On applying for admission to the Scottish Academy at Edinburgh, he was at first rejected, on account of the roughness of his introductory specimens. But he persevered; he accomplished something better; and was eventually enrolled as a student. Modest and self-contained—doubtful of his own genius—he endeavoured to supply the want of innate power by steadfast toil. The single element, he says, in all the progressive movements of my pencil, was persevering industry. With admirable tenacity he clung to his fixed purpose, and laboured day and night in the acquisition of knowledge. Removing to London, he took lodgings in Norton Street, and having obtained employment at eighteen