

phrases, and its constant use of what we must call, for want of a better epithet, "slang" expressions. Thus a man is no longer said to be in debt, but in a state of indebtedness; he is not a hearty good man, but a whole souled specimen of living and breathing humanity; place is pushed aside by locality; proceed by progress; thoughts by lucubrations; to say nothing of strange uncouth terms which require a dictionary of themselves. A curious instance of the effect of using a hard word where a simpler term would suffice, is shown in the general use of the word *commence* instead of *begin*. For now people often say, have you begun to commence? They might as well say, have you ended to terminate? This vicious style of speaking and writing is owing in a great degree to the laboured effort to produce great effects with small means; and when the mind has nothing to say worth hearing, it wraps itself up in words of prodigious length. This reminds me of a little anecdote I once heard, when I lived in the County of Cornwall. Two persons were conversing together on the subject of extemporaneous preaching, and one said to the other, who was a minister, "My friend, do you never lose the thread of your discourse?" "Yes," said the other, "sometimes I lose sight of my idea altogether." "And how," replied his companion, "do you proceed in such a case?" "Why," said the other, "when I find myself *without an idea*, I splash about, and get very warm, until I find it." And who knows but that the very part of the sermon in which the man was splashing about in search of his idea, might not be considered by many, the finest part of the discourse? I have known not a few writers, who proceed on this voyage of discovery, and as sure as you find a man without an idea, so surely will his words increase in length, in plain English, "much cry and little wool," much talk, and little sense. But enough of these absurdities

Let us now say a few words on the question of beauty of form and design, as one of the objects of *good taste*.

Beauty of form, elegance of combination, and harmony of color are evident in almost all the works of our great Creator, and we are generally most successful when we study nature and copy it.

In some parts of the animal creation, utility seems to be preferred to beauty, but in the majority of instances beauty and utility are united. And in the inanimate creation every part teems with beauty. As a perfect master of harmony never plays without melodious sounds, so, in a far higher degree, the Lord of Heaven and earth cannot move (as it were) without form, number, order, and harmony. And as our Saviour