

my paternal hands fall †. I have followed my object without any fixed plan: I have known neither rules nor exceptions; I have found the truth, only to lose it again. But when I had once discovered my first principles, every thing I sought for appeared; and in the course of twenty years, I have seen my work begun, grow up, advanced, and finished.

If this work meets with success, I shall owe it chiefly to the grandeur and majesty of the subject. However I do not think that I have been totally deficient in point of genius. When I have seen what so many great men both in France, England and Germany have said before me, I have been lost in admiration: but I have not lost my courage: I have said with Corregio, And I also am a || painter.

† *Ter patriæ cecidere manus* —
|| *Ed io anche son pittore.*