

that time in the full blow of his artistic reputation ; nor could I see that he copied him well. I urged and remonstrated, but to no effect. "Ah, Miller," he has said, "what matters it how I amuse myself? You have stamina in you, and will force your way ; but I want strength : the world will never hear of me." That overweening conceit which seems as natural to the young man as a playful disposition to the kitten, or a soft and timid one to the puppy, often assumes a ridiculous, and oftener still an unamiable, aspect. And yet, though it originates many very foolish things, it seems to be in itself, like the fanaticism of the Teetotaller, a wise provision, which, were it not made by nature, would leave most minds without spring enough to ellect, with the required energy, the movements necessary to launch them fairly into busy or studious life. The sobered man of mature age who has learned pretty correctly to take the measure of himself, has usually acquired both habits and knowledge that assist him in urging his onward way, and the moving force of necessity always presses him onward from behind ; but the exhilarating conviction of being born to superior parts, and to do something astonishingly clever, seems necessary to the young man ; and when I see it manifesting itself, if not very foolishly or very offensively, I usually think of my poor friend William Ross, who was unfortunate enough wholly to want it ; and extend to it a pretty ample toleration. Ultimately my friend gave up painting, and restricted himself to the ornamental parts of his profession, of which he became very much a master. In finishing a ceiling in oils, upon which he had represented in bold relief some of the ornately sculptured foliage of the architect, the gentleman for whom he wrought (the son-in-law of a distinguished artist, and himself an amateur), called on his wife to admire the truthful and delicate shading of their house-painter. It was astonishing, he said, and perhaps somewhat humiliating, to see the mere mechanic trenching so decidedly on the province of the artist. Poor William Ross, however, was no mere mechanic ; and even artists might have regarded his encroachments on their proper domain with more of com