

vantage; since from these three, all other colours or tints may be obtained. And with respect to black, which must practically be considered as a distinct colour, though not admitted as such theoretically, it is worthy of observation, that, although scarcely any vegetable substance yields it directly; yet, by the intervention of almost any form of iron, and this metal is in some shape or other present everywhere, it may readily be produced from a very numerous class of vegetable substances. In almost every instance where a vegetable substance has an austere and bitter taste, it will with iron give a dye of a black colour. Thus the bark of the oak, and of many other trees, and that vegetable excrescence called the *gall-nut*, produce an ink by the addition of any saline form of iron.

From the earliest and least civilised times, and through every intermediate stage of society to the present period of refinement, the productions of the vegetable world have been in constant request for the most common purposes of life. The simplest dwellings not only of the uninstructed savage, but of the peasantry of many parts of modern Europe, are constructed almost entirely of wood; the simplest implements of husbandry, the plough, the spade, and the hoe, could hardly be employed without the aid of a wooden frame-work or handle: and the