

by Kames in his late publication. Will you not extend your walk?"

We quitted the ruins together, and went sauntering along the shore. There was a rich sunset glow on the water, and the hills that rise on the opposite side of the Frith stretched their undulating line of azure under a gorgeous canopy of crimson and gold. My companion pointed to the scene. "These glorious clouds," he said, "are but wreaths of vapor, and these lovely hills accumulations of earth and stone. And it is thus with all the past,—with the past of our own little histories, that borrows so much of its golden beauty from the medium through which we survey it; with the past too of all history. There is poetry in the remote; the bleak hill seems a darker firmament, and the chill wreath of vapor a river of fire. And you, Sir, seem to have contemplated the history of our stern Reformers through this poetical medium, till you forget that the poetry was not in them, but in that through which you surveyed them."

"Ah, Mr. Ferguson," I replied, "you must permit me to make a distinction. I acquiesce fully in the justice of your remark: the analogy, too, is nice and striking; but I would fain carry it a little further. Every eye can see the beauty of the remote; but there is beauty in the near, an interest at least, which every eye cannot see. Each of the thousand little plants that spring up at our feet has an interest and beauty to the botanist; the mineralogist would find something to engage him in every little stone. And it is thus with the poetry of life; all have a sense of it in the remote and the distant, but it is only the men who stand high in the art, its men of profound science, that can discover it in the near. The *mediocre* poet shares but the commoner gift, and so he seeks his themes in ages