

**HOURS IN THE PICTURE GALLERY OF
THIRLESTANE HOUSE, CHELTENHAM:
BEING A CATALOGUE, WITH
CRITICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE NOTICES, OF
SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL PAINTINGS IN
LORD NORTHWICK'S COLLECTION**

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Hours in the picture gallery of Thirlestane house, Cheltenham: being a catalogue, with critical and descriptive notices, of some of the principal paintings in Lord Northwick's Collection by Henry Davies

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HENRY DAVIES

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Rushcutt

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Catalogue of the Paintings in the Picture Galleries of Thirlestane House consists of a series of Critical Notices originally published in the *Cheltenham Looker-On*, amplified by additions made from time to time as the paintings have increased in number, or opportunities have occurred of introducing new matter, until what originally consisted of brief notes and memoranda only, has become enlarged into a descriptive Catalogue of the entire Collection.

In preparing the present new and enlarged edition of the "Hours," the Editor has, among other aids, availed himself of the very excellent account of the Thirlestaine House Collection published in *The Art Union*, for September, 1846; in two or three instances incorporating the judicious remarks contained in that account with the original text, but in such cases he has uniformly acknowledged his authority. For permission thus to make use of the article in question, he acknowledges himself indebted to S. C. Hall, Esq., the Proprietor and Editor of the Journal in question.

October 1, 1846.

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HOURS
IN THE
PICTURE GALLERY.

INTRODUCTION.

OF the many attractions of which Cheltenham has reason to be proud, there is none superior to that of LORD NORTHWICK'S PICTURE GALLERY. Though not like public exhibition rooms, a place of universal and indiscriminate resort, it is yet, through the kindness and liberality of its noble owner, so easy of access to every lover of the fine arts, that, for all the purposes of cultivated taste and intellectual gratification, it may be almost so considered. Even during his Lordship's residence on the premises, it is rarely closed to a respectful application, while at other times it is permitted to be open daily, whenever the weather is such as to favour a view of the rich treasures of art there collected together; and the beauty and value of which might provoke the envy of princes.

Under these circumstances it has occurred to us that a catalogue with brief descriptive notices of some of the principal paintings contained in the gallery and rooms of Thirlestane House would prove acceptable to many of the residents and visitors of Cheltenham—the more so, inasmuch as the Collection being strictly a private one, there

has not, hitherto, existed any catalogue to which parties visiting the Collection could refer, for the purpose of recalling its contents to their minds, or of pointing out particular pictures to the attention of those friends who might be about to visit the gallery. In order to accomplish the task we have thus undertaken, as fully and faithfully as may be compatible with the above design, we have devoted several hours to an examination of the many choice and brilliant works which adorn the walls of the different apartments; and the result of these hours of careful inspection are here presented to the public.

The great number of pictures contained in the Collection renders it impossible to give any very elaborate or detailed criticism, even of many of the most important of them: our aim, therefore, will be to indicate the character and quality of a few of the choicest, or most remarkable, specimens, rather than to furnish a critical review of the whole; leaving it to our readers to follow out our suggestions at some convenient season, by a personal visit to the gallery.

The additions which Lord Northwick is constantly making, and the changes of situation which the pictures from time to time undergo, may, in some of its minor details, occasionally affect the accuracy of the following catalogue, but as the attendant who usually accompanies the visitor through the different apartments will be always prepared to point out such additions and changes, no inconvenience it is apprehended can possibly result. Before we proceed to speak of the pictures, we must, however, say a few words on the premises in which they are deposited.

THRIBLESTANE HOUSE, which was erected at a cost almost unparalleled, considering its size, is too well known to render any minute description of the edifice necessary;

but as the present noble owner has made some important additions to the original building, it may be as well, briefly, to notice the arrangement which he has adopted for the display of his fine collection of Pictures. The Dining Room, Drawing Room, and Saloon, all open, *en suite*, with the small Circular Room and the Gallery; forming together a vista of above two hundred and ten feet. The two latter apartments were erected by Lord Northwick—the Gallery being of admirable proportions and particularly well lighted: it alone is upwards of eighty feet in length, by twenty-six wide and twenty-nine feet high. His Lordship has also recently added two other rooms, forming a western wing to the building, and which, though not entering into the vista above noticed, yet opens into the Dining Room and ranges with the general suite. The whole of the apartments are, with singular good taste, hung with a rich crimson-coloured flock paper, which throws out the pictures into fine relief, and materially contributes to heighten the effect; the draperies and furniture being also in strict harmony.

Besides the rooms just mentioned, which occupy the entire frontage of Thirlestane House, Lord Northwick's private Sitting Room and Library are, during his Lordship's absence, equally accessible to the visitor, and contain a number of most beautiful paintings, mention of most of which will be found in the following pages.

H. D.

P.S.—In the following notes on the Pictures, technical phrases will be avoided as much as possible. And here it may not be amiss to observe, that the word *colouring* will be applied indifferently either to an arrangement of colours, or to a beautiful imitation of a particular object; the word