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JOHN ROBERT SCOTT

Dissertation on the Progress of the Fine Arts

**With an Introduction by
Roy Harvey Pearce**

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INTRODUCTION

Scott's "Dissertation on the Progress of the Fine Arts" embodies what we can now see as a final development in his century's deep concern to understand why what it so often admitted was the greatest art had somehow not been forthcoming in what it as often claimed was the greatest century. The "Dissertation" is in no way an original work; rather—and this is its primary value for us—its author takes a belief which his culture has given him and, like others before him, tries to clarify one of its implications. The belief is in the idea of a universal progress marred, if it in the end can be said to be marred, only by an esthetic primitivism; the implication is that that esthetic primitivism can be not only comprehended but surmounted. Scott accepts the century's commonplace that art of power and significance has been necessarily produced only in societies markedly simpler than his own; and he accepts too the fact (for such it was when men believed in it and judged according to the principles generated by it) that in all forms of culture excepting art, his own richly complex society has produced something far surpassing anything produced in the "simpler" society of classical Greece or of the Italian Renaissance. Scott's uniqueness is that, unlike those of his predecessors who had worked with the same belief, he does not try to establish an historical rationale for this status quo. He goes so far as to envisage—perhaps it would be truer to his state of mind to say posit—an enlightened modern society which will at once remain what it is and yet so change itself as to make possible the production of major art.

The main interest for us in the "Dissertation," then, lies in Scott's notions of the kind of society needed to produce major art, and beyond that, in what is entailed in holding fast to that notion, developing it into a doctrine, and even hoping to make it a reality in his own time. He outlines the doctrine in great detail, simply by describing what he takes to be the sociocultural situation of the classical Greek artist (and incidentally, that of the artist of the Italian Renaissance). He chooses to write almost entirely of the fine arts (for him in this case, sculpture), although he conceives, as the student of his age would expect him to, that what holds for the fine arts will also hold for poetry. In the immediacy of appeal of sculpture, he finds a quality which, when its working and expression are analysed, will let him see just how the artist and his work have been ideally related to the society in which they have flourished.

Scott's description of the artist and his place in Greek society is one which, in general, is familiar to students of eighteenth-century critical theory. Equally familiar is his concern to establish the fact that, as he puts it, "the connate temper of the times" made possible the production of great art. He sees Greek art as being authentically marked by the "rich raciness of the native soil." And he sees Greek society as in all departments making the work of the artist possible. In small, free, uncentralized states; in states where art has a public, memorial function; in states where, because so many games and rituals are performed naked, the artist is always directly and overwhelmingly aware of the possibility of beauty in the human body—in such states, owing to such "natural causes," art must necessarily flourish. Above all, art is of the people and their artists as they form a vital community; it is not borrowed; it is fresh and original. Finally, such a cultural situation, and therefore such an art, is found obviously to be lacking in his own time.

Now this argument, carried up to this point, had been more or less held to by many critics and literary theorists before Scott. ^[1] True enough, they had mainly concerned themselves with poetry; yet they found the source of major poetry to be ultimately in a nakedness of language—made possible by what was taken to be the simplicity, spontaneity, and cohesion of Greek life—comparable to Scott's notion of nakedness of body. They differ from Scott in this: that almost uniformly, so far as my reading goes, all had been willing to admit that there was absolutely no hope for comparable artistic achievement in their own time; that such art could be produced only in simpler, earlier societies than their own; that, indeed, a characteristic of a mature society was that it had grown up beyond the young, crude, exuberant stage in which conditions were ideal for the cultivation of the esthetic sensibilities. The ideal time for the production of major art, they tended to conclude, was at that point in the history of a society when it was moving from the savage into the civilized. They were thus not absolute esthetic primitivists; but they were concerned nonetheless to tie art to its primitive origins, as for the most part they were concerned equally to celebrate their triumph over the limitations of such origins. So, to take one example, Thomas Blackwell, meditating Homer's achievement in his Enquiry, had written in 1735 that it does not "seem to be given to one and the same Kingdom, to be thoroughly civilized, and afford proper Subjects for Poetry"; and in the same work he later declared that he hoped "That we may never be a proper Subject of an Heroic Poem." Only by being a "Subject" for a heroic poem could the poet write one; for only then would he have available to him the living language—and thus the techniques—adequately to express that "Subject." This was to be a dominant refrain—matched, to be sure, by a counter-refrain, treatment of which is not immediately relevant here ^[2]—through the century. A significant number of critics and literary theorists would be willing to resign themselves to having a lesser art, if such resignation would mean that they could adequately celebrate the enlightened achievements of their own century. They worked out a method of historical analysis whereby they might construct "conjectural histories" of civilization which would allow them to place poetry and the fine arts in the long line of the evolution of culture toward their own time and to demonstrate, moreover, that even as the arts had come early, so philosophy, proper religion, the sciences, and all the highest forms of civilization had come late. Thus they could announce triumphantly that if they had lost something, they had gained much more.

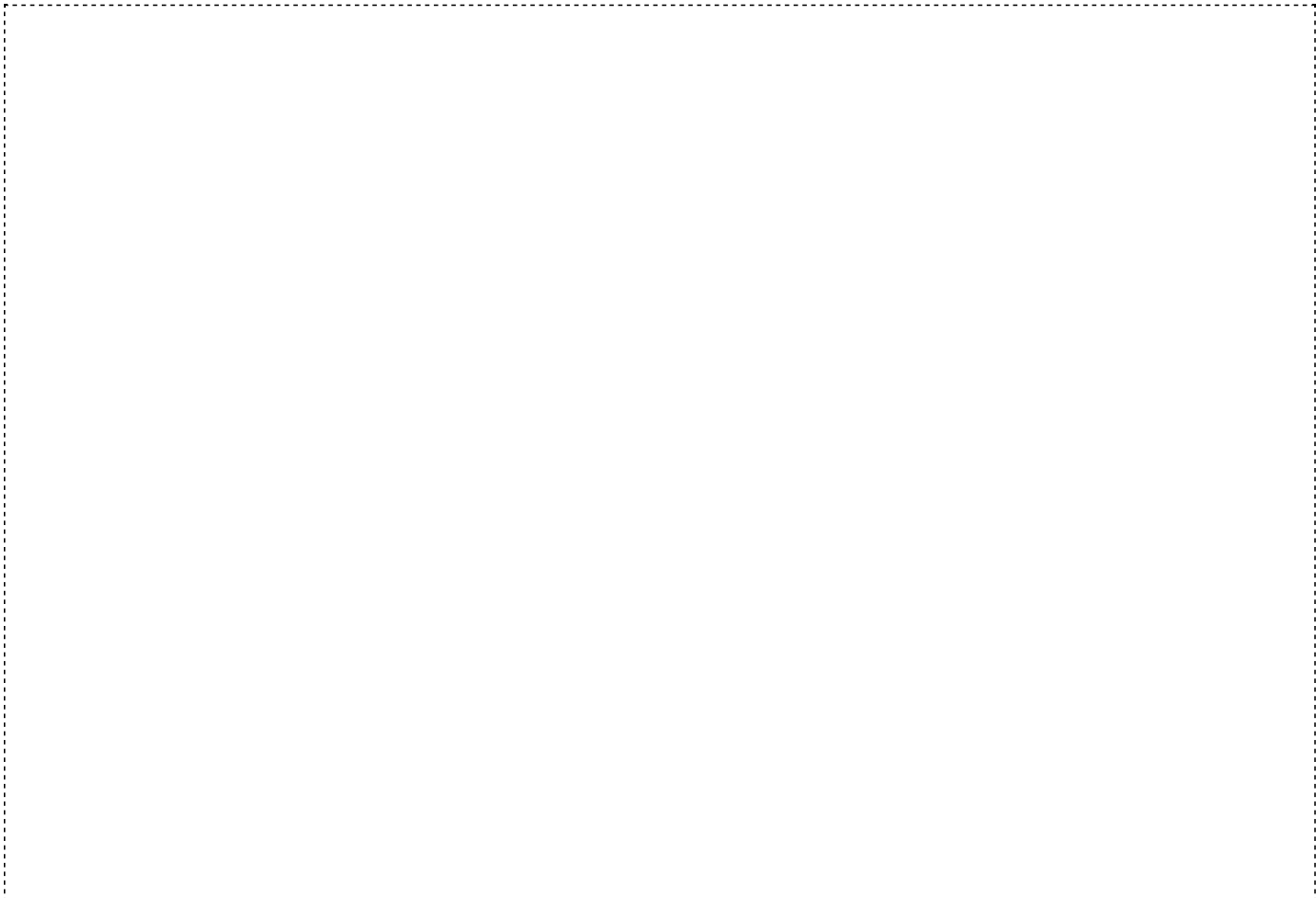
But still the greatness of the art which they did not have moved and attracted them. Their work is perhaps a measure of their attempts to rationalize out of existence a longing for the art which they felt their time was not giving them. Perhaps that is why Scott, in the 1790's—his mind, so it seems to us, not only informed but made by the critical formulae of his time—tried to face squarely up to the fact that somehow great art had to be made possible for even his enlightened century. Yet his mind was so simple and simplifying that he thought that merely by denying his predecessors carefully worked out conjecture of the necessary connection between an "early" society and great art, he could prove that such was possible in his time. For the artist

envisaged in the "Dissertation" is still, in spite of his obvious attempts to have it otherwise, the artist as conceived of by Blackwell and the rest of Scott's predecessors. Scott glories in the civilized achievements of his own age, yet somehow hopes that the same "liberal public encouragement" that obtained in Greece will come again and make for such labor, pains, and study as will create in England art as great as Greece's. Such a condition, he feels, is not impossible; yet he says nothing of the kind of social structure and character which he has already shown to be requisite to the development of "liberal public encouragement." The argument, such as it is, is left hanging. That is to say, there is no evidence in the essay that Scott could really think through to the possibility of the major artist's being immediately present in an eighteenth-century society re-made, so far as its artistic life was concerned, in a primitivistic pattern. He remains purely a theoretical possibility in Scott's scheme of things, as does the society in which he might flourish.

Likewise, in the other essays ^[3] which Scott collected and published along with the "Dissertation," there is no evidence that he really understood what was involved in taking the stand he did. In the most interesting of these pieces, "An Essay on the Influence of Taste on Morals," he denies the existence of a Hutchesonian moral sense, absolutely separates esthetic taste from morals, holds that art will have an influence toward immorality unless it is kept in check with a moral system properly inculcated by revealed religion. What he is entirely unaware of is the possible radical implications of such a separation of art and morality. As in the "Dissertation," he accepts a conventional notion and is satisfied to push it as far as he can, never exploring its possible ambiguities.

The ambiguities are those, of course, which led to that transformation of critical theory and artistic practice which we associate with the romantic movement. In this light, it is interesting to note that just fourteen years after the first publication of the "Dissertation" William Hazlitt could take a stand almost identical in gross characteristics with that of Scott and the others—this in his "Why the Arts are Not Progressive." ^[4] For Hazlitt, because "the arts unlike the sciences and the forms of high civilization in general hold immediate communication with nature," they develop best soon after their "birth" and thrive "in a state of society which [is], in other respects, comparatively barbarous." He goes so far as to instance Homer, Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Dante, Ariosto, Raphael, Titian, Michaelangelo, Correggio, Cervantes, and Boccaccio. In all its extremity, in its inclusive view of what constitutes a barbarous society and its peculiar cultural virtues, this is but the conventional doctrine of Scott and all those who came before him. But it is, in Hazlitt, transformed into a statement, not, as in Scott's predecessors, of a rationale for the weakness of art in their time, nor, as in Scott himself, of a dimly espoused hope of art in his time. It becomes a frank, "sympathetic" statement of a fact of life which, when granted, will enable men to enjoy and comprehend great art of all ages. The doctrine is focussed on the work of art, not on the culture which lacks it; it has been crucially transformed from a historical into a heuristic principle. Scott's "Dissertation" embodies the doctrine just before its transformation—a neoclassical strain, we can say, just before it had become a romantic strain. Scott almost takes his stand with Hazlitt; but he is not quite there. And not being quite there, he is a whole world away.

Roy Harvey Pearce
Ohio State University



NOTES

Among the works that I have seen which specifically develop this argument are: Thomas Blackwell, An Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer (1735); Richard Hurd, The Third [Elizabethan] Dialogue (1759) and Letters on Chivalry and Romance (1762); John Ogilvie, "An Essay on the Lyric Poetry of the Ancients," in Poems on Several Subjects (1762); John Brown, A Dissertation of the Rise, Union, and Power, the Progressions, Separations, and Corruptions of Poetry and Music (1763) and a shorter version of the Dissertation, The History of the Rise and Progress of Poetry (1764); Hugh Blair, A Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian (1763); William Duff, An Essay on Original Genius (1767); Robert Wood, An Essay on the Original Genius and Writings of Homer (1767, enlarged version 1769); Thomas Pownall, A Treatise on the Study of Antiquities (1782). Such a list, however, if it were to indicate the scope and ramifications of the argument would have to be expanded to include more general eighteenth-century studies of the evolution of cultural forms; for the argument on the nature of art and its relation to "primitive" societies is part of a larger one centering on the whole idea of progress. Treatment of the whole subject has never been fully integrated into a study of the nature (or natures) of eighteenth-century criticism and critical theory—although a start has been made on study of it in and of itself. The basic treatment remains Lois Whitney's Primitivism and the Idea of Progress (Baltimore, 1934) and her two essays "English Primitivistic Theories of Epic Origins," MP, XXI (1924), 337-378 and "Thomas Blackwell, a Disciple of Shaftesbury," PQ, V (1926), 196-211. These are to be considerably qualified in their general, sociological orientation by Gladys Bryson's Man and Society: The Scottish Inquiry of the Eighteenth Century (Princeton, 1945). They are further to be qualified in their literary-critical orientation by my "The Eighteenth-Century Scottish Primitivists: Some Reconsiderations," ELH, XII (1945), 203-220, which is in turn somewhat expanded upon and generalized in the appendix to Ernest Tuveson's Millenium and Utopia: A Study in the Background of the Idea of Progress (Berkeley, 1949).

See, for example, Donald Foerster, "Scottish Primitivism and the Historical Approach," PQ, XXIX (1950), 307-323.

The essay was republished in 1804 as part of Scott's Dissertations, Essays, and Parallels. These pieces range from college premium compositions of the 1770's to the "Dissertation" of 1800.

The essay is handily available in W. J. Bate's anthology, Criticism: The Major Texts (New York, 1952), pp. 292-295.

DISSERTATIONS,

Essays,

AND

PARALLELS.

BY

JOHN ROBERT SCOTT, D. D.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
A Dissertation on the Influence of Religion on Civil Society	1
A Dissertation on the Expulsion of the Moors from Spain, and the Protestants from France and the Low Countries	33
A Dissertation on the first Peopling of America	75
A Dissertation on the Progress of the Fine Arts	125
A Dissertation on National Population	181
An Essay on Writing History	219
An Essay on the Question, Was Eloquence beneficial to Athens?	245
An Essay on the Influence of Taste on Morals	269
Comparison between William III, of England and Henry IV, of France	303
Comparison of Cardinal Ximenes and Cardinal Richelieu	323
Comparison between Augustus Cæsar and Lewis XIV	343
Comparison of Maximilian de Bethune, Duke of Sully, and William Pitt, Earl of Chatham	361

PREFACE.

Most of the following compositions were written several years ago, when the Author was a student in the distinguished University of Dublin; whose acknowledged excellence in classical literature, and in every branch of scientific learning, needs not the celebration of his feeble praise: and by it the first and second Dissertations, and one of the Essays, were honoured with the first literary rewards in the power of that learned body to bestow. Written at first with an honest desire of acquiring fair reputation by praise-worthy exertions, they are now submitted to the public eye from a wish to contribute to the liberal amusement, and perhaps to the improvement, of the minds of his fellow-creatures; with all the natural anxieties of an author addressing a public, to whom he is little known; but without any unmanly dread or humiliating deprecation of just and candid criticism. Should they drop still-born from the press, as it may be has been the fate of as meritorious compositions, the author (as becomes him) will submit without murmuring to the general verdict. Should they, on the contrary, be graced with a favourable reception, he shall deem himself honoured by such notice; and will endeavour to render some larger works of his, shortly to be submitted to the same respectable tribunal, as worthy as his abilities will permit of its approving judgment.

Gloucester Street,
Queen Square, 1804.

DISSERTATION ON THE *PROGRESS OF THE FINE ARTS.*

(Published in 1800.)

TO
BENJAMIN WEST, ESQ.

PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY,

WHOSE TALENTS DIGNIFY,
AND WHOSE MANNERS ORNAMENT
HIS ELEVATED SITUATION AS HEAD OF
THAT HONOURABLE AND USEFUL
INSTITUTION,

THE

FOLLOWING DISSERTATION

ON

THE PROGRESS OF THE FINE ARTS

IS DEDICATED,

WITH SINCERE RESPECT AND ALL DUE DEFERENCE,

BY HIS OBLIGED

AND FAITHFUL HUMBLE SERVANT,

JOHN ROBERT SCOTT.

A DISSERTATION, &c.

The natural feelings of man, when he enters into society with his fellow-creatures, first induce him to improve by the means thence acquired the arts necessary to his existence and well-being: whose want he every day felt in his separate and detached state, and for whose melioration he has just reason to hope from the union of combined force, and from the co-operation of confederated talents. Pressed incessantly by the demands for the sustenance of animal life, to supply them plentifully is not only his first care, but also that of the community with which he has associated, if it is even one degree removed from the savage state: and hence, in this early period of growing civilization, the tending of flocks and the tilling of fields, Pasturage and Agriculture, are deemed not only necessary but honourable occupations; the simplicity of untutored man ever leading him to estimate that to be most laudable which he finds to be most useful. These being advanced to a certain degree of excellence, which, though far inferior to what they are obviously capable of attaining, is yet sufficient not only for the comfortable but for the indulgent enjoyment of life, new desires arise, new wants spring up; and their gratification is pursued with an eagerness correspondent to the novelty of their origin, and the untried force of their impression. The cravings of our animal nature being amply provided for by the ingenuity of the inhabitants, by the fertility of the soil, or by the conjoint operation of both, the imagination begins in the luxuriance of abundance to picture to itself new sources of delight, and spurning, not without some contempt, the mere provision for existence, to fancy ideal pleasures, and to search out with anxious care and laboured pains those objects which may gratify them. And man, finding himself possessed of more than a sufficiency to supply all his wants, is willingly inclined to impart some share of that redundancy to those who will contribute to his convenience and satisfaction; to those who will render his comforts at all times more comfortable, who will relieve the languors of his lassitude, and fill up the vacuities of his leisure with amusement. As there always were some to whom labour had no charms, other more agreeable means of acquiring support were quickly sought out, and the inventive powers of the mind were stretched to form those imagined pleasures whose want was felt, and whose reward was ready.

Hence Architecture, Painting, and Statuary, (with strict propriety denominated the fine arts) primarily arose; hence they derived their most assiduous cultivation, and hence the utmost perfection to which they have yet attained. Unsatisfied with the hut that merely protected from the inclemencies of the elements, and, in the moments of repose, from the unwarned attacks of the savages of the forest, man soon sought out for more permanent, more pleasing habitations: to which experience first joined increased conveniences, and then his inventive faculties, sometimes aided by fortunate chance, sometimes led on by correct fancy, added those ornaments that have stood the test of ages, and fixed those proportions that have uniformly approved themselves to all the judicious through the revolving course of various centuries. The ingenuity of love taught the fair nymph to portray the shadow of that favoured youth whose merits had won her heart, that even in his absence she might feast her mind with beholding some similitude of his form: and hence the imagination, impregnated by the nascent thought, conceived those possibilities of excellence in painting, and that source of intellectual enjoyment thence arising, which Zeuxis and Parrhasius exhibited to the admiring eyes of Greece, and which Raphael and Michael Angelo have displayed to the enraptured contemplation of the modern world. Poetry, it is true, early indeed enabled mankind, by the fascinating power of its melodious sounds and its persuasive numbers, to "raise monuments ^[e] more durable than brass," and to consecrate to immortality those illustrious persons who had entitled themselves to lasting fame by their deserts. But, even long antecedent to that period, the desire of having some representative form of revered or beloved individuals had taught men to make some likenesses of them in rude sculptures of stone or ivory: though destitute of the advantage of colouring, yet more impressively striking to the senses than the productions of painting, had they then existed (which may be doubted), and, from the nature of their materials, less liable to the injuries of the weather. These, we acknowledge, were cold, inanimate, and destitute of all appearance of motion; till Dædalus contrived to give expression to the countenance and action to the limbs; on which succeeding artists improving, each rivalling and then surpassing his predecessor, at length produced those "works to wonder at," the exquisite, the unmatched, the divine dignity of the Apollo Belvedere, the energy, the athletic force of the Borghese combatant, the agonized expression of the Laocoon, and the tearful sorrows of the Niobe.

The expectations formed of the enjoyments to be derived from the masterly productions of these Arts have in no one instance been disappointed; but, we may assert without fear of contradiction, have in every case been greatly exceeded: for though the emanations of the arts, with the single exception of the Apollo Belvedere, may have fallen short of that ideal excellence which forms their standard in each duly cultivated mind, as, in the department of literature, the great Roman orator states to have been the case with his own admirable compositions, they have yet confessedly arrived at a degree of beauty, a splendor of effect, and a power of impression, hardly to be hoped, and not easily to be conceived.

Should it then be demanded, what causes produced this transcendent beauty, this unrivalled grace, this combination of pleasing form and perfect utility? They will be found, not in any fortuitous concurrence of accidents, not in any benign aspect of the planets, not in any genial influence of the atmosphere, as has been weakly imagined and absurdly asserted by certain self-denominated Philosophers of the continent; but to have been the effects of much labour and much pains, of much study and much industry, of great national encouragement, and of the peculiar situation of that fortunate land wherein they were advanced from their salient principle to their matured perfection.

To confine ourselves to Greece, with which and its history, by means of its incomparable writers, we are best acquainted: the first striking circumstance in their favour was, that in it they were not borrowed, nor imported, nor caused by foreign imitation, but were the home-bred produce of the country; and therefore, however cultivated and improved, always retained the rich raciness of a native soil. Successive generations of artists arose, each excelling the other in merit, and each of these had a correspondent race of their countrymen ready to admire, and prepared to applaud them. No fastidious delicacy, no affected superiority of

discernment or skill, repressed their talents, or curbed their genius: but free scope was given to the boldest of their flights, and, when they happened to succeed, the praise of their own age was their sure and adequate reward. The productions of the earlier periods would not have, indeed, pleased in the polished age of Pericles, unless as illustrative of the progress of the arts; for then more captivating models were every day produced, more enchanting examples were every day exhibited to the view. But in their own age, and their own time, being superior to all that had been seen before, they were thought matchless performances, and so received with undisputed plaudits the highest estimation. This connate temper of the times (if I may use the expression) proved a most powerful incentive to the abilities of the artists, and ensured to them, if surpassing in merit their predecessors, honourable regard, and that fame ^[f] which above all other considerations was dear to a Grecian heart. Hence labour and pains, assiduity and exertion, were unremittingly applied to advance their peculiar art, to smooth its asperities, to ornament its nakedness, to improve whatever of excellent existed in it, and to aim at still farther capabilities of excellence. Certain of the approbation of their contemporaries, repressed by no ideas of unattainable perfection, which were the growth of latter times and of the greatest refinement, they daily added something to the common stock; and though that something was in itself, perhaps, inconsiderable, it yet raised its possessor to no common degree of celebrity. Thus the arts advanced, proceeding from strength to strength, constantly receiving accessions of improvement, which were favoured by many conspiring, and retarded by no unpropitious circumstances: and, being native to the country, the abilities of the artists in a great measure formed the taste of the age, as its fostering admiration constituted their most flattering reward.

From a situation perfectly dissimilar, though the Romans long and sedulously cultivated the arts, yet their noblest efforts never equalled the best works of the Grecian school; of which the sacred remnants still remain unrivalled and unmatched. For amongst them they were not indigenous, but introduced as it were by violence; by the power of the conquering sword, and by the plundering of insatiable rapacity: each of the Roman generals, however ignorant or unpolished himself, yet pillaging vanquished Greece of the choicest works of her happier days. Thus, indeed, exquisite models and patterns of consummate beauty were procured for the rustic Latians, ^[g] on which they wrought with assiduity, and attempted to emulate: but their redundancy was rather oppressive than co-operative, and their very perfection tended to prevent an encouraging esteem of the rising artists. For the judgment, or what we call the Taste, of the public being formed not gradually, and by progressive steps of improving art, but all at once, and (as it were) at a bound, assumed a squeamish delicacy which nothing imperfect would please, and which delighted more in finding faults than in discovering beauties. And this cause, whose operation is alike powerful and general, contributed more to keep down the Roman arts, and to prevent them from equalling the Greek, than any inferiority of talents, or than any want of continued application and culture.

The case has been the same in the modern world, and it will be found universally true, that where the arts have arisen from natural, or nearly natural causes, and have thence proceeded by gradual advances to higher degrees of perfection, the judgment or taste of the nation similarly meliorating with their improvement, they have attained, and will attain, the utmost excellence which the abilities of the artists can give them: but when brought forward among a people by extraneous circumstances, such as the force of conquests, the commanding influence of supreme power, or the efforts of affected imitation, though they may bloom and flourish for a season, that they never will arrive at that richness of maturity they have been seen to possess elsewhere, nor will enjoy that vigour of growth which native juices infuse; but, like hothouse plants, though fairly seeming, are yet vapid to the sense, and when bereft of their borrowed heat, quickly sink, rot, and die.

The progress of the arts in the ancient world, with the astonishing excellence to which they were carried, was also much aided by the manners and customs there prevailing, and in constant and daily practice. To games and vigorous exercises the ancients were remarkably addicted, regarding them both as liberal amusements and as a preparatory discipline for the active occupations of war, in which each freeman of the state knew himself obliged to engage at a certain period of his life, and which he could not avoid without being damned to never-ceasing infamy. Now all these were performed *naked*, as well on account of the warmth of the atmosphere as to preclude all unequal advantages, and to habituate the mind fearlessly to expose the person to the assaults of incumbent danger. Hence the human figure was hourly exhibited to the inspecting view of the attentive beholder, whether sculptor or painter, in all its various forms of grace and elegance, of strength and force, or of agony and torture: and these not the assumed appearances of fictitious feeling, but the vivid effects of actual endurance, and glowing from the mint of present impression. These were not to be sought in Schools and Academies, they were not the lifeless colourings of mercenary hirelings, but the energies of men emulous of fame, and conscious that their characters with their countrymen would be materially influenced by their performances in these favourite contests. Contests which as amusements were the delight of all, which as exercises were the duty of multitudes; which hoary age beheld with rapture, as recalling the remembrance of the days of their prime, and which unfledged youth gazed on with transport, as picturing those deeds whereby they panted soon to be distinguished. Thus nothing but the most careless inattention could avoid noting the distinctive marks of the various passions and affections, which nature writes in very legible characters: and as all from repeated observation were equally well acquainted with them, in their representation by the artist nothing short of the most exact and accurate likeness could hope for tolerance, much less for approbation.

Their scientific knowledge of anatomy, as applicable and subservient to medical purposes, was perhaps inferior to ours, for they appear not to have enjoyed the advantage in their principal cities of such men as the Hunters ^[h] and Cleghorn: ^[i] but that inferiority proved not injurious to the artist, who chiefly engaged in imitating the prominent features of the human frame when thrown into action, amply compensated for his ignorance of the theory of muscular motion, of the nervous system, and of osteology, by the effects of observation incessantly repeated on the most striking objects, and, it may be, the more impressive from coming unsought and uninculcated. In fact they could scarcely avoid making this observation: it was pressed on them from every quarter; it was urged on them by every incident. If they attended their morning exercises,

it was excited there; if they resorted to their evening amusements, it was roused there also. In the retirement of the country it was not allowed to sleep; in the bustle of the city it was awakened to all its vivacity. From private enjoyment, from public security; from the recreations of peace, from the toils of war; from the vacuities of idleness, and from the labours of industry it alike received nurture, support, and aliment. Thus reiteratedly enforced, its effects became, like those of a second nature, interwoven with the habitudes of the mind, and called forth into action, when the occasion required, with readiness and facility, without effort and without premeditation. Hence the wonders that we are told of the astonishing power of their paintings, limited as we know they were in the number of their colours; of which though we are deprived of the sight by the lapse of time, yet are they rendered credible, nay, fully verified, to us by the matchless remains of their statues; whose transcendent merit we have ocular demonstration that neither prejudice had praised nor ignorance had extolled beyond their real deserts. Hence the truth of nature in the Laocoon, where the expression of suffering is not confined to the agitated visage, but is as forcibly marked in the agonized foot as in the distorted countenance. Hence every muscle moves, every sinew is stretched, every atom of the figure conspires to the general effect in the Borghese combatant: [k] and hence each particular part of the Farnesian Hercules represents, as forcibly as the entire statue, that character of superior manly strength and resistless might, which ancient tales have taught us to connect with the idea of the person of that fabled hero.

It cannot be inferred from what has been here said that there is intended any unqualified approbation of the custom of appearing naked; which so generally prevailed among the ancients, and more especially among the Greeks. Surely no: for its indecency is obvious; it smoothed the path to many immoralities, and doubtless tended in no slight degree to inflame, if not kindle, some notorious vices to which they were eminently addicted. But it has been merely considered with respect to its subserviency to promote the arts of painting and sculpture: and its powerful and salutary influence on them seems so apparent as to be nearly incontestible. It co-operated with other causes, yet to be mentioned, to give them that superlative excellence which, through a long succession of centuries, has excited uniform admiration; and which yet, superlative as it was, fell short of the ideas of it entertained and cherished by the artists.

The peculiar situation of Greece, from the first beginnings of the arts to their most flourishing period, contributed also materially to their improvement and perfection. In its utmost extent not a country of large dimensions, it was yet divided and subdivided into a number of independent states; each eager for distinction, each emulous of fame, each jealous of all superiority in their neighbours. Never for any length of time subject to the dominion of masters, till the overwhelming influence of the Macedonian sunk them all into common slavery, their constitutions were free, or what they regarded as free: in which each citizen felt himself equally interested with any other to extend the reputation, to exalt the glory, and to enlarge the consequence of the state. And when the pre-eminence of power had assigned to Sparta, and afterwards to Athens, that preponderance of authority and weight of consequence necessary to a leading state, first among its equals; still, from national spirit and from deep-rooted habits, an emulation every where prevailed of rivalling in the first rank of reputation each of their neighbours, although they had conceded to one of them the dignity of command. With the single exception of Sparta, where the stern discipline of Lycurgus effectually prevented their progress, as after the arts had begun to arise their cultivation was diffused and eagerly pursued throughout all Greece; the praise of excellence in them early became and long continued an object of the first importance with all its various states. They regarded them not only as a means of internal ornament, in which yet they much prided themselves, but also of external character; a means which might raise to higher fame than the most celebrated their favoured district, however inferior to them in political power. Hence the possession of an artist of distinguished abilities and superior talents was considered as a national concern: and the esteem wherein he was held, the popularity he acquired, and the dignified stations to which with fair prospects of success he might aspire, were answerable to the consequence which his genius was thought to confer on his native land.

As this sentiment was universal, animating the minds and guiding the conduct of all the different states, its influence on the improvement of the arts, and on the exertions of their professors, was powerful in the extreme. They were not deemed the lucrative trades of mechanical men, by which some fame and much money might be procured; but the ennobling occupations of the best-deserving citizens, anxiously labouring to exalt the reputation of their country, and to raise her to a more envied eminence among the surrounding and rival republics. And the citizens thus employed were conscious, in addition to the common motives of rivalry generally prevalent at all times among men of spirit engaged in the same pursuits, that not only their individual character, but the fame of their nation, was implicated in their labours; and fired by the warm energy of that recollection, they wrought with a glowing heat, with an ardour of enthusiasm that, in repeated instances, burst forth in the brightest blaze of excellence. For their exertions in their particular arts were not thought, either by themselves or by the public, the mere efforts of competition of sculptors, painters, or architects, with their fellow artists; but trials of merit between adjacent communities, each vain of their present character, each aiming at higher distinction, each hoping for the pre-eminence: to which trials the eminent artists stepped forwards the champions of a people, not the combatants in a private contest.

Hence with unremitting zeal beauty and grace, strength and spirit, truth and nature, were investigated through all their different forms, were examined with minute attention, were applied with scrupulous accuracy. It little weighed with the professor what his own countrymen, however polished, judged of his work, what impression it made on them, or what plaudits of theirs it called forth: but how it would be received at the Olympic or Isthmian games, at the general assembly of all Greece; where each skilful eye and each intelligent mind would be employed in scrutinizing it without favour or affection, and would compare it as well with the best productions of similar art then known as with the elaborate essays of contemporary artists. Thus whatever of genius, or talents, or skill, or judgment, or industry, each man possessed, was called forth into action by motives the most operative on the human mind, whose power is known and confessed: and the consequence was the rapid and unequalled improvement of the Arts. Improvement which still astonishes, and which we are sometimes inclined to imagine the effort of a superior race of beings to those with whom we converse: but which arose from causes strong and cogent indeed, but natural, and without

difficulty discoverable.

Something not unlike this happened at the revival of the arts in Europe, and contributed materially to their advancement. For Italy, which was their cradle, was then broken into a number of independent states, mostly free, and rivalling each other in every praise of prowess and policy. Hence, when the revival of the arts furnished a new source of fame, it was pursued with avidity; and the various schools formed in its different cities vied with each other for superiority, and by their laudable rivalry promoted the progress of the arts with extraordinary celerity. And though, perhaps, these schools, which soon became distinguished by peculiar merits, may not finally have contributed to the perfection of the arts, as leading their respective students rather to pursue the attainment of that one distinct merit than to aim at the acquisition of universal excellence; yet, at the close of the fifteenth and in the sixteenth century, by their praiseworthy emulation and vigorous exertions, they were singularly useful, and essentially tended to the rapid improvement of the reviving arts. Their fame added much to the splendor and reputation of the cities wherein they were settled, and that circumstance proved a very perceptible incentive to invigorate their talents and to animate their exertions; and so produced, though in an inferior degree, not a little of that spirited labour, of that enthusiastic devotion to their profession, which had aided so considerably the progress of the arts in Greece. We say *in an inferior degree*; because the Italian cities, though sensible of their worth, and persuaded of their public utility, never bestowed on individual professors such extraordinary marks of attention and reverence as the Grecian states were in the habit of lavishing on their more illustrious artists; and, consequently, the cause being lessened, the effect must have been proportionably diminished. In truth this species of rivalry, in which states or nations, however small, feel themselves interested, has ever proved one of the strongest stimulatives that could be applied to abilities; as it combines the patriotic affections of the worthy citizen with the natural ambition of the artist, and alike operates on some of the most powerful public and private springs of action.

But the labour and pains, the study and industry early employed and long continued, in the cultivation of the arts, naturally and necessarily advanced their progress in a striking manner: raising them to such a height of perfection as we weakly think unattainable, because we will not use the adequate means of endeavouring to attain it. Labour is to man, from his constitution and his frame, the real price of every truly valuable acquisition; which, though indolence spurns and idleness rejects, always brings its own reward with it, whether we are ultimately successful or not, in the consciousness of having acted a manly part, and in the vigour of mind and health of body which it, and it alone, invariably confers. Some fortuitous instances may be mentioned of those who have possessed both without its aid; of those who, nursed on the lap of indolence, and folded in the arms of idleness, have enjoyed that first of human blessings, a sound mind in a sound body: but they are instances to astonish, not examples to incite. This is even more strictly and peculiarly true as it regards the arts, than it is in several other cases. For the great merit of painting and sculpture consisting in their exact and captivating copies of nature, and of architecture in its combination of beauty with grandeur, of convenience with magnificence, it is obvious that these qualities are never the casual effects of chance and accident, of lucky hits and fortunate events; but the steady results of pains and care, of study and attention.

Of this truth the professors of the arts in Greece were quickly and fully convinced; and applied that conviction to its only proper purpose, to an unremitting labour on their own appropriate pursuit: a labour which, paramount over each other object, neither pleasure prevented, nor politics precluded, nor the calls of animal life hindered. To excel in their art, to surpass their predecessors, to outstrip their competitors, to be the conspicuous subject of Grecian admiration, were the objects of their daily thoughts and of their nightly dreams: objects which scarce for a moment retired from their view, or, if for a moment retiring, it was only that they might recur again with renovated force. The ^[l] *multa dies et multa litura* which the Roman poet ascribes to the Grecian writers, and to which he truly attributes their superior merit, were still more eminently true of their artists; who applied to the completion of their various works a severity of study and a perseverance of labour that to us, habituated to very different manners indeed, seem surprising; but of which the authenticated accounts cannot be disputed. As exalted character, not the mere making of money, was the aim to which their thoughts were directed, it was pursued with that eagerness which honest ambition ever creates: and though, incidentally, fortune frequently followed their fame, as it came unsought for, none of its degrading motives swayed their conduct.

It was not the idea of the ^[m] hundred talents which he received, great as that sum was (for not one *drachma* of it would he have received had not his work been approved), that inspired the genius of Phidias when he was sculpturing the Olympian Jupiter; but the reflection that by his skill the rude block was to be transformed into the representative likeness of the father of gods and men, to be the admiration and adoration of his enraptured countrymen: and hence profound study, exquisite pains, and incessant labour, were employed to produce that statue, which thence became afterwards the wonder of the world. Under the impulse of such impressions must the Apollo Belvedere have come from the hands of its unequalled sculptor: for though we know not the history of that incomparable statue, yet its expression of dignity more than human, its unforced graceful ease which nature can but faintly copy, its perfect symmetry, and union of complete beauty with full bodily strength, tell more than a thousand witnesses the pains, the study, and the labour that must have been unremittingly exerted to produce it.

It would argue a silly prejudice, not a due sense of the merits of the ancients, to attempt to insinuate that this labour and study, to which we are inclined to attribute so much, was universal. No; for in Greece then, as with ourselves now, there were among the artists (what in the modern phrase we call) *fine gentlemen*: persons of too sublime a genius to condescend to study, and of too delicate a frame to submit to labour. The character of the species has been preserved, though the names of its individuals have long, long since been forgotten. But they never promoted the progress, never advanced the improvement of any art: but, like their *amiable* successors, followed a trade for support, and did not cultivate a profession with dignity. But the persons of whom we speak, as distinguished by these qualities, were those worthy citizens who addicted themselves to no art without adorning and improving it; whose names ennobled the age in which they lived;

who then were never mentioned without reverence, nor yet, at this far distant period, are ever thought on without respect. By their studies and their labours, vigorously and undeviatingly exerted, was the progress of the arts promoted, their improvement accelerated, and their near approximation to perfection effected: they thus experimentally proving the energetic power of these valuable qualities, and leaving examples to fire the emulation of the spirited and the active in each future age.

In addition to the circumstances already mentioned, whose power and efficiency on the progress of the arts we have endeavoured to point out, there must be called to mind the great national encouragement which they received in Greece, and the extraordinary influence which it must have had on the warm imaginations of its gay and high-spirited inhabitants. The desire of distinction and honour is a principle interwoven in the constitution of our nature; and though, like most others we possess, it is liable to perversion, is in itself not only blameless but laudable; inciting the best exertions of talents where they are, and often supplying their place where it finds them not. There are no countries, however adverse the regent of the day may have yoked his horses from them, where its operation is not more or less felt: and in exact proportion to the civilization and mental improvement of each country, its ascendancy has ever been found to be high, its dominion to be great. This is strictly true even with regard to the estimation of private individuals: but the applause of a whole people has invariably been deemed the most just meed of the most exceeding merit, ever since nations have assumed a fixed and stable form. Now this applause formed an important part of the great national rewards by which Greece fostered the arts; and it was a part that peculiarly came home both to the business and bosoms of each worthy citizen, and caused every pulse of a Grecian heart to vibrate to its impression. Their characteristic fondness of fame is known and acknowledged; but this applause, though by them in itself extravagantly valued, was not a mere empty, flattering sound: for, from the constitutions prevailing in nearly every state of Greece, it was the sure conductor to domestic dignity, to political power, and to commanding sway in the public deliberations. The first offices of the state, and the prime trusts of the government, were open to that distinguished artist whose admired performances had secured the universal suffrage. They were often without seeking offered by popular gratitude to his acceptance; nay, sometimes with honest violence forced on his unwilling reception. Thus the principles of interest, ambition, popularity, confessedly some of the most powerful that guide the conduct of mankind, were called forth in aid of that natural bent or disposition which had induced the man to cultivate any particular art: and the consequence was such as might be expected from the efficiency of such operative motives, surpassing merit and supreme excellence.

Another species of national encouragement, nearly connected with this, was the certainty which the eminent artist enjoyed that, whenever the occasion offered, his talents would be employed to erect, or to decorate with the labours of his pencil or his chissel, the temples, the theatres, the porticoes, the places of public assembling of the cities of Greece; where his works, contributing amply to his fortune from their munificent reward, would contribute more to his fame when exposed to the scrutinizing view of that intelligent people. He had no cause to fear that his abilities would be overlooked or buried in obscurity by prepossession, partiality, or prejudice: he had no apprehensions to dread from the effects of interested relationship, of commanding influence, of narrow local attachment, or of proud and presuming ignorance. If his merit was acknowledged his employment was sure; and he was even courted by the general voice to exert his talents for the public credit, not depressed in their exertion by mean and base affections. He was not obliged to solicit for employment with humiliating applications, and, when employed, to labour under the multiplied disadvantages of deficient or stinted means, of complying with vitiated judgments, of submitting to the senseless whims of folly and caprice. Full scope was given to the fertility of his imagination, to the extent of his genius, to the vigour of his fancy: whilst all the powers of his mind and all the vigour of his body, all the ingenuity of his head and all the dexterity of his hands, were impelled to their best performances by the consciousness that all deficiencies would be imputable solely to himself, the public being free from the slightest suspicion of having either curbed or confined his abilities. As no elevation of genius made him giddy, hence grace and beauty, strength and vigour, expression and passion, respectively marked his performances; and his fame became connected with the edifices, the statues, the paintings, that ornamented the country, which struck every eye, and which none beheld without recollecting with respect the able artist whose workmanship had produced them.

The effect of this kind of encouragement on the arts was great, is manifest, and need be but slightly mentioned: yet, perhaps, may appear the more striking from contrasting it with some practices of more modern times. In them the first city in the world has disgraced itself with all who have eyesight, by employing to erect its most expensive building ^[n] an architect *because the man was a citizen*: and, in more countries of Europe than one, statues and paintings are exhibited as commemorative of illustrious public deeds, where contorsion and extravagance, where flutter and glare, form the predominant characters; but they dishonour those countries, on account of the artists engaged to execute them being employed because they were the favourites of despots, the flatterers of titled harlots, or the relations of directors; whilst men of the first talents and merit in their profession were pining in indigence and obscurity, unnoticed and unfriended. The consequences of this latter conduct none will say that we have reason to boast of from the superlative excellence of modern art; but what has been felt from it may readily induce us to believe how essentially its direct opposite must have promoted the progress of the arts in Greece.

The vast sums expended by the Grecian states on their public monuments and their public works (vast, indeed, when the comparative value of money then and now is considered), tended much to assist the progress of the arts, and to aid their high improvement. For, though we have unquestionable reason to believe that the sordid motive of private profit was not the first principle in the minds of those great artists who have immortalized their names by their works, yet without a certain liberality of expence their ideas could not have been realized, their works could not have been executed; and that liberality they found limited commonly by nothing but the public means, and often not even by them. We know from the gravest and clearest authorities with what lavish expenditure scenic representations were exhibited at Athens, with what unbounded magnificence her temples, her tribunals, her porticoes were decorated: we equally well know the splendor of Corinth, a near neighbouring city; the incalculable price of its paintings, the inestimable value of

its statues, and that from the coalesced mass of its molten metals there arose, at its destruction, a compound more highly prized by the Romans than gold. The other principal cities were alike studious of embellishment, alike emulous of ornament, and in various proportions enjoyed them according to the circumstances of time and situation: but Delphi and Olympia, the grand seats of the national religion and the national games, centered in themselves each choicest production of genius, each happiest effort of art, each transcendent display of excellence; amassed with a judgment that delighted, with a profusion that surprized, and with an expence that astonished.

This generous spirit in carrying on and completing public works which, though it may sometimes be pushed to an excess (as, perhaps, was the case in Greece), is so truly honourable to any people, had, and obviously must have had, the most decided influence in advancing and improving the arts, and in giving them that degree of perfection which has never yet been exceeded, nor even equalled. It excited exertion, by the security that its efforts would not be suffered to remain undisplayed, but would be invited to add loveliness to the beautiful, and splendor to the magnificent; it roused the full force of emulation, by the certainty that superior merit would receive superior rewards, and neither be permitted to languish in privacy nor to pine in poverty; and it invigorated the boldest flights of genius, by the firm assurance that there was a prevalent spirit ready to countenance, prepared to adopt, and anxious to encourage them. It would be no small absurdity to affirm that fortune, as well as fame, had not attractions for a Grecian artist; for it must ever be absurd to affirm generally the absence of the operation of general principles: and therefore the great pecuniary recompences which their talents procured had, doubtless, a proportionate influence on all their labours to improve their art; though, it may be, less in that region than in many other countries. And from the combined efficacy of these several kinds of national encouragement, which, like different branches of the same tree, spring all from the same root, the progress of the arts was furthered so essentially, was advanced so highly, as we have heard of with wonder, and have seen with amazement.

So complex having been the causes, so slow and progressively gradual the progress of the Fine Arts, highly grateful must it be to every truly British breast to consider the rapid advances they have made in this favoured Isle within the last fifty years: advances certainly unmatched in their former history, as in that period they have arisen from the utmost imbecility of infantine weakness (indeed almost from *non-entity*) to a vigorous maturity that leaves far behind them the emasculate efforts and puny productions of all other contemporary European nations. The causes of this unequalled improvement have notoriously been the countenance and fostering protection of his present Majesty, an admirer and intelligent judge of their merit, and the ardent spirit of emulation excited among the artists themselves by such exalted and distinguishing notice. These co-operating have produced an exertion of talents, a display of abilities, and emanations of genius that always wore in existence, but which required concurring circumstances to bring them into full action, and to cause them to expand their latent energies. And had the general patronage been correspondent to these fortunate incidents, had not the fashionable jargon of presumptuous, self-created, arbiters of taste, affecting to despise National art, vitiated the public mind, or rather strengthened an ancient prejudice there floating, it is not easy to conceive how much greater still would have been their progress. It is at least certain that our ingenious young artists would have been amply encouraged to exert themselves, and not suffered, after the most promising exhibitions of dawning talents, to pine in indigence and wretchedness, to sink into obscurity and oblivion, or (like the illfated, but most meritorious Proctor ^[o]) to hasten, in the very opening of life, the termination of mortal existence from the excruciating pressure of continued penury and misery.

Thus having attempted to investigate the progress of the arts, and to what was owing that supreme excellence which they formerly attained, we seem to have reasonable grounds to conclude that it flowed from such natural and moral causes as, at all times and in all cases, are known powerfully to affect the feelings and to actuate the conduct of man. No whimsical refinements, no marvellous mysteries, no imaginary and fantastic theories have been had recourse to: but lighted on our way by the irradiating torch of authentic history, and unseduced by the false glare of lying legends, we have not dared so much to affirm what, in certain situations, our fellow-creatures **MUST** do, as to detail with some care what in fact they **DID** do. If what we have here advanced has not the attraction of novelty to allure, it is hoped that it is not deficient in the recommendation of truth to convince. It has not been thought necessary formally to refute the sentiments of those profound Philosophers, who have sagaciously discovered the causes of the inferiority of the arts in some countries and of their superiority in others, and consequently the perfection to which they arrived in Greece, in the power of the solar beams in certain latitudes, in the influences of the atmosphere, and in those of terrestrial and celestial vapours: for if the causes here assigned appear fully adequate to the end produced, as we conceive they do, it must be idle to shew the inutility of others, gratuitously brought forth from the inexhaustible storehouse of fancy, and supported by any thing rather than solid reasoning. It must be allowed that they very roundly assert, but as fallaciously argue, whenever they deign to argue on this subject: for mere assertions, positive, pompous, presuming, but assertions still, are the commonest weapons of their warfare. And, possibly, it would neither be reputable to contest the specious subtily of the sophisms of even such sages, nor honourable to conquer the powerless imbecility of their assertions.

It is but fair to avow that this enquiry into the progress of the arts has not been entered on for the sole purpose of ascertaining, as far as we were able, the causes of the surpassing excellence to which they were carried in Greece, without at the same time intimating, with due deference to superior judgments and to superior authority, the efficacy of the same causes, at all times and in all countries, in improving and exalting them. As human nature is the same at all periods, though diversified in its exterior shew by the various customs, modes, and manners, that variously prevail, it cannot be seriously doubted but that those principles, which have been found by experience in one country to powerfully sway its conduct, and to incite its efforts in the Arts to their noblest productions, would be equally efficient and equally successful elsewhere, were they fairly applied, and as vigorously exerted. We have no satisfactory reason for believing that either the mental or corporeal powers of man have degenerated in the succession of ages: and we well know that, by the benefits of experience and invention, considerable aids have been added to both, to methodize their motions and to facilitate their operations. Our profounder and better-studied knowledge of Metaphysics, our improved

skill in Natural Philosophy and Mechanics, and our more accurate acquaintance with the principles of colours, with their combinations and their shades, all confessedly tend to these points. Should then the same liberal public encouragement be displayed, by those possessed of the power of displaying it, as dignified the best days of Greece; should the same labour, the same pains, the same study, the same industry, be used by modern artists as distinguished their truly illustrious predecessors; we might not vainly hope to see the arts carried to still greater perfection than they have ever yet attained; we might expect to behold their deficiencies supplied, their utilities increased, their energies enlarged, and their beauties augmented.

On national encouragement it becomes not the mediocrity of our talents and station to presume to decide; yet, possibly, it will not be judged too vauntingly confident to say that it should in all cases be spirited, generous, impartial, and should not be subjected to the caprices of power, to the varying humours of the transient depositaries of the public confidence, nor to the inconstant and ever-mutable gusts of popular phrenzy. What effect such encouragement would have on the artists themselves can, indeed, be only conjectured; for such encouragement has never yet been exhibited in the modern world: but that conjecture is neither vague nor random, as it is guided by permanent principles, and directed by the known influence of steady affections on the human heart. It may be affirmed then, with some assurance, that it would inspirit their labours, that it would multiply their pains, that it would invigorate their studies, that it would augment their industry: for such were heretofore its experienced consequences in similar cases, and therefore they are reasonably to be expected again. They would not waste their youth in the riot of lawless pleasure, and so treasure up sickness and sorrow for the days of their prime: they would not spend their hours in the ceaseless pursuit of the intoxicating amusements of some great capital: they would not lay out their whole attention on the low and subordinate, but gainful, branches of their *trade*, in contempt of the superior features of their *ART*, and of its possible improvement: but concentrating all their powers, all their abilities, all their faculties, in the advancement of their peculiar pursuit, would rapidly raise themselves from the drudgery of mechanical workmanship to the proud elevation of professional exertion. Thus the arts, advanced by so conspicuous a change of manners in their cultivators, and by an encouragement differing so widely from the paltry private patronage pretending to that name, would attain that state of perfection to which their admirers fondly wish to see them carried; but which they must wish in vain till something like the changes here etched out shall have taken place. And that what depends on the artists has not been too sanguinely supposed, nor too strongly pictured, will surely not be asserted: for it has only been supposed that they are men of common sense and natural feelings; that they are not insensible to the allurements of each dignified distinction in life; that they have hearts that can be warmed and minds that can be roused.

That much higher ideas might justly be formed of some artists we can positively affirm from personal knowledge; as we know some who have really the souls of Artists; who, even in present circumstances, instead of grovelling all their lives in mean and sordid occupations, adventurously dare to soar into the immense void of possible excellence; and whose characters it would be highly grateful to portray, were not the desire restrained by the consciousness of inability to do justice to their merits. Such men, indeed, by the vigour of their genius, counteract the disadvantages to which they may be exposed, and, bursting the barriers of opposing obstacles with spirit all their own, impart to the arts whatever of addition or improvement they receive; elucidating their obscurities, polishing their asperities, and lopping their luxuriances: and their number might be increased to any given amount. But until that halcyon period shall arrive, if it ever shall arrive, when the arts shall be considered as real national objects, and receive *real* national encouragement (without which, it must be confessed, all extraordinary progress in them is not *generally* to be expected), their beauty, their grace, their grandeur, depend on these men alone. And conscious of the high ground whereon they stand, as the champions of truth and nature against fashion and futility, and caprice and extravagance, and of the possible benefits resulting from their labours in giving passion to the mute canvas, expression to the inanimate block, and magnificence to utility in each public edifice; they will not suffer themselves to be discouraged by temporary neglect, nor to be disheartened by temporary preferences of the incapable and undeserving. They will strengthen their minds to encounter the provoking criticisms of pert and petulant presumption; they will scorn the contempts of self-conceited and ignorant folly, however highly seated; and they will meet with firm dignity the misjudging decisions of purse-proud affluence. And conscious worth shall crown them with a wreath of honour, greener than ever bloomed on the brow of an Olympic conqueror; their own hearts shall applaud them; their works shall form a lasting monument to the immortality of their names; and their fame shall float down the current of future ages with daily increasing strength, with daily augmented splendor.

The final result then of our enquiry on this amusing and interesting subject is, that we have the best grounds for concluding the progress of the arts originally, and the great perfection to which they were carried in Greece, to have arisen from natural and moral causes of confessed efficacy, and not from any casual circumstances, extraneous to and independent of man: and we deem it reasonable to think that the same causes, operating as uncontrolledly any where else within the extent of the temperate climates, would most probably again produce the same effects. Far from indulging any licence of imagination, or from giving wing to its flights, it has been endeavoured rather carefully to detail facts than wantonly to invent systems. Of the evidence, which to us has appeared convincing, the public will judge: of the rectitude of our intention in producing it we are sure, for it is only to incite public reward, to encourage study, and labour, and industry.

Exegi monumentum ære perennius. Horatii Carmi. Lib. iii. Ode 30.

Præterea laudem nullius avaris. Horatius De Arte Poetica.

[g]

----- artes

Dr. **W**illiam Hunter and Mr. John Hunter, the late celebrated anatomists of London.

Dr. **G**eorge Cleghorn, the late excellent and deservedly famous Professor of Anatomy in the university of Dublin: a man of whom it can be truly said that the excellent qualities of his heart were as estimable as his superior professional talents were conspicuous.

This **s**tatue, which forms one of the most valuable possessions in the superb Borghese collection, is commonly called *the fighting Gladiator*; but, we apprehend, very erroneously: as the whole of that admirable figure bespeaks a character greatly superior to that of those degraded and despised beings, whose mercenary services contributed to the amusements of the Roman amphitheatre.

Horati**u**s.

19,375**l**.

The **M**ansion House of London.

The **f**ate of this ingenious youth deserves to be distinctly recorded. Born of humble parentage in one of the more distant counties, he had early manifested an admiration of the Arts, and, being admitted a student of the Royal Academy, eminently distinguished himself there by his abilities and his industry. Applying peculiarly to Sculpture, soon after the termination of his studies in the Academy he exhibited, at its annual Exhibition in Somerset-place, two models of unrivalled excellence, which might, without fear of deterioration, have been placed in competition with the happiest productions of the best days of Grecian art, and which at the time met with their well-earned applause. But, alas! applause was his only reward: no wealthy patron took him by the hand, no affluent lover of the Arts enquired into, or assisted, his circumstances; and his means being very confined, misery was his portion. He had however the soul of an Artist, and for a length of time bore up with manly fortitude against his distresses. The present worthy President of the Royal Academy, suspecting his situation, with the aid of the Council obtained for him from the Academy an annuity of 100*l.* a year, to enable him to go to Italy, and improve himself there: but the unhappy youth had unavoidably contracted some trifling debts, which he was utterly unable to discharge, and his mind was too delicately alive to every finer feeling to bear the thought of leaving this country without paying them. This circumstance, preying on his agitated spirits, and on a frame emaciated by the severest distress, caused his speedy dissolution, to the irreparable injury of the Arts. After his death it was discovered that, for the last two years of his life, he had resided in a miserable cock-loft in the worst house in Clare market, which he had rented for a shilling a week; and that his daily sustenance for that time had been *only two dry biscuits with a draft of water from the market pump.*

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JOHN BAILLIE: *An Essay on the Sublime* (1747). Introduction by Samuel H. Monk.

Contemporaries of the *Tatler* and *Spectator*. Introduction by Richmond P. Bond.

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Selections from Seventeenth-Century Songs. Introduction by Jennifer W. Angel.

A Sermon Preached at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul (1745). [Probably by Samuel Johnson]. Introduction by James L. Clifford.

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FIRST YEAR (1946-1947)

Numbers 1-6 out of print.

SECOND YEAR (1947-1948)

7. John Gay's *The Present State of Wit* (1711); and a section on Wit from *The English Theophrastus* (1702).

8. Rapin's *De Carmine Pastoralis*, translated by Creech (1684).

9. T. Hanmer's (?) *Some Remarks on the Tragedy of Hamlet* (1736).

10. Corbyn Morris' *Essay towards Fixing the True Standards of Wit, etc.* (1744).

11. Thomas Purney's *Discourse on the Pastoral* (1717).

12. *Essays on the Stage*, selected, with an Introduction by Joseph Wood Krutch.

THIRD YEAR (1948-1949)

13. Sir John Falstaff (pseud.), *The Theatre* (1720).

14. Edward Moore's *The Gamester* (1753).

15. John Oldmixon's *Reflections on Dr. Swift's Letter to Harley* (1712); and Arthur Mainwaring's *The British Academy* (1712).

16. Nevil Payne's *Fatal Jealousy* (1673).

17. Nicholas Rowe's *Some Account of the Life of Mr. William Shakespeare* (1709).

18. "Of Genius," in *The Occasional Paper*, Vol. III, No. 10 (1719); and Aaron Hill's Preface to *The Creation* (1720).

FOURTH YEAR (1949-1950)

19. Susanna Centlivre's *The Busie Body* (1709).

20. Lewis Theobald's *Preface to The Works of Shakespeare* (1734).

21. *Critical Remarks on Sir Charles Grandison, Clarissa, and Pamela* (1754).

22. Samuel Johnson's *The Vanity of Human Wishes* (1749) and *Two Rambler* papers (1750).
23. John Dryden's *His Majesties Declaration Defended* (1681).
24. Pierre Nicole's *An Essay on True and Apparent Beauty in Which from Settled Principles is Rendered the Grounds for Choosing and Rejecting Epigrams*, translated by J. V. Cunningham.

FIFTH YEAR (1950-1951)

25. Thomas Baker's *The Fine Lady's Airs* (1709).
26. Charles Macklin's *The Man of the World* (1792).
27. Frances Reynolds' *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Taste, and of the Origin of Our Ideas of Beauty, etc.* (1785).
28. John Evelyn's *An Apologie for the Royal Party* (1659); and *A Panegyric to Charles the Second* (1661).
29. Daniel Defoe's *A Vindication of the Press* (1718).
30. Essays on Taste from John Gilbert Cooper's *Letters Concerning Taste*, 3rd edition (1757), & John Armstrong's *Miscellanies* (1770).

SIXTH YEAR (1951-1952)

31. Thomas Gray's *An Elegy Wrote in a Country Church Yard* (1751); and *The Eton College Manuscript*.
32. Prefaces to Fiction; Georges de Scudéry's Preface to *Ibrahim* (1674), etc.
33. Henry Gally's *A Critical Essay on Characteristic-Writings* (1725).
34. Thomas Tyers' A Biographical Sketch of Dr. Samuel Johnson (1785).
35. James Boswell, Andrew Erskine, and George Dempster. *Critical Strictures on the New Tragedy of Elvira, Written by Mr. David Malloch* (1763).
36. Joseph Harris's *The City Bride* (1696).

SEVENTH YEAR (1952-1953)

37. Thomas Morrison's *A Pindarick Ode on Painting* (1767).
38. John Phillips' *A Satyr Against Hypocrites* (1655).
39. Thomas Warton's *A History of English Poetry*.
40. Edward Bysshe's *The Art of English Poetry* (1708).
41. Bernard Mandeville's "A Letter to Dion" (1732).
42. Prefaces to Four Seventeenth-Century Romances.

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Variations in spelling, punctuation and hyphenation have been retained except in obvious cases of typographical error:

"... [joined increased \(conveniencies—>\) conveniences...](#)"

"... [which nothing imperfect \(eould—>\) would please...](#)"

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