

parts, and can form some resemblance of the whole, yet they never could arrive at such a justness in their fabric as was necessary to produce the desired effect. If we pass to artists of a superior class, they seem to be still more defective, their paintings being more indebted to the native brightness and excellency of the colours than to the skill of the painter.

The Chinese government having also been the subject of boundless panegyric; on this head I must observe, that by their transactions with Mr. Anson, we have seen that their magistrates are corrupt, their people thievish, and their tribunals venal, and abounding with artifice. Nor is the constitution of the empire, or the general orders of the state, less liable to exception: since that form of government, which does not in the first place provide for the security of the public against the enterprises of foreign powers, is certainly a most defective institution: and yet this populous, this rich and extensive country, so pompously celebrated for its refined wisdom and policy, was conquered about an age since by a handful of Tartars; and even now, through the cowardice of the inhabitants, and the want of proper military regulations, it continues exposed, not only to the attempts of any potent state, but to the ravages of every petty invader. It has been already observed, on occasion of the commodore's disputes with the Chinese, that the Centurion alone was an overmatch for all the naval power of that empire: this perhaps may appear an extraordinary position; but their junks, though some of them are of great burden, are coarse unmanageable vessels; and the masts, sails, and rigging are ruder than the built; for their masts are made of trees, no otherwise fashioned than by barking them, and lopping off their branches. Each mast has only two shrouds of twisted rattan, which are often both shifted to the weather-side; and the halyard, when the yard is up, serves instead of a third shroud. The sails are of mat, strengthened every three feet by an horizontal rib of bamboo; they run up the mast with