

court, was asked why he took so much pains with a piece destined, perhaps, never to come under the eye of a connoisseur. "I cannot help it," he replied; "I do the best I can, unable, through a tyrant feeling, that will not brook offence, to do any thing less." It would be perhaps over bold to attribute any such overmastering feeling to the Creator; yet certain it is, that among his creatures well nigh all approximations towards perfection, in the province in which it expatiates, owe their origin to it, and that Deity in all his works is his own rule.

The *Osteolepis* was cased, I have said, from head to tail, in complete armor. The head had its plaited mail, the body its scaly mail, the fins their mail of parallel and jointed bars; the entire suit glittered with enamel; and every plate, bar, and scale was dotted with microscopic points. Every ray had its double or treble punctulated row, every scale or plate its punctulated group; the markings lie as thickly in proportion to the fields they cover, as the circular perforations in a lace veil; and the effect, viewed through the glass, is one of lightness and beauty. In the *Cheirolepis* an entirely different style obtains. The enamelled scales and plates glitter with minute ridges, that show like thorns in a December morning varnished with ice. Every ray of the fins presents its serrated edge, every occipital plate and bone its sculptured prominences, every scale its bunch of prickle-like ridges. A more rustic style characterized the *Glyptolepis*. The enamel of the scales and plates is less bright; the sculpturings are executed on a larger scale, and more rudely finished. The relieved ridges, waved enough to give them a pendulous appearance, drop adown the head and body. The rays of the fins, of great length, present also a pendulous appearance. The bones and scales seem disproportionately large