

very ridiculous prepossessions, and as the transactions of Mr. *Anson* with the Regency of *Canton* were of an uncommon nature, in which many circumstances occurred, different perhaps from any which have happened before, I hope the following reflections, many of them drawn from these incidents, will not be altogether unacceptable to the reader.

That the *Chinese* are a very ingenious and industrious people, is sufficiently evinced, from the great number of curious manufactures which are established amongst them, and which are eagerly sought for by the most distant nations; but tho' skill in the handicraft arts seems to be the most important qualification of this people, yet their talents therein are but of a second-rate kind; for they are much out-done by the *Japanese* in those manufactures, which are common to both countries; and they are in numerous instances incapable of rivalling the mechanic dexterity of the *Europeans*. Indeed, their principal excellency seems to be imitation; and they accordingly labour under that poverty of genius, which constantly attends all servile imitators. This is most conspicuous in works which require great truth and accuracy; as in clocks, watches, fire-arms, &c. for in all these, though they can copy the different 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. And if we pass from their manufactures to artists of a superior class, as painters, statuary, &c. in these matters they seem to be still more defective, their painters, though very numerous and in great esteem, rarely succeeding in the drawing or colouring