

—the greens more soothing, and the whole colours are softened. Reynolds observed to Sir George Beaumont that the pictures of Rubens appeared different to him, and less brilliant, on his second visit to the continent ; and the reason of the difference he discovered to be that, on the first visit, he had taken notes, and on the second he did not. The alleged reason is quite equal to the effect ; but I cannot help imagining that there is some incorrectness in the use of the term brilliant, unless warmth and depth of colouring is meant : for when the eye turns from the white paper to the painting, the reds and yellows must necessarily be deeper. If we look out from the window, and then turn towards a picture, the whole effect is gone—the reflected rays from the picture are too feeble to produce their impression ; and if we look upon a sheet of paper, and then upon a picture, the tone will be deeper, and the warm tints stronger, but the lights and shades less distinct. If we place an oil painting, without the frame, upon a large sheet of paper, or against a white plastered wall, it is offensively yellow. Here the eye alternately, though insensibly, moving from the white paper or wall to the painting, which is of a deep tone, the browns and yellows are unnaturally strong. We see the necessity or the effect of the gilt frame for such a picture : it does not merely cut off surrounding objects, but it prepares the eye