

chamber. Drawing the snowy curtain aside, Anna seated herself on the window seat, for though she could not look out upon the moonlit scene it was pleasant to feel the cool fragrant breeze play over her face, and hear the rustling among the branches of the horse-chestnut trees. Long did Anna sit there, and longer she would have lingered, indulging in those waking dreams, sad and yet sometimes enchanting, that are peculiarly endeared to those who, like her, are shut out from many of the bright realities of life, if the door communicating with her mother's apartment had not gently opened, and Mrs. Leslie entered with a mother's care to see that all was safe. "Anna, my child, nine o'clock, and you sitting here, when the damp breeze from the river is blowing directly in the window? what imprudence!" The window was closed, and Anna was carefully enveloped in flannel, and only her urgent remonstrances prevented her mother from administering some hot herb tea. After Anna had retired, Mrs. Leslie withdrew to her chamber, full of anxiety for her beloved child, whose delicate health and helplessness seemed to increase the love she felt for her.

When the old clock in the corner of the hall struck nine, Arthur lighted his candle and hastened to his room. After closing the door, he took from his chest an old fowling-piece, and carefully examined it. Placing it on the table, he repaired to the window, and, parting the waving tendrils of the vine, looked out anxiously. Light clouds had been flying across the deep blue of the sky all the evening; but now, darker and darker they gathered in huge masses, till it was impossible to discern objects with any distinctness on the river, or even in the garden below. Arthur was a brave boy, but he hesitated at the thought of descending to the garden and there watching for the thief, for the increasing darkness made it impossible to see from the window; but his hesitation vanished, for he thought he faintly heard the sound of oars on the river, and snatching up his fowling-piece, and silently opening his door, he proceeded lightly along the hall. As he passed the clock, it struck ten, and its silvery sound somewhat startled him as he felt his way in the dark. Noiselessly he opened the hall door, and stepped out into the yard. Everything around was quiet, except the rustling of the branches as a gust passed by, and the sound of oars striking the waves, which he now heard with more distinctness. Arthur bounded lightly over the hedge of sweetbrier, and made his way through the dewy shrubbery to his garden. It was very dark, and as he hid behind a group of currant bushes and awaited the coming of the depredator, he could scarcely distinguish a single object. Suddenly the noise ceased on the river, and breathlessly Arthur watched through the gloom. He started as he thought he perceived a tall form bending over near him; but, looking more closely, he saw it was a large sunflower bowing its head in the breeze. Again; did his imagination deceive him? No; a tall Highlander, his tartan and plumes shaken by the wind, crept cautiously through the bushes and proceeded to fill a large bag with all that the increasing darkness would enable him to lay his hands on. Arthur's fears, if he had any, were now dispelled, so indignant did he feel as he saw the inroads made in his fine beds of vegetables, and he sprang behind the startled Highlander, and in a voice hoarse with rage, levelling his fowling-piece close to his head, threatened him with instant death if he made the least resistance. The frightened fellow, rendered confident and more daring by his former unmolested visit, had come totally unarmed save a dirk in his belt; but the surprise and consternation which his sudden detection had occasioned, not being able to see his enemy and with death so near, his presence of mind utterly forsook him, and he followed implicitly the commands of Arthur, who ordered him to take up the bag and to walk in front whether he should direct. Tremblingly the Highlander, not daring to move his head, for the loaded gun still threatened him with instant death, obeyed; and Arthur, following closely and silently through the garden and along the road, stopped

not till he arrived at the camp in Cambridge, where he delivered his prisoner into his father's hands. Proudly Captain Leslie gazed on his intrepid boy, and many were the compliments that his courage obtained from the officers and soldiers. Nothing could exceed the anger and mortification which the Highlander felt as he gazed in surprise on his youthful captor, and many were the oaths that fell from his lips, as he saw the scornful sneers and listened to the contemptuous remarks of the American soldiers as they passed him and looked upon his sturdy form, and compared it with the slight, graceful figure of Arthur Leslie. Arthur did not long remain at the camp, but hastened home to relieve the anxiety of his mother and sister, and just as the sun began to gild "tree, shrub, and flower," Arthur with one bound sprang over the thicket, shaking large pearly dew-drops from the roses, and entered the portico just as his mother was descending the stairs from his room, where the bed, which evidently had not been occupied, had dreadfully alarmed her. Her anxiety was somewhat allayed by the appearance of Arthur; and when at the breakfast table he related to her and to Anna the adventure of the night, Mrs. Leslie knew not whether to blame the temerity, or praise the courage which he undoubtedly had manifested. Rachel was delighted with her brave boy's conduct; and long afterward, when the war was ended and Captain Leslie had removed to the city, where Mrs. Leslie resumed her former station at the head of a splendid establishment, and the sweet Anna had cultivated, with her brother's assistance, the learning and accomplishments attainable by one in her situation, then did Rachel recount to her wondering hearers the story of Arthur's adventure with the Highlander.

 LXII.

DESCRIPTION.

Description, as defined by Webster, is "a representation of names, natures, or properties, that give to another a view of the thing."

It is, in fine, a picture, delineated, not by lines, but by words; and it must be so presented as to convey a clear, definite, and exact semblance to the mind, such as the object described presents to the eye. Such a representation may be called a faithful description. Faithful descriptions, therefore, are faithful pictures. All definitions must be less perfect descriptions of a material thing, than a visible figure or delineation. But when a definition is expanded, so as to embrace not only all the particulars in which the object defined differs from other objects, but also those in which it resembles others of the same kind, such a definition, is, in fact, a description.

Owing to peculiar associations in the mind, and the difference in the habits of perception and observation, no two individuals would probably describe the same scene or the same object alike. This is particularly the case with young writers. Some, from a natural sluggishness of mind,

will perceive few particulars worthy of notice, where others, of different temperament, will find the subject replete with interesting details, all worthy of regard.*

A few suggestions will now be presented, which will probably lead those who may use this book to *think*, and to use their eyes to some purpose, when called upon to give a written description of any sensible object. These suggestions will be followed by a list of details, some one or more of which may always be noticed in a written description.

It will be noticed, that the object in presenting such a list is only, as has already been said, to *suggest ideas*, which the student himself is to mould as they may arise, and combine with what may spring spontaneously from his own mind.

To collect materials for a good description, there must be a devoted attention to the beauties of nature and to the scenes of social life. The mind will thereby be rendered susceptible and discriminative, acquiring sources of improvement which would otherwise be lost, while variety and copiousness of expression will at the same time be secured.

There are three great classes, under one of which all the varieties of description may be arranged. Under the first class are included all those subjects which are immediately under personal notice; which are actually present before our eyes. In the second class may be arranged all those which have been noticed, but have left only their pictures in the memory. The third class includes only those subjects which are purely imaginary. In the descriptions of all these classes, the object to be effected is one and the same; namely, to present to the reader a picture, easy and natural, lively in its character, and animated in its appearance; making those details the most prominent which would affect the beholder as most striking, and throwing, as it were, into the shade those circumstances which are designed to produce a subordinate impression. In producing such an effect, the writer should pay particular attention to the epithets † with which he designates particular objects, that he may render the impression, which he designs that they should convey, strong and durable. For this reason he cannot be too particular in the choice of his qualifying words, for they are sometimes more expressive than the objects themselves when presented in naked simplicity.

Thus, for instance, suppose we are describing a scene in a wood or forest; the following terms would appropriately describe the appearance of the scene: Dark, obscure, deep, dreary, gloomy, overcast, indistinct, dim, cloudy, dense, lurid, livid, &c.

Or a summer's noon; the following terms will be found in most cases suitable: Bright, shining, clear, lucid, brilliant, dazzling, splendid, resplendent, sparkling, refulgent, ardent, conspicuous, clear, placid, &c.

Or a storm, or a cataract; the following terms will be found expressive: Harsh, discordant, roar, howl, hiss, crash, reverberate, dash, splash, murmur, growl, clamorous, confused, terrific, tremendous, thundering, &c.

There are many kinds of description, also, in which the following terms may not only, with considerable advantage, be interwoven, but the terms themselves, by the law of association, will suggest ideas; such as, placid, calm, tranquil, motionless, peaceful, serene, restless, lazy, unruffled,

* See the "Dialogue between a Tutor and his Pupils," on page 8th.

† See the article on epithets.

hushed, silent, voiceless, sleeping, breathless, transparent, clear, waveless, engulfed, unmeasured, beautiful, mingled, crystal, golden, silvery, magnificent, breezeless, kindred, &c., &c., &c.

Acquaintance with the beauties of nature, particularly with those of the earth and the sky, and with the lights and shadows of life, must be considered as a great acquisition to any mind; and consequently the command of language, so requisite to embody and depicture the same with the glow and warmth which imagination lends to description, must be regarded as an object worthy of the highest regard by all who aim at being distinguished as writers.*

In descriptions, the principal point to which to direct the attention is the selection of the circumstances. The scene, or the circumstance, should be brought with distinctness and fulness to the view. We should be placed, as it were, by the description in the midst of the group of particulars, and be made fully acquainted with all its peculiarities. That which is called *truth to nature* is effected by the skilful selection and arrangement of the circumstances, and constitutes the *amplification* of descriptive writing. In some instances, especially where it is desirable that the description should be bold and striking, the enumeration of circumstances may be less full and minute.

In describing natural scenery, the student will find some

* Probably no writer has ever surpassed Sir Walter Scott in the beauty, fidelity, and accuracy of his descriptions. The following extract, from Mr. Morritt's "Memorandum," taken from Lockhart's Life of Sir Walter, Vol. III., page 30, exhibits his views, and the pains that he took to be accurate. Speaking of the visit of the great novelist at Rokeby, Mr. Morritt says: "I had many previous opportunities of testing the almost conscientious fidelity of his local descriptions; but I could not help being singularly struck with the lights which this visit threw on that characteristic of his compositions. The morning after he arrived, he said, 'You have often given me materials for a romance; now I want a good robber's cave, and an old church of the right sort.' We rode out, and he found what he wanted in the old slate quarries of Brignal, and the ruined Abbey of Egglestone. I observed him noting down *even the peculiar little wild flowers and herbs that accidentally grew around* and on the side of a bold crag, near his intended cave of Guy Denzil; and could not help saying, that as he was not to be upon oath in his work, *daisies, violets, and primroses would be as poetical as any of the humbler plants he was examining.* I laughed, in short, at his scrupulousness; but I understood him when he replied, 'that in nature herself no two scenes are exactly alike; and that *whoever copied truly what was before his eyes, would possess the same variety in his descriptions, and exhibit apparently an imagination as boundless as the range of nature in the scenes he recorded;* whereas, whoever trusted to imagination, would soon find his own mind circumscribed and contracted to a few favorite images, and the repetition of these would sooner or later produce that very monotony and barrenness which had always haunted descriptive poetry in the hands of any but patient worshippers of truth. Besides which,' he said, 'local names and peculiarities make a fictitious story look so much better in the face.' In fact, from his boyish habits, he was but half satisfied with the most beautiful scenery when he could not connect with it some local legend; and when I was forced sometimes to confess, with the knife-grinder, 'Story! God bless you! I have none to tell, sir,'—he would laugh, and say, 'Then let us make *one*,—nothing so easy as to make a tradition.'

aid in the following lists of particulars, which are here introduced as *suggestive* of ideas, which he himself is to mould as they may arise, and combine with what may spring spontaneously from his own mind. *

A COUNTRY.

Its principal water courses :

Its chains of mountains :

The nature of the hills, whether more or less rugged; the nature of the morasses, whether more or less practicable :

The rapidity and depth of the rivers; the nature of their fords, sluices, and piers; the state of the bridges, and their position: of the roads, and the necessary repairs; the reasons for preferring one road to another, which would lead to the same object, such as the ease of procuring subsistence, of travelling in security — the lateral communications opening from the great or main roads — the population of the villages, occupations of the inhabitants, the means of transportation, the chief commerce of the country, quantity and kind — the liquors, vinous or spirituous, with their effects on the inhabitants.

OF RIVERS: Their direction — their course — the nature of their beds, their breadth — their floods and times of drought; their meadows, and the marshes that intersect them; the mills upon their banks; the breadth of their valleys — the hills and ridges which skirt them — the side on which are commanding heights — the tributary rivulets, and the ravines which open into the valley of the stream — the distance between them; of what nature are the shrubs, the gullies, the brooks, the roads, &c. — the quality of the hedges, they are thin in poor soil, but in rich land they are thick, and formidable objects to the march of troops, &c.

CANALS. Their communication — the nature of the ground through which they are cut — the means of draining them, and of turning their courses; their locks — the mode of destroying and of protecting them — how their navigation may be obstructed or improved.

Mills often render water-courses fordable or not, at pleasure, by means of the water dammed up for their supply. When sand is of the ordinary

* These lists of particulars are taken, with slight alterations necessary to adapt them to the purposes of this work, from "Lallemand's Artillery Service," article "Reconnoitering." They were original in a work entitled "L'aide memoire à l'usage des officiers d'artillerie de France," par le General Gassendi.

From the dialogue between the tutor and his pupils, to which reference has already been made, the student will derive some hints upon "the art of seeing," or using his eyes aright. This dialogue, calculated as it is to awaken attention, and to fix habits of observation, is particularly recommended to the careful perusal of the student, who would relieve his mind from the labors of composition. Habits of observation, attended with careful analysis, not only aid the mind in its search after ideas, but also direct it in a judicious selection of those which are afforded by association.

color, the roads are generally good; but if the sand be black, or mixed with small white grains, the roads are impassable in winter, and often in time of rain.

CLIMATE. The physical causes which may affect health — the quality of the air, cold, hot, wet, or dry; seasons — whether inclement, and how long so — the means of protection from their effects — the customs of the inhabitants in this respect.

COASTS. The nature of the coasts — whether lined with sand-hills, covered with rocks, which render the approach more or less dangerous; or precipices, which forbid it altogether. The parts which are open and uncovered, and proper for landing; the bays which form roadsteads and harbors — the points and capes fit for forts and batteries, which may defend the accessible parts; the adjacent islands, which may serve as advanced works to form barriers against the attempts of an enemy; the gulfs, the bays, the roads, the ports — the nature of the winds required to enter or leave these ports, the nature and advantages of which may be pointed out — the time of tide most favorable for entering the ports, &c. — the dangers to be met — the obstacles to be surmounted — the actual state of the forts which protect the coast — the batteries, the guard-houses, and the artillery in them; if there be rivers emptying themselves on the coasts, the tides are apt to alter their channel; an account may be given of this influence, &c.

FORESTS AND WOODS. Their situation — their extent; the kinds of trees of which they are composed, whether fit for fuel or for timber — their extent — their magnitude; is the ground of the forest level or hilly, from whence do the roads come, and whither do they lead — their quality — the nature of the ground around them — are they near fields, meadows, ravines, hills, mountains, rivers — the streams, marshes, springs, dwellings, &c., near them — the distance of all these objects from the borders of the wood or forest; the roads which intersect them, and the swamps which divide them.

HOUSES. Their situations — style of architecture — the ground which they occupy — the mode in which they are built — the materials of which they are composed — the color given them by nature or art — are they old or new — the indications of age — moss-grown, ivy-hung, black with time — appendages connected with ancient customs — their associations — the improvements of modern art — additional conveniences, &c.

LEVEL COUNTRY. Its hedges, ditches, villages, buildings, brooks, canals, marshes, roads, rivers, bridges, &c. *

MOUNTAINS. Their position — their slopes in front and rear — the means of reaching their summits — the nature of the ground — its form — are they covered with wood or with bare rocks — their height — their

* In sandy countries, and those filled with brushwood, there are many marshes covered with water during the winter, which are almost dry in summer. In the winter they are impassable, and are to be mistrusted, even in summer, after long rains.

fertility — pastures, fodder, vegetation, dwellings, towns, villages, castles, workshops, roads, paths, &c.

RIVERS. Do they branch off, or continue in one undivided stream* — where do they rise — whither do they flow — what is the nature of the country through which they flow — the quality of the water — clear, sparkling, transparent, thick, muddy, turbid — ruffled with eddies and counter currents — with or without falls — salt or fresh, sweet or brackish — cold or warm — safe for bathing, or dangerous — the manufactories moved by the water — the canals running from or into it — the streams, brooks, rivulets, or other rivers that supply it, &c.

VILLAGES. Their situation — the number of fires or chimneys in operation — the nature of the soil — the quantity and quality of the produce — the occupation of the inhabitants — their markets — the neighborhood which frequents them — the beasts of burden, the flocks, the bees and poultry they possess — the architecture, or style in which the buildings, houses, barns, and sheep-cotes are built — the position of the church and burying ground — the blacksmith's shop — whether surrounded by walls, by bushes, by ditches, or palisades — the water and wind mills. †

* Rivers which divide into several branches, form islands and peninsulas. The rivers themselves, thus divided, are apt to change their channels at every flood.

† In the description of natural scenery, it will be well for the student to call to memory those beautiful lines of Cowper.

"Nor rural sights alone, but rural sounds
Exhilarate the spirits, and restore
The tone of languid nature. *Mighty winds,*
That sweep the skirt of some far-spreading wood
Of ancient growth, make music not unlike
The dash of Ocean on his winding shore,
And lull the spirit, while they fill the mind,
Unnumbered branches waving in the blast,
And all their leaves fast fluttering all at once.
Nor less composure waits upon the roar
Of distant floods; or on the softer voice
Of neighbouring fountain; or of rills, that slip
Through the cleft rock, and chiming as they fall
Upon loose pebbles, lose themselves at length
In matted grass, that with a livelier green
Betrays the secret of their silent course.
Nature inanimate employs sweet sounds;
But animated nature sweeter still,
To soothe and satisfy the human ear.
Ten thousand warblers cheer the day, and one
The live-long night. Nor these alone, whose notes
Nice fingered art must emulate in vain;
But cawing rooks, and kites that swim sublime,
In still repeated circles, screaming loud:
The jay, the pye, and e'en the hooting owl,
That hail the rising moon, have charms for me.
Sounds inharmonious in themselves, and harsh,
Yet heard in scenes where peace forever reigns,
And only there, please highly for their sake."

The particulars which have now been mentioned as suggestive of ideas, will undoubtedly aid the student, and enable him to combine what addresses itself to the eye with that which suggests itself to the imagination, in his endeavors to make verbal pictures of the beauties of nature. The nature and variety of such particulars must necessarily be dependent on the character of the object to be described.

If an individual sensible object is to be described, the questions which naturally arise, and which should most of them be answered in the description, are as follows:

Where is it?
Who made it?
What is it made of?
Is it old or new?
What was it made for?
How is it adapted for the purposes for which it was made?
Is it beneficial or prejudicial to the comfort and convenience of mankind?
Are its effects universal or particular?
Its divisions and parts?
Its dimensions, form, and color?
Does it produce, or is it connected with any sounds?
How is it constructed?
How does it strike the eye?
What are its resemblances or its differences?
How does it appear from different positions?

In addition to these questions, the student must call to mind what others would naturally arise in the mind of any one, desirous of exact and particular information with regard to the subject of his description, and endeavor fully to answer every such question in his written exercise.

In the description of persons, an entirely different set of questions will suggest the proper answers, to which the description should be a full reply.

What is the personal appearance, complexion, stature, figure, &c.; hands, arms, limbs, eyes, &c.?
What feature is most prominently conspicuous?
The expression of the countenance?
Is the individual remarkable for manly beauty; or illy made, awkward, and ungraceful?
What is the appearance of his chest, shoulders; length of his limbs, style of his dress?
What are his habits, his age; what graces, accomplishments, or attainments has he?
What is his moral character — his intellectual; who are his associates what influence have they wrought upon him?
For what virtues or vices is he particularly noted?

In the descriptions of persons of the other sex, such questions may be a little varied, and answered as in the following examples:

DESCRIPTION OF PERSONS.

Example 1st.

DESCRIPTION OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTTS.

The turbulence of the times, the rancor of party rage, and the medium of prejudice or partiality, through which every object in those periods was beheld, render it difficult to form a just opinion of the character of Mary. Her personal accomplishments and the graces which distinguished her as a woman, are admitted by all parties; respecting these, therefore, there can be no dispute. Her stature rose to the majestic, her form was elegant and her hands and arms distinguished for their delicacy and beauty. Her hair was black, though, in the fashion of the times, she frequently adorned herself in borrowed locks, and of various colors. Her eyes were dark gray, and her complexion remarkably fine. She walked, danced, and rode, with equal grace. She possessed a taste for music; she played upon the lute with skill, and sung melodiously. Towards the conclusion of her life, she began to grow corpulent, while confinement and bad accommodation brought upon her a rheumatic disorder, which deprived her of the use of her limbs. Her manners were affable and insinuating, dignified and sprightly. She spoke eloquently, and wrote with ease and elegance. Her temper was warm, and her heart affectionate. She loved flattery, and beheld the effects of her beauty with pleasure. If she had acquired the power of dissembling her sentiments in the refined and intriguing court of France, her nature was nevertheless frank and indisposed to suspicion. Her piety was fervent and sincere; her talents, if not of the highest, were undoubtedly of a superior order; and the resolution and courage which she manifested at her death, are truly worthy of admiration. A long series of successive sorrows bespeak, with few exceptions, some imprudence in the sufferer; the misfortunes of Mary, both in degree and duration, exceeded the common measure of human calamities, and even render the distresses of fiction comparatively faint. The vicissitudes of her life have afforded a fine and fruitful subject for the tragic muse. No man, says Brantome, ever beheld her without admiration and love; no one will read her history without pity and sorrow.*

* All writers agree in representing Mary of Scotland as distinguished for personal beauty. But on no subject, perhaps, do mankind differ so much as in their ideas of female beauty; and it seems to be wisely ordered by Providence that they should thus differ. Women in the Hottentot country are considered beautiful in proportion to the size of their ears, the flatness of their noses and the projection of their lips. In Otaheite corpulency is the constituent element of loveliness; and in China, small feet, cramped into absolute deformity, are considered an indispensable requisite for beauty. A late physiological writer, speaking of female beauty, says: "A woman of any height, from the *petite* almost to the gigantic, may be perfectly beau-

Example 2d.

BERNARD DE ROHAN.

I will attempt to paint him, to the eye of the reader, as I have myself seen him, represented by the hand of an unknown artist, in one of the

tiful; and of any complexion, from the darkest brunette to the fairest lily. The medium height is generally preferred; but the complexion is a matter that entirely depends on individual taste — the same person, too, would be likely to waver in choice between the darkly beautiful maidens of Spain and the seraphically fair daughters of Circassia. Nevertheless, though the shades of complexion, from the Spanish olive to the Circassian white, or the varieties of altitude, from the *petite* Cleopatra to that of the towering Roxana, matters but little; there are many things arbitrarily essential to perfect beauty in woman." "I shall describe," he continues, "a beautiful woman, taking her at the medium altitude, which is generally preferred."

As such a description may be interesting to many who have not access to the original work, and as it cannot be considered wholly out of place in a volume professing to teach the art of description, the author of this volume has, with some hesitation, ventured here to present it.

"Her height is five feet five inches; her hair is of any color that agrees with her complexion; her forehead is rather low, and as free from freckle or wrinkle as a piece of Paphian marble; her brows are dark, arched, narrow, and strongly defined; her eyes are large, rather languishing than bright, and of either of the usual colors; for the grey eyes of Mary of Scotland were not less captivating than the raven orbs of the Queen of Sheba; her eye lashes are dark and long; her nose is a mitigated aquiline, — that is, an aquiline curtailed of its severity; her lips are short and small, and yet withal full and pouting; her chin is very slightly developed; her ears are small, thin, and with the tip on a line with the eyebrow; her complexion varies with the emotions of her mind, and the blush that tinges her cheek is delicate, and loses itself in her face, so as to indicate no perceptible outline; her features are exactly regular, though made to appear otherwise by the ever-varying expression of her lips and eyes, and the fluctuations of the rosy tide that ebbs and flows beneath the transparent surface of her skin; her smile indicates sweetness of disposition, blended with a gently-proud expression, dictated probably by the consciousness of her own worth and beauty; her neck is flexible, moderately slender, of medium length, and pure as alabaster; the fall from her neck to her shoulders is gradual (like that of a bird); her bust is a gentle swell, so clear that the blue veins are visible; her shoulders almost verge on broadness, and press backwards; her waist is small, but not too taper; her arms are rounded; her hands delicately small, and fingers rather long and tapered; her instep is high, to secure a good arch to the foot, which adds grace in walking, and her feet are as small as they can possibly be without subjecting them to the character of diminutive."

To this description the same author adds, that there are "three species of female beauty, of which all the rest are varieties."

No. 1. Face round, eyes soft azure; neck rather short; shoulders moderately broad and gently rounded; limbs and arms tapering and delicate; hands and feet small; complexion, rose struggling with lily; hair luxuriant, flaxen or auburn; eyes blue, and whole figure soft and easy.

No. 2. Oblong face; neck long and tapering; shoulders broad and delicate, without being angular; limbs and arms rather long and tapering; feet

palaces on the banks of the Brenta. He was in person about the middle height, rather above it than below, and at this period was not more than twenty-three years of age. His forehead was broad and fine, with short dark hair curling around it; his features were small, excepting the eye and brow, the former of which was large and full, and the latter strongly marked. The mouth was very handsome, showing, when half open in speaking, the brilliant white teeth, and giving to the whole countenance a look of playful gaiety; but, when shut, there was an expression of much thoughtfulness, approaching perhaps to sternness, about it, which the rounded and somewhat prominent chin confirmed. The upper lip was very short; but on either side, divided in the middle, was a short black mustache, not overhanging the mouth, but raised above it; and the beard, which was short and black, like the hair, was only suffered to grow in such a manner as to ornament, but not to encumber the chin.

In form the cavalier was muscular, and powerfully made; his breadth of chest and shoulders giving the appearance of a more advanced period of life than that to which he had yet arrived.*—*Corse De Leon, by G. P. R. James.*

and hands rather small; complexion mostly dark; hair abundant, dark and strong; and the whole figure precise, striking, and brilliant.

No. 3. Oval face; high, pale, intellectual forehead; eye, expressive and full of sensibility, also indicating modesty and dignity; movements characterized by grace and elegance.

* In a note on page 172 is presented, in a quotation from a late physiological writer, the description of a beautiful woman. The same author thus describes a specimen of masculine beauty:

"A fine looking man, (the word handsome detracts from the idea of beauty in the male sex), is above the medium height, but considerably under the colossal; (about five feet ten inches is the perfection of altitude); his forehead is high and rather square; his back head is well rounded, but not too full; his eyes are dark, bright, and fairly set in their sockets—neither tending to recede nor to protrude; his hair inclines to a curl; his eyebrows are rather square than bushy, and leave a space of about three quarters of an inch between their inward extremities; his nose is a medium between Roman and aquiline; his cheek bones are not prominent, but still well defined; his cheeks neither lank nor so rounded as to indicate fatness or inflation; his mouth moderately small; his lips firm, compact, but not thin; his whiskers are well back on his cheek; his complexion is uniform, between brown and fair, with a slight tendency to a blush, but not sufficient to warrant him in being called rosy cheeked; and the whole countenance, well or even strongly marked; for a smooth, round face, where the features are all regular, and without any characteristic for a limner to fasten on, is incompatible with manly beauty. Then his neck is of moderate length and inclines to thickness; his throat is free from all protuberance commonly called 'the apple of Eve;' his breast is fairly full; his shoulders square, but not abruptly so, and sufficiently broad to just overhang his hips; his arms are of a length to leave about eight inches between the tips of his middle fingers and his knees; there is a gradual decrease inwards from the hips and shoulder to the waist; his back is free from the least tendency to roundness, but is not thrown very much to the rear; his limbs are full, but not clumsy; his joints small; the calves of the legs so that they just touch, without pressing against each other; his shin rather slender, his ankle small; his instep high; and his foot slightly hollowed, and of a size corresponding with his height; for, too small a foot interferes with

Example 3d.

THE ELEPHANT.

The elephant, a native of Asia and Africa, is the largest, the strongest, the most sagacious, and the most docile of all wild beasts. The usual height of this unsightly creature is from eight to twelve or fourteen feet. The color is nearly black; the eyes, which are very small, are lively, bright, and expressive; the ears are broad, and much longer, in proportion to the body, than those of the ass.

It has two long ivory tusks, thicker toward the head than a stout man's arm, and a trunk which it can contract or lengthen, as need requires. The latter is as useful to the animal as our hands are to us. With this singular organ it can take up the smallest object; it serves itself with it; and, in case of an attack, fights with it. It can also untie knots of ropes, and open and shut gates.

The legs of this stupendous quadruped are like columns of from twelve to eighteen inches in diameter, and from four to six feet high. The feet are short, and divided into five toes each, and are armed with nails of a horny substance, but which are so covered with skin, that they are scarcely visible.

The elephant, in a state of nature, is neither fierce nor mischievous. It is peaceable, mild, and brave; and exerts its powers only in its own defence, or in defence of those of its own kind, with which it is social and friendly.

Example 4th.

NATURAL SCENERY.

Long projecting reefs of rocks, extending under water, and only evincing their existence by here and there a peak entirely bare, or by the breakers which foamed over those that were partially covered, rendered Knockwinnock bay dreaded by pilots and ship-masters. The crags which rose between the beach and the main land to the height of two or three hundred feet, afforded in their crevices shelter for unnumbered sea fowl, in situations seemingly secured by their dizzy height from the rapacity of

that elasticity of step, and firmness of carriage, so essential in making up the perfect 'tout ensemble' of a well-proportioned man."

In descriptions of persons the student will do well to refer to what is said on the subject of *epithets* in another page of this volume. Thus, for example, the *manners* of an individual may be insinuating, sprightly, dignified, or reserved, &c.; speech, elegant, eloquent, &c.; person, thin or spare, fleshy or corpulent; temper, warm and affectionate; nature, frank and indisposed to suspicion, &c. Notice may also be taken, as occasion requires, of such particulars as the following: resolution, courage, effects of air and exercise, or confinement and exclusion from the air, on personal appearance,—series of sorrows as causing imprudence, constant success as producing temerity,—misfortunes in degree and duration exceeding the common measure of human calamity, rendering the distresses of fiction faint, &c., &c., &c.

man. Many of these wild tribes, with the instinct which sends them to seek the land before a storm arises, were now winging towards their nests with the shrill and dissonant clang which announces fear and disquietude.

The disk of the sun became almost totally obscured ere he had altogether sunk below the horizon, and an early and lurid shade of darkness blotted the serene twilight of a summer evening. The wind began next to arise, but its wild and moaning sound was heard for some time, and its effects became more visible on the bosom of the sea, before the gale was felt on the shore. The mass of waters, now dark and threatening, began to lift itself in larger ridges, and sink in deeper furrows, forming waves that rose high in foam upon the breakers, or burst upon the beach with a sound resembling distant thunder.—*Antiquary, Vol. I. p. 72.*

Example 5th.

NATURAL SCENERY.

Cities and villages were scattered over hill and valley, with cultivated environs blooming around them, all giving token of a dense and industrious population. In the centre of this brilliant circumference stood the Indian metropolis, with its gorgeous tiara of pyramids and temples, attracting the eye of the soldier from every other object, as he wound round the borders of the lake. Every inch of ground which the soldiers trod was familiar to them; familiar as the scenes of childhood, though with very different associations, for it had been written on their memories in characters of blood. On the right rose the hill of Montezuma, crowned by the *teocalli*, under the roof of which the shattered relics of the army had been gathered on the day following the flight from the capitol. In front lay the city of Tacuba, through whose inhospitable streets they had hurried in fear and consternation; and away to the east of it stretched the melancholy causeway.—*Prescott's Conquest of Mexico, Vol. III. p. 31.*

Example 6th.

NATURAL SCENERY.

They moved cautiously forward, straining their vision to pierce the thick gloom of the forests, where their wily foe might be lurking. But they saw no living thing, except only the wild inhabitants of the woods and flocks of the *zopolite*, the voracious vulture of the country, which, in anticipation of a bloody banquet, hung like a troop of evil spirits, on the march of the army.

As they descended, the Spaniards felt a sensible and most welcome change in the atmosphere. The character of the vegetation changed with it; and the funereal pine, their only companion of late, gave way to the sturdy oak, to the sycamore, and lower down, to the graceful pepper tree, mingling its red berries with the dark foliage of the forest; while in still lower depths, the gaudy-colored creepers might be seen flinging their gay blossoms over the branches, and telling of a softer and more luxurious climate.

At length, the army emerged on an open level, where the eye, unob-

structed by intervening wood or hill-top, could range, far and wide, over the Valley of Mexico. There it lay, bathed in the golden sunshine, stretched out, as it were, in slumber, in the arms of the giant of hills, which clustered, like a phalanx of guardian genii, around it.*—*Conquest of Mexico, Vol. II, p. 463.*

From the same source from which the preceding extract was taken, the following *personal description* has been borrowed

HERNANDO CORTÉS.

Hernando "Cortés at this time was thirty-three, or perhaps thirty-four years of age. In stature he was rather above the middle size. His complexion was pale, and his large dark eye gave an expression of gravity to his countenance, not to be expected in one of his cheerful temperament. His figure was slender, at least until later life; but his chest was deep, his shoulders broad, his frame muscular and well proportioned. It presented the union of agility and vigor, which qualified him to excel in fencing-horsemanship, and the other generous exercises of chivalry. In his diet he was temperate, careless of what he ate, and drinking little; while, to toil and privation he seemed perfectly indifferent. His dress, for he did not disdain the impression produced by such adventitious aids, was such as to set off his handsome person to advantage; neither gaudy nor striking, but rich. He wore few ornaments, and usually the same; but these were of great price. His manners frank and soldierlike, concealed a most cool and calculating spirit. With his gayest humor there mingled a settled air of resolution, which made those who approached him feel they must obey; and which infused something like awe into the attachment of his most devoted followers. Such a combination, in which love was tempered by authority, was the one probably best calculated to inspire devotion in the rough and turbulent spirits among whom his lot was to be cast."

* The introduction of figurative language in descriptive writing, if not too luxuriantly indulged, adds much to the beauty and animation of the style. The student will not fail to admire the beautiful figure here introduced from one of the most elegant historical writers of any age or country. Mr. Prescott, in the work from which the extract above was taken, has conferred a favor on the republic of letters, which will hand him down to posterity as the modern "*Dulcis et candidus et fusus Herodotus.*" The same remark that has been made in relation to the Father of History, may be applied with equal truth and justice to the author of "*The Conquest of Mexico.*" "His style abounds with elegance, ease, and sweetness; and if there is any of the fabulous or incredible, the author candidly informs the reader that it is introduced on the authority of others." They who are not attracted by the thrilling nature of the incidents which he relates, will be captivated by the glowing colors in which they are described, the purity and animation of his style the witchery he has woven around his subject, and the wonderful skill with which he has thrown into a connected narrative a mass of details, which with indefatigable industry he has thifted from a great variety of authors, often at variance with one another, and not unfrequently at issue with themselves. The pride with which an American peruses his works, naturally breaks forth into the apostrophe, "Perge modo, et quæ te via ducit dirige gressum."

The character of Cortés seems to have undergone some change with change of circumstances; or, to speak more correctly, the new scenes in which he was placed called forth qualities which before were dormant in his bosom. There are some hardy natures that require the heats of excited action to unfold their energies; like the plants, which, closed to the mild influence of a temperate latitude, come to their full growth, and give forth their fruits only in the burning atmosphere of the tropics. Such is the portrait left to us by his contemporaries of this remarkable man.

The examples which have now been introduced are deemed sufficient, both in variety and extent, to introduce the student to descriptive writing. The attentive perusal of the examples given, with careful attention to the preliminary hints and observations, it is thought will furnish considerable aid in this department of composition.

LXIII.

NARRATION AND DESCRIPTION UNITED.

That the student may perceive how much is added to the beauty and the interest of a narration by the union of description with the narrative, the following model is presented, which is founded on the simple circumstance, that a young man in a feeble state of health is called home, after a long absence, to be present at the death-bed of his mother. The student will observe how beautifully many of the particulars presented in the list in the preceding exercises are interwoven with the narrative, and how much the union of description with the narration has added to the beauty of the story.

Example.

In looking over some papers of a deceased acquaintance, I found the following fragment. He had frequently spoken to me of the person whom it concerned, and who had been his school-fellow. I remember well his one day telling me that, thinking the character of his friend, and some circumstances in his life, were of such a kind that an interesting moral little story might be made from them, he had undertaken it; but, considering as he

was going on, that bringing the private character and feelings of a deceased friend before the world, was something like sacrilege, though done under a fictitious name, he had stopped soon after beginning the tale,—that he had laid it away amongst his papers, and had never looked at it again.

As the person it concerns has been a long time dead, and no relation survives, I do not feel that there can be any impropriety in my now making it public. I give it as it was written, though evidently not revised by my friend. Though hastily put together, and beginning as abruptly as it ends, and with little of story and no novelty in the circumstances, yet there is a mournful tenderness in it, which, I trust, will interest others in some portion as it did me.

“The sun not set yet, Thomas?” “Not quite, Sir. It blazes through the trees on the hill yonder, as if their branches were all on fire.”

Arthur raised himself heavily forward, and with his hat still over his brow, turned his glazed and dim eyes towards the setting sun. It was only the night before that he had heard his mother was ill, and could survive but a day or two. He had lived nearly apart from society, and, being a lad of a thoughtful, dreamy mind, had made a world to himself. His thoughts and feelings were so much in it, that, except in relation to his own home, there were the same vague and strange notions in his brain concerning the state of things surrounding him, as we have of a foreign land.

The main feeling which this self-made world excited in him was love, and, like most of his age, he had formed to himself a being suited to his own fancies. This was the romance of life, and though men, with minds like his, make imagination to stand oftentimes in the place of real existence, and to take to itself as deep feeling and concern, yet in domestic relations, which are so near, and usual, and private, they feel longer and more deeply than those who look upon their homes as only a better part of the world to which they belong. Indeed, in affectionate and good men of a visionary cast, it is in some sort only realizing their hopes and desires, to turn them homeward. Arthur felt that it was so, and he loved his house hold the more that they gave him an earnest of one day realizing all his hopes and attachments.

Arthur's mother was peculiarly dear to him, in having a character so much like his own. For though the cares and attachments of life had long ago taken place of a fanciful existence in her, yet her natural turn of mind was strong enough to give to these something of the romance of her disposition. This had led to a more than usual openness and intimacy between Arthur and his mother, and now brought to his remembrance the hours they had sat together by the firelight, when he listened to her mild and melancholy voice, as she spoke of what she had undergone at the loss of her parents and husband. Her gentle rebuke of his faults, her affectionate look of approval when he had done well, her care that he should be a just man, and her motherly anxiety lest the world should go hard with him, all crowded into his mind, and he thought that every worldly attachment was hereafter to be a vain thing.

He had passed the night between violent, tumultuous grief, and numb insensibility. Stepping into the carriage, with a slow, weak motion, like one who was quitting his sick chamber for the first time, he began his journey homeward. As he lifted his eyes upward, the few stars that were here and there over the sky seemed to look down in pity, and shed a religious and healing light upon him. But they soon went out, one after another, and as the last faded from his imploring sight, it was as if every thing good and holy had forsaken him. The faint tint in the east soon became a ruddy glow, and the sun, shooting upward, burst over every living thing in full glory. The sight went to Arthur's sick heart, as if it were in mockery of his misery.