wide and eminent circle of friends, which, among artists, included Turner and Wilkie, and among men of letters Wilson and Scott,—the latter of whom desired that Thomson, instead of Turner, should have illustrated the collected edition of his works. He died at Duddingston on the 27th of October 1840 (not the 20th, as stated by some authorities). Thomson was twice married, and his second wife, the widow of Mr Dalrymple of Cleland, was herself also a skilful amateur artist.

Thomson holds an honourable position as the first powerful landscapist that Scotland produced, and he is still among her greatest. His style was founded, in the first instance, upon the practice of the Dutch masters ; but ultimately he submitted to the influence of the Poussins and the Italians, rightly believ­ing that their method—in the richer solemnity of its colour and the deeper gravity of its chiaroscuro—was more truly fitted for the portrayal of the scenery of Scotland, more in harmony with the gloom and the glory of its mountains and its glens and the passion of its wave-vexed cliffs. But to the study of the art of the past he joined a close and constant reference to nature which kept his own work fresh and original, though, of course, he never even approached such scientific accuracy in the rendering of natural form and effect as is expected from even the tyro in our recent schools of landscape. His art is clearly distinguished by “style”; at their best, his works show skilful selection in the leading lines of their composition and admirable qualities of abstract colour and tone. Thomson is fairly represented in the Scottish National Gallery ; and the Aberlady Bay of that collection, with the soft infinity of its clouded grey sky, and its sea which leaps and falls again in waves of sparkling and of shadowed silver, is fit to rank among the triumphs of Scottish art.

THOR. See Æsir, vol. i. p. 210, and Mythology, vol. xvii. p. 156.

THOREAU, Henry David (1817-1862), one of the most strongly-marked individualities of modern times, spent the greater part of his life in the neighbourhood of the place where he was born—Concord, a village town of Massachusetts, pleasantly situated some twenty miles north­west of Boston, amidst a pastoral country of placid beauty. To Thoreau this Concord country contained all of beauty and even grandeur that was necessary to the worshipper of nature : he once journeyed to Canada ; he went west on one occasion ; he sailed and explored a few rivers ; for the rest, he haunted Concord and its neighbourhood as faith­fully as the stork does its ancestral nest. John Thoreau, his father, who married the daughter of a New England clergy­man, was the son of a John Thoreau of the isle of Jersey, who, in Boston, married a Scottish lady of the name of Burns. This last-named John was the son of Philippe Thoreau and his wife Marie le Gallais, persons of pure French blood, settled at St Helier, in Jersey. From his New England Puritan mother, from his Scottish grandmother, from his Jersey-American grandfather, and from his remoter French ancestry Thoreau inherited distinctive traits : the Saxon element perhaps predominated, but the “ hauntings of Celtism ” were prevalent and potent. The stock of the Thoreaus was a robust one ; and in Concord the family, though never wealthy nor officially influential, was ever held in peculiar respect. As a boy, Henry drove his mother’s cow to the pastures, and thus early became enamoured of certain aspects of nature and of certain delights of solitude. At school and at Harvard university he in nowise distinguished himself, though he was an intelligently receptive student ; he became, however, pro­ficient enough in Greek, Latin, and the more general acquirements to enable him to act for a time as a master. But long before this he had become apprenticed to the learning of nature in preference to that of man : when only twelve years of age he had made collections for Agassiz, who had then just arrived in America, and already the meadows and the hedges and the stream-sides had become cabinets of rare knowledge to him. On the desertion of schoolmastering as a profession Thoreau became a lecturer and author, though it was the labour of his hands which mainly supported him through many years of his life : professionally he was a surveyor. In the effort to reduce the practice of economy to a fine art he arrived at the conviction that the less labour a man did, over and above the positive demands of necessity, the better for him and for the community at large ; he would have had the order of the week reversed,—six days of rest for one of labour. It was in 1845 he made the now famous experi­ment of Walden. Desirous of proving to himself and others that man could be as independent of his kind as the nest-building bird, Thoreau retired to a hut of his own construction on the pine-slope over against the shores of Walden Pond,—a hut which he built, furnished, and kept in order entirely by the labour of his own hands. During the two years of his residence in Walden woods he lived by the exercise of a little surveying, a little job-work, and the tillage of a few acres of ground which produced him his beans and potatoes. His absolute independency was as little gained as if he had camped out in Hyde Park; relatively he lived the life of a recluse. He read consider­ably, wrote abundantly, thought actively if not widely, and came to know beasts, birds, and fishes with an intimacy more extraordinary than was the case with St Francis of Assisi. Birds came at his call, and forgot their hereditary fear of man ; beasts lipped and caressed him ; the very fish in lake and stream would glide, unfearful, between his hands. This exquisite familiarity with bird and beast would make us love the memory of Thoreau, if his egotism were triply as arrogant, if his often meaningless paradoxes were even more absurd, if his sympathies were even less humanitarian than we know them to have been. His *Walden,* the record of this fascinating two years’ experi­ence, must always remain a production of great interest and considerable psychological value. Some years before Thoreau took to Walden woods he made the chief friend­ship of his life, that with Emerson. He became one of the famous circle of the transcendentalists, always keenly preserving his own individuality amongst such more or less potent natures as Emerson, Hawthorne, and Margaret Fuller. From Emerson he gained more than from any man, alive or dead ; and, though the older philosopher both enjoyed and learned from the association with the younger, it cannot be said that the gain was equal. There was nothing electrical in Thoreau’s intercourse with his fellow-men ; he gave off no spiritual sparks. He absorbed intensely, but when called upon to illuminate in turn was found wanting. It is with a sense of relief that we read of his having really been stirred into active enthusiasm anent the wrongs done the ill-fated John Brown. With children he was affectionate and gentle, with old people and strangers considerate. In a word, he loved his kind as animals, but did not seem to find them as interesting as those furred and feathered. In 1847 Thoreau left Walden Lake abruptly, and for a time occupied himself with lead- pencil making, the parental trade. He never married, thus further fulfilling his policy of what one of his essayist­biographers has termed “indulgence in fine renounce­ments.” At the comparatively early age of forty-five he died, on 6th May 1862. His grave is in the beautiful cemetery of Sleepy Hollow, beside those of Hawthorne and Emerson.

Thoreau’s fame will rest on Walden, the Excursions, and his Letters, though he wrote nothing which is not deserving of notice. Up till his thirtieth year he dabbled in verse, but he had little ear for metrical music, and he lacked the spiritual impulsiveness of the true poet. He had occasional flashes of insight and could record beautifully, notwithstanding : his little poem “Haze” is surcharged with concentrated loveliness. His weakness as a philosopher is his tendency to base the laws of the universe on the experience-born, thought-produced convictions of one man—himself. His weakness as a writer is the too frequent striving after antithesis and paradox. If he had had all his own originality without the itch of appearing