscure author in a pamphlet published at the time, who says, that in the year 1790, Sir Joshua Reynolds (probably at the request of the Earl of Aylesford) possessed a very anxious desire to procure the vacant professorship of Perspective in the Academy for Mr. Bonomi, an Italian architect; and as Mr. Bonomi had not yet been elected an associate, and of course was not an academician, it became a necessary step to raise him to those situations, in order to qualify him for being a professor. The election proceeded, and Mr. Gilpin was a competitor for the associateship with the Italian architect. The numbers on the ballot proved equal, and the President gave the casting vote for his friend Mr. Bonomi, who was thereby advanced so far towards the professorship. On the vacancy of an aca-

demic seat by the death of Mr. Meyers, Sir Joshua Reynolds exerted all his influence to obtain it for Mr. Bonomi; but a spirit of resistance appeared, (owing, I believe, to some misconception, or to some informality on the part of Sir Joshua, in producing some drawings of Bonomi's) and Mr. Fuseli was elected an academician by a majority of two to one. The President then quitted the chair with great dissatisfaction; and on the following day (the 12th of February) Sir Joshua Reynolds, who for twenty-one years had filled the chair of the Royal Academy, with honour to himself and his country, sent his resignation to Mr. Richards, the Secretary of the Academy. But the first letter he is said to have withdrawn, as being rather too warm, and in its place substituted the following :

“TO THE SECRETARY OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

Leicester Fields, Feb. 22, 1790.

“ SIR,

I beg you would inform the Council, which I understand meet this evening, with my fixed resolution of resigning the Presidency of the Royal Academy, and consequently my seat as Academician. As I can be no longer of any service to the Academy, as President, it would be still less in my power in a subordinate station; I therefore now take my final leave of the Academy, with

my sincere good wishes for its prosperity, and with all due respect to its members.

“ I am Sir,

“ Your most humble and most obedient servant,

“ JOSHUA REYNOLDS.”

“ P. S. Sir William Chambers has two letters of mine, either of which, or both, he has a full liberty to communicate to the Council.”

A council was soon after held, and the subject of their deliberation was, the resignation of the President. A letter from Sir Joshua to Mr. Richards was then read, declaring his resolution to resign the presidency of the Royal Academy. A letter from Sir William Chambers to Sir Joshua was also read; this was addressed to Sir Joshua in consequence of Sir William's interview with the King, in an early stage of this business; and, among other flattering marks of the Sovereign's favour, the letter expressed, “ That his Majesty would be happy in Sir Joshua's continuing in the President's chair.”

Sir Joshua's letter to Sir William Chambers, in reply, stated in effect, “ That he inferred his conduct must have been hitherto satisfactory to his Majesty, from the very gratifying way in which his Royal pleasure had been declared; and, if any inducement could make him depart from his original resolution, the will of his Sovereign would prevail; but that, flattered by his Majesty's ap-

proval to the last, there could be nothing that was not perfectly honourable in his resignation; and that, in addition to this determination, as he could not consistently hold the subordinate distinction of Royal Academician, after he had so long possessed the chair, he begged also to relinquish that honour."

All idea of now soothing Sir Joshua, by any proceeding of the Academy, since the Sovereign's wishes had been of no avail, was rejected as superfluous and inconsistent.

Immediately on Sir Joshua's resignation, the following lines were addressed to him by a Nobleman of genius, which I insert because they contain characteristic truths, and elegance of poetry. Some other verses were addressed to him by different persons but none of equal merit.

TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, &c. &c.

" Too wise for contest, and too meek for strife,
Like Lear, oppress'd by those you rais'd to life,
Thy scepter broken, thy dominion oe'r,
The curtain falls, and thou'rt a king no more.
Still near the wreck of thy demolished state,
Truth, and the weeping Muse with me shall wait;
Science shall teach Britannia's self to moan,
And make, O injured Friend! thy wrongs her own.

" Shall we forget when, with incessant toil,
To thee 'twas given to turn this stubborn soil;
To thee with flowers to deck our dreary waste,
And kill the poisonous weeds of vicious taste;
To pierce the gloom where England's genius slept,
Long of soft love and tenderness bereft;

From his young limbs to tear the bands away,
And bid the infant giant run and play ?

“ Dark was the hour, the age an age of stone,
When Hudson claimed an empire of his own ;
And from the time when, darting rival light,
Vandyke and Rubens cheered our northern night,
Those twin stars set, the Graces all had fled,
Yet paused to hover o'er a Lely's head ;
And sometimes bent, when won with earnest prayer,
To make the gentle Kneller all their care ;
But ne'er with smiles to gaudy Verrio turned ;
No happy incense on his altars burned.

O witness, Windsor, thy too passive walls,
Thy tortured ceilings, thy insulted halls !
Lo ! England's glory, Edward's conquering son,
Cover'd with spoils from Poictiers bravely won ;
Yet no white plumes, no arms of sable hue,
Mark the young hero to our ravished view ;
In buskin trim, and laurelled helmet bright,
A well-dressed Roman meets our puzzled sight ;
And Gallia's captive king, how strange his doom,
A Roman too perceives himself become !

“ See too the miracles of God profaned,
By the mad daubings of this impious hand.
For while the dumb exult in notes of praise,
While the lame walk, the blind in transport gaze,
While vanquished demons Heaven's high mandates hear,
And the pale dead spring from the silent bier,
With laced cravat, long wig, and careless mien,
The painter's present at the wondrous scene !

“ Vanloo and Dahl, these may more justly claim
A step still higher on the throne of fame ;
Yet to the west their course they seem to run,
The last red streaks of a declining sun.

“ And must we Jervas name ? so hard and cold,
In ermine, robes, and peruke only bold ;
Or when inspired, his rapturous pencil own,
The rolled-up stocking, and the damask gown,

Behold a tasteless age in wonder stand,
 And hail him the Apelles of the land !
 And Denner too ;—but yet so void of ease,
 His figures tell you they're forbid to please ;
 Nor in proportion, nor expression nice,
 The strong resemblance is itself a vice :
 As wax-work figures always shock the sight,
 Too near to human flesh and shape, affright,
 And when they best are form'd afford the least delight. }

“ Turn we from such to thee, whose nobler art
 Rivets the eye, and penetrates the heart ;
 To thee whom nature, in thy earliest youth,
 Fed with the honey of eternal truth :
 Then, by her fondling art, in happy hour,
 Enticed to learning's more sequest'ed bower.
 There all thy life of honours first was planned,
 While nature preached, and science held thy hand.
 When, but for these, condemned perchance to trace
 The tiresome vacuum of each senseless face,
 Thou in thy living tints had ne'er combined
 All grace of form, and energy of mind.
 How, but for these, should we have trembling fled
 The guilty tossings of a Beaufort's bed ;
 Or let the fountain of our sorrows flow
 At sight of famished Ugolino's woe ?
 Bent on revenge, should we have pensive stood
 O'er the pale cherubs of the fatal wood,
 Caught the last perfume of their rosy breath,
 And viewed them smiling at the stroke of death ?
 Should we have questioned, stung with rage and pain,
 The spectre line with the distracted Thane ?
 Or with Alcmena's natural terror wild,
 From the envenomed serpent torn her child ?

“ And must no more thy pure and classic page
 Unfold its treasures to the rising age ?
 Nor from thy own Athenian temple pour
 On list'ning youth of art the copious store ;
 Hold up to labour independent ease,
 And teach ambition all the ways to please ;

With ready hand neglected Genius save,
Sickening, o'erlook'd in Misery's hidden cave;
And, nobly just, decide the active mind
Neither to soil, nor climate is confined?

“ Desert not then thy sons, those sons who soon
Will mourn with me, and all their error own.
Thou must excuse that raging fire, the same
Which lights their daily course to endless fame;
Alas! impels them thoughtless far to stray
From filial love, and Reason's sober way.
Accept again thy power, resume the chair,
“ Nor leave it, till you place an Equal there.”

Even an imitator of Peter Pindar, in his eccentric way, laments also what he considered as improper treatment of this great painter, and in his verse attempts to immortalize that head which had so often, assisted by its hand, to immortalize the heads of so many others; and this the witty poet compares to that of Orpheus, which, on his being torn to pieces, was carried down the stream and drifted to the island of Lesbos. The passage is in a poem called, “ More Lyric Odes to the Royal Academicians.

“ Now I've been thinking, if our Reynolds' head
Should, on his palette, down the Thames drive souse,
And mindful of the walls he once arrayed
Bring to, a bit, at Somerset new house;
What scramblings there would be, what worlds of pains
Among the artists to possess his brains.
And like Neanthus for great Orpheus' lyre,
Some for his palette would be raising frays,
In hopes, no doubt, the wood would each inspire
To paint like him for—fame in better days;

As if a soldier, who'd no legs to use,
Should fight for his dead comrade's boots and shoes.

Reynolds, when I reflect what sons of fame
Have shar'd thy friendship, I with sighs regret
That all have died a little in thy debt,

And left a trump unknown to swell thy name;
But courage friend! when Time's relentless tooth
Hath nibbled mountains to the ground smack smooth,
And pick'd, as one would pick a savoury bone,
Each monument of iron, and brass, and stone;—
Thy name shall live, and like heav'n's sacred fire
Succeeding artists kindle, and inspire."

Every Academician now regretted the unforeseen consequence of the unfortunate disagreement; however, the whole body shewed so liberal a desire to retain Sir Joshua in the chair, that, after agitating those unpleasant differences between the president and the academy with as much delicacy as possible, it was determined that a delegation of the following gentlemen, to wit, Messrs. West, Farrington, Cosway, Catton, Sandby, Bacon, Copley, Russel, and the Secretary, should wait upon Sir Joshua, and lay before him the resolution which the Academy had come to in order to produce a conciliatory effect. The resolution was in substance as follows;

“ That it appeared, when the drawings of Mr. Bonomi were introduced at the election, Sir Joshua, by whose directions they were brought in, had certainly acted in conformity to the intentions of the council, as appeared by an order entered on their books; but that, such order not going

through the regular forms necessary to constitute a law, the full body of Academicians remained ignorant of the proceeding, and therefore fell into an error in ordering the drawings to be removed. But, as they unanimously professed that no personal disrespect was intended towards Sir Joshua, they trusted he would be prevailed upon to comply with the wishes of the King, and continue in the Presidency of the Royal Academy.”

The above delegates accordingly waited upon Sir Joshua, to entreat him to withdraw his letter of resignation, and resume his situation as President of an institution to which his talents had been so long an essential support. They had an interview with him at his house in Leicester Square, and were received with great politeness; and every mark of respect was expressed by those who had hitherto been deemed least cordial to the interests of the President. Upon a full explanation of the intentions and views of the Academy being made, and their wishes expressed that Sir Joshua would continue to adorn the presidency, he, after a handsome declaration of his gratitude for this honourable proceeding towards him, consented to resume the chair, and the whole of the delegates were invited to dine with him, in order to convince them that he returned to his office with sentiments of the most cordial amity.

On the suggestion of Lord Lansdowne, it was thought that Sir Joshua could not resume the

chair till he had the proper authority of the King. For this, in due form, Lord Lansdowne applied; and when granted, this great artist attended at Somerset House, to be restored to all his honours in full assembly of the members.

Shortly after this, Sir Joshua delivered his fifteenth and *last* discourse, in which he took leave of the Academy, on the 10th of December, 1790: a discourse which gave a foreign artist, of considerable celebrity, occasion to say, that if he had only heard this final oration in praise of Michael Angelo, and seen that great national ornament, Somerset House, he should have been certain that the English nation were far advanced in the highest departments of art.

On this interesting occasion, Sir Joshua observed, that the intimate connexion which he had maintained with the Royal Academy ever since its establishment, and the social duties in which he and its members had been mutually engaged for so many years, rendered any profession of attachment on his part altogether superfluous; as, independent of other causes, such attachment would naturally have been produced in such a connexion, by the influence of habit alone. He modestly hinted at the little differences which had arisen; but expressed his wish that such things should be lost amongst the members in mutual esteem for talents and acquirements, and that every controversy would be sunk in general zeal for the perfection of that art common to them all.

In parting with the Academy, he declared that he would remember with pride, affection, and gratitude, the support with which he had almost uniformly been honoured, from the commencement of the Establishment; and that he should leave it with unaffected cordial wishes for its future concord, and with a well-founded hope, that in that concord, the auspicious, and not obscure, origin of the Academy, might *not* be forgotten in the splendor of succeeding prospects.

He then, with his usual modesty, assigned his reasons for thus voluntarily giving those periodical discourses.

“ 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.”

Though Sir Joshua had not actually made his final resignation at this period, yet it is evident that he contemplated it, as he observed that his

age and infirmities made it probable that this would really be his last address; and he added, with a degree of philosophy worthy of imitation, that excluded as he was from indulging his imagination with a distant and forward perspective of life, so he trusted that he would be excused for turning his eyes back on the way that he had passed.

To follow him through this review of his professional life and discourses would far exceed my proposed limits; but I may be permitted to say, that if he did not absolutely feel the ruling passion strong in death, yet he appeared to express its strongest sentiments in what may thus be called his professional demise, which he concluded with these remarkable words, after having expatiated on the exalted genius of his favourite master—

“ 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!*”

On the evening of the delivery of this discourse one remarkable circumstance occurred, which, at the moment, not a little alarmed the company there assembled, and was this. At the time when Sir Joshua was delivering his oration

to a very numerous and even crowded audience, composed of persons of the highest rank in the state, as well as all those who were the most eminent in art, and just at the moment when a respectful and solemn silence prevailed, on a sudden, a loud crash was heard, and a sensation felt, as if the floor of this great room, which is at the top of the house, was giving way and falling. The company immediately took the alarm, and rushed towards the door, or to the sides of the room, tumbling one over the other, in the utmost confusion and consternation, expecting, every moment, that the floor would fall away, and precipitate them down to the lower part of the building.

Sir Joshua was silent, but did not move from his seat: when, after some little time, the company perceiving that the danger had ceased, most of them resumed their places, and Sir Joshua calmly continued his discourse, as coolly as if nothing extraordinary had occurred.

On an examination of the floor afterwards, it was found that one of the beams for its support had actually given way from the great weight of the assembly of persons who pressed upon it, and probably from a flaw also in the wood.

I remember the remark Sir Joshua made on this accident was, that if the floor had really fallen, most of the persons assembled must have been crushed to death in consequence; and if so, the arts, in this country, would have been thrown two hundred years back.

But, providentially, no ill effect was produced by the circumstance.

Sir Joshua's inability to pursue his profession did not, however, sour his mind against the increasing fame of his cotemporaries, as appears from his observation respecting the alarming occurrence, at the delivery of his last discourse; and such was his opinion, in respect to the progress the arts had then made in England, and as he imagined, were still making towards perfection, that, in conversation with me once, he ventured to predict, that the arts would so improve in this country, and in future years arrive to such a state of excellence, as that "all we can now achieve," he said, "will appear like children's work in comparison with what will be done."

I cannot coincide with this opinion, as far as it respects his own works, which I do not think he seemed to rate so high as they deserve. The only allusion to any merit in his own efforts that I can recollect him ever to have made, is once hearing him say, "That lovers had acknowledged to him, after having seen his portraits of their mistresses, that the originals had appeared even still more lovely to them than before, by their excellencies being so distinctly pourtrayed." Yet although his own opinion of his works was so humble, that I have heard him *confess his terror at seeing them exposed in the bright light of the Sun*; it cannot be doubted that justice was done to his merits in foreign countries: for, even previous to this pe-

riod, when the French Ambassador, count D'Adhemar, was leaving England, he intimated to Sir Joshua, that he would contrive to have him invited to Paris to paint the portrait of the then Queen Maria Antonetta. This I heard Sir Joshua relate, and when one in company said, "Why then you would be required to paint so many of that court, that we should never get you home again," Sir Joshua answered that such should not be the case, for he would make a resolution before he went, to paint no other person in France but the Queen.

Whether portrait painting will ever be carried much further than Sir Joshua has carried it, I have my doubts ; but, in respect to the arts in general, I think our countrymen fully qualified to verify the above prediction of Sir Joshua. It is my firm opinion, that had there been the same encouragement and opportunity offered to the arts in this country that have been afforded to them in Italy and France, we should have seen how British powers and talents would have burst forth, and also that laudable ambition, that activity and spirit of enterprize, that good sense and sound judgment, that originality and strength of character, which so particularly mark the people of this empire, that freedom of thinking for themselves which prevents the servile imitation of each other, so constantly found in most other countries, especially in France : when these are all considered, how much

more than probable is it that we should have seen such works of excellence and variety produced as no age or country have ever seen equalled; and thus Raffaelles and Corregios might have risen to rival the Apelles and Zeuxis of the ancients, as well as a Milton and Shakspeare to vie with Homer and Euripides.

But this vain hope is never to be realized in our isles; as no great and adequate cause is likely ever to occur to give the impetus, or to spur genius on to great exertions: and without some eminently powerful cause, it becomes a moral impossibility to be accomplished.

Notwithstanding the great excellence of Sir Joshua's work, many of them were rejected, and others never paid for. Once as I was passing through his gallery with him, he pointed to one of his own paintings, containing a group of portraits, in a picture which had been left upon his hands, saying, with a smile, "Pity so much good work should be thrown away for nothing!"

I remember a nobleman, when seeing his own full length portrait in the exhibition, which had been painted by Sir Joshua, but was never paid for, expressed his surprize to a friend who was then in his company, that painters should complain of any want of employment—"See there," said he, "that portrait of myself, with many others in this room, proves they cannot want employment."

He used to say he could not dun persons for debts whom he was continually in the habit of meeting at dinner parties.

Sir Joshua once, very unintentionally, mortified a lady extremely, who was sitting to him for her portrait. When she offered to sit to him for the hands also, (she esteemed her own to be very fine,) he answered, innocently, "that he would not give her so much trouble, as he commonly painted the hands from his servants!"

Another time a gentleman, who sat to him for his portrait, complained that Sir Joshua had not sufficiently finished the ruffles nor made out the pattern of the lace distinctly, when he answered smartly, "That is my manner, that is my manner!" At this the gentleman felt himself rather hurt; self-love placing his own foppish ideas above the rules of art.

It was a remark of his, that the characteristic property of robes of dignity in every country, is to be voluminous and encumber the persons they adorn, rendering them incapable of much action; thence indicating or implying that such personages are only to command their inferiors to perform what power or genius prompts. Thus the Chinese of exalted rank in addition to ample robes, shew also by the long nails on their fingers, that their hands are totally unfit for work of any kind, or even of being useful to themselves; a proof that they keep others to serve them.

It was the opinion of Sir Joshua Reynolds, that Michael Angelo was superior to the ancients, as he once declared to me; and on my not according with him in that opinion, I remember he said, "You have the strongest party in the argument, because you have the world on your side." But at this time I am more inclined to think with him, at least thus far, that in the works of Michael Angelo there always appears to be an exquisite sentiment produced; but from the antique, nothing of that which he inspires. The antique gives us, undoubtedly, a more perfect example of just proportions, and of characters. I apprehend the same qualities run through all their works of every species: their dramas seem to be the works of men of most powerful heads, and therefore the most proper models for the schools, as, in them, nothing that is wrong can be found; and we may therefore assist our judgment, by the help of their examples, as infallible guides, which examples can be reduced to rules. But the feelings of the heart admit of but little assistance or improvement from fixed rules. Thus, he who may have settled his notions of perfection from the models of the ancient dramas, and supposes nothing can surpass them in any quality whatever, must be struck with astonishment and admiration, when, for the first time, he contemplates the pages of Shakspeare, where such various sensations, subtle and refined, are described. Yet Shakspeare cannot,

like the ancients, be admitted as a model for the schools, in as much as he is irregular and licentious, and his excellencies, like all those of genius, cannot be taught to others.

It must have been in this view that Sir Joshua saw a superiority in Michael Angelo over the antique; as surely he could not think him equal to them in just proportion, or in the decision and propriety of character.*

Some attempts may be discovered in his practice to imitate Michael Angelo; and more to imitate Corregio; but it is evident, that his whole life was devoted to his finding out the Venetian mode of colouring; in the pursuit of which he risked both his fame and his fortune.

The regard of Reynolds for Michael Angelo, has already been stated: another artist, of whom he always spoke with high respect, was Nicholas Poussin, although that painter was the very reverse to him in his practice; and I remember being in company with Sir Joshua and Sir William

* I must in this place take the opportunity to correct a mistake, that Jonathan Richardson has made, in attributing to Michael Angelo the basso relievo of the death of Count Ugolino and his family; as poetically represented by Dante.

It was the work of Pietro da Vinci, a cast in bronze designed and executed by himself; and is most minutely described by Vassari, in the life of that promising young sculptor, who died at an early period of his life, not having fully completed the twenty-third year of his age. He was the nephew of the eminent Leonardo da Vinci.

Chambers, one evening, when we had an argument on Poussin's merits. I expressed my surprize to find him so highly extol the excellencies of an artist that he was so totally unlike in his own practice, insomuch as to be absolutely the reverse, and added some opinions of my own, rather harsh, against the works of Poussin, to which Sir Joshua would not agree; when Sir William Chambers smiled, and said I brought to his recollection the officious character which is always introduced to act a part when a saint is to be made by the Romish church. The office of this personage, who is supposed to be sent there purposely by the devil, and is therefore called the devil's advocate, is to seize every possible objection against the sanctity of the holy character that is to be canonized. He is of course to be confuted in all his arguments, to the greater glory of the new saint.

But in vindication of my sentiments in respect to Poussin, I shall here quote the authority of Mengs, as his opinion on this question precisely coincides with my own, as far as it goes. He says, "Among the many who came to Rome, (meaning painters,) Nicholas Poussin was he who proposed to imitate entirely the style of the ancients; and if the customs of his age had not impeded him, he would have obtained his end. Painting always in oil small pieces, took from him the opportunity of enlarging his style, or of executing works of so much study as those of the first men of Italy."

Considering, however, his *works only as sketches*, they are excellent."

Claude Lorraine also appears to have been a particular favourite painter in the estimation of Sir Joshua; as I have heard him say, that, in his opinion, the superiority of Claude in landscape was so pre-eminently excellent, that we might sooner expect to see another Raffaele than another Claude Lorraine.

Yet as to the figures which he so frequently introduced into his pictures, those Sir Joshua did not approve of; but said, that Claude in the attempt seemed, by his work, not to know what he was about.

This being nearly the close of Sir Joshua's *professional* life, I may remark, that, for some years, his price had been fifty guineas for a head portrait, the other sizes being in proportion. On this subject, a friend observed to him, that it certainly seemed to be a great demand; but that when it was taken into consideration how many pictures were left upon his hands, and never paid for, it would not amount to more, perhaps, than ten guineas for each, individually, which was too small a price. To this Sir Joshua smilingly replied, that he thought "ten guineas for each was a very reasonable profit."

I recollect a circumstance of a certain lady who came to Sir Joshua to have her portrait painted by

him, a short time before he raised his price to its final extent; but on her asking his demand, and being informed that it was forty guineas for the half length, she started, saying that she did not apprehend his terms to be so high, adding, that she must take some time to consider upon it. Shortly after, this lady paid Sir Joshua another visit, and informed him, that she had now made up her mind, and was come to a resolution to comply with his proposed terms; when he acquainted her with his price being raised; and, of course, that what would have been forty, was now sixty guineas. Thus, doubly mortified, the lady saw there was no alternative; and she frankly owned, that she would have her portrait drawn by him at any price; and accordingly sat for it.

1791.

ÆTAT. 67.

ON the tenth of December, of the last year, Mr. Henry Howard gained the gold prize medal at the Royal Academy, for the best historical picture, and in the spring following set out for Italy, in order to compleat his studies in that school of arts. When Sir Joshua obligingly gave him the following letter of introduction to Lord Hervey then at Florence.

“ TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD HERVEY
AT FLORENCE.

London, March 19, 1791.

“ MY LORD,

THOUGH I have not the honour of being known to your lordship, yet I trust I shall be excused in the liberty I take of recommending to your lordship's patronage and protection the bearer of this—Mr. Howard, a young painter who is on his way to Rome. He gained the first prize of our Academy in December last, and I had the pleasure of telling him, when I delivered the gold medal, that it was the opinion of the academicians that his picture was the best that had been presented to the academy ever since its establishment.

“ To such merit I rest assured that an introduction alone is sufficient to procure your lordship's favour.

“ I am with the greatest respect,

“ Your Lordship's

“ Most humble and most obedient servant,

“ JOSHUA REYNOLDS.”

Though now contemplating a secession from public life, Sir Joshua did not feel any decrease in his love for the *art*, or in his good wishes for the *profession*, sentiments strikingly evinced by his general conduct at all times, and particularly so in the year 1791.

He had, during the course of his professional labours, procured a very large and valuable collection of paintings, the works of the old masters; and his assemblage of prints was highly valuable and interesting. So great, indeed, was his desire to render his collection a good one, that, as Mr. Dayes very accurately states, he offered to cover twice with guineas, as the price of purchase, the picture of the "Witch coming from Hell with a lapful of Charms," by *Teniers*; but this was refused. Yet it is pleasing to record, that he afterwards possessed this very picture; and, as he modestly declared, by *only* painting a portrait, a fancy subject, and giving another of his own works, already executed. The sum which he offered would have amounted to near one thousand guineas!

In this collection he had what he thought to be an oil painting of his favorite, Michael Angelo—a *Madona and Child*. But this involves a question which no one can determine; for if it was by Michael Angelo it would be invaluable indeed, not so much from its intrinsic merit, as from the extreme rarity of oil paintings from the pencil of that artist, and of which there are, in fact, very few in existence; for *oil-painting*, he used to say, "was employment only fit for women and children!"*

* Sir Joshua had also a *Study* by the same master.

Upon the whole, Sir Joshua's professed admiration of him was so great, that Angelo's head was engraved on his seal ; and he also introduced his bust in that portrait which he painted of himself for the Royal Academy, and has marked the name of Michael Angelo on the paper held in the hand of his portrait, now in the Gallery at Florence.

So anxious was Sir Joshua Reynolds for the diffusion of a good taste in the art, and that future students might find a practical commentary on those precepts which he had now ceased to deliver, that he, in the most liberal manner, offered to the Academy this collection of paintings at a very low price, on the condition that they would purchase the Lyceum in the Strand for the purpose of constructing an exhibition room. This generous offer, however, for several reasons, was declined ; yet this must still be a subject of regret when we consider the various testimonies which Sir Joshua has left, to the merit of the great masters, and the necessity of often referring to them ; and whilst so many well selected works were in this collection. In one place he exclaims, " On whom then can the student rely, or who shall shew him the path that leads to excellence ? The answer is obvious : those great masters, who have travelled the same road with success, are the most likely to conduct others. The works of those, who have stood the test of ages, have a claim to that respect and veneration to which no mortal can pretend. The

duration and stability of their fame are sufficient to evince that it has not been suspended upon the slender thread of fashion and caprice, but bound to the human heart by every tie of sympathetic approbation." He follows this up by adding, that "Our minds should be habituated to the contemplation of excellence, and, far from being contented to make such habits the discipline of our youth only, we should, to the last moment of our lives, continue a settled intercourse with all the true examples of grandeur. Their inventions are not only the food of our infancy, but the substance which supplies the fullest maturity of our vigour."

His often repeated advice then was,—“ Study, therefore, the great works of the great masters for ever. Study, as nearly as you can, in the order, in the manner, on the principles, on which they studied. Study nature attentively, but always with those masters in your company; consider them as models which you are to imitate, and at the same time as rivals which you are to combat.”

Some further opinions of Sir Joshua may be drawn from the reverend Mr. Gilpin's *Essays on Picturesque Beauty*, (page 34,) who says, “ As the subject of the foregoing Essay is rather new, and I doubted whether sufficiently founded in truth, I was desirous, before I printed it, that it should receive the imprimatur of Sir Joshua Reynolds, I begged him therefore to look it over, and received the following answer.”

London, April 19, 1791.

“ DEAR SIR,

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

“ Without opposing any of your sentiments, it has suggested an idea that may be worth consideration, whether the epithet picturesque is not applicable to the excellence of the inferior schools rather than to the higher. The works of Michael Angelo, Raphael, &c. appear to me to have nothing of it; whereas Rubens, and the Venetian painters may almost be said to have nothing else.

“ Perhaps Picturesque is somewhat synonymous to the word Taste, which we should think improperly applied to Homer or to Milton, but very well to Pope or Prior. I suspect that the application of these words is to excellencies of an inferior order, and which are incompatible with the grand style.

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

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

“ The Essay has lain upon my table ; and I think no day has passed without my looking at it, reading a little at a time.

“ Whatever objections presented themselves at first view were done away on a closer inspection ; and I am not quite sure but that is the case in regard to the observation which I have ventured to make on the word Picturesque. “ I am, &c.

“ JOSHUA REYNOLDS.”

Failing in his attempt to establish a gallery for his pictures, Sir Joshua in this year, (1791,) determined to make a temporary exhibition of them ; and this took place in the month of April, at an apartment in the Haymarket, which had formerly been that of Ford the auctioneer. To this, the price of admission was one shilling ; and as the profits arising from the exhibition were generously given by him to his old servant, Ralph Kirkley, so in the catalogue it was designated as, “ Ralph’s Exhibition,” and some notice taken of it by a wicked wit, who, at the time, wished to insinuate that Sir Joshua was a partaker in the profits. But this was not the truth ; neither do I believe there were any profits to share ; however, these lines from Hudibras were inserted in a morning paper, together with some observations on the exhibition of pictures collected by the knight—

A ’Squire he had whose name was Ralph,
Who in the adventure went his half.”

Thus gaily making a sacrifice of truth to a joke.

The catalogue to Ralph's Exhibition was written by Sir Joshua himself, in which some of the particular pictures are well described, and it contains a few remarks useful to painters; as for instance—

“No. 12. *Ludo. Carracci*.—A study of a head from the life, for a picture of St. Antonio, which is in the church of —, in Bologna. In the finished picture, all the more minute parts which are here expressed are there omitted; the light part is one broad mass, and the scanty lock of hair which falls on the forehead, is there much fuller and larger. A copy of this picture seen at the same time with this study would be a good lesson to students, by shewing the different manner of painting a portrait and an historical head; and teach them at the same time the advantage of always having recourse to nature. No. 82. *Bassan*—*Sheep-Shearing*.—At some distance, on a hill, with some difficulty, is seen the sacrifice of Isaac. This is a curious instance how little that school considered the art beyond colouring, and a representation of common nature; the sacrifice is here made secondary to the common occupations of husbandmen.”

I insert his description of those two pictures of his collection, as sufficient to shew that Sir Joshua could not even barely describe a picture without its being in some degree a useful lesson.

My own observations, and those of others, respecting Reynolds's merits and practice, have

been so diffusely noticed through these memoirs, that little is left for further remark, except to observe, that he rarely made any drawings, and the very few which he did produce cannot claim notice but from their very great scarcity, and for being the work of so distinguished an artist. As to his Academy figures, it would be very difficult to collect a dozen specimens all together, and those few would be found to be poor and feeble.

When he found it necessary to make any sketches for his pictures, he always executed them in oil colours, in a very slight manner, merely to determine the general effect; but of those there are very few to be met with.

Of all the portrait painters who have hitherto flourished, there has been no one whose works were so well suited to that mode of engraving named mezzotinto as those of Reynolds; and a very large collection they make. A catalogue of them was arranged in the year 1794 by William Richardson, which formed a list of seven hundred prints, some of which are duplicates.

The prints from his works, which are chiefly in mezzotinto, certainly form the most numerous collection of portraits that have ever been engraved after the works of one artist.

I have heard Sir Joshua say he believed he had covered more canvass than any painter that had gone before him: however, I much doubt this, as Rubens and Vandyke, in this particular, seem to

be entitled to the palm : but certain it is, that he has painted two generations of the beauties of England, and in a few instances three.

Still it may be observed, that his application to his beloved art was such, that he seldom went out of his house in the day time ; and if by accident any circumstance obliged him to walk in the streets at such hours, it seemed so strange to him, that, according to his own expression, he felt as if every body was looking at him.

If it were necessary to add any thing further on the merits of his discourses, which, unlike his paintings, were by some supposed not to be all his own, it may be found in part of an unfinished sketch for a discourse which he had it in contemplation to compose, as has been before observed, and where he with great humility describes the kind of assistance which he supposed he had received from Dr. Johnson. But a man of genius is perpetually receiving assistance (if so we please to call it,) from every thing he hears or sees.

“ I remember,” he says, “ Mr. Burke, speaking of the Essays of Sir Francis Bacon, said, he thought them the best of his works. Dr. Johnson was of opinion ‘ that their excellence and their value consisted in being the observations of a strong mind operating upon life ; and in consequence you find there what you seldom find in other books.’—It is this kind of excellence,” he adds, which gives a value to the performances of artists

also. It is the thoughts expressed in the works of Michael Angelo, Corregio, Raffaele, Parmegiano, and perhaps some of the old Gothic masters, and not the inventions of Pietro de Cortona, Carlo Maratti, Luca Giordano, and others that I might mention, which we seek after with avidity. From the former we learn to think originally. May I presume to introduce myself on this occasion, and even to mention as an instance of the truth of what I have remarked, the very Discourses which I have had the honour of delivering from this place. Whatever merit they may have must be imputed, in a great measure, to the education which I may be said to have had under Dr. Johnson. I do not mean to say, though it certainly would be to the credit of these Discourses, if I could say it with truth, that he contributed even a single sentiment to them; but he qualified my mind to think justly."

A few persons dining at Sir Joshua Reynolds's about this time, of whom I was one, in the course of conversation after dinner Sir Joshua spoke of Mr. Malone's edition of Shakspeare, which was then just about to be published. He said it was such a work as would render it totally unnecessary to attempt to improve it any further, as Mr. Malone had, with indefatigable industry and the deepest research, now explored every source of knowledge from which Shakspeare might have had any means of getting assistance, for in truth

it had been the prime object of his pursuits, and the business of his whole life with intense application.

I must confess that I felt a little degree of irritation at hearing this vast eulogium on a work which, in its very nature, cannot be a matter requiring the least genius ; neither can it add one atom to the matchless excellencies of that captivating poet, and does little more than to form an excuse for the name of the commentator being handed down to posterity attached to that of the immortal Shakspeare.

I rather hastily replied, as a counteraction to the foregoing speech of Sir Joshua's, " What a very despicable creature must that man be who thus devotes himself and makes another man his God ;" when Boswell, who sat at my elbow, and was not in my thoughts at the time, cried out immediately, " Oh ! Sir Joshua, then that is me !" I was exceedingly sorry when he took it to himself, and excused the speech I had made in the best manner I was able. However, if Boswell's office was not a high one, the work he has produced by it is much more original and more valuable beyond all comparison, as very few books in the English language bid fairer for immortality than his life of Dr. Johnson.

Hitherto, Sir Joshua's personal health had not forsook him ; and indeed, Mr. Malone states that in September of this year, he was in such health and spirits, that on returning to London from

Gregories in Buckinghamshire, the seat of their mutual friend Edmund Burke, he and Sir Joshua left his carriage at the Inn at Hayes, and walked five miles on the road in a warm day, without his complaining of any fatigue. "He had at that time, though above sixty-eight years of age, the appearance of a man not much beyond fifty, and seemed as likely to live ten or fifteen years, as any of his younger friends."

In October, unhappily, his spirits became much depressed; as he then entertained strong apprehensions respecting a tumour which had been for some time collecting over his left eye. This was now accompanied by a considerable degree of inflammation, which rendered him fearful that his right eye might also be affected, and the surgeons adopted every means in their power to *discuss* it, but without effect; for it was afterwards discovered to consist merely of extravasated blood, and had no connection with the optic nerve.

He was so impressed, however, with a knowledge of his own state of health, that he now determined to retire from the situation of President; and accordingly he addressed a letter to the Academy, "intimating his intention to resign the office on account of bodily infirmities, which disabled him from executing the duties of it to his own satisfaction."

This was dated on the 10th of November; and on the 15th, a meeting of all the academicians being called for the election of associates to that

body, Mr. West, the present President, laid the letter before them, which was received with the most respectful concern by his long tried companions, to whom his talents and virtues were so well known.

It was now proposed to embody a resolution whose purport should be that a deputation should wait on Sir Joshua to express their regret at this determination, and their wish that he might still retain the office, but appoint a deputy to execute its more laborious duties. This office was bestowed on, and accepted by, Mr. West, as a temporary arrangement; but Sir Joshua was never able afterwards to resume any of his functions; for as Mr. Malone observes, "he laboured under a much more dangerous disease, (than that connected with the state of his eyes,) which deprived him of his wonted spirits and his appetite, though he was wholly unable to explain to his physicians the nature or seat of his disorder."

1792.

ÆTAT. 68.

During the course of Sir Joshua's active life, he had passed his days in a state of professional honour and social enjoyment, that has scarcely been equalled, and never surpassed by any of his predecessors in art. He had been blessed also with

an excellent constitution by nature. Of these advantages he was very sensible, and I well remember a remark he once made to me, saying, " I have been fortunate in an uninterrupted share of good health and success for thirty years of my life: therefore, whatever ills may attend on the remainder of my days, I shall have no right to complain."

But infirmities, more than age, seemed to rush upon him in the decline of life, and were naturally embittered by the sudden contrast. He had from the beginning of his malady a fixed apprehension that it would end fatally to him; yet death was slow in its approach, which he surveyed with the fortitude of a philosopher, and the piety of a christian. His conduct to his physicians was submissive and accommodating, even where his own consciousness of the inevitable termination of his disease taught him to believe that exterior symptoms, which excited hope in his friends, were deceptive. He saw his intimate acquaintances daily, and conversed with them cheerfully, without ever once concealing from them the consequence that he foreknew, till within a very short time of the period of his existence, which he waited for with an equanimity rarely evinced by any mortal.

When a friend attempted to give him comfort in the hope of returning health, he calmly answered, " I know that all things on earth must have an end, and now I am come to mine."

It was not more than a fortnight before his death, when it was discovered that his disorder was occasioned by a diseased liver, which had confined him three painful months to his bed.

Thus, not having completed his sixty-ninth year, he was taken from the world which admired him, and the country which he adorned, on Thursday evening, February the 23d, 1792. His friends had for some considerable time conceived that he was low spirited, without material cause; but on his body being opened by Mr. Hunter, a preternatural enlargement of the liver, to more than double the usual size, sufficiently accounted for his depression and his death.

Thus have I humbly attempted to trace the rise, and progress to the final dissolution, of Sir Joshua Reynolds, the nation's ornament, and the favourite of an approving world, taken from it when in the height of his professional honours, and in the full possession of an established fame—an artist and a man, of whom scarce any praise can be too high.

To sum up his character in brief I shall here insert the eulogium of Burke, written on the impulse of the moment, and which is alike creditable to the memory of departed genius, and to the ready talent of the surviving friend.

“ *Last night*, in the sixty-ninth year of his age, died, at his house in Leicester-fields, Sir Joshua Reynolds. His illness was long, but borne with a mild and cheerful fortitude, without the least

mixture of any thing irritable or querulous ; agreeably to the placid and even tenour of his whole life. He had, from the beginning of his malady, a distinct view of his dissolution ; and he contemplated it with that entire composure, which nothing but the innocence, integrity, and usefulness of his life, and an unaffected submission to the will of Providence, could bestow. In this situation he had every consolation from family tenderness, which his own kindness had, indeed, well deserved.

“ Sir Joshua Reynolds was, on very many accounts, one of the most memorable men of his time. He was the first Englishman who added the praise of the elegant arts to the other glories of his country. In taste, in grace, in facility, in happy invention, and in the richness and harmony of colouring, he was equal to the greatest masters of the renowned ages. In portrait he went beyond them ; for he communicated to that description of the art, in which English artists are the most engaged, a variety, a fancy, and a dignity, derived from the higher branches, which even those who professed them in a superior manner, did not always preserve, when they delineated individual nature. His portraits remind the spectator of the invention of history, and the amenity of landscape. In painting portraits, he appeared not to be raised upon that platform, but to descend upon it from a higher sphere. His paintings illustrate his lessons, and his lessons seem to be derived from his paintings.

“ He possessed the theory as perfectly as the practice of his art. To be such a painter, he was a profound and penetrating philosopher.

“ In full affluence of foreign and domestic fame, admired by the expert in art, and by the learned in science, courted by the great, caressed by Sovereign powers, and celebrated by distinguished poets, his native humility, modesty, and candour, never forsook him even on surprize or provocation ; nor was the least degree of arrogance or assumption visible to the most scrutinizing eye in any part of his conduct or discourse.

“ His talents of every kind, powerful from nature, and not meanly cultivated by letters, his social virtues in all the relations and all the habits of life, rendered him the centre of a very great and unparalleled variety of agreeable societies, which will be dissipated by his death. He had too much merit not to excite some jealousy, too much innocence to provoke any enmity. The loss of no man of his time can be felt with more sincere, general, and unmixed sorrow.

“ HAIL ! AND FAREWELL ! ”

All the periodical journals of the time teemed with eulogies on the character of this eminent man ; but they are too numerous to insert here, although several of them were extremely well written : but of this of Burke's, it was said by a

contemporary journalist, that it was the eulogium of *Apelles* pronounced by *Pericles*, and that to attempt to add to it, would be to risk the same censure that would be passed upon an inferior artist who should presume to retouch one of Sir Joshua's own pictures.

What now remains to be detailed, is the account of his funeral; and I shall, in this, avail myself partly of copying some particulars of that solemn ceremony as they were drawn up for the public prints, by the pens, it is said, of Messrs. Burke and Malone in conjunction—a very just statement given with simplicity and feeling, and worthy of its subject.

It may be necessary to premise, that Mr. Burke applied by letter to the Council of the Royal Academy, soon after Sir Joshua's decease, requesting that the apartment allotted to the exhibition, might then be prepared in the usual forms of solemnity, in order that the body might lie there in state previous to interment, so that the last sad tribute to his memory might take place from that spot so often embellished by the effusions of his magic pencil.

The Academy felt the requisition too forcibly not to consent immediately, with one solitary exception; however, this opposition was sufficiently powerful to hold its ground against all the united voices, until silenced by an express order from the *Royal Patron* that every possible honour should

be paid to the memory of their venerable President.

Therefore, acting under this express order of his Majesty, a condescension highly honourable to the memory of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and exceedingly gratifying to the wishes of that Society of eminent Artists—every thing being finally arranged, the corpse, in a coffin covered with black velvet, was removed from Leicester-fields to Somerset-house on the night of Friday, the 2nd of March, where it lay in state that night, and until the beginning of the funeral procession, in the Model-room of the Academy which was hung with black cloth and lighted by chandeliers, whilst an escutcheon of arms was emblazoned at the head of the room ; the hour of noon on the following day being appointed for the performance of the obsequies.

On Saturday, the 3rd of March, 1792, the expectation of this solemnity had filled all the streets, through which the procession was to pass, with people innumerable of all ranks, as well as the windows of every house ; but the passage of all carriages, except those which were to form the procession, was strictly prevented by peace officers stationed for that purpose, and all the shops in the line of procession were closely shut up.

Independent of those who, according to the arrangement, were to form the funeral cavalcade, the greatest part of the most distinguished individuals in the kingdom had assembled at Somerset-house,

anxious to pay the last melancholy duties to him whom they had been accustomed to love for his virtues, and to respect for his talents; and many more were prevented by illness or by unexpected and unavoidable necessity, from paying this mark of respect, to their great regret.

The persons, who attended the funeral, assembled in the Council-chamber and Library of the Royal Academy, and the Academicians in the great Exhibition-room; and as many others as could be admitted with propriety into the procession, were permitted to join it. Though the company were very select, yet so extended was the line of carriages, that the procession required nearly two hours to move from Somerset-house to St. Paul's: and the last carriage had only set off from the former place just as the City Marshals, who led the procession, had arrived at the doors of the Cathedral.

The order of the procession was arranged as follows:

Twelve peace officers to clear the way.

Two City Marshals on horseback.

Lord Mayor's Carriage.

Two Sheriffs of London.

The Undertaker and ten Conductors on horseback.

A Lid with plumes of feathers.

The *Hearse* with six horses.

Ten Pall-bearers, viz.

Duke of Dorset, Lord High Steward of His Majesty's Household,

Duke of Leeds, Duke of Portland,
Marquis Townshend, Marquis of Abercorn,
Earl of Carlisle, Earl of Inchiquin,
Earl of Upper Ossory, Lord Viscount Palmerston,
Lord Eliot.

Robert Lovel Gwatkin, Esq. Chief Mourner.
Two Attendants of the family, one of them Mr. Marchi.

Right Honourable Edmund Burke. }
Edmond Malone, Esq. } Executors.
Philip Metcalfe, Esq. }

The Council of the Royal Academy.
The Keeper. The Treasurer.
The Secretary. The Librarian.
Professors.

Mr. T. Sandby, Mr. Barry,
Bennet Langton, Esq. James Boswell, Esq.
(In Ancient Literature.) (Secretary for Foreign Correspondence.)

Academicians, two and two.
Associates, two and two.
Artists, not Members of the Royal Academy.
Students.

After these there followed, the Archbishop of York, Marquis of Buckingham, Earls of Fife and Carysfort, Bishop of London, Lords St. Asaph, Fortescue, Somers, and Lucan, the Dean of Norwich, Right Honourable William Windham, Sirs

Abraham Hume, George Beaumont, Thomas Dundas, Charles Bunbury, and William Forbes, Barts. Drs. George Fordyce, Ash, Brocklesby, and Blagden ; also the following Members of Parliament, Sir William Scott, George Rose, John Rolle, William Weddell, Reginald Pole Carew, Matthew Montague, Richard P. Knight, Dudley North, and John Cleveland, Esquires ; to whom we may add other gentlemen, viz. Richard Clark, Charles Townley, Abel Moysey, Welbore Ellis Agar, William Seward, Edward Jerningham, Richard Burke, Thomas Coutts, J. J. Angerstein, Edward Gwatkin, Charles Burney, John Hunter, William Cruikshank, and John Devaynes, Esqrs. together with Colonel Gwynn, Captain Pole, Mr. Kemble, Dr. Lawrence, Mr. Alderman Boydell, Messrs. Poggi, Breda, &c. &c. &c.

This company was conveyed in forty-two mourning coaches, whilst forty-nine coaches belonging to the nobility and gentry, followed the procession.

The statement of which I have spoken, goes on to detail that at half past three o'clock was interred the body of " Sir Joshua Reynolds, Knt. Doctor of Laws in the Universities of Oxford and Dublin, Principal Painter to his Majesty, President of the Royal Academy of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, of London, Fellow of the Royal Society, Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, and Member of the Imperial Academy at Florence."

The spot selected for the grave was in the crypt underneath the body of the Cathedral, next to that of Dr. Newton, late Bishop of Bristol, "and close by the tomb of the famous Sir Christopher Wren, the architect of that edifice."

On this solemn occasion it was still some consolation to reflect, that the company who attended it consisted of a great number of the most distinguished persons, who were emulous in their desire of paying the last honours to the remains of him whose life had been employed in the exertions of the highest talents, and in the exercise of those virtues that make a man respectable and beloved.

Never was a public solemnity conducted with more decorum and dignity. The procession set out at half an hour after twelve o'clock. The hearse arrived at the great western gate of St. Paul's about a quarter after two, and was there met by the Dignitaries of the church, and by the gentlemen of the choir, who chaunted the proper Psalms, while the procession moved to the entrance of the choir, where was performed, in a more than usual solemn manner, the full choir evening service, together with the famous anthem of Dr. Boyce; the body remaining during the whole time in the centre of the choir. The chief mourner and gentlemen of the Academy, having long cloaks of black, as of the family, were placed by the body; the chief mourner in a chair at the

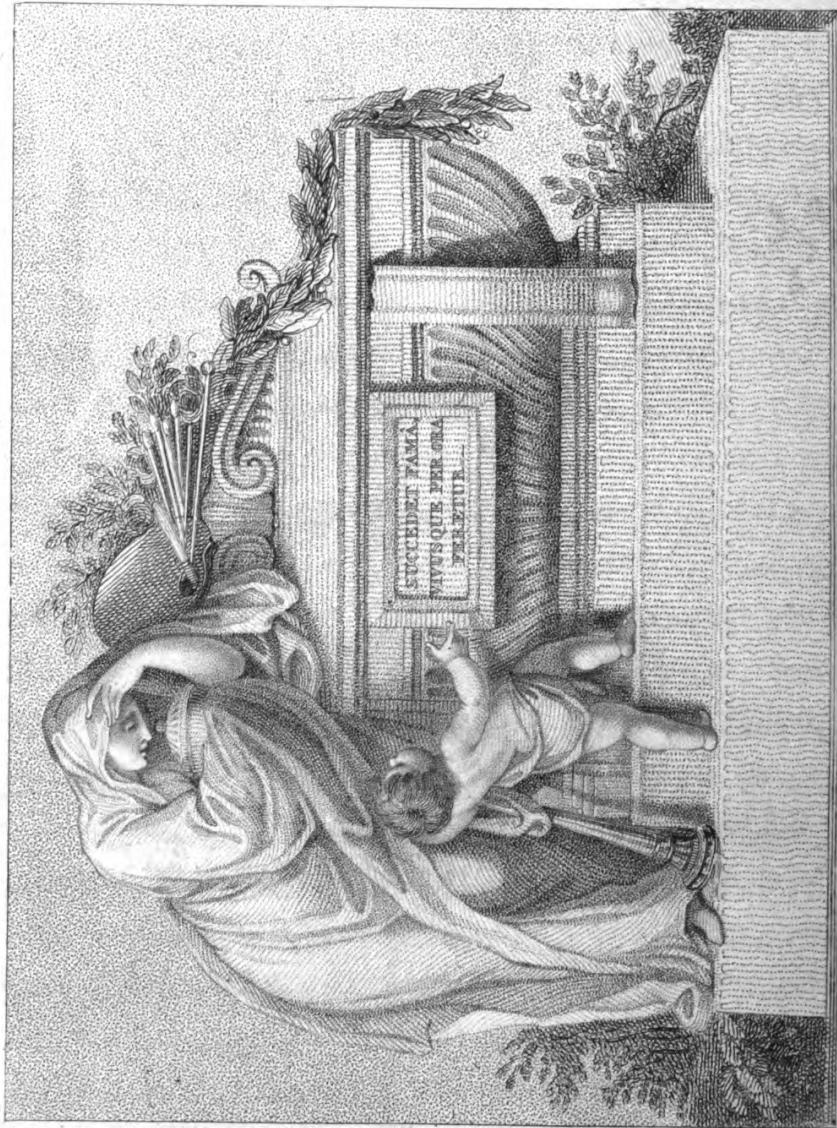
head ; the two attendants at the feet ; the Pall-bearers and Executors in the seats on the decanal side ; the other noblemen and gentlemen on the cantorial side. The Bishop of London was in his proper place, as were the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs.

“ After the service, the body was conveyed into the crypt, and placed immediately beneath the perforated brass plate, under the centre of the dome. Dr. Jefferies, Canon Residentiary, with the other Canons, and the whole choir, came under the dome ; the grave digger attending in the middle with a shovel of mould, which at the proper time was thrown through the aperture of the plate, on the coffin. The funeral service was chaunted, and accompanied on the organ in a grand and affecting manner. When the funeral service was ended, the Chief Mourner and Executors went into the crypt, and attended the corpse to the grave, which was dug under the pavement.

“ The Lord Mayor and Sheriffs honoured the procession by coming to Somerset Place, where an officer’s guard of thirty men was placed at the great court-gate. After the procession had passed through Temple Bar, the gates were shut by order of the Lord Mayor, to prevent any interruption from carriages passing to or from the city.”

After the ceremony, the Procession returned in nearly the same order to the Royal Academy ; and I may here mention, that it contained as many members, of the “ Literary Club,” as were not





prevented by personal duties from attending it. It has also been noticed, as worthy of record, that in the procession were three Knights of the Garter, two of St. Patrick, and one of the Thistle, three Dukes, and four noblemen who had held the high office of Viceroy of Ireland.

A cold collation having been prepared for the members of the Royal Academy, on their return to Somerset Place, Mr. Burke entered the room to return the thanks of the family for the attention shewn to the remains of their lamented President; but his feelings were too acute to permit him to utter the sentiments he wished to express.

“ Thus,” says a recent panegyrist, “ thus were deposited the remains of Sir Joshua Reynolds, doubly hallowed by a nation’s respect, and by the tears of private friendship—and thus ends all that is earthly and perishable of him whose fame as an artist, as a patronizer of the arts, and above all, as a good man, will long survive him !”

As a token of respect and a pledge of remembrance, a print engraved by Bartolozzi, was presented to each of the gentlemen who had joined the procession.

It represented a female clasping an urn, a funeral emblem of a weeping muse, (from the pencil of Burney) and on the monument are a pallet, pencils, and a resting stick. The Genius of Painting is also introduced, holding an inverted and ex-

tinguished torch, and pointing to the monument, on which is written,

“ *Succedet fama, vivusque per ora feretur.*”

Beneath is a complimentary address : and a fac simile of the whole will be found at the close of these Memoirs. The funeral expenses were in part defrayed out of the funds of the Royal Academy.

The last will and testament of Sir Joshua Reynolds had been written not very long previous to his decease, being dated on the 5th of November, 1791.

He had written it with his own hand, and its beginning was extremely expressive of his own feelings and sentiments on the subject, for he says,

“ As it is probable that I may shortly be deprived of sight, and may not have an opportunity of making a formal will, I desire that the following memorandums may be considered as my last will and testament.

“ I commend my soul to God, in humble hopes of his mercy, and my body to the earth.”——

All his property, real and personal, with the exceptions here recorded, he then bequeaths to his niece Miss Palmer, now Marchioness of Thomond, including his Richmond Villa, the house in Leicester-fields, together with all property in the public funds, pictures, books, furniture, plate, &c.

He then proceeds to specify his various legacies: viz., to Mrs. Gwatkins, £10,000 in the three per cents.; to his sister, Miss Frances Reynolds, £2,500 in the funds for life, with the reversion to Miss Palmer; to Mr. Burke, £2,000, with the cancelling of a bond of the same amount for money borrowed; to the Earl of Upper Ossory, the first choice, and to Lord Palmerstone the second choice of any picture of his own painting; to Sir Abraham Hume, Bart. the choice of his Claude Lorraines; to Sir George Beaumont, Bart. the "Return of the Ark," by Sebastian Bourdon; the sum of £200 each to his executors, and the same to Mr. Boswell, to be expended, if they thought proper, in the purchase of a picture, to be bought for each at the sale of his paintings, and to be kept for his sake; his miniature of Milton, to Mr. Mason; one of Oliver Cromwell, by the same artist, (Cooper) to Richard Burke, jun.; his watch and seals to his nephew, William Johnson, then at Calcutta; his picture of the angel Contemplation, which formed the upper part of the Nativity, to the Duke of Portland;* to Mrs. Bunbury, the portrait of her son; to Mrs. Gwyn, her own portrait, with a turban: £1,000 to his old and faith-

* It is said that he wished to have had this picture carried in the procession at his funeral, but it was not deemed prudent to comply with it, as it could not be ascertained in what manner a London populace might have received it.



ful servant, Ralph Kirkly, who had lived with him upwards of thirty years.*

This is the principal purport of his will, which was proved in Doctor's Commons on the 28th of February; and the whole amount of cash and funded property was, at least, £60,000, whilst the houses, pictures, &c. were valued at £20,000 more: a sum that fully proves the high estimation in which he had professionally been held, particularly when we consider the liberal and hospitable manner in which the greatest part of his life had been spent.

Completely to fill up the vacancy which the loss of such a man produced in society, was impossible; Dr. Douglas, Bishop of Salisbury, was selected to occupy his seat in the Literary Club; Sir T. Lawrence, appointed principal painter in ordinary to his Majesty; and Mr. West, the present President of the Royal Academy, was unanimously elected to fill the chair at Somerset-place, on the 24th of March; on which occasion he united a handsome tribute of praise towards his deceased friend and predecessor, with his expression of thanks for the honor conferred on him.

* It is to be remarked, that so little did Sir Joshua know of testamentary matters, or of the forms of law, that after having made his will, and in it bequeathed a legacy of One Thousand Pounds to his faithful servant, Mr. Ralph Kirkly, he made him sign it as one of the witnesses; this error was in good time discovered by Edm. Burke, and rectified accordingly.

On the death of Sir Joshua, even those whose little jealousies had contributed to give him some uneasiness whilst living, all stood forward to make amends by the warmest commendations; amongst the rest was Mr. Barry, who now gave a full scope to his more generous feelings, and about a year afterwards, on the 18th of February, 1793, paid some very well deserved compliments to his friend in his sixth Lecture read at the Academy.*

This just tribute to the memory of Sir Joshua, was noticed by the Marquis and Marchioness of Thomond, who, in order to mark their approval, presented him with their inestimable relative's painting-room chair. I have preserved his answer, from its connection with the present itself, and its containing an appropriate compliment to the former lamented possessor. "Mr. Barry presents his most respectful compliments to Lord and Lady T. with every acknowledgment and thanks for their inestimable favour conferred on him this morning in the gift of Sir Joshua's chair.

"Alas! this chair, that had such a glorious career of fortune, instrumental as it has been in giving the most advantageous stability to the otherwise fleeting, perishable graces of a Lady Sarah Bunbury, or a Waldegrave, or in perpetuating the negligent honest exterior of the authors of the Rambler, the Traveller, and almost

* See Barry's works, vol. i. pages 552 to 557.

every one to whom the public admiration gave a currency for abilities, beauty, rank, or fashion.

“The very chair that is immortalized in Mrs. Siddons’s Tragic Muse, where it will have as much celebrity as the chair of Pindar, which for so many ages was shewn in the porch at Olympia! This chair of Sir Joshua Reynolds may rest well satisfied with the reputation it has gained, and although its present possessor may not be enabled to grace it with any new ornament, yet it can surely count upon finding a most affectionate, reverential conservator, whilst God shall permit it to remain under his care.” January 30th, 1794.

The “*Noctes Cœnæque Detum*,” (as Boswell calls them,) enjoyed at the table of Sir Joshua, were now no more. But, as Malone says, from experience, “will be long remembered by those who had the happiness to partake of them; but the remembrance must always be accompanied with regret, when it is considered, that the death of their amiable and illustrious host has left a chasm in society, and that no such common centre of union for the accomplished and the learned now exists, or is likely soon to exist, in London.”

Some time after the funeral, a copy of verses was addressed to the Royal Academicians, written by the beautiful Mrs. Robinson, which possess considerable merit, but are, however, too long for insertion; therefore, I shall make an extract of

those lines only which apply to the particular merits of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

“ Ye solemn mourners, who, with footsteps slow,
Prolonged the sable line of public woe ;
Who fondly crowding round his plumed bier,
Gave to his worth, th’ involuntary tear ;
Ye children of his school, who oft have hung
On the grac’d precepts of his tuneful tongue ;
Who many an hour in mute attention caught
The vivid lustre of his polished thought !
Ye who have felt, for ye have taste to feel,
The magic influence o’er your senses steal,
When eloquently chaste, from wisdom’s page
He drew each model for a rising age !
Say, is no kind, no grateful tribute due,
To HIM who twin’d immortal wreaths for you ?
Who from the dawn of youth to manhood’s prime
Snatch’d hidden branches from the wings of time ;
Who gave new lustre to your wond’ring sight,
Drawn from the chaos of oblivious night ;
Where chain’d by *Ignorance*, in *Envy’s* cave,
The art he courted found a chilling grave ;
Where native genius faded, unadmired,
While emulation’s glorious flame expir’d,
Till Reynolds, braving *Envy’s* recreant spell,
Dragg’d the huge monster from her thorny cell,
Who, shrinking from his mild benignant eye,
Subdued, to Stygian darkness fled—to die.
Beneath yon lofty dome that props the skies,
Low ‘ on the lap of earth’ your patron lies ;
Cold is the hand that gave the touch divine,
Which bade the mimic orbs of reason shine :
Closed is that eye which beam’d with living light,
That gave the mental soul to mortal sight !
For, by the matchless wonders of his art
The outward mein bespoke the hidden heart !
Taste, feeling, character, his pencil knew,
And TRUTH acknowledged e’en what Fancy drew.

So just to nature ev'ry part combin'd,
 Each *feature* mark'd the tenor of the *mind* !
 'Twas his, with varying excellence to show
 Stern manhood's dignity and beauty's glow !
 To paint the perfect form, the witching face,
 With Guido's softness, and with Titian's grace !
 The dimpled cherub at the mother's breast,
 The smile serene, that spoke the parent blest !
 The POET's vivid thought, that shone divine
 Through the rich image of each finish'd line !
 The tale that bids the tear of pity flow ;
 The frenzied gaze of petrifying woe ;
 The dying father, fix'd in horror wild,
 O'er the shrunk image of his famish'd child.
 AH ! STAY MY MUSE—nor trace the madd'ning scene,
 Nor paint the starting eye, the frantic mien ;
 Turn from the picture of distracting woes ,
 Turn from each charm that beauty's smile bestows,
 Go form a wreath Time's temple to adorn,
 Bedeck'd with many a *rose*—with many a *thorn* !
 Go, bind the hero's brow with deathless bays ;
 Or, to calm friendship chaunt the note of praise ;
 Or, with a feather stol'n from Fancy's wing,
 Sweep with light hand the gay fantastic string ;
 But leave, oh, leave thy fond lamenting song,
 The feeble echo of a wond'ring throng—
 Can'st thou with brighter tints adorn the rose,
 Where nature's vivid blush divinely glows ?
 Say can'st thou add one ray to heaven's own light,
 Or give to Alpine snow a purer white ?
 Cans't thou increase the diamond's burning glow,
 Or to the flower a richer scent bestow ?
 Say cans't thou snatch, by sympathy sublime,
 One kindred bosom from the grasp of TIME ?
 Ah ! no ! then bend with cypress boughs thy lyre,
 Mute be its chords, and quench'd its sacred fire,
 For dimly gleam the poet's votive lays
 Midst the vast splendor of a NATION'S PRAISE."

To sum up the whole of Sir Joshua's character as a professional man, it may be observed that when we contemplate him as a painter, we are to recollect, that after the death of Kneller, the arts in England fell to the lowest state of barbarism, and each professor either followed that painter's steps, or else wandered in utter darkness, till Reynolds, like the sun, dispelled the mist, and threw an unprecedented splendor on the department of portraiture. Hence the English school is, in a great degree, the growth of his admirable example.

To the grandeur, the truth, and simplicity of Titian, and to the daring strength of Rembrandt, he has united the chasteness and delicacy of Vandyke. Delighted with the picturesque beauties of Rubens, he was the first that attempted a bright and gay back ground to portraits; and defying the dull and ignorant rules of his master, at a very early period of life, emancipated his art from the shackles with which it had been encumbered in the school of Hudson. There is, however, every reason to believe, that he very rarely copied an entire picture of any master,* though he certainly

* Of the very few copies he made at Rome the only finished one is St. Michael, the Archangel, chaining the dragon, after Guido. This copy he placed in the ceiling of his Picture Gallery, where it remained till his death. It was then taken down by his niece, and heiress, when she left that house.

He made a small copy of the School of Athens, from Raffaello; also about eight or ten heads selected from Raffaello in the Vatican, and a head or two from Titian.

did imitate the excellent parts of many ; and his versatility in this respect was equalled only by the susceptibility of his feelings, the quickness of his comprehension, and the ardor which prompted his efforts. His pictures in general possess a degree of merit superior to mere portraits ; they assume the rank of history. His portraits of men are distinguished by a certain air of dignity, and those of women and children by a grace, a beauty, and simplicity, which have seldom been equalled, and never surpassed. No painter ever gave so completely as himself, that momentary fascinating expression, that irresistible charm which accompanies and denotes "the Cynthia of the minute." In his attempts to give character where it did not exist, he has sometimes lost likeness ; but the deficiencies of the portrait were often compensated by the beauty of the picture.

The attitudes of his figures are generally full of grace, ease, and propriety ; he could throw them into the boldest variations, and he often ventures on postures, which inferior painters could not execute ; or which, if attempted, would inevitably destroy their credit. His chief aim, however, was *colour* and *effect* ; and these he always varied as the subject required. Whatever deficiencies there may be in the design of this great master, no one at any period better understood the principles of colouring ; nor can it be doubted that he carried this branch of his art to a very high degree of ex-

cellence. His lights display the knowledge he possessed, and with shade he conceals his defects. Whether we consider the power, the brilliancy, or the form of his lights, the transparency of his shadows, with the just quantities of each, and the harmony, richness, and full effect of the whole, it is evident that he has not only far transcended every modern master, but that his excellencies in these captivating parts of painting, vie with the works of the great models he has emulated. The opinion he has given of Raffaele may, with equal justice, be applied to himself; "that his materials were generally borrowed, but the noble structure was his own." No one ever appropriated the ideas of others to his own purpose with more skill than Sir Joshua. He possessed the alchemy of painting, by converting whatever he touched into gold. Like the bee that extracts sweets from the most noxious flowers, so his active observation could see every thing pregnant with a means of improvement, from the wooden print on a common ballad, to the highest graces of Parmegiano. Perhaps there is no painter that ever went before him, from whom he has not derived some advantage, and appropriated certain excellencies with judicious selection and consummate taste. Yet after all that can be alledged against him as a borrower of forms from other masters, it must be allowed that he engrafted on them beauties peculiarly his own. The severest critics, indeed, must

admit that his manner is truly original, bold, and free. Freedom is certainly one of his principal characteristics ; and to this he seems often to have sacrificed every other consideration. He has, however, two manners ; his early pictures are without those violent freedoms of execution and dashes of the pencil, being more minute and more fearful, but the colouring is clear, natural, and good. In his latter and bolder works, the colour, though excellent, is sometimes more artificial than chaste.

As an *Historical painter*, he cannot be placed in the same rank which he holds in the line of portraiture. The compositions of his portraits are unquestionably excellent, whilst his historical pictures are, in this respect, often very defective. They frequently consist of borrowed parts, which are not always suited to each other. Though many times inaccurate, and deficient in the style of drawing, they must, however, be allowed to possess great breadth, taste, and feeling, and many of them fine expression. His light poetical pieces much excelled those of a narrative or historical character.

There is a circumstance contained in one of his fragments of an intended discourse, preserved by Mr. Malone, in which he says, " It has frequently happened, as I was informed by the keeper of the Vatican, that many of those whom he had conducted through the various apartments of that

edifice, when about to be dismissed, have asked for the works of Raffaele, and would not believe that they had already passed through the rooms where they are preserved ; so little impression had those performances made on them. One of the first painters now in France once told me, that this circumstance happened to himself ; though he now looks on Raffaele with the veneration which he deserves from all painters and lovers of the art.

“ I remember very well my own disappointment, when I first visited the Vatican ; but on confessing my feelings to a brother student, of whose ingenuousness I had a high opinion, he acknowledged that the works of Raffaele had the same effect on him ; or, rather, that they did not produce the effect which he expected. This was a great relief to my mind ; and on inquiring further, of other students, I found that those persons only who, from natural imbecility, appeared to be incapable of ever relishing those divine performances, made pretensions to instantaneous raptures on first beholding them. In justice to myself, however, I must add, that though disappointed and mortified at not finding myself enraptured with the works of this great man, I did not for a moment conceive or suppose that the name of Raffaele, and those admirable paintings in particular, owed their reputation to the ignorance and prejudice of mankind ; on the contrary, my not relishing them, as I was conscious I ought to have done, was one of the

most humiliating circumstances that ever happened to me ; I found myself in the midst of works executed upon principles with which I was unacquainted : I felt my ignorance, and stood abashed. All the indigested notions of painting which I had brought with me from England, where the art was in the lowest state it had ever been in, (it could not, indeed, be lower,) were to be totally done away, and eradicated from my mind. It was necessary, as it is expressed on a very solemn occasion, that I should become as a *little child*. Notwithstanding my disappointment, I proceeded to copy some of those excellent works. I viewed them again and again ; I even affected to feel their merit ; and to admire them more than I really did.

“ In a short time a new taste and new perception began to dawn upon me ; and I was convinced that I had originally formed a false opinion of the perfection of art, and that this great painter was well entitled to the high rank which he holds in the estimation of the world. The truth is, that if these works had really been what I expected, they would have contained beauties superficial and alluring, but by no means such as would have entitled them to the great reputation which they have so long and so justly obtained.”

Considering the study and practice Reynolds must have gone through before he visited Italy, he certainly was, in comparison with others, a man of a cultivated taste ; and, though what has been

said may be very true, that many persons, after having been conducted through the rooms of the Vatican, have turned to the keeper and asked him for the paintings of Raffaele, yet it is not easy to conceive how he, who probably had seen the cartoons, and other pictures, besides prints from this great painter, should have formed such an inadequate and erroneous idea of what he was to see at Rome. Splendor of colour, depth of chiaro-scuro, he must have been taught not to expect ; strength and dignity of character, unexampled variety, and vivacity of expression, (qualities more striking to the eye of taste, and scarcely less so to the vulgar,) they certainly possess. To what, then, can be attributed their want of impression, particularly on such as him ? It does not appear that the same complaint has been made of the works of Michael Angelo.

That, which in his discourses he denominates the ornamental style, and which he treats in his writings with so much severity, seems to have been the very style which it was his constant endeavour to attain, and which it may be said he did attain in an unexampled degree ; while the excellencies of the grand style, its severe and majestic simplicity, he seems not to have been inclined to attempt, although so great an admirer of it, that even its defects are deemed beauties in his eyes ; whilst its dryness and hardness of manner,

and an inharmonious effect, frequently proceeding from a want of skill in the painter, he contemplates altogether with enthusiastic admiration. His theory and his practice are evidently at variance; he speaks of the cold painters of portraits, and ranks them on a level with the epigrammatist and sonneteer, yet devoted his life to portraits. How to account for this dereliction of his theory may be difficult; the reason given by himself was, that he adapted his style to the taste of the age in which he lived; and again, that a man does not always do what he would, but what he can.

My own opinion is, that his mind by nature was constituted more for the cultivation of that which belongs to the beautiful and the graceful, than of those qualities which compose the terrible or the sublime, and that the style of Michael Angelo which he seems to have lamented that he did not adopt in his youth, was not that style to which he could, with most advantage to himself, have devoted his studies; yet it must ever remain a doubt, whether he could or could not have succeeded in the highest style, if the opportunity had been offered to him. All that we can say of him is, that he has done full enough to prove that his genius was very great, as he is an example of the most perfect growth that English culture can produce; and from the means which he had, he has accomplished all that was required of him, and

availed himself of that patronage which is in the hands of an infinity of persons to bestow.*

But that great style, which he so properly had made his idol, and appeared to adore, a style which never can exist in its fullness but in countries where the religion, or the government, or both together, are its patrons—is an article totally useless and unfit in respect to the habits of private life, and in this country held as very disagreeable; and had Raffaele or Michael Angelo been born in England, they would, perhaps, have been far greater than Sir Joshua Reynolds, and most undoubtedly would have acquired great fame; but they would have been known only as illustrious portrait painters even to themselves, as they never would have been required to execute any other works.

The grand style is an instrument fit only to be in the hands of government, civil or religious, and only proper for solemn occasions. It is not to be the subject of vulgar criticism; it is to command,

* There is a singularity in the works of Sir Joshua not easily explained. Portrait painting was his chief employment—and in that department he ever gave an air of dignity or grace to the meanest subjects of his pencil. Yet, in his historical pictures, for which he might select his models and aggrandize his figures as he pleased, he frequently failed in giving them an ordinary portion of those qualities. This is exemplified in the ignoble representations of the warlike Warwick and Salisbury, and of the high-born Cardinal Beaufort, in the picture of the death of that prelate. Also his Madonnas are certainly wanting in dignity.

to guide, and to direct the heart, and such are the uses the church of Rome has made of it.

The lectures which he delivered at the Royal Academy on the 10th of December, at first every year, and latterly every two years, are the works which chiefly bestow on him the character of an estimable writer. In these he treats his favourite art with the depth of a philosopher, the accomplishments of a scholar, and the accuracy of a critic. These were designed to animate and direct the students in the pursuit of excellence, and indeed are replete with the soundest instructions, expressed in language at once natural, perspicuous, and correct.*

The profound knowledge of the art displayed in these discourses is enriched by the classical and appropriate illustrations of a polished mind; they are treasures of information to the student and to the proficient; and the elegance and chastity of the style have very rarely, if ever, been equalled by the most eminent of our writers. His observations on the old masters are equally just and ingenious; several branches of the theory of art

* " Those who attentively read Sir Joshua Reynolds's discourses, will be imperceptibly led into the school of excellence, where they will find delicacy, imagination, and a natural acuteness of judgment, arising from a long and intimate acquaintance with the best performances of every kind. These studies will enable an enquiring youth to form ideas with exactness and precision; and lay a foundation for discovering the peculiar character and manner of the different masters." RAYS OF GENIUS.

are treated with uncommon judgement and ability, and the composition throughout is strongly marked by the simplicity of his own individual character and manner, and totally unlike that of any of his literary friends, to whom some idle critics have attributed the merit of those discourses. They have been translated into French; and the late Mr. Baretti published an edition of them in the Italian language.

It has been conjectured that Sir Joshua was not the author of the discourses which he delivered at the Royal Academy.

I can only say that at the periods when it was expected he should have composed them, I have heard him walking at intervals in his room as if in meditation, till one or two o'clock in the morning, and I have on the following morning, at an early hour, seen the papers on the subject of his art which had been written on the preceding night. I have had the rude manuscript from himself in his own hand writing, in order to make a fair copy from it for him, to read it in public; I have seen the manuscript also after it had been revised by Dr. Johnson, who has sometimes altered it to a wrong meaning, from his total ignorance of the subject and of art; but never to my knowledge saw the marks of Burke's pen on any of the manuscripts.

I remember one day in particular, after Sir Joshua had been studying the preceding night, Burke paid him a morning visit, and at that time

I was at work in the adjoining room, and could easily overhear their conversation, which, as Sir Joshua was deaf, was very distinct ; and he read aloud to Burke the following paragraph of his discourse for December the 10th, 1774.

“ Like a sovereign judge and arbiter of art,” (alluding to the painter,) “ he is possessed of that presiding power which separates and attracts every excellence from every school ; selects both from what is great and what is little, brings home knowledge from the east and from the west ; making the universe tributary towards furnishing his mind and enriching his works with originality and variety of invention.”

Burke commended it in the highest terms saying, “ This is, indeed, excellent, nobody can mend it, no man could say it better.”

Yet, I must confess, it is wonderful, that a man, whose time was so entirely absorbed in the practical acquirements of his art, and who could not be ranked as a man eminent for literature, should compose such prose as good judges have pronounced to be amongst the highest examples in our language.

The Bishop of Rochester, who has examined the manuscripts of Mr. Burke since his death, and has lately edited a part of them, informed a friend that he could discover no reason to think that Mr. Burke had the least hand in the discourses of Reynolds : nor can I pay any attention to what Mr. Courtenay says in his “ Moral and Literary

Character of Dr. Johnson," where he seems to think that Reynolds copied from the latter, or imitated him.

"To Fame's proud cliff, he bade our Raffaele rise,
Hence Reynolds' pen with Reynolds' pencil vies."

Mr. M'Cormick also asserts, that Burke wrote his letter in 1790, when he retired from the chair; but I trust that there is sufficient evidence already adduced, to prove that those opinions are totally erroneous.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM E. BURKE, TO MR.
MALONE.

"I have read over some part of the discourses with an unusual sort of pleasure; partly because, being faded a little in my memory, they have a sort of appearance of novelty; partly by reviving recollections mixed with melancholy and satisfaction. The Flemish Journal I had never seen before. You trace in that, every where, the spirit of the discourses, supported by new examples. He is always the same man; the same philosophical, the same artist-like critic, the same sagacious observer, with the same minuteness, without the smallest degree of trifling."

Before I quit the subject of these discourses of Sir Joshua, I cannot refrain from giving the opinion of the Chevalier Mengs on them, whether because he had not the capacity to comprehend them, or from the effect of envy I cannot deter-

mine, but this Mengs says, "That the book of the English Reynolds would lead youth into error, because it abandons them to superficial principles, the only ones known to that author."

This criticism from Mengs raised the choler of our English Poet, Cumberland, and he thus retorts the charge to the great annoyance of the Chevalier Don Joseph Nicholas D'Azara, Spanish minister at Rome, and the editor of Mengs's manuscripts, also his adorer.

"If the genius of Mengs," says Cumberland, "had been capable of producing a composition equal to that of the tragic and pathetic Ugolino, I am persuaded such a sentence as the above would never have passed his lips; but flattery made him vain, and sickness rendered him peevish: he found himself in Madrid, in a country without rivals, and because the Arts had travelled out of his sight, he was disposed to think they existed no where but on his own palette. The time perhaps is at hand when our virtuosi will extend their route to Spain, and of these some one probably will be found, who, regarding with just indignation the dogmatical decrees of Mengs, will take in hand the examination of his paintings, which I have enumerated; and we may then be told, with the authority of science, that his nativity though so splendidly encased, and covered with such care that the very winds of Heaven are not permitted to visit the face too roughly, would

have owed more to the chrystal than it does, in some parts at least, had it been less transparent than it is ; that it discovers an abortive and puisne Bambino, which seems copied from a bottle ; that Mengs was an artist who had seen much, and invented little ; that he dispenses neither life nor death to his figures ; excites no terror, rouses no passion, and risks no flights ; that by studying to avoid particular defects, he incurs general ones, and paints with tameness and servility ; that the contracted scale and idea of a painter of miniatures, as which he was brought up, is to be traced in all, or most of his compositions, in which a finished delicacy of the pencil exhibits the hand of the artist, but gives no emanations of the soul of the master ; if it is beauty it does not warm ; if it is sorrow it excites no pity : that, when the angel announces the salutation to Mary, it is a messenger that has neither used dispatch in the errand, nor grace in the delivery ; that although Rubens was by one of his oracular sayings condemned to the ignominious dullness of a Dutch translator, Mengs was as capable of painting Rubens's adoration, as he was of creating the star in the East that ushered the Magi : but these are questions above my capacity ; I resign Mengs to abler critics, and Reynolds to better defenders ; well contented that posterity should admire them both, and well assured that the fame of our countryman is established beyond the reach of envy and detraction."

I have given this long quotation from Cumberland, because in my apprehension it contains a true and candid estimate of the talents of Mengs, of him who treats the works of Rubens and of Reynolds with contempt. Cumberland thus adds, "Yet Mengs is the author whom courtly prejudice has put above comparison in Spain, whom not to admire is treason against the state, and whose worship is become canonical, a part almost of the orthodox idolatry of their religion."

We may be permitted to sum up our opinions of Reynolds' sentiments on art, and of his mode of expressing them, by an anecdote, told me by the late Mr. Opie, that a friend of his, a clergyman, declared to him, that he once delivered one of Sir Joshua's discourses, from the pulpit, as a sermon, with no other alteration but in such words as made it applicable to morals instead of the fine arts; which is a proof of the depth of his reasoning, and of its foundation being formed on the principles of general nature.

With respect to his character as a man, to say that Sir Joshua was without faults, would be to bestow on him that praise, to which no human being can have a claim; but when we consider the conspicuous situation in which he stood, it is surprizing to find that so few can be discovered in him: and certainly he possessed an equanimity of disposition very rarely to be met with in per-

sons whose pursuit is universal reputation, and who are attended and surrounded in their perilous journey by jealous competition. "His native humility, modesty, and candour never forsook him, even from surprize or provocation, nor was the least degree of arrogance or assumption visible to the most scrutinizing eye in any part of his conduct." He was not annoyed by that fluctuation of idea and inconstancy of temper which prevent many with equal desire for fame from resolving upon any particular plan, and dispose them to change it, even after they have made their election. He had none of those eccentric bursts of action, those fiery impetuosities which are supposed by the vulgar to characterize genius, and which frequently are found to accompany a secondary rank of talent, but are never conjoined with the first. His incessant industry was never wearied into despondency by miscarriage, nor elated into negligence by success. All nature and all art combined to form his academy. His mind was constantly awake, ever on the wing, comprehensive, vigorous, discriminating, and retentive. His powers of attention were never torpid. He had a strong turn and relish for humour in all its various forms, and very quickly saw the weak sides of things. Of the numerous characters which presented themselves to him in the mixed companies in which he lived, he was a nice and sagacious observer, as I have had frequent occasion to remark.

“ The Graces,” says a certain author, “ after wandering to find a home, settled in the bosom of Addison.” I think such a compliment would be equally, if not more applicable to Sir Joshua ; for all he said or did was wholly unmixed with any of those inelegant coarsenesses which frequently stain the beauty of high exertions. There was a polish even in his exterior, illustrative of the gentleman and the scholar. His general manner, deportment, and behaviour, were amiable and prepossessing ; his disposition was naturally courtly. He always evinced a desire to pay a due respect to persons in superior stations, and certainly contrived to move in a higher sphere of society than any other English artist had done before him. Thus he procured for Professors of the Arts a consequence, dignity, and reception, which they had never before possessed in this country. In conversation he preserved an equable flow of spirits, which rendered him at all times a most desirable companion, ever ready to be amused, and to contribute to the amusement of others. He practised the minute elegancies, and, though latterly a deaf companion, was never troublesome.*

Although easy and complying in his intercourse with the world, yet in his profession, having, by unremitting study, matured his judgment, he ne-

* His deafness, I have been informed, first came upon him from a cold which he caught by his intense application in the winter season, in the unaired rooms of Raffaele in the Vatican.

ver sacrificed his opinion to the casual caprices of his employers, and without seeming to oppose theirs, still followed his own. He had temper to bear with the defects of others, as well as capacity to understand their good qualities, and he possessed that rare wisdom which consisted in a thorough knowledge, not only of the real value of things, but of the genius of the age he lived in, and of the characters and prejudices of those about him.

Far from over-rating his own talents, he did not seem to hold them in that degree of estimation which they deservedly obtained from the public. In short, it may be safely said, that his faults were few, and that those were much subdued by his wisdom ; for no man had ever more reverence for virtue, or a higher respect for unsullied fame.*

* Although at the very outset of his career in life he gained both praise and flattery, yet he still preserved his natural humility. An instance of early tribute to his merit has fallen into my hands since the former part of these sheets were printed, written at the beginning of the year 1748, but which, although out of place, I am unwilling to omit, as it evidently shews the high estimation in which this *great painter* was then held.

“ To Mr. Reynolds, on his having painted a very beautiful young lady in a bonnet and capuchin, which last was a kind of veil then much in fashion.

“ Vultus nimium lubricus aspici.”

HORACE.

Whilst the original's unknown,
I still can call my heart my own ;
Unhurt the copy view :

As to his person ; in his stature Sir Joshua Reynolds was rather under the middle size, of a florid complexion, roundish blunt features, and a lively aspect ; not corpulent, though somewhat inclined to it, but extremely active ; with manners uncommonly polished and agreeable.

In conversation, his manner was perfectly natural, simple and unassuming. He most heartily enjoyed his profession, in which he was both fortunate and illustrious ; and I agree with Mr. Malone who says he appeared to him to be the happiest man he had ever known. He was thoroughly sensible of his rare lot in life and truly thankful for it ; his virtues were blessed with their full reward.

It is a common, but a just observation, that virtue cannot exist where irregularity is present ; and the converse is true as applied to Sir Joshua's

Whilst thus the beauteous face you shade,
 And eyes too bright, by nature made,
 Nor death, nor wounds ensue.
 Thus at the sun thro' mists we gaze,
 Our sight from his enfeebling rays,
 The vapour dark securing ;
 But when no medium screens his light,
 His beams are so severely bright
 The blaze there 's no enduring.
 Friend to your sex ! our thanks receive,
 'Tis owing to your art we live ;
 Ourselves unwounded find :
 Such charms were dangerous you knew,
 So o'er the piece a veil you threw
 In pity to mankind."

mode of life, which was so regular as to produce correctness without degenerating into insipidity, or tediousness to his friends by unnecessary and troublesome precision.

Rising at eight o'clock in general, he was enabled to retire from the breakfast table to his painting room about ten, where, for an hour at least, he occupied himself in arranging the subordinate accessories in such of his works as he was then engaged in, or perhaps in preserving some new ideas by a sketch.

The hours dedicated to his sitters were generally from eleven to four, but not with rigid attention, as he often gave a relaxation to his mind by receiving the visits of particular friends. Yet upon the whole, his application was great, nay, in some measure, excessive; for it is very true, as he himself observed to Malone, that such was his love of his art, and such his ardour to excel, that he had often, and during the greater part of his life, laboured as hard with his pencil, as any mechanic working at his trade for bread.

Considering the hospitable elegance of his own table, and the number of his friends, it is not to be wondered at that his invitations to other tables were pretty numerous. Of these, however, he seldom accepted more than two in the week, during the winter; and though his regulated plan was to have his friends once at home during the same period, yet it frequently happened that his table

was filled much oftener by the most estimable and remarkable men in public life. In such companies, intellectual pleasures must be considered as the most important: yet neither he nor his friends disdained the good things which affluence could provide, and of course every elegance and every luxury were always to be found there in moderation.

Mr. Malone draws the comparison between the character of Lælius as given by Mr. Melmoth, and Sir Joshua Reynolds, which seems in many respects to be singularly similar, but too long for insertion; here I shall only give the concluding part, which says—

“ In public estimation, in uniform success in life, in moderation in prosperity, in the the applause and admiration of his contemporaries, in simplicity of manners and playfulness of humour, in good sense and elegant attainments, in modesty and equability of temper, in undeviating integrity, in respect for received and long-established opinions, in serenity, cheerfulness, and urbanity, the resemblance must be allowed to be uncommonly striking and exact.”

As before observed, Sir Joshua had many pupils who resided for years under his roof. It is a surprising fact, however, that scarcely any of their names have been heard of as painters. Most of them have pined in poverty and died in want, miserable to themselves, and a disgrace to the art.

To account for this seeming paradox many reasons may be assigned. First, the vast difficulties of the art of painting render its higher branches unattainable to nine-tenths of those persons who profess, or pretend to study it: Secondly, Sir Joshua, never having received a well-founded education in the academies of art, was forced to make his own way by the strength of his genius and unwearied industry: hence those excellencies which he possessed could not be imparted or taught to another, and what could be taught he did not sufficiently possess. It is art which the scholar is to learn, and not genius. Sir Joshua seems to have disdained the rules of art, and may be said to have snatched a grace beyond them. But the young painter who daubs because he fancies Sir Joshua daubed, is like the fool who purchased the lamp of Epictetus. The best reason that can be assigned for his having a more enlarged notion of grace and greatness than his contemporaries is, that he had more information and understanding than they. A vulgar man may acquire what is termed cleverness, but cannot arrive at greatness; which can only be attained by him, who unites general information with taste and feeling.

Together with other various tributes to the memory of departed excellence, we must not omit the following extract from Mr. Sotheby's poetical epistle to Sir George Beaumont, in which the subject of our biography is so elegantly charac-

terized, and which has been published since his death.

' Hail! guide and glory of the British School,
 Whose magic line gave life to every rule.
 Reynolds! thy portraits, true to nature, glow'd,
 Yet o'er the whole ideal graces flow'd;
 While forth to sight the living likeness came,
 Souls touch'd by genius, felt the higher aim.
 Here, where the public gaze a Siddons views,
 See fear and pity crown the Tragic muse.
 There, girt with flames, where Calpé gleams afar,
 In dauntless Heathfield hail the god of war.
 Painter of grace! Love gave to thee alone,
 Corregio's melting line, with Titian's tone,
 Bade Beauty wear all forms that breathe delight,
 And a new charm in each attract the sight:
 Here a wild Thais wave the blazing brand,
 There yield her zone to Cupid's treach'rous hand;
 An empress melt the pearl in Egypt's bowl,
 Or a sly gypsey read the tell tale soul.
 Painter of passion! horror in thy view
 Pour'd the wild scenes that daring Shakspeare drew;
 When the fiend scowl'd on Beaufort's bed of death,
 And each weird hag 'mid lightnings hail'd Macbeth.
 Thee Dante led to Famine's murky cave;
 "Round yon mute father hear his children rave;
 Behold them stretch'd beneath his stony eye,
 Drop one by one, and gaze on him, and die;
 So strain each starting ball in sightless stare,
 And each grim feature fix in stern despair."——
 No earth-born giant struggling into size,
 Stretch'd in thy canvass, sprawls before our eyes;
 The mind applies its standard to the scene,
 Notes, with mute awe, the more than mortal mien,
 Where boundless genius brooding o'er the whole,
 Stamps e'en on babes sublimity of soul.
 Whether, where terror crowns Jove's infant brow,
 Before the God-head aw'd Olympus bow,

Or in yon babe, th' Herculean strength upholds
Th' enormous snakes, and slacks their length'ning folds;
Or while, from Heaven, celestial Grace descends,
Meek on his knees the infant Samuel bends,
Lifts his clasp'd hands, and as he glows in prayer,
Fixes in awful trance his eye on air.

Yet not fair forms, by Reynolds' hand design'd,
No, nor his magic pen that paints the mind;
That pen, which erst on charm'd Ilyssus' shore
Th' exulting Graces to their Plato bore,
When Fancy wove, for Truth, her fairest flow'rs;
And Wisdom commun'd with the Muse's bow'rs;
Not these suffice _____'

Little remains now to add, only, that in the year 1795 that fine collection of pictures of the ancient masters, which Sir Joshua had so judiciously amassed, actually fetched the sum of 10,319*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*; whilst, in the succeeding year, various historical and fancy pictures of his own painting, accompanied by some unclaimed portraits, were sold for 4,505*l.* 18*s.*; these sums were independent of his most valuable collection of prints and drawings, which since that have come to the hammer.

To the account of his death, I have nothing to add. The following notice was given at the time of the sale of his own works in the daily papers, and may to many readers be interesting.

SALE OF SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS'S PICTURES.

“ These invaluable remains of the great master of the British School are 199 in number, portraits finished and unfinished—sketches and historical compositions, studies, &c. affording a complete view of his progressive merits, from his first rude beginnings to a degree of excellence which we may reasonably conjecture will not speedily be equalled.

“ Mr. Greenwood’s Room yesterday afforded also a secondary pleasure, which the moralist will best appreciate. Those living artists who have done most honour to their great and illustrious leader, attended with fond delay, to behold, for the last time together, his numerous and fascinating progeny.

“ The magnets of the morning were—

The Death of Dido,	Cupid and Psyche,
The Infant Moses,	The Theory of the Arts,
The Duke & Duchess	Mrs. Robinson,
of Hamilton,	C. Greville,
St. John,	And a beginning of Puck,
Hope nursing Love,	Ugolino, a head, &c. &c.

Various spirited sketches of large pictures, and a

more splendid example of taste and brilliant colouring than any gallery of a single artist can exhibit.

“ It is no pleasing reflection, that the majority of the portraits consists of pictures by which the sitters hoped a kind of protracted existence, and which the parsimony and ingratitude of their heirs never redeemed, by paying up the remainder of the artist’s price.”

This seems to have been written merely with a view to assist the sale ; but as it contains some information, I was unwilling to omit it.

It may seem superfluous to cotemporary readers to mention that in the year 1813 a Commemoration of his talents was celebrated by the “ British Institution,” in which they were most liberally aided by the patriotic kindness of a considerable part of the possessors of specimens of Sir Joshua Reynolds’s pencil ; a most brilliant collection of his works being thus exhibited at the rooms of the institution, late the Shakspeare Gallery.

The highest compliment that was ever paid to Sir Joshua or his works was by a gentleman, not a connoisseur in art ; who, when he saw the exhibition of this painter’s works, together in a mass, said that it had raised his idea of mankind, and gave him a better opinion of the world than he had ever before conceived. This was a pure sentiment of the heart.

It must be very gratifying to those who revere the memory of Sir Joshua to reflect, that so attractive were the excellencies of his works, without the aid of any newspaper paragraphs, &c. that the exhibition of them brought a very handsome sum of money to the proprietors of the rooms, and also raised the credit of the British School of Art: and we may rejoice to find, that this scheme having been so liberally encouraged by the people in general, the same project will be pursued, so that for a very small price to each individual, the public at large may view with patriotic exultation the admirable labours of their late illustrious painters, who have conferred lasting honour on their country.

It is also to be remarked of such exhibitions, if thus amply patronized by the nation, that the profits from them, managed with skill and prudence, will enable the projectors of the scheme to lend a helping hand to forward the polite arts of England.

Carlo Maratti used to say, that he considered himself as the heir of the Carracchi, and therefore demanded the high prices for his works which his great predecessors ought to have been paid, but could not obtain.

In like manner, the large sum received from exhibiting the works of those lamented, excellent painters, our compatriots, if bestowed with judgment on the living artists, will thus constitute them heirs of their unrewarded predecessors.

But at the same time it should be remembered what J. J. Rousseau says upon this subject, and which has but too much truth in it. His observation is—That so many establishments in favour of the arts, only hurt them; by indiscreetly multiplying the subjects, we confound them; true merit remains smothered in the crowd, and the honours due to the most skilful are always bestowed on the most intriguing.

True talents, true genius, have a certain simplicity, which renders them less unquiet, less restless, less ready to shew themselves, than an apparent and false talent, which we take for the true; and which consists only in a vain desire to shine, without the requisites for insuring success.

If this work descend to posterity, though not so lasting as his fame, it may be proper that I should here close these Memoirs with also noticing, that in the room in which his works were exhibited the company dined, at its opening—a dinner highly honoured by the presence of the Prince Regent, numerous nobility, and eminent artists—a small whole length model of this great painter was placed at the head of the room, and accompanied by the following inscription from the pen of R. P. Knight, Esq.

“ Joshua Reynolds

Pictorum sui seculi facile principi,
Et splendore et commissuris Colorum,
Alternis vicibus Luminis et Umbrae

Sese mutuo excitantium,
 Vix ulli Veterum secundo ;
 Qui, cum summa artis, gloria modeste uteretur,
 Et morum suavitate et vitæ elegantia
 Perinde commendaretur ;
 Artem etiam ipsam, per orbem terrarum,
 Languentur et prope inter mortuam
 Exemplis egregie venustis suscitavit,
 Præceptis exquisite conscriptis illustravit
 Atque emendationem et expolitiorem,
 Posteris exercendam tradidit ;
 Laudem ejus fautores et amici
 Hanc effigiem posuerunt.

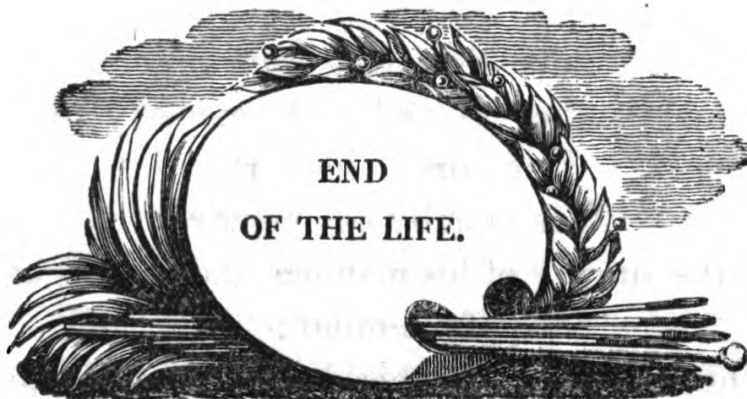
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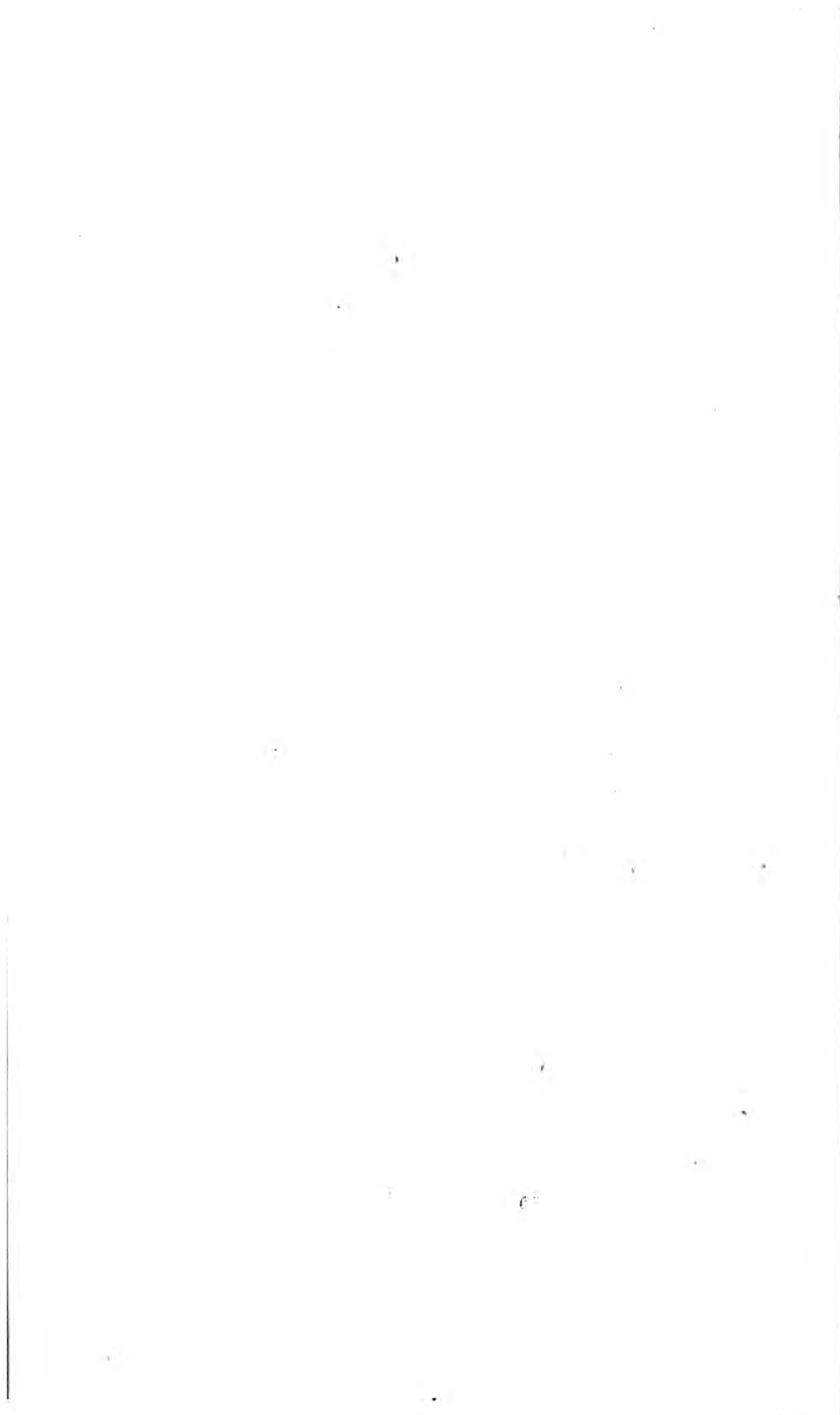
To Sir Joshua Reynolds
 Confessedly the first artist of his time ;
 Scarcely inferior to any of the Ancients,
 In the splendor and combination of colours,
 In the alternate succession of light and shade,
 Mutually displaying each other :
 Who, whilst he enjoyed with modesty the first
 honours of his Art,
 Was equally commended
 For the suavity of his manners and the elegance
 of his mind ;
 Who restored, by his highly beautiful models,
 The Art itself, languishing and almost extin-
 guished

In every part of the world ;
Who illustrated it by the admirable precepts
contained
In his writings,
And transmitted it in a correct and refined state
To be cultivated by posterity ;
The friends and admirers of his Talents
Have raised this monument.

1813.

The late display of the labours of this deceased ornament of Britain having been thus detailed, I have nothing further to observe but that the monument to the memory of SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, executed by Mr. Flaxman, is now erected in ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, and makes one of the four statues which are placed near the choir ; the others being those of Dr. JOHNSON, SIR WILLIAM JONES, and Mr. HOWARD.





APPENDIX.

MEMOIR OF WILLIAM GANDY.

As there is no record of this William Gandy preserved in any manner but what he has formed for himself by his pictures, which being without his name marked on them are known but to few, and thus will soon be wholly unknown, I cannot resist the impulse of preserving the small record which tradition gives of him as a just tribute to his memory before it is too late, and thus be lost for ever. This must be an excuse for the adding of a subject which at first sight may seem unconnected with our present plan ; but will have this good effect, at least, that by pointing him out as one admired both by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Sir Godfrey Kneller (in whose time he lived), it may be the means of preserving many of his works which otherwise might have been destroyed by those ignorant of their merit.

WILLIAM GANDY was an itinerant painter in the county of Devon, where he lived and died ; but it is uncertain whether he was a native of that county. He was the son of James Gandy, of whom Pilkington in his Dictionary of the Painters gives the following account :

“ James Gandy, painted portrait.

“ Died 1689, aged 70.

“ This painter, although he was a very able artist, is but little known ; he was born in the year 1619, and instructed by Vandyke, and his works are a sufficient proof of the signal improvement he received from the precepts and example of that great master.

“ The cause of his being so totally unknown was his being brought into Ireland by the old Duke of Ormond, and retained in his service : and as Ireland was at that time in a very unsettled condition, the merit and memory of this master would have been entirely unnoticed, if some of his performances, which still subsist, had not preserved him from oblivion. There are at this time in Ireland many portraits painted by him of noblemen and persons of fortune, which are very little inferior to Vandyke, either for expression, colouring, or dignity ; and several of his copies after Vandyke, which were in the Ormond collection

at Kilkenny, were sold for original paintings of Vandyke."

Thus much is related of the father by Pilkington, who seems to have known nothing of William the son ; a circumstance not much to be wondered at, as William's little fame has seldom passed the limits of the county in which he resided ; and where he spent his life in a state of indigence most truly pitiable, if a great part of it did not deserve to be considered as much his own fault, as his misfortune.

He was a man of a most untractable disposition, very resentful, of unbounded pride, and in the latter part of his life both idle and luxurious ; of which I remember to have heard many instances from my father, who knew him, and whose portrait he painted when a child.

He was at all times totally careless of his reputation as a painter ; and more particularly so if any thing happened in the course of his business to displease him. He was once employed to paint the portrait of a Mr. John Vallack, an apothecary of Plymouth, who had amassed a large fortune in that town ; and as Gandy always attended at the houses of his employers to execute his work (having no room of his own fit to receive a sitter), he expected, of course, to be invited to dinner (which was not the least of his gratifications), concluding he should be well entertained by his patron ; but unfortunately for Gandy, it was Mr. Vallack's

custom to have a certain fixed dinner for each day of the week, and by ill luck it happened to be a Saturday when the portrait was begun, and the dinner on that day was nothing more than pork and peas, to the utter mortification and disappointment of the Artist, who at his return to his lodgings vented his rage in curses on his employer's meanness, and not having good nature enough to be thoroughly reconciled to him afterwards, totally neglected the picture. This anecdote is certified by the performance itself which I have seen, and a very indifferent performance it is.

Another instance which I shall give, discovers a singular display of pride and poverty.

He was invited, together with a friend of his, to visit Sir William Carew, at Anthony House, which is on the other side of the River Tamer, and at such a distance from Plymouth, where they lived, that it was nearly impossible for them to return to their home on the same day, and in consequence they were to sleep at Sir William's: but it happened that the house at that time was so crowded with visitors, that there was a necessity for Gandy and his friend to content themselves with one bed between them. This seemed to mortify Gandy's pride at the moment; and they were no sooner retired to their chamber than he began to give free vent to his ill humour, in curses on the indignity thus offered them, by treating two gentlemen (to use his own term) in such a manner, and not al-

lotting to each of them a separate chamber. Notwithstanding all the reasons which were offered to him, from the necessity of the case, as the house was at that time so filled with guests, nothing that could be urged was sufficient to appease the rage of Gandy; and of this the secret and real cause was now about to transpire, for on taking off his clothes to go to bed, it evidently appeared that, instead of proper linen, he had two shirts on (if such might be called shirts), both of which were in such a ruinous and tattered condition, such a mere bundle of rags, that out of the two it would have been impossible to realize half a one fit for wear.

His portraits (for I believe he never painted any thing else) are slight and sketchy, and show more of genius than labour; they indeed demonstrate facility, feeling, and nice observation, as far as concerns the head; but he was so idle and so unambitious that the remainder of the picture, except sometimes the hand, was commonly copied from some print after Sir Godfrey Kneller.

It is evident that there must have been some period of his life when he pursued his profession with assiduity and energy, which alone could have gained him the facility of practice that he possessed; but in the latter part of his life he could never be induced to paint at all, unless driven to it by mere want; and he had no sooner acquired a little money than it was as quickly gone in lux-

urious feeding, which seemed to be his great passion.

There is little reason to doubt that he might have been the greatest painter of his time, had he not been his own greatest enemy.

There is no portrait of himself existing that I ever heard of, and when, how, or where he died or was buried, I never knew, but most probably at Exeter, as that city was chiefly the place of his residence.

He came to Plymouth about the year 1714, and was then a man advanced in years. My grandfather was a great friend to him ; but Gandy quitted Plymouth much in his debt, departing secretly and leaving only a few old books and prints behind him.

I have seen in Devonshire several very fine heads of his painting, particularly one of the Rev. John Gilbert, Canon of the cathedral of Exeter, and vicar of St. Andrew's, Plymouth, and father of the archbishop of York, of that name : it is less than life, and has been engraved by Vertue for the volume of Sermons, published by Mr. Gilbert. There is also a fine portrait of the Reverend Nathaniel Harding, at that time a famous dissenting preacher of Plymouth ; this picture was painted by the desire of my father's mother, and given by her to the daughter of Mr. Harding, after his death.

There is likewise a portrait of one Tobias Langton of Exeter, remarkably fine. Sir Godfrey Kneller, who was once at Exeter, by chance saw this picture, and with astonishment inquired who was the artist capable of having painted it, and when told it was by a painter of that city who was in great poverty, he exclaimed "Good God! why does he bury his talents in the country when he ought immediately to come to London, where his merit would soon be known and properly rewarded?"

One of my father when a child of four years of age is equally excellent.—One of my father's mother is likewise extremely fine, although Gandy, from his ill nature, was quarrelling with her the whole time he was painting it. The drapery of this picture is painted in a slovenly manner from a print after Kneller; but there is a hand in it very finely executed.

There are also a great many of his pictures scattered about Devonshire and Cornwall; some very fine and many more good for nothing, though the worst of them still look like the careless productions of a good painter; but the draperies were always so entirely neglected by him, that this very much conduces to destroy the general effect of the picture. He seemed never to have thought of fame, but only how to get rid of his work, that he

might the sooner receive the money, which was not above two guineas a head.

He wished to have it supposed that he was the natural son of the great Duke of Ormond, who was afterwards banished, and always insinuated that he had some secret reasons for not appearing publicly in London; whether this was really the case, or whether he only hoped to give himself importance by his mysterious speeches, I cannot determine.

I have learnt these particulars from my father, whose family had opportunities of being well acquainted with Gandy's history, in consequence of his having resided a long time in the house of my grandfather, who admired his talents, and esteemed him as the greatest artist of his time.

I have seen a portrait by Gandy's father (of whom Pilkington speaks) of the Duke of Ormond; it is in the possession of the Earl of Leicester, and this, as it was of his patron, may be supposed one of his best performances; if so, I must give the preference in ability to the son; for though this portrait is finished with much more care than any by the younger Gandy, yet it is very far from discovering so much genius.

It is remarkable that the drapery in this portrait is so exactly similar to that which we so often find in Vandyke's pictures, that it confirms Pilkington's

supposition of Gandy, the father, having been the assistant of Vandyke, and almost proves him to have frequently painted those parts in the pictures of that celebrated painter.

It appears to me to be highly probable that this James Gandy, the father, was a native of Exeter, as the son made choice of it for his place of residence, and also because that it is a well known name and family still remaining in that city. We find the name also in Prince's "Worthies of Devon."

I cannot close the memoir of this man without noticing how much it proves that the greatest abilities may become totally useless to the possessor, and lost to the world at large, if not directed by virtue and industry : for the lives of such persons, as they exhibit an example of the distresses to which idleness and want of moral principles may expose men of parts, may be an useful lesson to the rising generation, and prove a more powerful persuasive to industry, economy, and the right use of great talents, than the most laboured argument ; and as Johnson so exquisitely expresses it—

“ Those who, in confidence of superior capacities or attainments, disregard the common maxims of life, should be reminded, that nothing will supply the want of prudence ; and that negligence and irregularity long continued, will make know-

ledge useless, wit ridiculous, and genius contemptible.”

The example of Sir Joshua Reynolds is an illustrious contrast to this, where we see that great abilities, united to virtue, have raised for him an everlasting monument of fame.

L I S T
 OF THE
HISTORICAL AND FANCY SUBJECTS,
 TOGETHER WITH SOME OF THE
MOST ILLUSTRIOUS AND EMINENT PORTRAITS,
 EXECUTED BY
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

<i>Subjects.</i>	<i>Possessors.</i>	<i>Prices.</i> <i>Guineas.</i>	<i>Engravers.</i>
Angel contemplating the Cross, be- queathed to	} Duke of Portland		
Ascension . . . . .	. . . . .	
Calling of Samuel	Duke of Rutland	100	Dean, 1788
Do. do.	Duke of Dorset	50	J. R. Smith, 1783
Do. do.	Earl of Darnley	75	Delatre, 1784
Do. do.	C. Long, Esq.		C. Knight, 1792
Cornelia & her Children (Lady Cockburn)	. . . . .		C. Wilkins, 1791
Cauldron Scene in Macbeth	Mr. Boydell	1000	Thew
Cardinal Beaufort	} Do. now Earl of } Egremont. }	500	{ Caroline Watson, 1792. }
Dionysius the Areopagite . . . . .	. . . . .		Jenner, 1776
Death of Dido: for Mr. Bryant	Marchs. Thomond	200	Grozer
Holy Family : 500 <i>l.</i> to Macklin, sold to Lord Gwydir		700	W. Sharp, 1792
Hercules strangling the Serpents	Empress of Russia	1500	Hodges, Walker
Infant Hercules in Cradle	Earl Fitzwilliam	150	Do. do. 1792
Infant Moses in the Bulrushes	Duke of Leeds	125	J. Dean, 1786, 1791
Infant Jupiter	Duke of Rutland	100	Smith, 1775
King Lear	Marchs. Thomond		{ Marchi & Sharp, 1783 }
Nativity : for New College window	Duke of Rutland	1200	Earlom
St. John : for New College window	Marchs. Thomond		
Do.	— Willet, Esq.	150	Grozer, 1784
St. Michael slaying the Dragon : Copy from Guido	} Marchs. Thomond }		

<i>Subjects.</i>	<i>Possessors.</i>	<i>Prices.</i> Guineas.	<i>Engravers.</i>
School of Athens, from Raffaele: Copy	Do.		
Do. travestied: now at Straffan, in Ireland	} J. Henry, Esq.		
Ugolino and Children in the Dungeon	Duke of Dorset	400	Dixon
Virgin and Child: left unfinished	J. Bannister, Esq.	65	
Do. do.	Earl of Egremont		
Young Hannibal, a boy in armour	. . . . .		C. Townley, 1792
—			
Ariadne	W. Locke, Esq.	35	Doughty, 1779
Bacchante, portrait of Mad. Baccelli	Duke of Dorset		J. R. Smith, 1784
Do.	Sir W. Hamilton	50	Do. Do.
Bacchus, portrait of Master Herbert	Lord Porchester	75	Smith, 1776
Beggar Boy, with Child & Cabbage-nets	Duke of Dorset		Hodges
The Bird . . . . .	. . . . .		J. Dean
Boy laughing	— Bromwell, Esq.	50	
Boy with a Dog . . . . .	. . . . .		Dean . .
Do. in a Turkish Dress . . . . .	. . . . .		Do. 1778
Do. with Drawing in his Hand	Duke of Dorset	50	
Do. with Portfolio	Earl of Warwick	50	
Do. praying: since sent to France	Mr. Chamier	50	
Do. eating Grapes	{ Sir J. F. Leicester, Bart. } late Mr. Shelley's		Spilsbury
Do. reading	Sir H. Englefield	35	Hodges
Do. Do.	{ Sir J. F. Leicester, Bt. from } Coll. of Judge Harding		
Boy's School: heads of two Master Gawlers	}		Smith, 1788
Captive: has been called Cartouche, &c.	Rev. W. Long	80	Smith, 1777 & Dean
Captain of Banditti	J. Crewe, Esq.	35	
Careful Shepherdess . . . . .	. . . . .		Eliz. Judkins, 1775
Cardinal Virtues, and four others: for the New College Window	} Marchioness Thomond		Facius, 1781
Cælia (Mrs. Collyer) lamenting her Sparrow	} Gen. Gwyn		J. Watson
Charity: for New College window	. . . . .		Facius, 1781
Circe	Sir C. Bunbury	35	
Children in the Wood	Lord Palmerstone	50	J. Watson, 1772
Child with Angels	Duke of Leeds		

<i>Subjects.</i>	<i>Possessors.</i>	<i>Prices.</i> Guineas.	<i>Engravers.</i>
Child sleeping	S. Rogers, Esq.		Doughty, 1780
Do. do.	Earl of Aylesford		
Comic Muse (Mrs. A. Boringdon)	Duke of Dorset		Sherwin
Cleopatra dissolving the Pearl (Kitty Fisher)	} Lord Boringdon		Fisher
Continence of Scipio			
Conway Castle, a Landscape			W. Birch, 1790
Covent Garden Cupid			Dean, 1779
Cottagers, from Thomson, for Macklin's Gallery	}		Bartolozzi, 1784
Count La Lippe: portrait		H. R. H. Prince Regent	
Master Crewe as Henry VIII.	J. Crewe, Esq.		Smith, 1776
Cupid and Psyche (Miss Greville and brother)	} C. Long, Esq.	250	Mac Ardell, 1762
Do. do.		S. Rogers, Esq.	
Cupid in the Clouds			Dean
Cupid sleeping			Do. 1778
Cymon and Iphigenia: the last fancy piece ever executed by Sir Joshua	} Marchs. Thomond		F. Harwood
Diana (Lady Napier)			
Do. (Duchess of Manchester)			J. Watson
Edwin: from Beattie's Minstrel	Duke of Leeds	55	
Faith: for New College window			Facius, 1787
Family of the Duke of Marlborough		700	
Fortitude: for new College window			Do. Do.
Fortune teller (Lord and Lady Spencer)	Duke of Marlborough		Sherwin
Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy: sold to J. J. Angerstein, Esq. for 250 guineas	} Earl of Halifax	300	} T. Watson and Fisher, 1762, &c.
Garrick, as Kitley . . . . .				Finlayson, 1769
Mr. and Mrs. Garrick sitting on a garden seat, and Garrick reading to her	} Hon. T. Fitzmaurice	150	
Girl with Bird's-nest		N. Desenfans, Esq.	
Do. with Bird-cage	Duke of Dorset		
Do. with Muff	Marchs. Thomond		Jenner
Do. with Cat (Felina)	} N. Desenfans, Esq. now Sir J. F. Leicester, Bt.		} Coliyer, 1790
Do. with Kitten		Marchs. Thomond	
Do. drawing (Miss Johnson)			Grozer, 1790

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<i>Subjects.</i>	<i>Possessors.</i>	<i>Prices.</i> Guineas.	<i>Engravers.</i>
Girl leaning on a Pedestal	. Visc. Palmerstone	75	Baldry
Do. laughing . . . . .	. Earl of Lonsdale		
Gypsy Fortune-teller . . . . .	. Duke of Dorset	350	Sherwin
Do. . . . .	. Marchs. Thomond		
Gleaners (Mrs. Macklin and Miss Potts)	Mr. Macklin	300	
Heads of Angels : study from daughter of Lord William Gordon	} Lord W. Gordon	100	
Hebe (Miss Meyer) . . . . .	. . . . .		Fisher&Jacobi, 1780
Do. (Mrs. Musters) . . . . .	. . . . .		J. R. Smith, 1799
Hope nursing Love . . . . .	. Henry Hope, Esq.	150	
Do. . . . .	. Lord Holland		Do. 1777
Do. . . . .	. Marchs. Thomond		Fisher, 1771
Hope : for New College Window . . . . .	. . . . .		Facius, 1781
Innocence . . . . .	. J. Harman, Esq.		Grozer, 1788
Infant Academy : bequeathed to	Lord Palmerstone		Hayward
Juno (Lady Blake) . . . . .	. . . . .		J. Dixon, 1771
Justice : for New College window . . . . .	. . . . .		Facius, 1781
Lady Sarah Bunbury sacrificing to the Graces	} Sir C. Bunbury		Fisher
Lady with Flowers . . . . .	. . . . .		Do.
L'Allegro (Mrs. Hale) . . . . .	. Lord Harewood		Watson, &c.
Landscape . . . . .	. Earl of Aylesford	50	
Do. View from Richmond Villa . . . . .	. . . . .		Jones and Birch
Lesbia . . . . .	. Duke of Dorset	75	Bartolozzi, 1788
Lord Sidney & Col. Ackland, as Archers	Earl of Caernarvon		
Love untying the Zone of Beauty : called the Snake in the Grass	} Earl of Carysfort	200	J. R. Smith, 1787
Do. Do. . . . .	. Prince Potemkin	100	
Do. Do. a present to . . . . .	. Henry Hope, Esq.		
Original Design for Do.	} Sir J. F. Leicester, Bt. from Westall's Gallery }		
Madona . . . . .	. . . . .		Blackmore
Marchioness Townshend, Mrs. Gardner, and Hon. Mrs. Beresford, } decorating a Term of Hymen	Lord Mountjoy	450	T. Watson
Melancholy (Miss Jones) . . . . .	. . . . .	
The Blackguard Mercury . . . . .	. . . . .		Dean, 1777
Miranda (Hon. Mrs. Tollemache) and Caliban	} Earl of Dysart .		J. Jones, 1786

<i>Subjects.</i>	<i>Possessors.</i>	<i>Prices.</i> Guineas.	<i>Engravers.</i>
Muscipula, Girl with Mouse-trap .	Count d'Adhemar	50	Jones, 1786
Nymph (Mrs. Hartley) and young Bacchus }	Earl of Carysfort		
Nymph and Boy }	J. J. Angerstein, Esq.		
Old Man's Head }	— Edridge, Esq.		J. Watson
Do. reading a Ballad }	Duke of Rutland		Okey
Omai, the Native of Otaheite }	J. W. Steers, Esq.		Jacobi, 1777
Oxford Window (a general plate) }			Earlom
Pouting Girl }	G. Hardinge, Esq.		
Prudence: for New College window }			Facius, 1781
Puck, from Midsummer Night's Dream: done for Alderman Boydell }	S. Rogers, Esq.	100	Schiavonetti
Resignation, from Goldsmith's Deserted Village (White, the Pa-viour) }	Marchs. Thomond		T. Watson, 1772
RobINETTE (Hon. Mrs. Tollemache) }	Earl of Lousdale		J. Jones, 1787
Shepherd Boy }	Lord Irwin	50	{ Barnard, Spilsbury, 1788
Do. do. }	Marchs. Thomond		
Shepherdess with a Lamb }	Do.		J. Grozer, 1784
Shepherd and Shepherdesses }	Do.		
Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse }	W. Smith, Esq.	700	Hayward, 1787
St. Agnes (Mrs. Quarrington) }	R. P. Knight, Esq.	50	{ Chambers, 1787 Bettelini
St. Cecilia (Mrs. Sheridan and two Misses Purdons) }	R. B. Sheridan, Esq.	150	Dickinson, 1776
St. George (Francis Duke of Bedford and Brothers) }			V. Green, 1778
St. John (Master Wynne, now Sir Watkyn Williams) }			J. Dean, 1776
Strawberry Girl }	Earl of Carysfort	50	T. Watson, 1774
Studious Boy }	{ P. Metcalfe, Esq. now Sir J. F. Leicester, Bart. }		Dean, 1777, Smith
Thais }	Mr. Greville		F. Bartolozzi, 1792
Temperance: for New College window }			Facius, 1787
Theory of Painting }	Royal Academy		J. Grozer, 1785
Do. do. }	Marchs. Thomond		
Do. do. }	J. Hughes, Esq.		
Triumph of Truth (Dr. Beattie) }	Mrs. Glennie		J. Watson, 1775

<i>Subjects.</i>	<i>Possessors.</i>	<i>Prices.</i> Guineas.	<i>Engravers.</i>
Two Groupes of celebrated Characters done for the	} Dilletanti Society		
Tuccia, the Vestal Virgin, from Gregory's Ode to Meditation	} Mr. Macklin	300	
Venus chiding Cupid for casting Accents	} Earl of Charlemont	100	Bartolozzi, 1784
Venus do. bequeathed to the Do. do. painted for Sir B. Boothby	E. of Upper Ossory Sir T. Bernard		J. R. Collyer, 1786
Venus, and Boy piping	J. J. Angerstein, Esq.	250	
Una, from Spenser (Miss Beauclerck)	Marchs. Thomond		T. Watson, 1782
Wang-y-Tong, a Chinese Boy	Duke of Dorset	70	



Archbishop Markham, of York	.	.	.	Fisher & Watson	1778
——— Robinson, primate of Ireland	.	.	.	Houston,	1765
——— Burke, of Tuam	.	.	.	J. R. Smith,	1784
Admiral Barrington	.	.	.	Earlom,	1780
——— Boscawen	.	.	.	Mac Ardell,	1757
Mrs. Abington	.	Lord Boringdon	.	Judkins,	1772
Bishop Percy, of Dromore	.	.	.	Dickinson,	1775
——— Shipley, of St. Asaph	.	.	.	Smith,	1777
——— Newton, of Bristol	.	Abp. of Canterbury	.	Watson,	1775
Joseph Barretti	.	Mrs. Piozzi	.	Hardy,	1794
Archibald Bower	.	.	.	Faber	
Edmund Burke	.	.	.	J. Watson,	1771
Do. do.	.	.	.	Hardy,	1780
Mr. Chauncey	.	— Carter, Esq.	.	Caroline Watson	
Count Belgioso	.	.	.	Jacobi	
Colonel Tarleton	.	.	.	J. Smith,	1782
Countess of Berkeley	.	.	.	Mac Ardell,	1757
——— Carlisle	.	.	.	J. Watson,	1773
——— Cornwallis	.	.	.	Do.	1771
——— Coventry	.	.	.	Do.	
——— Essex	.	.	.	Mac Ardell	
——— Harrington	.	.	.	V. Green,	1780
——— Hyndford	.	.	.	Mac Ardell	
——— Northumberland	.	.	.	Houston,	1759
——— Pembroke and Son	.	.	.	Dixon	

<i>Portraits.</i>	<i>Possessors.</i>	<i>Engravers.</i>
Two Miss Crewes	Dixon
First Duke of Cumberland	Spooner
Late Duke of Cumberland	T. Watson, 1774
Duke of Bedford, two Brothers, and } Miss Vernon	Smith
Duke of Devonshire	Faber, 1755
———— Gloucester	Pr. Sophia of Gloucester	
———— Marlborough	Houston
———— Orleans	Prince Regent	J. R. Smith, 1786
———— York	J. Jones, 1790
Honourable Miss Damer	J. R. Smith, 1774
Dr. Charles Burney	Mrs. Piozzi	Bartolozzi, 1781
— John Hawkesworth	J. Watson, 1773
— Lucas	Mac Ardell
— W. Robertson	Dixon, 1772
— Joseph Warton	Smith, 1777
Duchess of Ancaster	Houston, 1758
Do.	Dixon
Duchess of Buccleugh	Ja. Watson, 1775
———— Cumberland	Do. 1777, 1790
———— Devonshire	V. Green, 1780
———— Gloucester	Lady Waldegrave	Mac Ardell, 1762
———— Gordon	Dickinson, 1775
———— Rutland (Dowager)	V. Green, 1780
Samuel Dyer	Sir Ridley Colborne	Marchi, 1773
Earl of Albemarle	Fisher
———— Abercorn	Dean
———— Bath	Mac Ardell, 1758
———— Bristol (Augustus)	Fisher
———— Carlisle	Spilsbury, 1763
———— Dalkeith	V. Green
———— Dartmouth	Spilsbury
———— Gower	Fisher, 1765
———— Mansfield	Bartolozzi, 1786
———— Moira	Duke of York	Jones, 1792
———— Pembroke	Dixon, Watson 1772
———— Rothes	Mac Ardell, 1755
———— Strafford	Do. 1762
Mrs. Fitzherbert	
Samuel Foote	Blackmore, 1771

LIST OF PAINTINGS

<i>Portraits.</i>	<i>Possessors.</i>	<i>Engravers.</i>
Monsieur Gautier (done at Paris)	.	H. Fess
Edward Gibbon	.	Hall, 1780
Oliver Goldsmith	Mrs. Piozzi	Marchi, 1770
Groupe: Lady Sarah Bunbury, Lady Susan Strangeways, and Charles James Fox	}	J. Watson
Warren Hastings	.	T. Watson, 1777
Soame Jenyns	.	Dickinson
Samuel Johnson	Mrs. Piozzi	J. Watson, 1770
Do.	.	Hall, 1787
Do.	.	Doughty, 1784
Angelica Kauffman	.	Bartolozzi, 1780
Miss Kemble	.	J. Jones, 1784
Mrs. Kennedy	.	T. Watson, 1771
Lady Bampfylde	.	Do.
— Broughton	.	Do. 1770
— Almeria Carpenter	.	J. Watson, 1763
— Chambers	.	Mac Ardell
— Elizabeth Keppel	.	Fisher
— Louisa Manners	.	V. Green
— Melbourne and Child	Viscount Melbourne	T. Watson
Three Ladies Waldegrave	.	V. Green
Lord Amherst	.	J. Watson
— Anson	.	Mac Ardell, 1755
— Camden	M. Camden	Basire, 1766
Do.	.	Ravenhill
— Cardross (Earl Buchan)	.	Mac Ardell
— Heathfield	.	Earlom, 1788
— Hood	.	J. Jones, 1783
— Ligonier, on horseback	.	Fisher
— Rodney	Mars. Thomond	Dickinson, 1780
Do.	.	J. Watson
— Romney	.	Finlayson, 1773
— George Seymour	.	Fisher, 1771
Lord Chancellor Thurlow	.	Bartolozzi, 1782
THEIR MAJESTIES (two)	Royal Academy	Various
Giuseppe Marchi	.	Spilsbury
Marquis of Abercorn (a family piece)	.	.
— Buckingham	.	Dickinson, 1778
— Granby	.	Houston, 1760

<i>Portraits.</i>	<i>Possessors.</i>	<i>Engravers.</i>
Marquis of Granby (with a horse)	.	J. Watson
—— Lansdowne, Lord Ashbur-	} Sir T. Baring	
ton, and Colonel Barré		
—— Rockingham	.	Fisher
—— Tavistock	Duke of Bedford	J. Watson, 1767
—— Tichfield	.	Jenner, 1777
Marchioness of Lothian	.	Spilsbury
—— Thomond	.	
—— Townshend	.	V. Green
Mrs. Montague	.	Pollard
Mrs. Parker	T. L. Parker, Esq.	Browsholme
Nelly O'Brien	.	J. Watson
H. R. H. the Prince Regent	.	F. Haward, 1793
Princess Augusta	.	Mac Ardell, 1764
—— Sophia	.	
Rev. Zachariah Mudge	.	J. Watson
—— Thomas Warton	.	Hodges, 1794
Samuel Reynolds, S. T. P.	.	Mac Ardell
<p>Of SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS himself the portraits have been so numerous, as to bid defiance to enumeration. These are all from his own pencil, with the exception of one by C. G. Stuart, an American, one by Zoffanii, and one by Mr. Breda, a Swedish painter. The best engravings are by</p>		<p>V. Green, J. Collyer, J. Watson, C. Townley, I. K. Sherwin, R. Earlom, Pariset, Facius, S. W. Reynolds, Caroline Kirkley, Caroline Watson, T. Holloway, and the portrait which accompanies this work.</p>
Sir Joseph Banks	.	Dickinson, 1774
— Charles Bunbury	.	Marchi
— William Chambers	Royal Academy	V. Green, 1780
— John Cust	.	J. Watson, 1769
— J. F. Leicester	Sir J. F. Leicester (One of the last works of the master.)	S. Reynolds
— Charles Saunders	.	Mac Ardell
— John Wynne	.	Dean
Do:	.	Watson
Laurence Sterne	Earl of Ossory	Fisher
Viscount Downe	.	Do.

356 LIST OF PAINTINGS BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

<i>Portraits.</i>		<i>Possessors.</i>			<i>Engravers.</i>
Viscount Keppel	Fisher, 1759
— Sackville	Mac Ardell
Horace Walpole	Mac Ardell, 1757
Harry Woodward	Houston.

Even in the late Exhibition there were many which are not here enumerated:— indeed, a complete list, if it were possible to procure it, would fill a volume.

It is also proper to notice, that several of those here enumerated have been likewise engraved by other artists.

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