

their genius, but of their dispositions also. Shenstone was naturally an egotist, and, like Rousseau, scarce ever contemplated a landscape without some tacit reference to the space occupied in it by himself. "An air of greatness," remarks the infirm philosopher of Geneva, "has always something melancholy in it: it leads us to consider the wretchedness of those who affect it. In the midst of extended grass-plats and fine walks, the little individual does not grow greater; a tree of twenty feet high will shelter him as well as one of sixty; he never occupies a space of more than three feet; and in the midst of his immense possessions, is lost like a poor worm." Alas! it was but a poor worm, ever brooding over its own mean dimensions, — ever thinking of the little entity self, and jealous, in its egotism, of even the greatness of nature, — that could have moralized in a strain so unwholesome. Thomson, the least egotistic of all poets, had no such jealousy in his composition. Instead of feeling himself lost in any save vignette landscapes, it was his delight, wholly forgetful of self and its minute measurements, to make landscapes even larger than the life, — to become all eye, — and, by adding one long reach of the vision to another, to take in a kingdom at a glance. There are few things finer in English poetry than the description in which, on this principle, he lays all Scotland at once upon the canvas.

"Here a while the Muse,  
High hovering o'er the broad cerulean scene,  
Sees Caledonia in romantic view ;  
Her airy mountains, from the waving main  
Invested with a keen diffusive sky,  
Breathing the soul acute ; her forests huge,  
Incult, robust, and tall, by Nature's hand  
Planted of old ; her azure lakes between,  
Poured out extensive, and her watery wealth  
Full ; winding deep and green her fertile vales ;  
With many a cool translucent brimming flood