

there a group of white cottages, all basking in the red light. And mark the loiterer,—one of the intellectual peasants of our own country,—a well-selected specimen of the class which, in at least thought, feeling, and power, has found its meet type and representative in

“Him who walked in glory and in joy,
Following his plough upon the mountain side.”

How his steps become gradually fewer and more slow! and how at length, unconscious of aught except what Akenside exquisitely describes as the “form of beauty smiling at his heart,” he stands still, to lose, in the happiness of the present, every gloomier recollection of the past, and every darker anticipation of the future! Undoubtedly that untaught peasant is a connoisseur of the higher class. The birds peck the grapes, the mastiff recognises the portrait; but the peasant can judge of more than mere likeness;—he can exquisitely feel the beautiful; and he is perfectly qualified to say that the work of art which can re-awaken in him this feeling is assuredly a work of genius. But why all this wild radicalism, this lowering of the aristocracy of criticism, this breaking down of the fictitious distinctions of connoisseurship! In the first place, I am merely making my apology for having derived very exquisite pleasure from even a first visit to the pictures of the academy; and, in the second, for daring to do what I am just on the eve of doing,—for daring to assure the reader, that if he has an eye and a heart for nature, he may go there, however unskilled in the rules or the vocabulary of criticism, and derive much pleasure from them too. I am merely standing up, as Earl Grey and Cobbett have expressed it, *for my order*,—the uninitiated.

I have spent some of my happiest hours amid exhibitions of a different kind from the Exhibition in the Academy; and some of my most vivid recollections refer to scenes redolent of the wild and the sublime of nature, and to the emotions