

FIFTH ARTICLE.

WHAT sort of painters, think you, do the Scotch promise to become? Why, painters equal to any the world ever produced, if the national mind be only suffered to get into a national track, and our artists have sense and spirit enough, however much they may admire the pictures of other countries, not to imitate them. The genius of our countrymen, as shown in their literature, is eminently of a pictorial character. The national feeling is vividly descriptive. As early even as the days of James IV., old Gavin Douglas, and his contemporary Will Dunbar, could fill page after page with splendid descriptions, as minutely faithful as the descriptions of Cowper in his "Task," and scarcely less poetical. The "Seasons" of Thomson form a series of landscapes; and never surely were there landscapes more felicitously conceived or more exquisitely finished. It has become the fashion of late to decry M'Pherson, but rarely has Europe seen a mightier master of description. The scenery of Burns is nature itself. Who ever excelled Grahame in pictures of quiet beauty, or Professor Wilson in the wild and the sublime of Alpine landscape? And, last and greatest, we stake Sir Walter Scott for the vividly graphic, for strength of outline and beauty of colour, against every painter of every school, and all the writers of the world. The people whose literature exhibits such powers have, if they wish to become painters, only to try. But let them beware of imitation. The straight-nosed beauties of Greece were no doubt very great beauties, and its historical characters very fine characters indeed. There is something very admirable, too, in the genius of Italy. No people ever excelled the Italians in drawing legendary saints, with glories of yellow-ochre round their heads, or angels mounted on the wings of pigeons. But