

The pleasant seat, the ruined tower,
 The naked rock, the shady bower,
 The town and village, dome and farm,
 Each gives each a double charm."

It is true there are other objects than external nature which excite these emotions; but I choose to limit my attention to this for the present, in order to give you a clearer view of the true nature of this class of mental phenomena, which appear to me to have been unnecessarily mystified by all the writers on Rhetoric that I have consulted. If the question then should be asked, who is the poet whose writings will be always pleasing? Without entering more minutely into the question, we would answer, that it is he, who, possessing a mental constitution more alive than other men to the beauties of nature, has kindled with a warmer glow as his eye expatiated over them. Other men might experience the same feelings in kind, but they were different in degree. They were more languid, and consequently more transitory. They might have the outline, but they wanted the well-defined figures and vivid coloring which are essential to a true representation. The consequence was, their emotions soon faded, and left no other trace save the remembrance that for the time they were pleased. The true poet, however, like an inspired prophet of old, is constrained by a noble impulse to pour out his soul in language fresh and appropriate. His art, if art it may be called, is not what many suppose it to be, the mere capacity of expressing himself magniloquently on common things; and of so selecting terms that the last of every second or third line may have a similarity of sound. One who writes thus, writes not from the fulness of his heart, but from a principle of imitation. It would be an interesting discussion to point out the adaptations which exist between external nature and man's mental constitution—this, however, would lead me too far away from the immediate object of this lecture—it may be enough to say, that such an adaptation exists, and the soul of the true poet responds not less truly to the graceful and the sublime in the natural world than do the cords of a well tuned instrument to the hand of the performer. True poetry is of the nature of a testimony. And neither does it seem to matter what shape it assumes—whether the author speaks in his own person, or conjures up imaginary beings who speak as if of themselves, he is never withdrawn; and I doubt not could we know the private history of the Author of some Epic such as the *Aeneid*, *Paradise Lost*, or *Telemachus*, we should see that there was less of mystery in the matter of originality and invention than the reading public had been taught by critics to believe—and that the author whether he was describing things spoken by Gods, Angels, or Men—by Kings or Commons—whether he transported them to another world or limited them to this one, was all the while borrowing from ordi-