



THE study of landscape-drawing from Nature, amid country scenes, is one of the most delightful occupations we can pursue, creating refined enjoyment and contributing to excite a cheerful, happy, grateful frame of mind, akin to the purest and best sensations we can experience.

Judgment, taste, imagination, memory, each is stimulated and disciplined by the pursuit, so that we can hardly engage therein without improving ourselves, not merely as artists, but in other important respects.

To understand how this can be, it is only necessary to bear in mind that sketching from Nature usually tends to bring a great variety of scenery and objects under our notice. This leads us to compare their different picturesque characteristics one with another, and to discriminate their beauties, or to the exercise of judgment and formation of taste. At the same time, surrounded by an exquisite diversity of natural objects and charming pictorial effects, fancy and imagination, even though not originally active, throw out new tendrils into the world of wonders that lies beyond the domains of materiality. For Nature is a twofold world—a material world, to which the sluggish fancy alone clings, and a spiritual world, into which the quickened imagination branches forth, receiving from its magical influences nourishment and support, engendering those immortal fruits that assume a form in the works of the artist and poet. Lastly, memory is exerted and strengthened by the constant direction of the attention to the objects being sketched, and which cannot be imitated, unless remembered whilst the eye is withdrawn from them to guide the operations of the hand.

When, therefore, it is also borne in mind that a mere copyist of the drawings of others can never become a thorough artist, it will be perceived how great are the inducements to sketch as much as possible from Nature, and the important results arising from doing so—results no one can fail to derive, who is earnest, industrious, and persevering—who is not easily discouraged by failure, and frequently uses his pencil and brush at various times and seasons, abroad as well as at home.

But a knowledge of the following principles of proceeding will greatly facilitate the first attempts of art students to sketch with purpose and utility.

What shall I sketch? may be a question arising in the minds of some, when they determine upon extending the sphere of their efforts. The answer to this question is,—That which you prefer, provided you have the opportunity so to do; or, if you have not, then, from the scenes which are accessible to you, select a subject the most in accordance with your inclinations. Yet the end a student has in view in studying art should always govern his choice of subject. Should he wish, consequently, to excel in, or the bent of his genius tend towards, the representation of mere landscape, or of landscape and figure objects combined, he should concentrate his efforts accordingly. He must not forget,