

his taste. There, however, it as necessarily happens that, as adventitious circumstances rarely call the attention of youth to that line of business, it is the powerful incitements of genius alone that prompts any one to prosecute the study of the fine arts, so that perhaps fewer unsuccessful attempts may be expected there to be made, than in countries which are more favourably circumstanced.

There are few instances of young persons in Scotland setting out in life with an intention of prosecuting the fine arts: It is scarcely ever within the view of the parents. The education of children of persons in easy circumstances in Scotland is invariably directed toward the attainment of literary knowledge, either to fit them for the profession of the law, or to enable them to act a becoming part in the character of a gentleman. Hence it happens that Scottish artists abroad, are in general as much distinguished for elegant mental acquirements as professional skill; which tends to connect them more intimately with acquaintances formed abroad than is usual among those of other nations, and which too often prevents them from returning to their native country, or continuing in it after they have attained eminence in their art.

Such was the case with Mr Aikman. His father, a man of eminence at the Scottish bar*, intended that his son should follow the same profession with him.

* He was Sherriff of Forfar-shire, and in the nomination of a lord of Session at the time of his death.

1793.
self, a
views
fine a
sooner
edly d
to att
Poetr
called
mind a
to oper
excels
an adm
of poe
those
the her
ings of
with th
felt it c
tached
the De
been a
wrote
Mr A
quaint
pal pa
he alw
same c
of his
who u
time,
tronag
one of