

scene is," I said, "you will find, even among those who arrogate to themselves the praise of wisdom and learning, men who regard such scenes as mere errors of nature. Burnett would have told you that a Dutch landscape, without hill, rock, or valley, must be the perfection of beauty, seeing that Paradise itself could have furnished nothing better."

"I hold Milton as higher authority on the subject," said my companion, "than all the philosophers who ever wrote. Beauty is a tame, unvaried flat, where a man would know his country only by the milestones! A very Dutch paradise, truly!"

"But would not some of your companions above," I asked, "deem the scene as much an error of nature as Burnet himself? They could pass over these stubborn rocks neither plough nor harrow."

"True," he replied; "there is a species of small wisdom in the world that often constitutes the extremest of its folly, — a wisdom that would change the entire nature of *good*, had it but the power, by vainly endeavoring to render that good universal. It would convert the entire earth into one vast corn-field, and then find that it had ruined the species by its improvement."

"We of Scotland can hardly be ruined in that way for an age to come," I said. "But I am not sure that I understand you. Alter the very nature of good in the attempt to render it universal! How?"

"I dare say you have seen a graduated scale," said my companion, "exhibiting the various powers of the different musical instruments, and observed how some of limited scope cross only a few of the divisions, and how others stretch nearly from side to side. 'Tis but a poor truism, perhaps, to say that similar differences in scope and power