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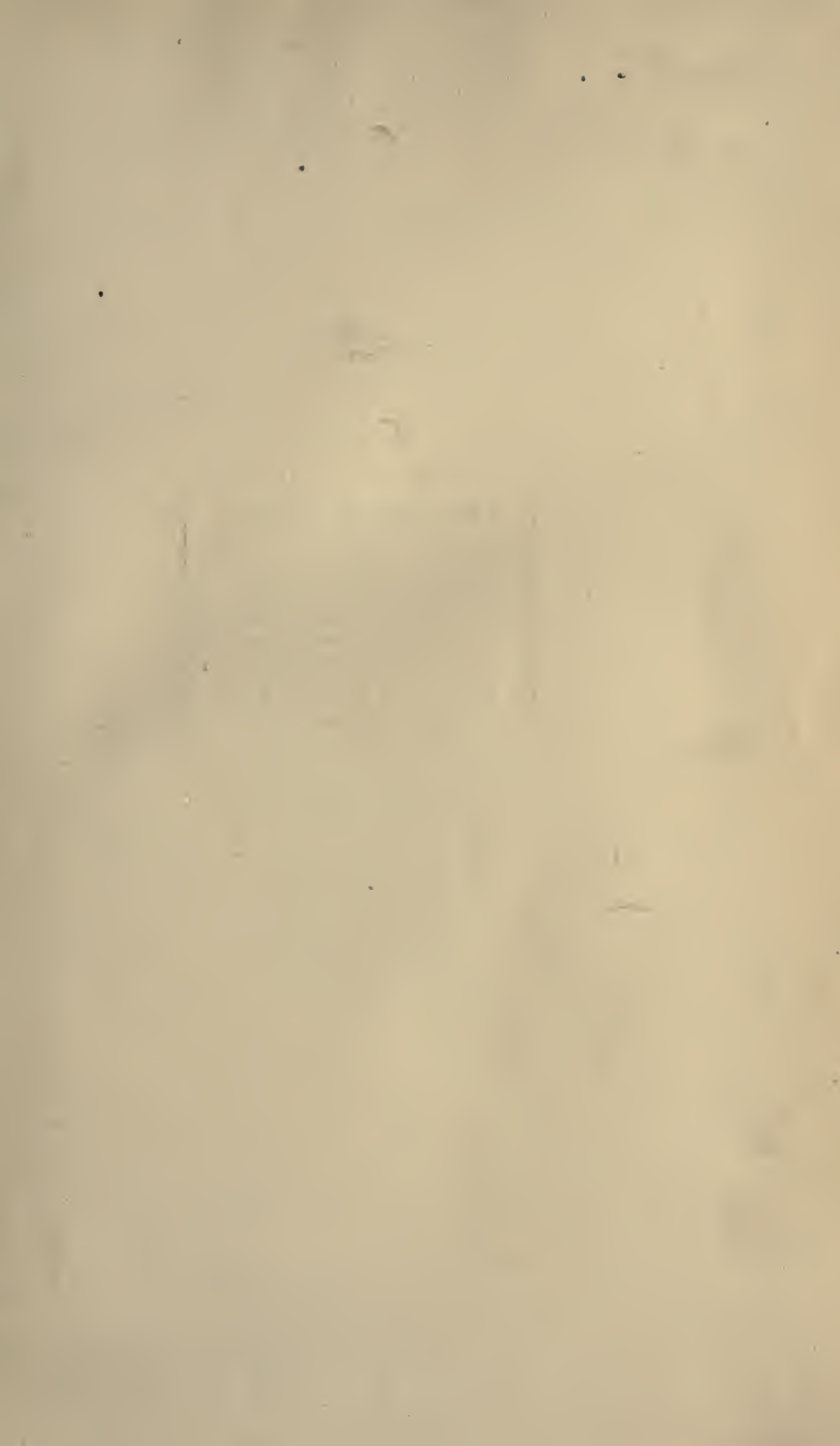
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THE  
EARLY RENAISSANCE

AND OTHER ESSAYS ON  
ART SUBJECTS

By JAMES M. HOPPIN

PROFESSOR OF THE HISTORY OF ART IN YALE UNIVERSITY



BOSTON AND NEW YORK  
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## PREFACE

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With the exception of the last five essays, those contained in this volume have already appeared in print; the essay upon *Art in Education*, or a portion of it, was published in the 'Forum,' that upon *Principles of Art* in the 'Church Review,' and others in the 'New Englander.' The first article, upon *The Early Renaissance*, was originally delivered as an introductory address before the Yale School of Fine Arts; and the occasional nature of all these essays, not being academic class-lectures or having a strictly technical, and therefore perhaps more popular character, have led me to put them in book form. There has been a marked awakening of interest in things pertaining to art and its literature, not only among the more highly cultivated class but among professional and practical men; and the hope of meeting this demand in some slight way, has also influenced me.

Allusions occur to Mr. Ruskin in these pages, and lest their critical tone might be misinterpreted, I am glad to avow myself a true disciple and an ardent admirer of that great teacher who has done more for the right understanding of Art than any living man, or artist; who has been an apostle of good in other things besides art and has fought a glorious fight against untruth and materialism; who has given nature a chance

to live and the heart freedom to love her, the little heather on the hillside to bloom as well as the joy in simple things. He has cleared away much gross misapprehension from the domain of æsthetics, and has shown that the deepest foundations of art are moral, that they lie below the fluctuating surface of sense, in faith and life, and that art is "an expression of man's rational delight in the facts of the universe." Since his prophetic voice has been heard art has risen from its degraded position as the slave of luxury, as a *bourgeois* conventionality, as a mere decoration of life however brilliant, and its true nature is seen that it has a vital and eternal beauty belonging to divine things.

But this admiration of a master in the theory and criticism of art has not prevented me from enjoying artistic excellence wherever it may be found, and in periods in which Mr. Ruskin sometimes declines to recognize it, in Greek as well as Gothic, in Dutch, French and Spanish schools of painting as well as Italian, and especially to view Greek art as the head-source, giving its law to all that comes after. I have, in a word, tried to cultivate a catholic spirit, believing that art dwells in the human soul, and shows itself in an infinite variety of form, like the types and products of nature ;, but whatever opinions Mr. Ruskin himself may have arrived at, from some of which we are forced respectfully to dissent, he has been our best guide to the facts and ideas of nature.



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## THE EARLY RENAISSANCE.

A rabbinic proverb says that "night came before day." Out of night is born the new light. The dissolution of the Roman empire and the sweeping away of the old civilization by northern barbarism and rude uncultivated force, was followed in Southern Europe where the Latin civilization prevailed, by an intellectual night, in which the learning then contained exclusively in the Latin and Greek languages, was blotted out. The new civilization had not dawned and the old had been destroyed. This period of gross darkness lasted, Mr. Hallam says, "with no very sensible difference on a superficial view about five centuries." The only glimmer of learning arose from the necessity of preserving some forms of the Latin language by the church for ecclesiastical uses; and, too, by a happy circumstance, that religious order in the church which was then the most influential and widely diffused, the Benedictine order, enjoined the preserving and copying of classical manuscripts, and thus the learning of the Latin language became deposited (safe to be sure but useless) in the stone walls of monasteries as in a tomb awaiting its resurrection. The palimpsest was only the winding-sheet within the coffin. But the knowledge of the Greek language and literature seems literally to have perished; and there was not found in Western Europe a man who could read a line of Homer or Plato, or who had even a suspicion of the inestimable wealth of wisdom and beauty shut up in Greek literature.

The causes which led to the revival of learning in

Europe would form too vast a theme to enter upon, it would be in fact to review the whole history of Europe during the Middle Ages—but however brought about, and the sources of this revival are probably deeper than philosophy can reach, the fact remains that towards the middle of the fourteenth century there was an intellectual awakening, a new enthusiasm for classic learning, which was anticipated by the poet Dante, who gathered into his mind all the tendencies of the age and was himself an epoch. While, as one has said, the thought and the subject matter of the *Divina Commedia* is intensely mediæval, its style has felt the breath of classical antiquity;\* for its very name ‘*Commedia*’ showed that Dante chose the ‘middle style,’ between ancient ‘tragedy’ and ‘elegy’—the classic style of easy narration and human life, the style, as he says, of his ‘master and author,’ Virgil; and if Beatrice was his symbolic interpreter in divine wisdom, Virgil was his interpreter in all human wisdom. The forces and laws of nature took on their old classic forms even in the deepest place of punishment; and the poem, though its theme was so serious, caught the everlasting spirit of beauty which was in the old literatures of humanity, which is ever old and which is also ever new, making Dante, as some have thought, the heralding-star of modern literature. But even more than to Dante the immediate resuscitation of classical culture may be ascribed to the poet Petrarch, whose exquisite perception of beauty led him to lay hold of the poetry of Virgil and the writings of Cicero, and to make them his masters, for he had learned Greek with Boccaccio only in the later years of his life and but very imperfectly. He was himself an ardent collector

\* Hallam’s *Hist. of Literature*, p. 73.

of ancient manuscripts, and never, it is related of him, could he pass convent walls without stopping to rummage their depths for literary treasures. His visits to the city of Rome introduced him to the actual monuments of antiquity: and he loved to ascend the weed-grown arches of the Baths of Diocletian, and the still more "mountainous vaults," as Shelley called them, of the Baths of Caracalla, in whose shadows and inspired by whose pagan vastness that poet wrote the 'Prometheus Unbound.'

The revival of classic antiquity was in fact of two kinds, of its literature and its monuments. Of the latter Rome itself was and still is the great treasure-house. I would observe in passing that antique Rome is best seen at night, or, if that seem paradoxical, by moonlight, when the garish sights and colors of the modern city vanish away and the colossal forms of antiquity come out to view—the huge bones of the old city are visible. Then alone (to use a homely but expressive word) one *senses* he is in Rome of the Cæsars. Above all, that enormous shell of antique power, the Vespasian amphitheatre, with its condensed mass of black shadow on one side, touched here and there by spots of silver light penetrating the cavernous arches, and the numerous tiers of vaults above vaults, giving airiness and elegance even to that Titanic structure, at such a moment brings back the old imperial city with wonderful distinctness. Only it is deplorable that the Coliseum in these last years has been cleaned! The ruthless besom of needed improvement has swept away all the wild shrubs and flowers, of which it is said there were 420 different species growing at one time upon its aged walls and lending a picturesque mantle to its decay. Although in Petrarch's time much remained of the ancient city,

much more had fallen into irretrievable ruin. It is a very curious history—that of the ruins of Rome. For three centuries after Constantine removed the seat of empire to Constantinople, desolation and almost silence reigned in Rome. Time slowly undermined tower and arch. But the mediæval wars and sieges did as much for the destruction of the monuments of Rome (an Italian historian says) as the hostile assaults and calamities which attended the destruction of the western empire. Her temples were used for fortresses by the fierce nobles of the Middle Ages in their sanguinary wars. “Whatever were the means,” says another writer, “by which they obtained possession, the Orsini had occupied the mole of Hadrian and the theatre of Pompey; the Colonna, the mausoleum of Augustus and the baths of Constantine; the Conti were in the Quirinal; the Frangipani had the Coliseum, the Septizonium of Severus, the Janus of the Forum Boarium, and a corner of the Palatine; the Savelli were at the tomb of Metella; the Corsi had fortified the Capitol. If the churches were not spared, it is certain that the Pagan monuments would be protected by no imagined sanctity; and we find that the Corsi family had occupied the basilica of St. Paul, without the walls; and that the Pantheon was a fortress defended for the pope.”

But much more of the ancient city was still standing in Petrarch’s and Poggio’s day than in the time of Raphael eighty or a hundred years later, when the artist addressed his noble letter to Leo X., “beseeching him to protect the few relics which were left to testify to the power and greatness of that divine soul of antiquity whose memory was inspiration to all who were capable of higher things.” Poggio, for example, saw and described the tomb of Cecilia



Metella while it was almost perfect and was coated with white marble that was soon afterwards destroyed on account of the marble's fatal facility to be burned into lime.\* But something more beautiful than strife, deformity, and blood, was to issue from these gaunt ruins of a former civilization.

After Petrarch, there came the school of classic scholars, or the 'humanists,' literally 'professors of learned studies,' who, not only like Poggio Bracciolini, recovered the lost works of Roman literature and restored, in plan at least, the old Rome, but who, later on, like Nicholas V., brought back the very spirit of antiquity in letters and philosophy, and saturated with it the whole culture of the age. This pontiff, who was the real founder of the Vatican library, had a magnificent conception that almost excused his enthusiasm for pagan antiquity and learning, and which is expressed in the words of Milman: "It was the splendid dream of Nicholas V., that the church should array herself in all the spoils of the ancient world, and so maintain, as a natural result, her dominion over the mind of man."

While the influence of the humanists who were carried away by their pedantry, with their high-flighted extravagances, their false style and pagan sensualism, culminating in such a vain-glorious career as that of Francesco Filelfo who filled Europe with his fame and follies, is a familiar fact, yet it should not be forgotten that though the most of them were but baptized pagans like Filelfo, Poggio and Poliziano, there were among them such worthy men as Ficino and Pico della Mirandola, who believed in the identity of Christianity and liberal learning and art; and with all the sad admixture of false philoso-

\* Burckhardt's Renaissance.

phy and pagan ideas belonging to this whole humanistic movement, mind was awakened. Men became alive to what had been written and thought by those who went before them. New subjects were started—philosophy, government, law, nature. The world opened freshly. There was something in this world to study as well as the world beyond. A zeal for learning was generated, false in many respects but stimulating. Man was recognized as worth studying. His body, proportioned to the subtlest laws of power and beauty, attracted attention as if a god were new come to earth. He was the microcosm of the universe, and a mystery floated about him. Rays of light went from his hands and head, and he was seen to be the embodiment of a divine type of beauty. The human element, so long lost, was reasserted. A simultaneous development of civic life also took place, and the rise of the Italian republics modelled partly upon political forms drawn from the study of the Roman law, brought men together on more equal terms, and made way for a state of society which demanded culture of some sort; and yet, as another has said, being without the means of culture in itself, it must fain lay hold of the ancient civilization to assist it in understanding the world, and life, and man; and thus this new enthusiasm for classic learning, this steeping of the human soul in the ancient ideas of freedom, beauty, and power, led the mind resistlessly to the subject or instrumentality of Art as interpreting its new longings; and formed just that intellectual preparation, created that moral and mental mould of culture, from which proceeded the new birth of Art.

This period of the revival of Art in Europe (above all in Italy where the scene of its first beginnings is



exclusively laid, for it was among the Latin races, the teachers of art to modern men as the Greeks were to the ancients) is, according to Lübke's excellent classification, divided into three portions, Early Renaissance from 1420 to 1500, or, in round numbers, the Fifteenth Century; High Renaissance—the perfected period of the revival—from 1500 to 1580, comprising nearly the whole of the Sixteenth Century; and the Decadence, from 1600 to 1800, or, it might be said in some respects, down to our own day. We confine ourselves to the first period—the Early Renaissance of the 15th century—the morning of this new day—and can speak but little, how little, of so great a theme, limited as it is. We cannot enter the noon-tide glory of the 16th century, of Lionardo, Titian, Michael Angelo, and Raphael.\* We must deny ourselves the privilege of ascending to those heights of perfection where the greatest masters serenely dwell. We keep in the valley, but it is full of good fruit. In truth, the Early Renaissance (as every new truth or birth of truth is) is the most fruitful of the three periods, and is it not also that famous period with which Mr. Ruskin has made the world ring—the original Paraisaical perfection before the fall? Not quite so either, I fear; since Mr. Ruskin loves to go back still further in the state of primitive innocence to the anterior religious Art of the 14th and 13th centuries—the *trecentisti* age—and it is hard for him to recognize the new power and life which even the pure beginnings of the Renaissance period (that he is wont to call the corruptions of the Gothic by the Renaissance) brought in, although he does do so eloquently

\* Though Lionardo da Vinci lived partially in the 15th century, his whole style and history anticipate and in fact belong to the 16th.

enough when he discourses upon the sculpture of Ghiberti and Rossellino, and the painting of Masaccio and Botticelli and Francesco Francia, as if forced by the truth. But even as Chaucer is a more interesting poet than Dryden, supposing their genius to have been the same, since he was the maker of an epoch, so this first period is the most suggestive of the three in its lessons for all time, and for us in this new world so strange to the beautiful feet of Art; for here in America is virgin soil for new things not only in science and government but art; and yet the culture that we have found necessarily to precede whatever is new, individual, and great in Art, must it not first come?—has it come?—when and how will it come?—we leave these questions for the present and return to our historic theme.

To resume the figure which has been employed all along, the Early Renaissance may be compared to morning after night—the night (though not without its stars) of barbarism, ignorance, and intellectual bondage. But there is a light that precedes the dawn—a flushing of the eastern sky which heralds the morn; and amid the darkness of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth centuries there shoot up these flashes of the coming day. Let us now take our stand for a moment upon one of those spots, or summits, we might call them, which caught this earliest light.

There are not many more interesting places in Europe than the neighborhood of the old cathedral at Pisa, where, on the plain at the extremity of the town, and in sight of the hills, those four expressive monuments of the Middle Ages, the Duomo, the Baptistery, the Campanile (the leaning tower of Pisa as it is commonly called, which undoubtedly commenced sinking on one side when it was building, and

then, being found safe, was strengthened and built up with care) and the Campo Santo, stand in one cluster almost alone and deserted, but with a strange Oriental majesty. There are few more important spots artistically viewed than this group of buildings, since here are brought together whole Art-epochs. I have always delighted in this old Pisan Duomo begun to be built as far back as the 11th century; for though it is much less bewildering in its beauty than the many-domed Byzantine San Marco at Venice with its dazzling colors and deep shadows, and carven flowers, and crowds of white-winged angels as if just lighted on it; and is less gloomily quaint and curiously-sculptured than the Gothic churches at Siena and Orvieto; and has far less of overpowering magnificence than the German cathedral at Milan; yet it is so pure a specimen of the Italian Romanesque just when the Roman basilica budded into the Gothic from the inspiration of the same warm southern genius, with its sides built of alternate layers of white and dark-green marble; its five naves and three transepts, and dome crowning the intersection of these and binding them compactly in one; its slender columns of Oriental marbles that might have belonged to Solomon's temple; its gallery behind gallery of open pillars; its lofty roof fretted with golden stars; its glimpses of gilded cornice seen between the high arches; its hundred windows of stained glass; its bright mosaics and solemn frescoes; its virgins and saints from the faultless hand of Del Sarto; and its beautiful bronze gates representing "the mysteries of the Redeemer"—something altogether curious, elaborately rich and pleasing, but at the same time singularly self-contained, classic, even severe! It shows manifestly its source from the basilica of

ancient Rome, of which Pisa was originally a colony, and this itself is a faint architectural prophecy of the Renaissance.\*

This city of Pisa at the mouth of the Arno, now so fallen from its former greatness but important as a commercial centre before the close of the 10th century, and from which "issued the first maritime code in the world"—the proud and somewhat treacherous little republic that held its own so long against foreign foe and its sister republics of Florence and Genoa, and that sent to sea three hundred war vessels and brought back the spoils of an older Eastern civilization with which, in the odd fashion of those days mingling rapine with devotion, to deck its temple of God—this free city of Pisa, above all, nourished in its bosom that creative genius, Nicolo Pisano. Nicolo of Pisa and Giotto of Florence were the prophets of modern art. Nicolo, with his son Giovanni and his pupil Andrea Pisano, do not, it is true, represent the Renaissance, but rather, as we have said, the light before the dawn. They were the reformers before the reformation. They were the first fruits of the new culture, not only feeling the influence of Dante, but coming freshly themselves in contact with antique learning and art.

\* "The *Duomo* at Pisa differs but little in style from the cathedral at Lucca, but the ground-plan and the design of the interior introduce us to something which, in its fullness, has no parallel at Lucca, at Ravenna, or any other city. We see plainly the influence of the basilica, but we see no less plainly the influence of the domical churches of Constantinople and Venice, we see also the influence of the mosques of Palermo, and of the churches, if not of northern Europe, at least of northern Italy. From the east came the central cupola; from the north came the spreading transept; and these two features Buschetto strove to work into harmony with the central body, whose general design was to be that of a basilica."—Edward A. Freeman's *Historical and Architectural Sketches*.



The vase on which is carved a bearded Bacchus, and the sarcophagus of Phedra and Hippolytus—fragments of the old Greek sculpture which made Nicolo Pisano a sculptor, and first breathed into him the inspiration of ancient art which is the everlasting spirit of beauty—may be seen at the Campo Santo of Pisa, which is a burial place indeed of dead bodies, but a birth-place of Art. This court of the Campo Santo so significant in its relation to the revival and history of Art contains, as is well known, an area about four hundred feet in length and one hundred and eighteen in width, and is surrounded by high walls covered with frescoes—now many of them in a lamentable condition of decay and, worse still, of horribly tasteless renovation—with an inner arcade, or cloister with chapels of Gothic tracery-work, built by Giovanni Pisano. In the year 1228 the earth which covers this cemetery was brought to Pisa from the aceldama of Jerusalem, in fifty galleys of the republic. The best artists of the day, chiefly from Tuscany, were called to decorate its walls with religious paintings; for, it is a familiar fact, but one of great import, that in those days of the revival of art as in the time of its greatest perfection, the unity of the arts was recognized, their mutual dependence on each other, and their comprehensive architectonic effect. The artists themselves moved easily in this circle of the arts, and drew their strength from all. In our time the musical composer Richard Wagner, has, with his more doubtful innovations, seized upon this idea and wrought out of it great dramatic expression, and the time will come, we think, when Christianity shall employ this conception of the unity of the arts with effect, not precisely from the motive of Nicholas V. to subdue under the church's authority the human mind, but rather to glorify God

with the consecration of the varied powers of the mind to his praise. We could step into the Duomo hard by the Campo Santo, and discourse of Nicolo Pisano's glorious sculptured pulpit and his other works; but here in the Campo Santo, though greatly stimulated by Nicolo's genius, *painting* is more prominent, and was more influential upon the revival of Art. The early Italian painters were fresco-painters, and had not learned the magical charms and mysteries of color. Oil-painting was not yet introduced into Italy. The broad spaces of wall which in the Byzantine architecture were ornamented with mosaics, in the later Lombard and Gothic architecture were covered with frescoes, or paintings in distemper, and this developed a bold and large style and gave play to original genius. But what a pity that modern art-critics with their odious accuracy should have robbed some of these old fresco-painters of their honors in the Pisan Campo Santo! We experience a disappointment such as we feel at the demolition of the legend of the building of Rome, or of the history of William Tell, or of the story of Faust, when we learn that Orcagna, the terrible Orcagna, did not, after all, paint the tremendous fresco on the northern wall (which even Mr. Ruskin gives him the credit of doing) of the 'Last Judgment;' and that Giotto is not the author of the vigorous picture of the 'Trials of Job' which occupies a third part of the south wall. But these paintings, and others which adorn the Campo Santo, especially the animated Scriptural scenes of Benozzo Gozzoli executed a century later, making it a thoughtful but not gloomy place, show the new spirit that had come into painting from Giotto (a greater name than Cimabue to whom the first beginnings of revival are commonly ascribed) and that might have

come from Dante, Giotto's friend, who not only lived in closest intimacy with him but proposed to him subjects to paint. These frescoes, whoever painted them, are Giottesque. They belong to the sphere of this creative mind. They have caught the controlling character of this great master,—something too of his moral power who painted the feeling 'Entombment' in the Arena Chapel at Padua, and the grand symbolic figures of 'Poverty,' 'Chastity,' and 'Obedience,' at the lower church of San Francesco at Assisi. Perhaps the new power was in the breath of the age itself which came over those old Tuscan painters Aretino Spinello, Simone Memmi, Buffamalco, and others, and they were raised above themselves. Yet a false impression should not be made that the real change had yet taken place, or was absolute. Giotto himself but laid foundations, and groped in the darkness like a blind giant. He had no scientific knowledge of the anatomy of the human body. He lacked the commonest technical skill belonging to the present day; and he was almost totally ignorant of the laws of linear perspective and *chiaroscuro*. He had no conception of the vast world of nature as connected with art, and of the infinite richness of landscape-painting as afterwards developed.

So the tone of these Campo Santo frescoes has still all the rigidity of the old style; but an indescribable something, a new spirit and life, is nevertheless perceptible. There is less conventionalism in the drawing and more force in the grouping. There is a plainer connection "between the idea intended to be conveyed and the object represented." There is an increased accuracy in the copy of real objects, in fine a sensible breaking away from the lifeless character of the former manner. It is not yet art in its true sense,

because there is not beauty, but there is power, or the prophecy of something powerful to come. For an example of this, the figure of Satan who appears before God among the angels of heaven, as represented in the fresco of the 'Trials of Job,' is, to my mind, a juster conception of the personified spirit of evil than even Milton's conception in *Paradise Lost*—not so heroic indeed, but more essentially ugly, impure, cunning, strong, vile. If Milton's idea be true as it is noble—

“for neither do the Spirits damn'd  
Lose all their virtue,”

then his portraiture is the greater, but if evil be evil indeed, that is, the opposite of good, of truth, of beauty, then the old Tuscan painter's is the finer conception. The contrast which this essentially ugly, impish, and defiant form presents to the angelic beings who float in the blissful sunshine of the divine countenance, is fearfully powerful. He is a deformed blot upon the purity, a harsh discord in the harmony of heaven. There is also occasionally a gleam of grim humor, and even pathos, amid these terrible things and fearful imaginings of the religious mind in the Middle Ages. Nature speaks in the fresco of the 'Triumph of Death.' Who does not recall the touch, when as that bat-winged figure of Death (borrowed from Petrarch's poetry) is flying to sweep down with her unsparing scythe princes and nobles, and pleasure-seeking rich men and ladies banqueting under the orange trees to the music of viols, how the group of wretched beggars and children of sorrow, misery and disappointment, stretch their imploring hands to her in vain! She passes them by in scorn. She lets *them* live. Where will you find in the sister arts of poetry and eloquence a more wonderful touch of nature than



this? So we see in the same picture the representation of a nun, who though she has taken the rigorous vow of poverty, still grasps tightly her well-filled purse. In that most terrific though grotesque fresco of the 'Last Judgment,' painted probably by the Siennese brothers Giovanni and Pietro Lorenzetti, in which the "emperor of the dolorous realm" is a huge figure (in this instance taken from Dante's *Inferno*, and less thoughtfully powerful but even more monstrously hideous than the personation in the other picture that has been noticed) there are also touches of satiric nature. King Solomon, for example, is depicted as rising from his tomb looking altogether doubtful upon which side of the judgment-seat to take his place. In one part of the painting a watchful angel drags back an ecclesiastic in his full robes from the groups of the Blessed into which he is confidently pressing, and another serviceable spirit rescues a youth dressed in gay attire from a group of the Accursed where in modest consciousness he had ranged himself—illustrating the Lord's words "the first shall be last, and the last first." And above the whole awful scene a pitying archangel sits, partially hiding his sorrowful countenance in his mantle. We see here the workings of the popular conscience. Mind is beginning to act independently. There is a foregleam of freedom across the sombre scenes. The night of the tasteless, inexpressive, and unreasoning Byzantine period of art, is soon to vanish away.

By Byzantine Art, let me say, is not meant (as the error is sometimes made) early Christian Art, which, after its struggle with Pagan ideas began to exhibit evidences of a new spirit and power; but that Art (Christian indeed as contra-distinguished from heathen) which, originally a weak mixture of Orien-

talized Greek and Latin classicism, sprang up in the East at the foundation of Constantinople, A. D. 328, and existed to the final conquest of that city by the Turks in 1453. It fairly dominated the art of the Christian church both at the East and the West from the time of Justinian in the sixth century to about the eleventh century, and many of the Byzantine buildings, paintings, mosaics and sculptures, which now exist, belong to that middle period.\* That it had its good points, its grand conceptions and achievements, the basilicas of San Marco at Venice, San Vitale at Ravenna, and, above all, the church of Santa Sophia built by Justinian at Constantinople, bear testimony; and I would here express the hope (registered in my deepest mind as I once stood under its disfigured dome) that the Greek church of Eastern Europe may, at no distant day, worship again in that mighty fane which was once dedicated to the 'Divine Wisdom.'

Byzantine Art with much that was richly ornamental and occasionally forcible, was however but a dry branch, and survived at the West in a stark mannerism, without life or movement, its best phases in architecture its worst in painting, gorgeously artificial like the imperial court from which it originated, but as a general rule, devoid of freedom, nature and beauty. It became at last utterly conventional and and feebly manneristic, and in its attempts at plastic art it resembled nothing in heaven above or earth beneath. It excelled in the cold decorative art of mosaic. It took on a thoroughly hieratic character

\* "The round of the minster at Aachen beyond all doubt reproduces the round of St. Vital; and columns from Ravenna were used to adorn the churches and palaces which Charles raised both at Aachen and at Ingelheim."—Edward A. Freeman.

and was essentially ecclesiastical art ; and while we have nothing to say against the Church which nourished whatever Art there was during the barbarism of the Middle Ages, as well as what learning there was, yet it must be said that the Church, unwittingly it may be, used its all but omnipotent authority to maintain the false canons of taste that had become fixed in its own practice. We have thus taken an illustration of the earliest beginnings of the new spirit in art from the frescoes of the Campo Santo at Pisa belonging to the Fourteenth century ; let us now take another illustration of this light before the dawn from the sister art of Architecture—which brings us where we must sooner or later have come, to the “ lily-city.”

The circle of the cathedral of Florence and the buildings that surround it—the Bigallo with its loggia, the Baptistery of San Giovanni with its bronze gates, and the Campanile of Giotto, that “ one poor steeple,” as the old Florentines proudly called it, which is estimated to have cost at the rate of three hundred dollars a superficial foot, making an entire expenditure of what would amount in the currency of our day to twenty-five million dollars, built too by a small republic amid constant wars and struggles for existence\*—these renowned buildings form another great centre from which the earliest light emanated, or on which it rested. The domical basilica of Santa Maria del Fiore, like the chalice of the lily in this city of flowers, itself marks a period in art.

The story of the building of the cupola of the Florentine cathedral, which is the model of the dome of St. Peter's at Rome, only the more solid and perfect of the two, and really the larger, measuring simply the

\* Jarves' Art-Hints, p. 39.

cupola and not the drum on which it rests,—as related by Vasari (the gem of his book)—is not surpassed as an example of heroic energy and genius. In such a history Art asserts its place as an expression of mind, and of national character. These buildings, reared by an inspiration of liberty, have exercised an undeniable influence upon man's spiritual destiny, upon poetry and literature, upon popular forms of government in Europe, upon the advancement of freedom, proving Art to be no plaything of the age, no mere instrument of mindless decoration and sensual amusement, which it became in the last stages of the Decadence, and which it is threatening again to become, and in our free land under the influences of a money prosperity and materialistic tendencies. Art has higher uses than to amuse and decorate. The stern old council chamber in the rugged Palazzo Vecchio of Florence, that once accommodated a thousand free citizens of the republic in their deliberations, frowns upon such petty ideas of Art, as in many quarters so unworthily prevail.

“Art,” says Mr. Ruskin, “is properly no recreation, it cannot be learned at spare moments; nor pursued when we have nothing better to do. It is no handiwork for drawing-room tables; no relief of the ennui of boudoirs; it must be understood and undertaken seriously or not at all. To advance it men's lives must be given, and to receive it their hearts. ‘*Le peintre Rubens s’amuse à être ambassadeur,*’ said one with whom, but for his own words, we might have thought that effort had been absorbed in power, and the labor of his art in its felicity.”

None of this group of edifices of which we are now speaking, excepting the old walls of the Baptistery of San Giovanni were in existence when Dante was



born ; and they are, it might be said, because he was ; for both Brunelleschi and Giotto were students of his writings, and their greatest works reveal the impress of his sublime genius. At all events; Dante and Brunelleschi drank at the same fountain of classical antiquity. The plan of the cathedral at Florence was made, and the main body of the edifice was built at the end of the 13th century by Arnolfo di Cambrio, the same architect who built the Palazzo Vecchio. I will not repeat the familiar decree of the popular will by which the republic though struggling with formidable enemies consecrated its treasures to the erection of this temple, to be built, so it ran, "with the greatest possible magnificence that the human mind is capable of conceiving, since it has been decreed in council, both public and private, by the most able men of this city, that nothing should be undertaken for the community which did not correspond entirely to the ideas of its most enlightened citizens united together to decide on such subjects." Under the succeeding hands of Giotto, Taddeo Gaddi, Orcagna, and Lorenzo Filippi, it grew for a century or more, but none had the force to undertake its crowning cupola, which the Byzantine method of pendentive supports in corners, or the rearing of a domical vault upon huge piers, thus narrowing and filling up the space beneath, could not achieve. It was not until the fiery-minded little Brunelleschi began to muse upon this problem that it had any prospect of being solved. He seemed to be raised up for this sole work ; for while like Giotto, Leone Alberti, Lionardo da Vinci, and some other artists of that extraordinary age of great men, he was a universal genius, a keen disputant in philosophy, a theologian, sculptor, painter, inventor it might be said of linear perspective, geome-

trician, artificer in gold, poet, orator—he was more than all, architect; a master of that comprehensive art which, as the etymology of the word implies, is the first art, the primitive art—and really so—since to make a house for man to live in and a house for God to dwell in, is commonly the original manifestation of the art-instinct of a people. Filippo Brunelleschi, as the chronicles say, came while a very young man to Florence burning with eagerness to compete with Ghiberti and other sculptors for the gates of San Giovanni. His generosity yielded the first place to Ghiberti in the competition; but his own genius soared higher. He was to place the topmost stone with rejoicing upon the Duomo of Alfonso. This filled his ardent and profoundly musing mind. No way presented itself to cover the vast void with a dome that united nave and transept. He could see no light upon it until happily he turned his feet to go to Rome. There for years he studied the building methods of the ancients. He dug to the deepest foundations of the old Roman edifices. He sought the secret of the solid and bold Roman vault. Vasari says: “Donato having returned to Florence, Filippo was left alone in Rome, and there he labored continually among the ruins of the buildings, where he studied more industriously than ever. Nor did he rest until he had drawn every description of fabric—temples, round, square, or octagon; basilicas, aqueducts, baths, arches, the coliseum and amphitheatres, of which he examined all the modes of binding and clamping, as well as the turning of the vaults and arches; he took note likewise of all the methods used for uniting the stones as well as of the means employed for securing the equilibrium and close conjunction of all the parts. He pondered specially on

the difficulties involved in the vaults of the Ritonda (the Pantheon) and maturely considered the means by which it might be effected. He well examined and made careful drawings of the other vaults and arches of antiquity ; to these he devoted perpetual study, and if by chance he found fragments of capitals, columns, cornices, or basements of buildings buried in the earth, he set laborers to work and caused them to be dug out, until the foundation was laid open to view."

He returned to Florence with the secret. He wrought out his plans patiently and silently. In no haste but at the right time he urged the city to complete the cupola. I will not tell the story of a life-time—how baffled and thrown back, he returned ever to the contest—how he craftily caused to assemble together in Florence, in order to bring out their incompetence and triumph over them, the most celebrated artists of the world—how by violence, by audacity, by cunning, by eloquence, by pathos, and more than all by the resistless argument of convincing skill, never losing sight of his object, outwitting his colleague, Ghiberti, he at length, in 1420, obtained sole directorship of the great design,—how going on step by step, overcoming workmen's strikes and every technical difficulty with an invention absolutely inexhaustible and never once baffled, he lived to see the wondrous dome, as by magic, suspended in mid-air, and even the lantern crowning it, though not completed externally nor the outer marble casing of the drum laid on, and breathed his last in 1446, within a year of three score and ten. There this work of a great life stands in the bosom of the "lily-city," so beautiful that Michael Angelo had his tomb placed in the church of Santa Croce hard by, in such a spot that when the doors were opened the dome might be seen from where he lay. It was in archi-

ecture the first freeing from the Byzantine and Gothic styles. It was an emanation from the breath of power lingering in the ruins of antique Rome. The architecture of the Renaissance was in its beginnings the revival of Latin antiquity, being a resuscitation on its own soil of the same Italian genius that built the Pantheon; while the arts of sculpture and painting were mainly inspired, as will be made to appear, from Greek classic art. Brunelleschi's dome was an improvement upon the Pantheon. It consisted of two disjoined domes in fact assisting each other, an outer and inner—a ribbed outer octagonal cupola covering an interior vault—and both raised upon an octagonal drum, with the vast diameter of one hundred and thirty-eight feet and six inches at the base, and from the cornice of the drum to the eye of the dome one hundred and thirty-three feet and three inches in height, and about one hundred feet more from the ground, topped by a lantern of fifty feet, and all supported upon eight massive piers—self-supported—hung in air, and rising like an exhalation, silently without scaffolding, or centering, as by the pure force of scientific genius, the miracle of that age, and the original of all domical buildings of the Renaissance from St. Peter's to our own Washington capitol.

Though I confess that to my own mind the aspiring character of the Gothic, gathering its forest of vaults, arches and lines like a prayer, in one shaft, piercing the heavens and "running up into infinity," is fitter for church architecture than the domical basilica of the Renaissance which, with all its soaring, still seems to cling to earth like a monstrous plant, yet I could not—to say it with respect—agree with Mr. Ruskin in his condemnation of everything in architecture that is not Gothic, or at least that did not exist before the



fifteenth century ; and I must say I rejoice in the Renaissance if for no other reason than that it was a declaration of independence ; that the mind was liberated from bondage, from a conventional form of art, and made free to invent, to combine, to originate new forms, while still based on the old eternal principles of beauty. The modern mind found its irresistible expression in the Renaissance—we cannot go back of it—and if evil and license have come along with it, so has also good ; and the good will predominate. Mr. Ruskin, as we know, in his noble and enthusiastic way, makes Art to comprehend a great many other things besides Art—religion, ethics, metaphysics, political economy, science, and pretty much everything else that is good ; but while Art has much to do with all these, and is greatly influenced by them, it must still be clearly discriminated from them and judged by its own laws.

In the Florentine Duomo of which we are speaking, an edifice that forms a “new departure” in architecture, being a mean between the pointed and the ancient, thus taking its peculiar place in that revival of art which finds its sanction mainly in the principles of ancient art as a standard, in this church are specimens of stained windows of greatest beauty executed at Lübeck in the early part of the 15th century, whose designs are attributed to Ghiberti and Donato, commonly called Donatello. There are other works by these two artists in the church, and also sculpture-pieces, wood-carvings, and paintings, by Paolo Uccello, Jacopo della Quercia, Luca della Robbia, and Domenico Ghirlandajo, which introduce us to some of the principal names of the Early Renaissance, in whose works not only the hints or the prophecies of true art are found, but the absolute qualities—not

only the suggestion of power but the manifestation of beauty. Here, in free Florence, before the rise of the power of the Medici and after the power of feudalism had been broken by the development of a stalwart civic life among the people, in this free city so full of movement and political and intellectual life, there was originated a wonderful individuality. There was an opportunity for this individuality made by the new political liberty. The ideas of antiquity like seed cast into rich soil produced fruits of surprising variety. It was not alone the revived spirit of antiquity which brought about the Renaissance of Art, but it was this spirit of antiquity acting upon the awakened and freed mind of the Italian people allowed to carry out its national instincts, emancipated in a measure from the yoke of ecclesiastical mediævalism, and itself full of that same artistic genius which created the great works of antiquity. It was seed in congenial soil. It was fire to inflammable matter. It was the discovery of the true artistic principles united to the genius of a highly æsthetic people, who loved beauty as well as freedom, who in their temperament and sympathies, like the ancient Greeks, found an expression in Art, and who, like children let out of school where a conventional task-master had ruled, rioted in their new liberty through the green fields of nature. Great works sprang up. Adjoining the Duomo, the Campanile of Giotto rose like a stately flower. It is true that this tower of Giotto was begun as early as the middle of the Fourteenth Century, but it was continued from designs of Giotto (it is a pity that his beautiful conception of a pointed spire was not carried out) by his pupil Taddeo Gaddi, and it was enriched with carvings by Andrea Pisano, Luca della Robbia, and Donatello, which last two sculptors bring it down

to the actual period of the Renaissance. The subjects of these sculpture-pieces upon Giotto's Campanile like the age itself, form a curious mingling of scriptural and classic; of religious and profane; of Adam and Orpheus; of the seven sacraments and the seven liberal arts; of Noah's ark and the emigration of Dædalus, as an emblem of the spirit of modern commerce and industry. The mind's fancies had begun to burgeon in a genial sunshine; nature gave signs of a more powerful life; and though the age was still predominantly religious and under the sway of ecclesiastical ideas, yet in the words of another: "The subject of representation was no longer limited by the dictates of the church, but was suggested by the instinct of what is true and divine deep in the soul of the individual artist; so that works of art had become things to treasure and admire, not because they told the well-known sacred histories, but because they contained within themselves a world of independent and sensitive beauty." This marks a true advance in Art.

This period of progress is shown perhaps, still more clearly, in another beautiful series of Florentine Art-works—the famous bronze gates of the Baptistery of San Giovanni just across the Piazza from the cathedral. Here we find ourselves at last standing on solid Early Renaissance ground; for while the Baptistery itself is a structure of unknown antiquity, its northern and eastern gates which are the most famous—although the gate that now stands at the south made by Andrea Pisano in 1330 to the joy of all Tuscany is very noble—were erected at the expense of the guild of Florentine merchants between 1400 and 1424. This period marks about the commencement of the Early Renaissance. We enter now upon a charming region of Art. We have come down from the barren though pictur-



esque hills into the sweet and fruitful plains. The true life of beauty springs up around us. The sun shines and the birds sing. As in a piece of genuine Renaissance Italian poetry :

“ The leafy tresses of that timeless garden  
 Nor fragile brine nor fresh snow dares to whiten ;  
 Frore winter never comes the rills to harden  
 Nor winds the tender shrubs and herbs to frighten ;  
 Glad spring is always here, a laughing warden ;  
 Nor do the seasons wane, but ever brighten ;  
 Here to the breeze young May, her curls unbinding,  
 With thousand flowers her wreath is ever winding.”\*

Yet this new spring of Early Renaissance art is, unfortunately not so lasting. It is a peculiar period which, like that of the new-born pair in Eden amid its fresh roses and odors, does not endure long, but which, while it lasts, is a prophecy of what may and should be again. It is a Golden Age of Art to look back upon—a breath of that spring which shall surely visit the world again. Goethe in his *Torquato Tasso* sings :

My friend, the Golden Age is long gone by ;  
 The good alone can ever bring it back ;  
 And shall I truly tell you what I think ?  
 The Golden Age, with which the poet loves  
 To flatter us, the perfect age, it was,  
 So it appears to me, as little as it is ;  
 And were it really, it were only so  
 As we can always have it now again.

In this brief period there was still truth and genuineness. Originating from the depths of mediævalism and not yet separated from it, it was highly religious, and of a sincere, even if, as some of us may think, mystic faith ; yet Art while it thus retained the holy calm of religion, rejoiced in a new freedom, drank at the

\* Symonds' *Sketches of Studies in Italy*, p. 224.



old uncovered fountain of beauty, call it Helicon, or Egeria, or Nature; was uncorrupted as yet by the 'humanistic' philosophy that, united with the luxuriousness of the growing power of the princes, and in Florence of the Medici, finally prevailed over its simplicity; but, released from the false canons of taste which forbade the representation of natural beauty and the copying of real life, and the joy of looking Nature and God in the face, there seems to have come to the art of sculpture at least, as we have said, its golden period. "Antique beauty domesticated itself under Christian themes;" and He, the loving spirit who had created both, was glorified more truly. This is delightfully exemplified in the flowering gates of Ghiberti made in enduring brass. These beautiful works are quite familiar; but they become more interesting when we exactly place them in the history of Art, and see their proper relations to its whole course and development.

Ghiberti was a man of but twenty-three, a goldsmith's apprentice, when he entered into the competition for the gates. The consuls of the guild of Florentine merchants undertook to erect in 1401 a second gate that should equal or surpass the old one of Andrea Pisano. No expense was to be spared. The competition was thrown open and the subject of the 'Sacrifice of Isaac' to be done in bronze in one year's time, was the test. Ghiberti's success over his rivals, and his twenty-two years' labor from 1402 to 1424 are well known. The subjects of the northern gate, or folding-doors, represented on twenty panels (ten on each door) are drawn from the history of Christ, with eight panels below containing full-length effigies of the evangelists, and the doctors of the Latin Church (majestic figures); while around all runs a rich border of fruit, flower

and foliage ornamentation, intermingled with heads of prophets and sibyls boldly and exquisitely wrought—or as Ghiberti himself said, “with infinite diligence and infinite love.” In one of these busts we see the bald head of the artist. But as is usually the case, the best reward of good labor done is having more to do, and this lovely work only led the way to another still fairer and more wonderful. That same guild of Florentine merchants decreed another gate to be made by the same artist, cost what it might. The middle, or eastern doors, which were assigned to Ghiberti in 1424 and were finished in 1447,—not indeed entirely completed, gilded, and set up until 1450, twenty-six years after the first—represent the history of the Old Testament, and these are the gates whose elegance elicited Michael Angelo’s words that every school-boy knows. But like Brunelleschi’s cupola they were Ghiberti’s life-work. Nearly fifty years he labored on these two brazen doors. Centuries have gone and those “gates beautiful” are lovely still. Practical men who ask what Art is good for, and who sometimes have a little disdain for the beautiful work of the artist in this day of restless action and greed of present possession, might learn something from those calm works of the old masters who patiently wrought for all time—works

“Of labor, that in lasting fruit outgrows  
Far noisier schemes, accomplished in repose,  
Too great for haste, too high for rivalry.”

Ghiberti, while yet a young man, conceived a passionate enthusiasm for the study of Greek sculpture, which, in his day, had begun to be sought after in Italy, owing to the new interest in Greek literature introduced by the coming of Greek scholars from the

East to Florence, in the days of Cosimo de' Medici ; when that merchant prince had not yet developed his deep-laid schemes of power, and was a simple citizen, though of immense wealth, and a munificent patron of learning.

This search for antiquities had become a passion with all classes, and embraced not only statues, but vases, bronzes, coins, mosaics, and every description of the antique which had been buried for ages under the ruins of the old cities. The discovery of a Greek statue was a fortune to a poor man, or a title of nobility. The Pythian Apollo was found near Cape Antium ; the Laocoön in a windowless chamber of the baths of Titus. Popes and princes vied for the possession of each newly discovered fragment, and it was invested in the imagination of those who were enthusiastic in the new learning, with an almost supernatural charm and value. Indeed nothing was esteemed beautiful but what was ancient. Ghiberti, too, was carried away by this ardor for antiquity ; but while thus enraptured by the revelation of beauty in these fragments of Greek sculpture, he was also greatly influenced by Giotto's painting, and having as yet more enthusiasm than actual knowledge, he was led to attempt to transfer the picturesque effect of painting to stone and brass. He was only too successful in this. He made the hard bronze plastic in his hands, and with marvellous skill managed to introduce upon almost smooth surfaces scenes and groups in different planes of perspective, aiming at elaborate landscape effects and all the accessories and detail of painting excepting color. Each panel of his bronze gates, forms a picture in itself, as if it could be taken out, framed, and hung. His success in this particular has done injury to his art, as is witnessed in similar

works even to this late day. While then the skill shown in the doors of the Baptistery in overcoming the difficulties of the material, the plastic invention, the delicacy and taste in treatment, the animation without extravagance, the calm and noble style, the perfect finish and grace of every part, wrought a lasting influence for good upon modern sculpture, yet, in so far as these works embodied a false principle, they did harm. Their very beauty served to obscure, as by an illusion of truth, the boundaries between sculpture and painting. A glorious but limited art is that of sculpture!

It may demand the highest artistic skill to produce the greatest effects in so confined a sphere (for probably the artistic genius of man never rose higher than in Pheidias) but still the greatest genius in the art of sculpture is compelled to walk in comparatively narrow bounds. It may easily exceed these bounds, and attempt things which do not belong to it. Even the grand group of the Laocoön, about which the ancient and modern worlds have stood in admiration, belongs to the decadence of Greek sculpture, and has fallen from the Pheidian ideal; for it has attempted to represent in sculpture what could only be adequately done by the arts of painting and poetry. It has not only striven to express perspective as in landscape by giving different relative sizes to the figures of the same group, but also mental emotion. Sculpture is objective and simple, not subjective and complex. The varying moods of the individual mind do not flit around inflexible marble; while marble or bronze may still render nobly some permanent feeling, motive, or conception of an idealized type. Michael Angelo himself in some of his sublimest works overpassed these just bounds of his art, and indulged in exag-



gerated demonstrations of mental states. The ancients of the first period of sculpture would not have delineated either the agony or the lassitude of the mind, which manifest themselves in writhing muscles and distorted limbs. These may be magnificent but they are not art. Thus with all his mighty genius, coming nearer to the ancients than any modern, Michael Angelo sometimes reversed the arts and failed of the highest effect. Sculpture demands unity and harmony; and when it is broken up into many motives, or has parts which do not bear common relation to the same object, when it contains incongruous accessories such as landscape-painting may effectively introduce, like the multifarious wealth of nature, it loses its impression; so that a battered Theseus, or a marred Venus of Milo, is more beautiful in its simplicity than the most varied but confused grouping of figures and actions great in themselves. The beauty of sculpture is ideal speaking to the mind, rather than pictorial speaking to the eyes and sensibilities; and the idea in sculpture must not be too obvious but must appeal to the intelligence of the beholder—the susceptibility of soul which is in him—who with his own kindling thought, like the story of Pygmalion and his statue that concealed under it a truth, warms the marble into life.

Ghiberti therefore, in his great work of the gates, by indulging in this scenic effect, having too much of the goldsmith's literal and exact art, lost somewhat of the grand simplicity of classic sculpture; but what was lost here was made up in the grace, clearness and noble animation of his pictures. He brought back art to nature.

Passing on we come to one of Ghiberti's unsuccessful competitors in the gates, who is, nevertheless, a

great artist exercising a powerful influence upon the revival of art—Jacopo della Quercia. He too, by the pure force of genius, succeeded in escaping from the bondage of traditionalism and coming into the liberty of one who worked from his own ideas. His style is bolder than Ghiberti's, though lacking its elegance. An art-critic says of him: "Had the gates of the Baptistery been entrusted to his execution we might have possessed a masterpiece of more heroic style." In his bas-reliefs of St. Petronius executed between 1428 and 1435 there is a rugged energy which anticipates the style of Michael Angelo, and is said to have directly influenced that sculptor in some of his works. At the same time this master could delineate the motionless calm of death, as in the portrait of the beautiful Ilaria del Caretto on her tomb in the cathedral of Lucca.\*

A greater sculptor now comes before us, who was another rival of Ghiberti in the gates, though but a stripling at the time—Donatello. He was a still closer copyist of nature than either of those who have been already mentioned. He struck out boldly into new paths. Renaissance sculpture gained an immense advance under his hand. The older Byzantine and Gothic sculptors had confined themselves to the carving of undetached figures in connection with mural architecture, though some round sculpture had been made as in the cathedrals of Verona, and Modena, and elsewhere; but these sculptures were generally of a rude though earnest character.† Donatello, though

\* Symonds' Renaissance in Italy, p. 132.

† Reference is not here made to the symbolic sculpture, especially of the northern Gothic cathedrals of Germany and France, in which sometimes profound religious ideas are conveyed, and genuine artistic motive and genius exhibited.

mainly carving architectural bas-reliefs also made larger single figures. His St. George in the church of Or San Michele, at Florence, is particularly bold and vigorous in its youthful beauty. Of a humoristic nature, Donatello was original, homely, and at times terribly realistic and true to ugliness; for he aimed at truth and individualization, more than beauty, although some of his angel-heads are of exceeding sweetness. He went to nature, and sought through the antique not so much the reproduction of the antique, as the path to nature. The children represented in his bas-reliefs are, as it were, separated from the cold marblè or bronze and are flesh itself, so full are they of life and movement.

We arrive now at a younger contemporary of Ghiberti and Donatello, yet belonging to the same Florentine group of sculptors standing as it were about the "gates"—a lovely artist, who was indeed one of the truest types of the unspoiled innocence, freedom, and grace of the Early Renaissance, though moving in a circumscribed sphere even of the sculptor's art—Luca della Robbia. The spirit of beauty seems to have found him. Singularly enough, though a sculptor, the material he chiefly employed was glazed terra cotta, or glazed clay slightly colored; and with this ductile material he produced the most delightful effects. The noble character and refined loveliness of his female heads, and the joyous grace and bounding innocence of his youthful figures, especially those of the singers, players, and dancers, carved upon the marble frieze in front of the organ of the Florentine cathedral, which sculptures are now in the Uffizi palace, though treating religious themes, seem like a new and happy world after emerging from the gloomy archaic period of religious art; as if he delighted to

catch nature in her joyous moments, when she wore a gleam of Eden-light upon her face; and yet there is nothing extravagant in his mirthfulness, but it is the simple expression of a healthy and loving spirit. That he could also be strong as well as beautiful, is seen in the figure of St. Dominic in the bas-relief representing the Virgin sitting between St. James and St. Dominic in the church of San Jacopo di Ripoli. If an ideal how wonderfully he treats it. The St. Dominic of Luca della Robbia is no vulgar conception of the founder of the formidable order of inquisitors—no fierce-visaged man with blood and flame burned as it were upon his countenance. There is silent but intense force. It is in some respects even a saintly face. The features are finely chiselled and full of intellectual character. But they are very peculiar and will bear study. It is a face of ecclesiastical unmercifulness. There is a sad, unsmiling expression, accompanied with a look of such unyielding severity of purpose, that it is fairly tremendous. One feels as if he who bears it could torment the world without compunction for a theory. This St. Dominic holds a long lily stem in his hand as if the pureness of his doctrine were a sufficient apology for the implacableness of his zeal, and the destruction of his foes. But by the side of this stern and powerful man sits the Madonna holding her child, a type of maternal loveliness and grace. It is womanhood celestialized—I cannot permit myself even in the mystical sense of the faith of that day to say deified—by a thought of divine mercy. Raphael himself has not surpassed the sweetness of some of these gracious Madonna countenances of Luca della Robbia. One of his most famous works is the ornamentation of the bronze doors of the canon's sacristy in the Florentine cathedral which he covered



with glazed earthen bas-reliefs. These doors have also an interesting historical association; for they were the doors that were so opportunely closed by Politian and others of the friends of Lorenzo de' Medici, when at the assassination of his brother Giuliano, Lorenzo found a safe refuge in the sacristy of the church. Luca della Robbia, in a word, is one of the best types of the Early Renaissance—of its whilom innocence, joyfulness and freedom, when it united a reverent spirit with an unpedantic enthusiasm for antiquity and a new-awakened love for nature. These artists, amid a confusing maze, had found the lost thread of art; and they found it through a study of the ancients, who, in sculpture at least, possessed the secret.

A weighty axiom is the saying of Goethe, "The point is for a work to be thoroughly good, and then it is sure to be classical." The truth of this remark forms, I think, the great apology for the Renaissance. If the Renaissance did not keep up to its standard and after a while fell away into the splendid sensuousness of the 16th century and the absolute falsities of the Decadence, it nevertheless had the penetration to discover the true standard; and did not also Christianity fall away from its early purity into false doctrines and practices? If the genius of the ancients had possessed itself of true art-principles, had showed the road to what is perfect, then the impulse of the Early Renaissance was in the right direction in following the antique, which led back to original sources of art in nature. The mind of the Renaissance artist was emancipated by the force of the human element in the antique from its blind worship of an oppressive form, and learn to comprehend Christian ideas themselves in a new spirit. The spring-

torrent of Christian faith descending from the heavenly hills, destroyed for a time the channels of the old art, and until confined in the iron conduits of Christian mediævalism, was destructive of art itself, and swept away its very fact and existence, as an expression of the human soul. What had Christian martyrs and confessors to do with heathen sculptures and temples? They loathed the sight of them as the emblems of idolatry. But as time went on, Art, as one of the absolute and necessary manifestations of the human mind and of national genius, was again recognized, and so the devastating torrent was gradually turned back into forced and conventional courses like the Roman aqueducts, till it was almost wasted in those arbitrary and dogmatic channels which allowed no kind of freedom. No flowers grew along these artificial ways. There was no playful winding like the natural stream in these straight and narrow courses into which ecclesiastic art was trained. Nature and beauty were wellnigh destroyed, when by a providential circumstance nature once more asserted itself by the help of the antique, and then art came to life, or was new-born. It must always be so. Touch the antique and you touch the true in art. Was not this signally proved at the end of the eighteenth century, when Winckelman and Lessing by the study of ancient art, arrested the decadence of art, and produced as it were a new temporary renaissance?

I cannot dwell with particularity upon the other sculptors of this period—upon the bold and realistic Pollajuolo, the poetic and delightful Rossellino, the mild Setignano, the scenic Majano who caught Ghiberti's pictorial style, and Donatello's pupil, Andrea Verrocchio, who was the master of Lionardo da Vinci—glory enough for him. But I cannot forget that it

was this Florentine sculptor, Verrocchio, who, with Leopardi the Venetian, made that commanding equestrian bronze statue which usually goes by the name of the "Warrior," and which stands by the side of the basilica of Saint John and Paul in Venice. Titian's painting of the martyrdom of St. Peter the Dominican that once hung within the walls of this church, was not nobler as a work of art than this statue without its walls. It is of such amazing vivacity and force that it might be called the finest equestrian statue of modern art. While outwardly but the portraiture of Bartolommeo Colleoni, a bold, crafty, and unscrupulous soldier, it is such an emblem of courage and antagonism, that it partakes of the moral sublime. So ought a good man, panoplied in proof-armor, to look and ride with an undaunted countenance against the powers of evil in this world !

But we must now turn for a few moments to sketch in some more regular way than has been heretofore done, though of course very rapidly, the history of the painting of this Early Renaissance period, which art, even before that of sculpture (except in the single instance of Nicolo Pisano), felt the reviving breath of the new movement.

The French writer, Coindet, in his history of Italian painting says, that it is in the art of mosaic we must seek the history of painting in those obscure ages. Mosaic, he asserts, forms the intermediate link between ancient and modern art. The old Greeks practiced it with success ; they cultivated it in preference even to painting as being more permanent ; and this explains how, in the complete decline of antique art, it is the enduring mosaic which has transmitted to us the best traditions of classic painting. Mosaic was not then as now the work of the copyist, but that



its compositions were fresh and original, may be seen in the magnificent fragment of the "Battle of Issus" that was found at Pompeii. It is true that in the catacombs of Rome and Naples, there are vestiges to be seen of early Christian painting, properly so called ;\* but it was the mosaic which constituted almost the first Christian art, certainly in Italy ; and the oldest Christian mosaics are in the corrupt Greek or Byzantine style, where nature and truth are lost sight of. This is the case, says Coindet, not only in the figure which is delineated by the mosaic, but in all its accessories, and even in the drapery which is as uniform as geometric lines. The expression, too, has the rigidity of marble, a spectral air, a total absence of animation ; the body is elongated beyond measure, the proportions are meagre, there is no motive, or action ; the bodies have not even the appearance of being able to move or do anything. They have lost the form of humanity and have become lay figures and symbolic types. Nevertheless these mosaic representations are accompanied by great elaborateness of ornamentation, and rich gold and jewel work, so that when the mosaic is gradually transformed into the altar-painting, the same characteristics remain—the dead uniformity, the elaborate and bizarre ornamentation. After the capture of Constantinople by the Venetians, the Greek artists of Constantinople followed their works into Western Europe, and spread the influence of their art throughout Italy. They became the accredited artists of the Church and set the stamp of their manneristic

\* There is every reason to think that these primitive paintings by no means partook of the immobility of the hieratic type of later Christian art ; but, as in the representations of the Saviour, they were characterized by a winning freedom, nature and sensibility.—Rio's *L'Art Chretien*, p. 41.

style upon all ecclesiastical art—especially painting. The pictures with which the churches were adorned were not independent works of the artist's own mind, but were constructed, as Greek altar-pieces now are, mostly upon unvarying types. We have already seen how the fresco painters of the Pisan Campo Santo in the Fourteenth Century began to assert their freedom, and to swerve a little from the old Greek style formed on the mosaic; and even before Cimabue and Giotto there were artists like Giunta of Pisa and Margharitone who worked in encaustic and water colors, with the slight gain of freedom there may have been in these methods. The reforming genius of Italian painting (as we have already had frequent occasion to point out) was Giotto. He first really burst the bands of tradition and manifested individuality. Through the study of antiquity and a shrewd though not scientific observation of nature, he begins to put life in those immobile figures. The eyes gain expression; the body if not anatomically correct, has limbs; the hands and feet do not terminate in long points but have a natural formation; the groups are harmonized in their action. He it is who has transmitted to us the features of the poet Dante. But Giotto, as one writer has remarked, putting it all in a word, "belonged to the Middle Ages, though his method and spirit anticipate the Renaissance."

It remained for another great creative genius to bring painting up to the revival period, and that was Masaccio. His short life of twenty-seven years, from 1401 to 1428, brought to a close it is said by the jealousy of his rivals (for this beautiful world of Art has stormy passions sweeping across it like tropical tempests) *was* Early Renaissance.

In the Branacci Chapel of the Church of Santa

Maria del Carmine in Florence where Masaccio painted his twelve frescoes which are the highest expression of his genius—dry, hard, and colorless as they now appear—there we find the cradle of all modern painting. Botticelli, Lorenzo di Credi, Lionardo da Vinci, Perugino, Michael Angelo, Fra Bartolommeo, Raphael himself, came there reverently to study.

The epoch of Masaccio was one of immense activity in painting but it was this inspired "lout" who gave it the right direction. Though he died so young he produced vastly important works. He was one of those profoundly musing spirits who work in secret impelled by a shut-in fire to come at the truth of things, and who, unconsciously, work out the problem for others and the world. He not only copied nature but idealized his models. There was a simple power and grandeur never before seen in painting. By a study of ancient works, or by the same intuition which created them, he restored the ideal beauty of the human form, copying the body itself as did the Greeks, conquering the difficulties of foreshortening, drawing with correctness, putting fire and life into the figures, so that he came at once, in some respects, to the perfection of art. "The expression of his heads," said Raphael Mengs, "is so true that he painted souls as well as bodies." For the first time, too, in painting, the landscape began to assume some significance, and there are, in Masaccio's frescoes, touches of natural scenery which are true, and a sense of aerial perspective. "His forms move in a transparent medium of light, graduated according to degrees of distance, and harmonized by tones that indicate an atmospheric unity."\*

\* Symonds' Renaissance, p. 230.

Masaccio's pupil, Filippo Lippi, who was a vigorous painter, was able to avail himself of the aid and enrichment of oil-painting which had been introduced into Italy in his day by one Antonello, who stole it from the Flemish painter Jan Van Eyck. Filippo Lippi carried out his master's designs and finished, it is said, some of his frescoes; but, though he possessed the charms of color, the soft golds and browns of oil-painting, the witchery of *chiaroscuro*, and improved skill in the technique of painting, he was far inferior to Masaccio in genius. His thought was less noble, his ideal less intellectual, earnest and elevated. But he was a beautiful and forcible painter. Filippino, the pupil of Lippi, and in many points his superior, brings us down to the time of Raphael, and beyond our present scheme. But in the meantime there had been other great painters of this Fifteenth century. We can only touch them.

The works of Beato Fra Angelico, which do not seem to belong to this gross earth, nor can the usual canons of art be said to apply to them, coming down only to about the middle of the century, are familiar to all. Protestant and Catholic alike have set up his saints in the shrine of their hearts. He painted upon his knees. His pictures were prayers and heavenly aspirations. His power of expression lay in the consecration of a pure soul that seemed to draw its conceptions of beauty not from the antique, as did the best painters of his day, but, like Milton, directly from the source that inspired prophets and holy men of old. Yet it is said that Fra Angelico did not altogether disdain aid from nature, and, as did Raphael, copied the beautiful faces that he saw in Florence; so that in those choirs of meek-eyed angels who blow upon long silver trumpets and curiously-fashioned



musical instruments, we have some remembrances of those devout ones who, like timid doves in the storms of the times, sought refuge under the shadow of the altar.

The different Italian schools of painting, as they branched out like a banyan-tree in the golden sunshine of the Early Renaissance, and of the period immediately preceding when art was struggling to be free, would be, each one of them, worth our most careful study.

There were, for instance, the schools of painting that had their seats at Perugia, Assisi and Siena, lying in that beautiful Umbrian country between Florence and Rome, and closely affiliated to both, especially to the former, but in some instances older than either. I retain very delightful recollections of a journey from Rome to Florence, made many a long year ago, before there was a railroad through this portion of "the garden of fair Italy;" and I may be permitted to break the course of the historical review for a moment, and to group together a few of those youthful impressions of classic and Early Renaissance ground; for neither does the nature or the art in this charmed land alter much, where there is still poetry and beauty.

Arrived at Spoleto for *mezzo giorno*. The Citadel on the hill shows some remains of Cyclopean walls. Went into the cathedral to see the frescoes of the "Coronation of the Virgin" by Fra Filippo Lippi, who was a strange character combining artist, monk and adventurer, in extraordinary fashion. The frescoes are in the apse of the church, and, to my eye, are powerful paintings, and the colors are remarkably soft and mellow. In this church is Filippo Lippi's tomb. \* \* \* \*

Drove through the vale of Clitumnus. Did not come across Corydon and Amaryllis, but the valley has the peaceful pastoral character of Virgil's *Georgics* and *Bucolics*—smooth green pastures, abundant fruit trees, large white oxen, and the crystal stream of the Clitumnus, now a very small affair. \* \* \*

Foligno has a majestic cathedral. \* \* \* \* \*

Spello, next passed, has Roman antiquities of interest. Here is the scene of some of the popular legends of Orlando Furioso, of which Ariosto made poetical use. In the Duomo saw some famous paintings of Pinturicchio, pupil of Perugino, of the Roman school, and having much of his master's dry style. \* \*

Between Spello and Assisi the grape-vines along the road for miles are enormous in size, and festoon the trees in the manner one sees in Benozzo Gozzoli's pictures. \* \* \* \* \*

Assisi has a noble site on the slope of the hills, and commands a magnificent view of the Umbrian plain. The tower of Santa Maria degli Angeli is conspicuous in the center of the town, sung by Dante. Visited the little church called Chiesa Nuova, which was built over the house where St. Francis was born, and where he was imprisoned and had the famous vision of the "Stigmata." The Franciscan Convent itself, is an immense pile of buildings, on a high, precipitous rock, with vast propping arches, and looks like a fortress. It once accommodated thousands of monks. The convent-church of San Francesco, which is Italian Gothic, though built by a German, is divided into three compartments—the lower, middle and upper. The upper church is a glorious vision of light and splendor, and reminds one somewhat, in its luminousness, of the choir of Cologne Cathedral, though on a far smaller scale. Its ceiling is painted with frescoes by Cimabue, but that are now almost defaced; their ground color is blue, though there is much gold introduced. The middle church is darker, and has the gloomy monastic look of mediæval piety. The lower, underground church is gloomier still, and here is the tomb of St. Francis. On the ceiling of the cross-aisle above the high altar over the tomb are the frescoes by Giotto, whose subjects represent the three virtues enjoined by St. Francis—Poverty, Obedience and Chastity. These are impressive allegorical figures, and are said to have been suggested by Dante. Poverty is represented by a female standing among thorns, and is given by Christ in marriage to St. Francis. Dante, in his *Divina Commedia*, refers to this picture in these words :

"The lovers' titles—Poverty and Francis.  
Their concord and glad looks, wonder and love,  
And sweet regard, gave birth to holy thoughts."

These frescoes are said to have occasioned also Dante's words:



“Cimabue thought,  
To lord it over painting’s field; and now  
The cry is Giotto’s, and his name eclipsed.”

\* \* \* \* \*

On the road to Perugia we again crossed the umber-colored Tiber—a considerable river even here, and on and on it flows through history and poetry—to Rome. \* \* \* \*

Pulled up a long hill to Perugia, but was repaid by delightful views of the great plain of Umbria, and the Appenines beyond, with now and then a snow-capped peak among them. The nearer hills are pleasant and green, and are like those seen in Perugino’s and Raphael’s early pictures, which have gradual and gentle swells, and are sparsely wooded with just such straight and clean-limbed trees; and this same crystalline atmosphere is in the old pictures, I have noticed.

From the balcony of the Benedictine Church of St. Peter on the brow of the hill, just before reaching the city gates, the view is one of the most charming in Italy. Here Raphael studied before he went to Rome. He certainly had all the surroundings of beautiful nature to make him a painter. In the Sala del Cambio, the Exchange of Perugia, saw some of the finest pictures of Perugino, belonging to the Fifteenth century, in which mythological and sacred subjects are commingled. Obtained higher ideas of Perugino’s genius than before conceived. His figures are not drawn correctly according to nature, and are not like human beings at all, but are unnaturally attenuated, slim-waisted, and finically fine, the carpet-knights of celestial chivalry; yet I confess they have marvelous sweetness and a kind of supernal beauty. \* \* \* \*

Passed the clear blue lake of Perugia—the ancient Trasimenus—where old Rome suffered one of her few crushing defeats. \* \* \* \*

Arezzo is one of the three principal Etruscan cities of antiquity—an old, old place. It was the birth-place of Petrarch, and of the painters Margaritone, Spinello and Vasari. Its venerable Gothic cathedral belongs to the thirteenth century, and its stained windows, from the sombre character of the church, shine with unusual brilliancy. The house where Petrarch was born is small but respectable, and has nothing remarkable about it but its doorway, which is of carved Gothic work. The country between Arezzo and Siena is uninteresting, and the approach to Siena barren and melancholy. \* \* \* \*

Siena is a very pictorial place, especially the public square. Here tournaments were held. It was here, too, that the Siense populace, proud of its victory of Montaperti over Florence, assembled in their fierce, tumultuous joy. It has a thoroughly mediæval aspect. Any of the figures in the old pictures of the great "Sala delle Balestre"—the "Hall of Crossbows"—might come down out of their frames and appear in it without a shock to one's notions of fitness. Saw the frescoes of the "Virtues" and "Vices" in this hall by Ambrosio Lorenzetti, a Siense painter. The cathedral of Siena, which dates back to the thirteenth century, has a half-oriental or Saracenic look, with its stripes of white and black marble, and is one of the most characteristic examples of Italian Gothic. The carvings of its front are peculiarly elaborate, one of the most conspicuous being statues of the prophets and two angels prostrating themselves before the name of Jesus, by Jacopo della Quercia. Within is the renowned pulpit by Nicolo Pisano, which he executed in less than two years, for eight "sols" per day. The pavement of this church is composed of mosaics, mostly of the fifteenth century, a splendid work executed by Siense artists; the shading and drawing have all the ease of painting. Saw many of the pictures of the school of Siena, generally dark with age. The "Madonna," by Giovanni Razzi, is a lovely picture. Some think him equal to Raphael. I have rarely seen a painting that moved me more than his "Deposition" in the church of San Francesco. The heads are noble, the motive pathetic and sublime. Another picture in this church by Beccafumi, represents the "Holy Fathers in Purgatory," certainly a very bold subject for those Catholic days. In the church of San Dominico, an immense brick basilica with a kind of a barn-like bigness, is the oldest Italian picture authenticated, by Guido di Ghezzo, of Siena. \* \* \* \*

The Siense school has been called "the sprightly school of a sprightly people," but, like that of Perugia, it was a devotional school of painting producing such artists as Simone Memmi, and the brothers Lorenzetti, thoroughly penetrated by the religious motive, more archaic in style, and less influenced than the other schools by the Renaissance.

The school of Venice felt the Renaissance movement through the genius of Gian Bellini quite late in the fifteenth century; but it soon revealed those charms of color such as play on the shallow lagunes and the water-stained palaces of Venice. There was even a sparkle of the Renaissance that was borne across the Adriatic to the almost Italian province of Dalmatia.

The Roman school developed more slowly still. Before the time of Pietro Perugino (a founder of this school) there were no painters of note in Rome. Its first epoch was of little account, but it became a center of Italian art in Raphael's day.

Without speaking of the other schools which are mostly of later date, the school of Florence, though it had several markedly distinct epochs, was eminently intellectual and progressive. A recent writer calls it "scientific"—that is, its beauty lay in thought and form rather than color and expression; and there came from it a race of painters who were more noble and learned than graceful. Of this type was Domenico Ghirlandajo, the "garland-maker." Goldsmith, modeler, sculptor, he carried the idea of form into his painting. He studied nature, because art in his time had really returned to truth in nature; but, after all, a change is observable, and something of the first joy and simplicity of the study of nature by painters of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth centuries seems to be absent; and there is a suspicion of the learned and academic style. So, too, in Signorelli, the robust, the master of Michael Angelo; and so above all in Mantegna, who studied the antique with such enthusiasm that one has said "his figures look as if copied from statues." His inspiration comes from antiquity and not from nature; and yet his great pictures of Roman processions and imperial triumphs

are magnificent works, full of the fruits of study, though conceived in a pagan spirit.

Sandro Botticelli is an exceptional painter of much more freedom, nature, and vivacity. He felt deeply, too, the influence of the classic revival, but he was not made pedantic by it, except in the choice of his subjects. He is among the first to paint upon themes other than purely religious—pictures especially of classical subjects. The great fluttering crowd of cupids, genii, nymphs, gods and goddesses, that waited impatiently to descend upon the field of painting so as almost in the succeeding centuries to obscure Christian forms and ideas, begin to appear in him. His "Venus borne upon the sea and driven to the shore by the winds" is full of breezy movement, life and power.

Yet Botticelli, notwithstanding this classic fervor which in him was very delightful, imparting a kind of poetic glory and spring-like airiness to his works without bringing in the sensuousness which afterwards accompanied this infusion of pagan ideas, was also a religious painter of great nobility of form and the purest Christian sentiment, so that the essentially religious character of the art of the fifteenth century—of the Early Renaissance—is not destroyed; neither was it destroyed by the paintings of Francesco Francia, who with great depth of religious feeling united sweetness of expression and wondrous glow of coloring; nor was it destroyed by Perugino who was certainly prince of the narrow but lovely mystic Umbrian school, nor even by Bernardo Pinturicchio with his dramatic treatment of religious subjects, nor by Fra Bartolomeo, who comes at the very end of the century, the friend of Raphael, a painter of solid merits in composition, drawing and coloring, and still an earnest



religious painter—these bring us to the beginnings of the sixteenth century, the epoch of the great masters, where Early Renaissance ceases, having finished its work of preparation, and where there is not only new life, but skill of execution, accurate drawing, rich coloring, and all the qualities and the charms of perfected art. But let it be remembered that the morning must come before the full noon, that a Masaccio must precede a Raphael, and a Ghiberti and a Donatello must usher in a Michael Angelo; nor can we say where the palm of original power and creative genius lies.

Now, let us ask, what was this important secret of antique art that the Renaissance had seized upon? It was that Art must ever come back to Nature for its starting-point. The Early Renaissance, whatever may be said of the later periods of the movement, so far from losing sight of nature in its newly awakened pursuit of antiquity, on the contrary, with delightful simplicity sought or found nature through its study of antiquity, and, in this way, became creative, like Greek art, which went to nature as the exhaustless spring of knowledge and inspiration. Greek æsthetics was simply delight in nature. The Greek mind had just that keen sensitiveness to and perception of the beauty in nature that made it the artist. There is no doubt that Greek artists copied the forms they saw before them in the public games. They did not withdraw themselves from the world of nature into the solitude of their own minds. Taine, in his "Philosophy of Art," says: "Pheidias and Ictinus were, like other Athenians, free citizens, brought up in the *palæstra*, exercising and wrestling, and accustomed to deliberate and to vote in the public assemblies; so that in all the important acts of their life they recog-

nized themselves as part of the multitude of which their audience was composed." That, it is true, was a unique audience ; and we sometimes forget, in speaking of the ideal quality of the Greek sculptor, that he had such models to copy from, so that Herbert Spencer reasons that since the Greeks were, as shown by their works in philosophy, literature, and arms, as well as art, one of the most intellectual nations that has existed, if not the most intellectual—the ideal face and form given by them to their gods, or their deified humanity, is in fact, and must be for all time, the highest ideal human face and form, that is, in its intellectual type. These artists, with such models before them to copy, by a penetrative glance into nature, seized her hidden laws, and thus reached an ideal which has been the vain effort of art ever since to attain. And here all true art must begin. Art is a reality ; it is based upon and grows out of the real. Ghiberti, and Donatello, and Masaccio, found this to be their golden secret. Dante, who inspired them all, himself said that Nature takes its course from the Divine intellect, and is thus God's art ; so that man's art must follow nature even as the disciple the master.\*

Let the artist—such is the lesson of the Early Renaissance—set to work to acquire knowledge. Let him "chisel the rock faithfully and tuft his forest delicately, and the spirit will come upon him when he is not aware and he will utter mighty truths."

Mr. Ruskin's sketches which were recently on exhibition in Boston and New York, are valuable as showing just this point, viz : Ruskin's theory of art-analysis, or the method of realistic study and practice by which the artist builds up his mind in the solid

\* Inferno. Canto xi. 100-105.



knowledge of facts. They are close copies of fact and of nature, combined with neatness and clearness of delineation. A block of gneiss-rock seamed with time-lines and colored with weather-stains, standing out from an Alpine hillside; a thistle burr; an arch-volt of a door of St. Mark's in Venice; a street in Verona; a bit of ante-historic bone; a lacquered sunrise; an hibiscus as a study in color; a fragment of weed-covered stone-wall; a magnified pheasant's feather; a dry curled oak-leaf; a wave, or water-curve of the Falls of Schaffhausen; these are copied with exemplary fidelity to truth. Mr. Ruskin seems to say in every sketch, "I do not shirk work." He aims after the qualities of things in nature. Though not a great artist, each of his drawings, in his own language as applied to the work of another, is "a most lovely piece of quiet work, full of honorable and right feeling." He counsels others to go "right at nature," and find the truth, and wrest the secret. So he advises constant use of the pencil, for the acquisition of close habits of observation and skill in manipulation. He drives the student out of his study into the roads, fields, and forests, and sets him to drawing men and animals, plants, stones, leaves, and the commonest objects of nature about him with absolute precision, without attempting to gild refined gold or paint the lily. He says that the artist must put implicit faith in nature and go unhesitatingly where she leads. Art, then, is a return to nature. The highest art is the most real nature. One clear sight, rather insight, of nature, is more to an artist than all the rules of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

But the imitation of nature must also join with it an independent action of the artist's own mind. We have seen that those creative artists of the Early Renaissance,

Masaccio preëminently, seized the ideal in the actual, employed the truth they won from nature in the higher forms of the imagination. Donatello, the most naturalistic of the Renaissance sculptors, shows marked progress in his own works from the literal copy to the ideal, since in Christian art there is something more than the beauty of the body to be expressed—there is beauty of soul. He felt this, and worked more and more upon a deeper principle of the imagination in his later sculptures, so that of his statute of St. Mark, Michael Angelo used to say, “Why do you not speak to me?” These artists burst from the old forms. They used their own thoughts. They became themselves creators. They did not remain mere copyists of nature and facts. An artist may have the microscopic power of a Gerard Dou to copy every hair in an eyebrow or on a fur-collar, but he is not the artist for all time unless he have imaginative scope, unless he be “of imagination all compact,” unless he have the poetic eye to see the ideal type of the thing he paints, the beauty in the form, and which is fitted to correspond delicately with the whole symbolic world of nature. He thus looks beneath the form of things and draws the soul out of natural objects.

Mr. Ruskin speaks thus of one of his sketches—entitled “A piece of the mountain-side of Chamouni”—“Study of rounded turf and pine grouping, but still useless to express the pine beauty; elsewhere I have noticed Turner’s prudence in “counting the pines” of the lower Alps, or at least estimating their uncountableness! I did not understand his warning, and went insanely at them, at first, thinking to give some notion of them by sheer labor.” Here he seems unconsciously to confess the inability of the most laborious copyist of nature to render its truth and true effect,

since painting is an illusion, producing by art on the mind of the beholder the same effect that the real object does; and this is not attained by a precise copy of nature like a dead photograph of a natural scene: for while art does not consist in getting away from nature, it does consist in seeking throughout nature for her original ideas, her real types, her constant effects, her intrinsic qualities and beauty, and in truly interpreting these to the perceptions and hearts of men.

“Never do anything,” Mr. William Morris Hunt said, “without having, like the old painters, nature before you.” “Do not try to compose without knowledge. Get your impressions from nature. Composition is simply a recollection of certain facts. Look to nature for material, and then use it as you have need.” But this same admirable artist also says: “It is not the eye itself which is beautiful. A snail has the same ‘liquid look.’ It is the regard. It is the soul.” “Elaboration is not beauty, and sand-paper has never finished a bad piece of work.” “Imagination comes in after we have had experience.” “Think and believe it requires some brains to draw.” Such were (alas that we say “were”) his maxims. He thought all Ruskin’s precepts could not make an artist who had not the sensibility or the imaginative power to see nature with his own eyes, and to report its beauty.

The Early Renaissance shows that art, like nature, contains an element of freedom; and it is to be remarked that during the period when the element of freedom continued to characterize the Renaissance, and antiquity was an inspiration rather than a domination of the artistic spirit, there was ever charming originality and freshness, while the century that followed of the slavish copying of the antique, was the very period of decline in Italian art.

There must be some adequate preparation for what is great in art. There must be the conditions of greatness and progress, and art-progress in a nation cannot be looked for where there is not true intellectual and political freedom. Where society is hopelessly stratified no such living thing as art can flourish in its rocky soil. Where man is a physical atom in the State, without political choice or the hope, and hardly the desire, of it, as in Oriental civilization, it is vain to expect that he will make any advance in thought, or in the free study of nature, or in the expression of individuality of genius; for in such a condition of society man goes on doing what his ancestors have done before him, and he does it in just the same way—thus is it in Japanese art, which never individualizes.

The beginnings of the Renaissance in the fifteenth century were precisely the period of Italian freedom, after the strife of the Guelfs and Ghibellines was mainly over, and before the reign of the tyrants; and, in the case of Florence, where, turbulent and factious though her history is, the spirit of freedom was a steadier flame than in the other Italian States—republican institutions were not sapped by the power of the Medici until near the end of that century. Italy was then a country of small republics, built upon the ruins of the Latin civilization, and on the forms of the old Roman law, and kept alive by holding the balance of power during the conflict of the Papacy and the Empire, but more than all by the popular energy. By eternal vigilance the life of freedom was maintained; and when the great *caroccio*, or “standard-car,” was wheeled into the battle-plain, then all enemies of freedom knew that the life-blood of her best citizens was ready to be poured out like water for the republic. Florence of the fifteenth century was a hive of popular



activity in all departments of industry. The "arts arose from the midst of public affairs." The great guilds of the "arti," or "industrial arts," composed of free burghers who each had a vote and a voice, constituted in fact the sovereignty of the State. They controlled everything. They did everything. Then were those beautiful works of art of which we have been speaking made. They were the inspiration of the breath of republican freedom. They were conceived by the people, decreed by the people, and paid for out of the people's purse. The artists themselves were of the people, and in almost every instance were enrolled artisans in one or other of those guilds of the "arti." They felt the common intellectual life and the reviving breath of the Renaissance. Their stimulus came not from the nobles, but from that intelligent social organism of freemen in whose tastes and sympathies they lived and were nourished and formed an integral part; and it would be easy to show that the splendid art-patronage of the tyrants themselves who ruled Florence, Milan, Ferrara, Mantua, Verona, and other States, when they had succeeded in overthrowing the republics, was only a continuation of the example set them by the Communes. In a recent historian's words, "the despots held their power at the price of magnificence in works of public utility." It is a wrong theory which we sometimes hear set forth, that art thrives best under monarchical and aristocratical patronage, and that great works are made for the few and not for the many. History has disproved this. Art has been greatest under free governments. The finest works of Greek art were achieved by republics before liberty was lost; and Pericles, even when he might have been meditating selfish power, built the Parthenon and the Odeon in the name of freedom,



for the people and by the people's help, who gave him freely of their treasures. Art has in itself an element of freedom. Original productions are impossible where the intellect is circumscribed and the will enslaved, let it be even in the sacred name of religion. Art while it demands a rich soil of culture to flourish in, because knowledge and thought are the first conditions of art, lives best in the atmosphere of liberty ; and its true patrons, as well as in the end its true judges, are the people.

This truth surely presents a prospect full of bright hope for the future of American art. Art may and will flourish in great beauty and strength in our land whenever we cease to be imitators of the Old World and trust to the inspiration of a free national spirit.

## PRINCIPLES OF ART.

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In the estimation in which art is held, there has been of late a change with us as also in England where the prosaic level of thought is stirred; while on the contrary, in Germany, art has been a recognized factor of intellectual life, certainly since the days of Lessing and Goethe, making itself felt in literature, philosophy, and all the higher forms of social living. Whether arising from a sense of the money value of art-works stimulating their production for the market, or some less selfish cause, art-studies are far more in vogue than formerly. Time was, and not long ago, when even among educated people the question was scornfully asked, What is art? Now art has gained admission into the circle of the recognized humanities. It ranks with literature and science. Our schools are incomplete without instruction in this branch, and it is expected of cultivated persons that they should possess some knowledge of art,—should be able to speak of the Renaissance and have a vague idea at least of the distinction between the Romanesque and the Gothic. Writers find it quite the thing to embroider their essays with art illustrations, and preachers their discourses. While there are groups among us not untouched by æsthetic culture, and while there is wholesome activity in many directions, as in wood-engraving, etching, wood-carving, pottery, glass-painting, and the decorative arts, it may be doubted whether there is a love of art beyond this decorative stage; but this is a beginning, and the ornamental idea is entering fast enough into the sur-

roundings of our lives, to add grace to every bit of furniture, and rug on the hearth and plate on the table, and I do not know why we should quarrel with the diffusion of taste in such things; yet as representing art, this goes only a small way. We have, too, artists of conspicuous talent, if not constituting an original school; but the mind of the country (how could it be otherwise?) is not in its art. Its labor is still in the rough, and in industrial pursuits. Art demands the severest labor, but it also demands the labor of love. It is a product of the loving study of nature. When a nation loves art its whole mental force goes into it. The people who produced the mediæval sculptures loved nature, as is proved by every carven leaf and tendril, and they must have regarded with delight the variety of nature's objects and their curious combinations as they walked through the fields and vineyards, mingling them with human faces of celestial innocence. They had thoughts of rarer things playing into their minds. The exquisite intagli of the Church of San Agostino at Perugia were created as spontaneously as the flowers. Men found relief from the tyrannies of iron-handed governments and the terrors of political factions in these objects of the imagination. In the streets of Orvieto, Nuremberg, Chartres, Rheims, the people doubtless stopped to study the rich recessed doorways of the cathedrals, just as the citizens of Athens turned aside from their daily avocations to gaze with silent joy on the sculptures at the entrance of the Acropolis, as if these were nothing so strange after all, for they themselves felt the same love of beauty and inspiration out of which they sprang. While the sight touched something responsive they were made nobler by it, for how great a privilege for a people to be able to see every day the

most beautiful things! But this does not happen at once. Perfection comes through imperfection. There was a vast deal anterior to the perfection of Greek art, of the unskilled effort of ages following crude ideas and false types; yet Greek art, though it has its incomplete periods, represents the development rather than the beginning of the artistic impulse in the world; it marks the period of organized and perfected art.

The history of art, which, a century since, was a confused field with immense unknown tracts, is now tolerably well explored and reduced to definite bounds, though much remains to be cleared up in the evolution of the art-instinct in civilization. Historic art like historic science "consists in the making of distinctions; and its primary distinctions are those of time and space," comparing decade with decade, century with century, and even a hundred centuries with a hundred centuries, and then the steps of progress begin to be discovered and nothing of existent art—no fragment—is without significance.

It is impossible to give a rigid definition of art. It bursts from our formulas like an uncontrolled spring. It is indefinable because it is a truth rather than a term; yet we may do something toward a definition by separating art from truths akin to it. Art, for example, is not nature, while it is nothing without nature. Nature, in a general way, is all that is not art,—all that is created, not made. Nature is the substance, physical and spiritual, out of whose depths art arises like an exhalation of beauty. It comprises the forces at work to produce the phenomena of the world and their laws outside of human agency. Those phenomena in ourselves and the world "which we do not originate, but find," represent nature; those

“which we do not find, but originate,” represent art. Thus the human element comes into art, while nature is purely Divine. Art, too, is not science. Science concerns itself simply with knowledge and the investigation of truth, and it may be said to be the soul’s law of knowing. It deals with the facts of the universe, its chief instrument being the reason whose special function is to seek for the causes of things. Art also has to do with knowledge, for art may aid in the search after truth ; but it does not end in knowing. It is, in fact, a science, as far as its technique is concerned, and it applies science to its own methods, but its end is farther on in the perfect and ‘joy-giving’ work, rather than in the scientific knowledge or technical process. Art, in like manner, is not philosophy, nor religion, nor morality ; and it does not pretend to overtop, oppose, usurp, or meddle with these while keeping to its own sphere ; and much confusion has been caused (and no one has done more of this than Mr. Ruskin) by mixing these ; but the difference in such cases is obvious. Art, however, is no negative thing, but is a most objective reality, in that it implies the existence of natural material upon which to work, and from which to create results, requiring, however, a subjective principle of thought that orders nature for its conscious ends. In every work of art, its original material of nature, the subjective idea which calls it forth, and the form which is complete in itself like a natural creation, are comprehended. This applies to all forms of art, even the most mechanical. At first the term doubtless meant the arts of bare existence, the “coarse arts,” as Mr. Emerson calls them,—so that the useful was its foundation idea ; and, indeed, what is not intrinsically useful is worthless in art, in the highest art itself which belong to the



highest needs of our being, and compared with which its commoner uses are as earth and clay. But as new methods of civilization arose, art came up into these more purely intellectual and spiritual spheres. Nature was studied; her subtle laws of working were lovingly observed; finer natures were touched to finer issues; and the arts which have in them a thoughtful element succeeded the arts of mere existence, until "art" won a peculiar meaning, limited to the production which has in it the love of perfect creation, of beauty, which Plato says is at once the most manifest and desirable of things. (But while the artist represents the beautiful object he sees in his mind's eye, and paints from his mind's eye, art is never simply a mental act. "The art-idea is not a mere conception,—*ist niemals ein Begriff*,—inasmuch as the latter is a frame into which different phenomena may fit, whereas the artistic idea must stand in the most intimate agreement with the particular form of the work." In fine, the subject must be conceived in the object, there must be the representation of the idea which is its expression, and which expression must accompany conception. Expression reveals the artist, and indeed is another word for his art; for if it be true that

Many are the poets sown by nature,  
Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse,

it can hardly be said that the power of vision in the artist is ever unaccompanied by the power of expression, though the two may be unequally distributed. The bas-reliefs on the pediment of the temple of Zeus at Olympia, which Pausanias ascribes to the Attic sculptors Alkamenes and Paionios, are conceived with the utmost dramatic power, but are stiffly executed: probably the conception was that of the great artist,

and the work that of the local artist. Art, therefore, if we should attempt to define the indefinable, might at least be described, in its works, as the power of creating the representation in reality of the form represented in the mind, or, more specifically, in the imagination, which is awakened to act by its sympathy with nature in all her forms, but particularly with what is perfect and beautiful.

1. Art, then, has its foundation in an inner susceptibility that corresponds to outward forms. There is a power of receiving impression corresponding to the power that impresses. There is more than this. The mind contains the ideas in their conceptual mould in which the forms of natural objects are cast, and is thus fitted to comprehend them, so that art is the condition under which the sensibility for impression is excited, when the object and subject become identified. The German writer Lotze, indeed, says that "the impression of beauty cannot be referred to a uniform standard in us, to a spiritual organization actually existing in all individuals, but to one that has first to be realized in each person by means of development, and realized in each only in an imperfect and one-sided way;" but though it may be true that the perfect standard is not developed in every mind, or in the artist himself, yet this does not militate against the truth that there is an ideal condition, like the plate delicately prepared to receive impressions of objects, and without which the actualization of any form of beauty would be lost, and objects would remain without form and void. A mountain is a huge pile of rocky matter until thoughts of majesty, unity, power, are actualized in its impingement upon the ideal sense. We are enframed in the material kosmos as an organism itself Divinely designed, through which the soul

realizes its ideas, and without which it could not formulate them,—and this is the most important part nature plays in art. So, too, the ethical sense is a permanent condition of the soul, but the ideas of justice, right, duty, are not developed except in the actual relations of life.

Call the beautiful an intuition or not, man has an æsthetic sense, the outcome of whose formulated ideas is art, and which is capable of recognizing and expressing the objective beauty of the universe. We are subjects of impressions which do not always find expression, and only do so when they impress with sufficient force to form clear and distinct conceptions. We, it is true, may sometimes feign an enjoyment of nature that we do not feel. There is an æsthetic cant as nauseating as any other cant. The first hunter who saw Niagara was doubtless overpowered by its sublimity, but, it may be, his mind soon recovered its accustomed apathy, and he saw nothing in the stupendous phenomenon to give him delight, and he made his preparations to cook his dinner on the edge of the cataract as coolly as ever. With an Audubon it would have been different.

If the eye had not been sunny  
How could it look upon the sun?

I have, however, guarded against the theory that art exists solely in the mind, and that there is no intrinsic beauty in natural objects but what the mind creates in them.

2. Art is the interpretation of the significance and perfection of nature. The product of the subjective capacity when drawn forth by the beauty of nature becomes the language of art. Some think of nature only for scientific and practical uses, but “nature has

two revelations,—that of use and that of beauty. The beauty is just as much a part of nature as the use; they are only different aspects of the self-same facts, the usefulness on one side is on the other beauty. The colors of the landscape, the tints of spring and autumn, the lines of twilight and the dawn,—all that might seem the superfluity of nature,—are only her most necessary operations under another view; her ornament is another aspect of her work; and, in the act of laboring as a machine, she also sleeps as a picture. The same lines which serve as the measure of distance to regulate all our motions also make the beauty of perspective.”\* But beyond this, it is my belief that there is actual contrivance in nature for an appeal to the æsthetic sense. Mountains that surround a valley “like a chorus of hills,” by their fusion of noblest forms with finest tints, speak directly to the mind, as do the powerful words of a chorus in a Greek drama; and there is found also in nature every secret, even the subtlest, for the result of beauty, so as to produce the effect of beauty and power on the mind of the beholder. This is nature’s art. What Venetian blue is like the blue of the Rosenlaur glacier? What painting ever excelled the splendors of

The fiery noon, and eve’s one star?

He who begins to study nature; who observes trees or a single leaf; who looks closely at the minute grass-spires under his feet that cover the whole earth; who notices the tricky play of light and shadow; who watches the sky, “sometimes gentle, sometimes capricious, sometimes awful, never the same for two moments together; almost human in its passions, almost spiritual in its tenderness, almost Divine in its

\* Canon Mozley.



infinity ;” he must believe that there is that in nature which is designed to convey thoughts to the human soul far beyond those of mere sense. Art interprets this higher truth. The aim of art, says Taine, is “to manifest the essence of things.” Art, indeed, seeks for the means of the highest effects. It depends on a penetrative study of nature’s principles, and here it still may be original. Here the Yankee artist has as good a chance as the Greek. Here American art may, in the future, prove its claim to originality as truly as the Dutch school has done in the past. The artist, to be an interpreter, must have knowledge, whether gained by study or instinct. He goes patiently and lovingly where nature leads him, and enters this kingdom of art by being a little child, until, through long discipline, he sees “the most essential quality of things,” he grows into such intimacy with nature that he comes to interpret the thoughts of nature, and also the thoughts of the human heart. The great group of the “Niobe” came out of the profoundest depths of human experience,—there is nothing more suggestive than this sculpture in Modern Art,—as the Greek poet, Melæger, in his poem on the “Niobe,” believed and proved this of ancient art. There is a fragment of the Reformation in the works of that satiric, keen-eyed humorist, Holbein. There is much of the splendid but corrupt sensuousness of the Renaissance period, under the cover of Christian forms of humanity, represented in Titian’s voluptuous pictures ; for art is a true reflection of life, and of the life of the human soul.

3. Art finds its laws primarily in nature. It cannot go a step independently of these and remain art. There is, for instance, the great fundamental law of



Truth, which involves the idea upon which the universe itself was built. There must be a sensitive relation in the artist's mind to this law, without which art is a mere artifice, or sham. But art, as has been said, is not nature itself, nor does the artist, in Coleridge's words, "pick nature's pockets." Nature is inimitable; for how can a little square of painted canvas convey the infinitude of mountain scenery, where power is revealed like Divine inspiration? Yet nature in her commoner moods, if still inimitable, is genial and accessible. She is odd and humorous at times, with a fancifulness full of the most grotesque irony. She does not hide her winsome face. She invites us to sit at her feet. She will herself teach us. We cannot follow her instructions too closely, nor imitate her too minutely. Not a leaf but is a map of the boldest and most complicate pattern. Nature furnished the originals of Greek forms of every sort. But the artist must go beneath the surface of things to the plastic law of these forms, else imitation would be untrue. He must discover, as it were, nature's own law of creation. A picture is an illusion, but it is not a delusion, for its end is not imitation, which would be something unreal and an absurdity, but it is the production of similar effects of nature's beauty and power, so as to speak to the mind in some sense as nature speaks. While the artist is not to leave nature and lapse into a dreamland of his own, while he is to seek truth, yet by his thought, by separating the natural object from its accidental circumstances and conceiving it as a whole, by so painting the tree, the flower, the man, that the true form is seen, that the type is brought out in which the properties of the species are developed and in which it is best fitted to discharge the functions for which it was made,—this

shows the highest skill ; for here is the action of the artist's soul which gives to his works the appearance of fresh creations. This is the ideal in art. This ideal law of mental selection probably was coeval with the law of imitation, and accompanied the earliest art, since no art, even the most archaic, could have been entirely imitative. "In the effort to imitate the human figure the process of thought and sympathy becomes apparent ; and where this process of controlling power begins, there the ideal in art begins. Whenever this isolated portion, or scene, or action of nature is taken, it cannot be truly represented unless, by an act of thought, it is connected with the whole. The idea, or the whole to which it belongs as a part, must enter into it and transfuse it."\* Yet be it noted that the ideal does not exist without the real, passing into it like a spirit, even as mind works on facts and moulds them. The real is the basis of the ideal. The poetic superstructure is grounded deep down in the soil of nature. "The beautiful in the real," was the Florentine sculptor Duprè's motto. Imitation, therefore, is not the object of art, or is, at best, but a very low ideal of it. Yet how can a picture, or sculpture, be too true to nature? Were the best Greek sculptures? You may be sure that it was not the close imitation only in the familiar story of the grapes that made the birds peck at them, but it was chiefly the truth. It was the real life of natural objects that the artist had caught. It was a picture, not a copy. A portrait ;—what is it worth if it be not real and rugged as life is? This is the foundation of all artistic excellence. "The more nearly and truly a picture approaches the exact colors and forms of nature, the

\* A. S. Murray, *History of Greek Sculpture*, p. 7.

greater will be the effect." The healthy tendency of art, then, is to become more and more real, which is in the true line of progress. The vigorous revival of art in the Netherlands in the first half of the seventeenth century, which created the great Flemish and Dutch schools, to which the names of Rembrandt, Frans Hals, Terburg, Jan Steen belong, was nothing more than a return to realistic art from the feeble classic idealism and conventionalism of Italian Renaissance art. Yet rashness in theory makes a one-sided development, and the attitude of the artistic mind should be ever that of a thoughtful receptivity. All great painters have been realistic painters, but that is not all that they were. Velasquez did not paint the mere architecture of a face, but its character, its real character, drawn from a creative conception of the man. So art must continue to have in it these two elements of the real and ideal, or it will run into something analogous to that bold realism in literature which is threatening its finer life, or to that weakly subjective school of poets illustrated by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, charming as it is, but neither of them complete in itself. Art would finally run out, since some essential ingredient of life would be lost. It would either drop the element of truth to nature or the element of thought. The canons of universal art must not be swamped in the turbid deluge of French impressionism. Art has a rational and spiritual as well as a technical side, allying it with poetry, and with the highest achievements of the human mind. The innate sensitiveness of the Greek mind to *beauty* made Greek art differ from Egyptian, Oriental, Roman, and every other form, and in this consisted the unequalled artistic genius of the Greeks; but the Greek sense of beauty was chiefly, after all, an intellectual quality of

an intellectual people ; for even the sensual, strong in the Greek, was subordinated to the mental in this finely attuned and gifted race. " It has been said that the Greeks worshipped only beauty ; that they cultivated morality from the æsthetic side ; that virtue was with them a question not of duty but a task ; and many texts might be quoted to support this. We find Isocrates saying, in his encomium on Helen, that beauty is the first of all things in majesty, honor, and divineness, and that admiration for virtue itself comes to this, that of all manifestations of life, virtue is the most beautiful. Aristotle distinguishes the highest courage as willingness to die for the beautiful, which certainly did not mean mere bodily beauty. So also Plato describes philosophy as a love that leads one from fair forms to fair practices, and from fair practices to fair notions, until from fair notions he arrives at the notion of absolute beauty, and at last knows what the essence of beauty is. And this is that life beyond all others which man should live, in contemplation of beauty absolute. While loveliness has been worshipped by many others, none have conceived it under a form so worthy of worship as the Greeks. Beauty with them was neither little nor voluptuous ; the soul's energies were not relaxed, but exalted by its contemplation. It was the information of matter by mind. Therefore what a Greek worshipped was the perpetual and ever-present energizing of mind ; but he forgot that beauty can only exist in a combination of spirit with sense ; and after detaching the higher element, he continued to call it by name and clothe it in attributes proper to its earthly manifestations alone. Yet such an extension of the æsthetic sentiment involved no weakening of the moral fibre. A service comprehending all idealisms in one, demand-



ing the self-effacement of a laborious preparation and the self-restraint of a gradual achievement. They who pitched the goal of their aspiration so high knew that the paths leading up to it were rough, steep, and long; they felt that perfect workmanship and perfect taste, being supremely precious, must be supremely difficult as well; *χαλεπόν τό κᾶλον*, they said, the beautiful is hard to win and hard to keep."\* Thus beauty with the Greeks was mainly in the perfect idea of mind and not a sensuous decoration; it was self-development, the working out of a deeper inner principle, which made their art so noble. It is this by which in the presence of their serious sculptures our spirits grow calm, and we feel the truth and moral power of the Greek conception of beauty, raising us above our littleness into a region of higher thought and feeling.

So there are other principles of nature, besides truth, which enter into art, such as unity, or that consistency of parts with the whole which gives us delight in any beautiful object; proportion, which is the outcome of symmetric mind; grace, which flows from inward sympathy and freedom; character, or individuality, or expression, so variously named, which, indeed, is very much the same as ideality, by which the artist expresses his own thought, and by which also a distinctive spirit of the period and history of the work is stamped on it; and not to mention more of these laws, above all, the law of form, to which everything in art comes, which is the highest intellectual expression of art, so that sculpture is the purest art-manifestation. By studying these laws we come, too, at the principles of art-criticism, and

\* *Westminster Review.*



through the ignorance of which there is such lamentable judgment in matters of art, betokening entirely false standards drawn from metaphysics or political economy rather than from nature, and making to be measures such qualities as logic, cost, difficulty, prettiness, melodramatic effect, bulk, warm coloring and appeal to the sensuous, elaborate though senseless detail, instead of the true standards of nature, by a return to which through the clear instinct of æsthetic genius, lies the only road to reform and advancement.

4. Art in its final source is Divine. Beauty exists absolutely in the Divine mind, so that it is not exclusively a product of human thought. The sensualization of art goes beyond the truth of that æsthetic sensibility which lies partly in the sphere of the senses, and it forgets the deeper source of the spiritual, which makes the artist the priest of Divine things, of that moral beauty of which Christianity is the highest expression.

Looking at these four principles, that art has its foundation in an innate susceptibility which corresponds to outward forms; that art is the interpretation of the significance and perfection of nature; that art finds its laws primarily in nature; and that art in its final source is Divine; we may judge somewhat, from these rough pillars, what is the vast scope of art, how it reaches into the heavens as well as makes our own thought higher, our life sweeter, and this earth lovelier.

The classification of art would bring out still further its principles; for each of the forms of art is grounded on some reason in the mental constitution, and depends originally upon the nature of the idea which strives for representation, so that every art has a body, as it were, in which its life develops itself, and in no other.

The arts of expression by language differ from the arts of expression by form and color, and cannot be combined upon the same lines of representation. So, too, sculpture cannot perfect itself in the principles that apply to the pictorial art; and a familiar example, of which we have already treated, is the beautiful gate of the baptistery of San Giovanni, in Florence, that, by attempting to unite the plastic and graphic elements, or not keeping them distinct, fails of the highest effect. Yet the principles of all the arts are, in a measure, interchangeable, even as the laws of construction in architecture, bringing into play such analytic qualities as order, mass, and combination, may enter with effect into the composition of a picture, and lend it unity of design and a firmer tone.

One German writer classifies artistic forms into two—the mathematic and the organic; in this way art appears, as it were, a second nature, which represents and reviews her processes. All rhythmic arts are governed by mathematical laws like architecture in its form in space, and music in its movement in time; poetry also partakes of this regulated character. On the other hand, the arts which represent life, free life, such as landscape, animal existence, and, above all, the forms of human life in historic, *genre*, and portrait painting, and especially in sculpture, come under the class of organic laws; which arts are essentially imitative, but at the same time they stand in connection with higher ideas. Yet here, too, it is difficult to draw distinctions. Painting expresses, above all, quality and character; and yet in music there is as truly quality as quantity of sound, character as well as harmony. Colors have a genuine resemblance to tones, and colors form an octave which produces concord or discord, and gives rise to as various sensa-

tions. Architecture, which is abstractly geometrical, becomes also highly expressive of thought, feeling, and character, almost as much so as painting and sculpture.

Another classification separates all art into groups of technic, æsthetic, and phonetic, the first being those that minister to the primary wants, the second to the æsthetic, and the third those that express ideas by colors, forms, and words—in fact, language. But, actually, no positive limits can be assigned to these varieties as a question of fact, and it is rather a matter of degree than of classification. While, therefore, it is highly productive of thought to make this effort to classify, and is useful also as bringing out more clearly the underlying principles of art, it is evident that a deep-grounded and philosophical classification has not yet been reached. In the above I have alluded to theoretical rather than technical principles of art.

## TENDENCIES OF MODERN ART.

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It has been affirmed that throughout Europe—and that means modern civilization—art is in its decline. The fruit-bearing ages have passed with their inspirations. The Greek, the Gothic, and the Italian epochs have gone, leaving their rich gifts but no successors. Science, with its remorseless induction, has taken the place of original poetic feeling, and sown the field of human thought with clashing theories in which the beautiful arts cannot grow. Modern art is charged with being itself tamely scientific, with lack of creative power, and its only merit is said to consist in the reproduction and development of old ideas. If this be true, who is to remedy such a condition of things but the artists themselves, and it is profitable to listen to one who, while he does not give way to these discouraging views is alive to the evil as well as good tendencies of the age, and has a right to speak from the fact that he is true artist. Gustave Rodolph Boulanger, was a painter whose pictures and especially frescoes, established his reputation as a master in the modern classic school; and although he was too much of a classicist, he had power, while free from the extreme license of a great deal of the work of the French school. The address which follows, was made in 1885 to the pupils of the *Studio Julien*, a school organized upon the same plan as that of the *École des Beaux Arts*, and of large scope as to material, ateliers, and number of students, of which institution Boulanger was a professor, and is important as coming from a man who was a keen critic as

well as an accomplished artist, thus occupying a binocular point of vision, if one might use such an expression. It deals with French art, and approaches the subject in ways foreign to English minds, yet what he says is very comprehensive. The crisis in art forced him to speak ; but it is quite impossible to render into English (I am afraid I have not succeeded in doing so) the sarcastic vigor and subtle polish of style, and equally impossible to make extracts without weakening the whole. I have added something by way of suggestion and review, upon a theme that has a wide range as regards thought outside of the special field of art.

“As there is a set of artists who threaten to give a false character to this age, I think it my duty to warn you against some paradoxes which, if not disproved, may assume by and by the aspect of irrefutable truths. I do not belong to the class of discontents, who take a melancholy view and pronounce the decline of art to be remediless. Such persons will even admit to you that there is a higher average of talent now than there ever was, but they say that there are no masters, no stars of the first magnitude. They do not perceive that in proportion to the elevation of the mean standard the intensity of its light pales the isolated stars—a law in optics. It certainly is true that if the works of some artists of our time had suddenly appeared in a *salon* of forty years ago, they would have shone so dazzlingly that the light which then seemed bright would have lost its luster. But if a general decline has not yet arrested the progress of French art, it is ready to invade us, and we can see the signs of its approach. The gravest symptom of the evils that menace us, or rather of the evil most formidable,



owing to its insidious appeal to our vanity, is a reckless striving for originality, with or without motive, originality for its own sake, in fine, novelty. In order to attract notice everyone thinks he must sing higher than the rest, even if on a false key; and this tendency is aggravated by a class of critics who do not know how to distinguish between marks of genius and errors of orthography, and who clamor for the spontaneous blossoming forth of a new art connected by no bond with the past; as if this were possible or had ever happened. Such criticism has a specially bad effect on the young. It leads them to neglect all patient, conscientious, and solid study, and to run after novelties, or what they mistake for originality; to attain, in short, a singularity which has not the merit of freshness, but which is always a piece of downright conventional coarseness or absurdity. This pretended novelty we see coming into notice, year after year, under names as arrogant as they are unjustifiable, such as naturalism, impressionism, illuminism, intentionism, sketchism (*tacheisme*)—to utter the slang in which they attempt to glorify imbecility and indolence.

These tendencies have a peculiar character, and are unprecedented in the history of art; they are based on negations. All elegance of drawing and composition is treated as something of the past, all modelling and color are despised under the pretext of the open air (*plein-air*) system,\* without perceiving that they are losing sight of art. They declare that there is no such thing as perspective; I call your attention to this, for the mania threatens to become general. Men

\* This probably refers to the new method of not merely sketching but making finished pictures in the broad open daylight, little portable studios on wheels, like a gypsy cart, being used, to avoid artificial light.—Tr.

of talent, not making any account of the minimum of distance required for a perspective which is true, introduce into their pictures figures in the mean distance totally out of proportion, and place the horizon so high that the ground seems to be rising, which is mathematically false, for, in that case, we are forced to admit several points of sight ; though the reply to this is, that photography presents nature in this way ; and we are thus compelled to draw the conclusion that common sense is also gone by.\* There are young painters upon whom nature has bestowed gifts that labor has developed into real talent, who certainly have no need to take up such theories, and they have been careful to avoid it, but, tormented by a feverish desire to attract attention, they hope to command admiration by representing scenes of trivial character upon canvas of colossal size. In this they manifest a want of good sense, and a disregard of that principle of proportion, which does not allow a subject to be expressed in a form beyond its importance. You can treat a great subject in a small compass where you concentrate it, but in developing a small subject in a great frame you only dilute it. What is true of one art is true of all. If, though such a supposition were impossible, Alfred de Musset had seen fit to put into five acts his delightful gem of '*Un Caprice*' he would have spoiled it ; but the same thing is frequently done in painting, and if, in such a case, the work produced by real talent does not border on absurdity, yet, just as in the search after the odd, it falls into prosaicism and vulgarity.

\* When will the error be given up that photography is art ? It is a brilliant scientific discovery which may be made of great importance to art, but it is only the mechanical application of a natural law, without the slightest act of artistic volition.—TR.

Vulgarity, I say, for such is the least unfortunate result of this excessive wish to win distinction. We have seen only too well how it shows itself in painting, and how it begins to make its appearance in sculpture, our choicest, most incontrovertible artistic pride; sculpture too is threatened by these trivial tendencies. Sometimes it is supposed that originality is shown in carving a Homeric hero with the features of a jail-bird; it is no longer the ugly (which may be needed in certain cases to mark a forcible thought and even to secure grandeur) but it is the common or low type. Under the pretext of avoiding the cold expression of antique masks they no longer carve heads with helmets (*Casques*) but heads with caps (*Casquettes*). Our young sculptors do not trouble themselves much about the muscles but about the veins and superficial swellings. It is not form which interests them but the accident of form.

A wide prejudice exists among artists themselves, which tends to create the belief that painting coarsely done is the result of power, though just the opposite is true. Coarse execution almost always betrays weakness, while an execution pushed even to the extreme verge, presents to the artist the sure indication of energy. The most powerful master is, without contradiction, that grand creator of a supernatural world, Michael Angelo. Very well, this terrible genius executed smooth painting and his marbles were highly polished. And Rubens, of an entirely different temperament and education, a fiery artist if there ever was one, is the author of that beautiful light and flowing style of painting with which we are familiar. Neither Buonarotti nor Rubens had recourse to processes of the trowel, whose thick plastery coats of color we are made to regard as the expression of force,

but which only prove the helplessness of those who employ them, and who, with a semblance of vigor that is calculated to impose on the ignorant, try to conceal their want of experience in regard to the most difficult thing presented by every kind of art, viz: to come to the finish of a work.

This negligence, whether real or feigned, where it is not the result of sheer ignorance, is nearly related to the systematic striving after the vulgar and trivial. This conscious letting down of the standard both of conception and rendering, is nothing in reality but a means of concealing weakness and escaping toil; for, you all know that it is a hundred times harder to paint a beautiful goddess than to make a picture of a rustic wench.

The fact is, we must concede—whether we will or not—that the orders of intellectual culture present themselves strictly graded, and demand effort to scale them proportioned to their height.

But the anxiety to turn out what is new, makes the artist lose sight of any desire to turn out what is good. This is the danger that threatens to draw the French school into a current where it may be wrecked if a strong reaction do not soon take place.

It is then urgent that you should recollect a truth too often forgotten, which is, that originality cannot be made to order; it exists as it is unconscious. Striven after, it becomes oddity, mania, extravagance, and can only lead to those sad results of which I have spoken. It is for this reason you should take good care, in spite of the strong current of fashion, not to accept all your predecessors have rejected; furthermore, for this cause I say: fight against the tide of the commonplace, for the day when painters and sculptors cease to be poets, there will be no further use for



them, and if these new schools can claim the authority of a few instances of vulgarity in the works of certain masters, they may be answered that these faults pass unnoticed, because they are so greatly eclipsed by the true poetry of color and effect, seen, for example, in Rembrandt, but that these vulgarisms have never constituted an artistic quality.

If one take a lofty view of the developments of the human mind, you will recognize the fact that they all, even the most absurd of them, have a reason, from which we may always be able to derive instruction. Now, if in the case before us, the reaction is disorganized or without organic unity, yet the reason for its extravagance must have some foundation in truth: yes, the conventional that degenerates into the common, brings on, of necessity, a reaction. This reaction, pushed often too far, and more often still led into a false direction by men of ill-regulated minds and incomplete education, begets those tendencies to which I am opposed. There should be reaction, of course, against old forms of routine, but it should be with science for a guide. Nay, I grant that routine methods ought to be strenuously combatted. What unfortunately follows the great periods of revolution in art is a settled formula, a fixed type leading to immobility, an exaggeration, gradually increasing even to deformity, of some plastic quality revealed by the masters of art, a uniform treatment even in presence of a thousand forms of being. It seems as if the tree having borne an excessive crop of good and beautiful fruit, must necessarily be enfeebled, must send in circulation a thin sap, and produce nothing more than a dwarfed fruit, in the degenerate type of the first harvest. After the highest point comes the decline. When Raphael and Michael Angelo had



reached the supreme expression of the movement of Italian art called the Renaissance, they each gathered it up in a form peculiar to himself, but drawn scientifically from nature and subordinated to its laws. It seems as if after them no more efforts were possible. Certainly not, if this effort was with the intention of surpassing them, instead of proceeding on the basis of the earnest study of nature, just as these incomparable geniuses had wrought ; but people imagined that they could reach their lofty height, and may I be pardoned, perhaps excelling their flight, by starting from the point of their attainment. It was thought easier, and believed wiser to restrict oneself to what these masters had formed, and thus a servile, exaggerated, and even depraved imitation of their manner was substituted for the study of nature itself, which was no more considered worthy of a thought. For a long time, it is true, by reason of such acquired force, artistic works preserved something of that bold manner, that high sentiment, which is the characteristic of the wonderful frescoes of the Vatican ; but the stamp or the semblance even of these qualities disappeared under a treatment pedantically employed according to formulas learned, and indiscriminately applied to every form of plastic expression. The same uniform means of interpretation were applied to figures, whatever they might be, youth, the old man, woman or child. The first signs of this decline are seen in the paintings of the Farnesina that are still so beautiful ; and Giulio Romano, in spite of a genuine knowledge, determined this downward movement, which was precipitated a little later by the intrusion of the Flemish school. The great Venetian school underwent the same fate ; it held firm even to Veronese, but soon after it departed further and further from nature up to Zucchi ; and

in the French school up to Boucher. And yet at that time you meet everywhere with great knowledge of the profession and artistic skill. The reform begun among ourselves by David was incomplete, because, without maintaining a sufficient regard for nature and the lessons to be learned from the Renaissance, he made it come directly from an inferior type of antique art, which was itself produced by reason of one of those transitions of which I have just spoken from Greek art to the Græco-Roman. David knew nothing of Phidias, to whom this name of *naturalist* which is applied in our days in the strangest and falsest manner, was perfectly suited.

The Greek artists of the great period had discovered the truth that the beautiful was not exclusive of the individual, and that, on the contrary, the infinite variety of natural types brought an eternal renewal to beauty. The "Theseus" has its form, which is not that of the "Ilissus"; the "Achilleus," so personal, has no relation to the "Discobolos"; the "Venus of Milo," is of a type entirely different from the beautiful Greek *torso* preserved at the *École des Beaux Arts*, and called by the name of M. Ingres.

For the exaggerated conventionalism of the art belonging to the close of the eighteenth century, David only substituted another conventionalism more scientific, it is true, but cold and monotonous. But the science of David was considerable, and was steeped in nature; it might have made him an artist able to vie with the greatest, as his superb picture of the "Coronation," one of the most beautiful works of French painting, and also many of his portraits, prove.

Next came M. Ingres. He taught us to see Greek art, out of which he drew that aphorism of such deep meaning: "Let us seek character in nature," a pre-

cept worthy to be engraved on the front of every department of art.

Never forget that the future of our French school depends on it. The modern movement must proceed chiefly from this principle. Remember that all types, all temperaments, all dates of development and transformation are represented in nature, and that it presents to us from time to time the perfect expression of each one of them either as a whole, which is rare, or in some detail, which occurs more frequently. Exercise yourselves then in honestly imitating nature, and varying your types as it does, shunning the commonplace of which it knows nothing.

As to the injurious criticism of academic, or, as it is called, official, education, there could exist no other education than that which consists in instructing young artists in what I would call the grammar, in order to lead them on into rhetoric. But whether this education be given in public schools or in private, in the studios of the *École des Beaux Arts* or private studios, there is but one orthography, one language, one syntax possible to teach. But would it ever be imagined that a rhetorical professor could have any personal influence upon the future style of the students of his class? And, besides, in general, have the most original minds received a different teaching from that which is given in the various universities, whatever they may be? Why then should it be otherwise in regard to instruction in art, where the master, after all, can teach only the technique.

Do not fail to observe that not only no professor, but no person in the world, can modify your originality, in so far as it is involuntary and superior to influence from another mind. The proof of this is in the uniform and despotic education which the great

masters themselves, from whom the arts have drawn their highest glory, have received at every period and in every school.

Formerly a child was apprenticed to a painter, or a sculptor, as in our time is still done with a young mechanic. At a period when the paternal discipline had a rigor now unknown, that of a patron was also severe, it was more than absolute and doubtless exclusive. As an amusing illustration of this, it was, I believe, the painter Natoure who, as his last word to his pupils going to Rome, said: "Whatever you do, don't forget my style!" It was indeed exclusive, because, beyond the fact that the apprentice paid his master a specified sum, he owed him still, after his education was finished, some years of work. It came about that the patron took the greatest care to arrest at the outset any personal fancy on the part of his pupil, since he must learn, before all, to paint exactly like himself, so as to be able to assist him in his work.

But I am not aware that our great masters have had their personality compromised by this tyrannic education. Raphael began by scrupulously imitating Perugino, which did not prevent him from becoming the divine Sanzio. Van Dyck, who took so large a part in the works of Rubens executing entire figures in the pictures of this master, among others that of the Magdalen, in the "Descent from the Cross," became the Van Dyck whom no one confounds with the illustrious pupil of old Otto Venius. Largillière, who distinguished himself by that fine style of painting so light and beautiful, was still laboring at the age of forty on the pictures of Lebrun, whose manner was totally opposed to his own.

What a clamor would be heard if the same kind of education should be given to-day! And yet for all



that, notwithstanding its perhaps excessively rigorous discipline, it was the best. Yes, by far the best, because the master having but a few pupils, and living constantly with them, obliged them to learn all he knew, and he knew a great deal, having himself received a complete education, the tradition of which mounts back to Leonardo da Vinci, who said: "I know no profession which requires more extensive knowledge than that of the painter." But without carrying the requisite requirements to such an extent as that great master did, who, not content with excelling in the arts of painting, sculpture, architecture, poetry and music, was also a mathematician and a wonderful engineer, all the painters even to David, were, to a certain extent, sculptors, and above all, architects. This sound tradition they are trying at this moment to revive at the *École des Beaux Arts*, and I could not urge you too strongly to follow it; for the knowledge of architecture among other things, although the most neglected, is one of the most useful to have.

Again, this education was the best because it was eminently practical, and broke in the pupil to material processes that were fruits of an experience accumulated through generations; an experience which must now be gained by an empiricism of routine, if indeed gained at all. The fact is, as my friend Claudius Popelin has very justly said: "To follow traditions is the only means of going right. Art must be a chain; it is when this chain breaks that there is decline. All renaissance consists in fastening a new link to that which hangs on the past. It is this which renders the revival of the fifteenth century so great and so fruitful." That is a thought, with which I should wish to see you thoroughly imbued.



Now, how can we explain it, that the normal education which consists in grounding art on elementary principles, on a thorough mastery of the artist's craft, should ever have been questioned? For, if it be undeniable that grammar does not impart genius, that the most accomplished rhetorician may do the stupidest work even if most correct, it does not follow that the way to possess genius is to dispense with rhetoric. It is just here, indeed, where is the deplorable and mischievous confusion against which I wish to warn you. But, if grammar does not confer genius, if it does not develop the imagination, if, in a word, it does not constitute talent, it is still more incapable of depriving those who have these gifts, of them, and it still remains the most indispensable instrument of expressing the degree of imagination or talent each one may have. This is why Buffon dared to say: "Genius is patience;" which is not an absolute paradox, for granting that genius has an independent separate existence, yet it is never to be improvised, it does not germinate except in an intelligence prepared by culture, and only formulates itself after severe labor.

It is also the fashion to attack the Academy of France at Rome; this gives a false air of a liberal mind. They unceremoniously represent the Academy of France, in a way that shows great ignorance, as an effete institution which acts as a mould from which the same kind of artists must invariably emerge. In such a statement as this, is there only a lack of information; might there not be something like a want of good faith? To speak of painters only, would it not seem to proceed from a faculty of observation too feeble to be worth notice, to assert that such men as Hébert, Cabanel, Baudry, Bougereau, and Henner, show the same tendencies?

Be assured that it is highly advantageous to young artists to retire, for some years, away from the tides of fashion, the solicitations of vanity, the seductions of anticipated and hasty gain, to a common retreat among the masterpieces found only at Rome. I speak especially of the highest expressions of great decorative art in fresco. Is it then nothing, to live in a country where intellectual culture has everywhere left the impress of its passage across the ages, where human art, in what it has had of highest excellence, has everywhere set its sacred mark? Is the impression of that wonderful campagna of Rome nothing, which has all the severe grandeur of its history and all the grace of the Virgilian idyl? Is Italy nothing, which exhibits from north to south to the observing eye of the artist the magnificent developments of painting, and where are so many monuments of antiquity and the Renaissance stamped with an incomparable character? Put forth, then, every effort to merit the enjoyment in your turn of this good and healthy retreat, which will leave you the best memories of your life, and whose beneficial effects you will feel through your whole career.

The summits of mountains are only to be reached by the longest roads, because these are the surest. Arm yourselves, therefore, with courage and perseverance; and, disdaining easy success, be priests of the beautiful: of that beauty whose sovereign expression is man, the last and most perfect of created things.

Continue then, at every cost, to be scholars; but above all be poets; be enthusiasts, fanatics, delicate and fastidious artists; be passionate lovers of nature in her loftiest expression, and spurn from you this new æsthetics founded upon commonplace. In virtue of its very principle which prescribes all poetry, it is a

mere emanation of the *bourgeois* spirit, and the negation of all art, since art itself is simply selection in the expression of thought and form."

The axiom laid down in this address of Boulanger, that perfection depends upon faithful work in the line of traditional and well-established principles, and that, however great the artistic genius, it will amount to nothing without patient study of *technique*, is of prime value. The address also touches on some subtle tendencies of the times that more or less influence all who have aught to do with art-studies in America as well as France. There is a new spirit abroad in art and literature. The art-movement in England has perceptibly affected us in America. Its origin, the Pre-Raphaelite revival of thirty or thirty-five years ago, was itself a remarkable event, which had in it the germs of endless progress. It was the salvation of English art. Denying classic paganism, it had a moral aim and was so jealous of truth, that while it went to nature, it would not depart from nature even to follow its own higher thought. Religion was its aim, yet one might say that realism was its religion. But with all its unmodified enthusiasm, Pre-Raphaelitism was a genuine movement, and its germinant idea was true. That idea however manneristically misapplied, was the principle of absolute trust in the truth that is in nature; and while its "divine crookedness and holy awkwardness" have passed away, its originators— young men of genius such as John Everett Millais, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Holman Hunt, Thomas Woolner, and, later on, E. Burne Jones, Alma Tadema, Frederick Leighton, and George F. Watts, not leaving out the greatest of all, Turner, in landscape — have become illustrious artists, each

standing on his merits and with an individual power that has nothing in it of the dryness of the primitive school. The writers and poets of this school, the two Rossettis, William Morris, Swinburne, perhaps Robert Browning, and, above all, John Ruskin, its prophet crying in the wilderness of selfish and unloving life, have made an impression on modern art and poetry so decided, that this revival may have some claims to its name of the English Renaissance. This outburst of artistic energy was an effort to return to the earnest simplicity of nature. Sincerity and a love of art for art's sake, were its watch-words; and, certainly, from it a wind as from the salt sea, a wind of the Hellenic spirit of beauty, has breathed over English art, and a true power has come into it, for whatever of artistic energy there may be in a soul there must be some living nature, some touch of reality, to draw it forth; and this may have been the meaning of the Greek myth that the Goddess of beauty was born of the melting sea-foam.

But, with this new spirit, weaknesses have been developed, partaking of exaggeration, and of a false subjectivity which seeks for intense expression superficially effected rather than caused by deep study and poetic truth; in a word, a striving for impression rather than abiding truth, catching the fleeting present more than the enduring form—which have won for it, in its last phase at least, the name of the "impressionist school." Something of this superficiality may be seen, for instance, in the wonderful pictures of Watts, many of which have been recently exhibited in this country, and that, I venture to say, have already left their impress on American art. Watts is said to have redeemed portrait-painting from the charge of decline in our day. He has a Raphael-



esque power of painting a man and not his mask, but in ways the opposite of Raphael. We can see in one of his portraits that we are spirits before we are bodies. Thought struggles through it, and in the strange mingling of high colors, blue, red, yellow and green, almost like the inharmonious juxtaposition of opposite colors in Japanese painting, the spirit flashes, and we forget the medium and think only of the impression of the person. A ray of his intellectual being penetrates us. Types of face are given. In the portrait of Morris, for example, I recognize the poetic type of Virgil and Petrarch. Watts' ideal compositions, in which he has won the praise of a lofty style, such as his "Love in death,"\* "Orpheus and Eurydice," "Paolo and Francesca," are manifestations of poetic ideas, as if Robert Browning had spoken through colors instead of words, and they produce the subtle effects of a poem. These paintings do not really differ from poetry nor does the poetry of the same brilliant artists differ from their paintings. They merely change the pen for the brush. The "Blessed Damosel" might have been painted instead of sung :

\* I do not know whether the artist had in view the lines of Dryden, but the coincidence of the picture and the poet's verse is striking :

"Love has in store for me one happy minute,  
And she will end my pain who did begin it :  
Then no day void of bliss or pleasure leaving,  
Ages shall glide away without perceiving ;  
Cupid shall guard the door, the more to please us,  
And keep out Time and Death when they would seize us,  
Till Time and Death depart, and say, in flying,  
Love has found out a way to live by dying."



“The blessed damosel leaned out  
From the gold bar of heaven ;  
Her eyes were deeper than the depth  
Of waters stilled at even ;  
She had three lilies in her hand  
And the stars in her hair were seven.”

Their power is like the spirit that floats in music and belongs to the soul. It is the power that lies in color-tones, to convey passionate and pathetic thought from the artist's soul to ours and with their prevailing tone of gray aerial coloring, through which shine delicate roseate lights, they seem to steal into the mind as a misty vision, bodiless and rainbow-tinted. The forms are but the plastic creations of the brain. Appealing thus, as do the mystic paintings of Burne-Jones, to the sensitive mind more than even to the eye, and expressing the inward moods of poetic thought with little of the substance of objects, they share the weakness of purely subjective expression in all art, for æsthetics is not only in the mind of those who perceive the beauty there is in nature, but it also dwells in nature. There is a body to it. The drawing thus is often feeble as if not studied in patient ways in nature and the antique ; so that the words of Boulanger may not be amiss ; for, above all, he draws back to the antique.

The French school of “impressionists” is less poetic and more uncompromisingly realistic, than the English. It is more learned, for the modern science of archæology, having left the oft barren heights of philology and descended into the real life of the past, has made it simply impossible for artists now to paint classic scenes in the manner of David or Poussin, so that a painter like Gérôme is one of the best classic commentators ; yet archæology—

noble science that it is and skillful aid to art—cannot presume to be or make art; and some of the old paintings, with their ignorances even, catch the deeper spirit, the poetic life, of antiquity, and above all religious antiquity, more truly than the Alma-Tadema school, whether of France or England. But the French school goes on the principle that the best art is “the art that is inspired by the life of its own day,” however commonplace, artificial, and vulgar that life is. What one sees to-day, that is the right subject for art. Academic traditions and criticisms are cast to the winds. High taste and high art are relegated to the tombs of the Escorial and Uffizi. Ugliness is welcomed if real, and sometimes if not real; indeed, ugliness is a trifle preferred to beauty. The law of choice, which every one must acknowledge is the law of the ideal in art, is viewed as a matter of no sort of importance. One sharp critic of this school goes so far as to say that “anything like a noble or dignified sentiment, or even physical beauty in what it has of delicate and exalted, is abandoned to begin with.” This is sweeping, for some noble pictures, like those of Bastien-Lepage have been produced; yet, it must be said, that the sentiment, whether noble or ignoble, is a secondary thing, and it is the fact that is sought, whether it be prismatic as a soap-bubble or black as sin. The novel is mainly aimed after. It finds its counterpart in modern French literature, and is not at all nice in what it takes. The crowded street; the motley throng on the beach of a watering-place; the interior of a gilded opera-house; a masked ball; a horse-race; a cabbage-garden or turnip-field; a priest enjoying his bottle of wine; blouses playing cards; a soldier, a stout laundress or a pet dog; no matter

whether these have any significance or not ; no matter whether they have poetic light or not ; any of the thousand and one scenes of everyday life touched perhaps with the artist's own spirit or fun, delight, or sardonic satire, painted simply because they are expressions of life—these form the rapid topics for the unscrupulous brush of this lively school, that deals in simulated lights and sensational effects, and often not without veritable power. There is power in its idea if not carried too far—the real and its interpretation. It is believing that what has been is, or rather believing in what is as more important than what was. This imparts light to the canvas, and it is wonderful how the luminous air is sometimes caught, how the stamp of the present which never was before and never can be again is in these paintings. The classic is abjured in order to be alive. And as an attribute of the soul art is independent of time. Why should we indulge in this idolatry of the past, of Greek or Italian art, if the materials of art are not exhausted? There may be a great deal of nonsense written and spoken about old art. Art is a faculty in humanity that has vital force in itself. Beauty is young. The forms of nature are as lovely as they ever were. While we dream of the past, genius bathes its hands in the sunshine. Turn over a portfolio of etchings drawn by deft artists like Seymour Haden and Van's Gravesande, and you will find the trees as roughly picturesque, the clouds as fleecy and the water as limpid, as in pictures of Claude or Ruysdael. The sources of art are within, ever renewing its life as the tree silently puts forth new leaves and fruit every spring,

“ Und grün des Lebens goldner Baum.”

But beauty changes somewhat as the ages go on, and we cannot expect that the forms of art would remain the same. As art is, more than almost any other manifestation of mind, in its forms at least, the reflection of the age, so there is hope for modern art and American art. But this truth seized upon, has apparently formed the sole inspiration of a school that has cut itself off from the work of universal art, and grown weak in knowledge and *technique*, so that, though accompanied by considerable power, it has failed in the higher aims of art. The Grosvenor gallery is a spot where the most vigorous modern English art is found, but the French *salon*, has become, each year of its new departure, more trivial in its themes and sensational in its expressions. But for the sincere and sweet nature of Millet, and the real perception of beauty of Daubigny and a few others, the paintings of a recent *salon* were either trifling or sensuous—a momentary action; a forced posture; a dash of high color laid on like plaster; a fantastic conceit; a bit of Flaubertesque paganism without Flaubert's learning; a nudity not clothed even with modesty; a calling up of historic costumes in their minutiae but not of historic men, for in even Meissonier's gems the figures are lay, not living, they are characterless frames to hang robes upon—and this of him who painted "1807" and "1814"! But I should not give a wrong conception of a new development of art so full of brightness and promise, since the impressionist school has been illustrated by painters of remarkable individuality and exquisite genius, such as Claude Manet, Millet, and, above all, Degas and Renoir. Of the same class, though not the same nation, was Duprè, the Florentine sculptor of the "Abel," the "Sappho," and the most noble and



religious "group of the Pieta," with his pregnant motto "the beautiful in the real."

As a general rule, the works of these artists both in France and England, are attractive at first glance—an enchanting freshness of impression is produced—but hanging their clever paintings by the side of the lovely mellow and finished religious pictures of the old Italian or even older French school, the dramatic and poetic works of the German school, and the great classic paintings of the world, I doubt whether they would hold long in our estimation, or draw us permanently away from those deeper impressions of the imagination and spiritual life. They would tire, for they embody but the outward, and have nothing in them more profound or spiritual. A notable example is Munkacsy's "Christ before Pilate," which, with its extraordinary *tours de force*, has a marked absence of inner and divine elements, and represents the anachronism of a modern fanatic before a Roman prætor—how much inferior to the simple portrait of "*Le Doreur*" by Rembrandt recently brought to this country, which has no pretensions and is not even the portrait of a prince or great man, but of an honest burgher who lived, it may be, in the *Jodenbreedstaadt* where the painter dwelt and took his evening pipe with him, but what character, what tone in the flesh, what sagacious eyes, what a feathery lace frill, what inwardness!

This phase of modern art has not been without its good influences. It has served to banish unreality and invigorated art by a fresh dip into nature. It has grappled with the coarse earth-spirit, who, like Caliban, is sometimes a spirit of wisdom and a poet; but is there no thought in art? Is there no choice? "If we despise the law of choice," remarks a sensible



writer, "in our bodily tastes, and eat indiscriminately everything that offers itself to our appetite, how soon we would kill ourselves." So if the painter represent with daring accuracy nature pure and simple, and human life the most degrading, how soon would art become a disgusting phenomenon. The artist's mind would be his fingers not his soul, and the unity of his creative thought, in which he resembles God, would give way to an orderless chaos of indiscriminate and unreasoning imitation. The highest idea of art, as I conceive it, is the combination of realism with that spiritual knowledge of a deeply thoughtful mind, without which the artist would become a slave of nature. He would no more interpret the highest things, as the poet does. There would be in his works no appeal to the pure imagination, to form, to the universal loveliness in which the joy of art consists. Beauty, which is the soul of art, would vanish like an offended spirit being so majestic; and hence Greek art still exerts and ought to exert a conservative influence over all manifestations of the artistic spirit.

## FRENCH LANDSCAPE-PAINTING.

### I.

The æsthetics of landscape might be described in a word as the product of human sentiment awakened by communion with nature. Nature's aspects of the picturesque, the cheerful, and the tender, find an answer in the soul of man. Nature is sympathetic with man's mental conditions. The artist is only poet of another sort, who tells us in color as the poet in words, what nature teaches him. This is the more important because nature is divine, and we ourselves are part of this wonderful nature, inframed in her subtle organism. The artist becomes her interpreter. The power of the landscape-painter is that of one who finds in nature this responsive image of the soul, and interprets to us what the divine—the source of truth and beauty—speaks to us. We are softened, taught, elevated. It is a prophetic art, the most blameless of all, and one which seems to be peculiarly in the line of American art, that has not (perhaps fortunately) much besides nature—sweet and divine nature—to draw from; and the landscapists, whether American or French, whose brilliant and charming pictures so delight us, are our true benefactors, bringing the whole universe into a narrow room.

But simple as this philosophy of landscape-art may seem, it would not be well for the student to commence with landscape-painting, which is a difficult kind of art-production, since it combines accurate drawing with picturesque effect—always a hard combination. The lines of landscape are more complex than those used in the drawing of simple objects, and

a certain indefiniteness and confusion of lines even are allowable in landscape-painting, so that it is only the skillful artist who can at the same time be truthful to nature and produce the effect which the varied objects of landscape convey to the eye.\* It is a mistake to think that this can be easily done, or by the novice; therefore the pupil should first learn to represent with perfect correctness simple objects standing separate one from another, and afterwards he may learn to combine and compose, and by an effort of imagination to bring even a vast natural scene, with its numberless details, into one picture. Yet if landscape drawing and painting directly from nature be too long deferred, the danger is of making academicians and not artists of students, just as in linguistic pursuits grammar may be so exclusively studied, that the literature, which is the end of literary study, and all its rich fruits, may be lost.

But it took a long time to find out the true source and method of landscape-painting, which has been called by DeQuincey, the Christian art, and, certainly, it is a modern one. The Greeks did not comprehend its power, or if they studied landscape it is seen more in their literature than in their art—more in Theocritus than in Pheidias. It is only now, that the significance of nature in her correspondence with the soul, both in art and philosophy, has been profoundly recognized, and that nature has been accepted as the teacher of man who is child and pupil. Goethe, as interpreter of the true in nature and of her innermost revelations to the soul, did much towards this. Man, heretofore, had been teaching nature and not letting nature teach him; and landscape-painting—that one

\* P. Hamerton.

would think brought man nearer to nature of any art—has been forced to go through many phases, and its evolution has been slow from form to reality, from conventional ideas of nature to nature itself.

In France, landscape-painting had its beginnings in the Italian classic school of art, which was also the beginning of French painting in all departments—the source and river, so to speak, of French art flowing through imaginary fields of Greece and Rome, before it reached the soil of France, or real nature.

Nicolas Poussin, the first great name, in point of time, of French landscape, and who would be great now and in any period, was nurtured on Roman soil. He was imbued with classic ideas. Poussin became well acquainted with the best antique models then known, and with the older Italian masters, having been himself a pupil of Domenichino; but his was a profound mind drawing from original sources, thoughtful, a philosophic painter of landscape whose light, though cold, fell upon forms partly ideal and partly of nature—a grand serious painter, and whose pictures are widely scattered through all the galleries of Europe.

His own portrait in the Louvre always arrested me with something of power in it not altogether divine but demonic, like the face of Michel Angelo; but one could not carelessly go by his great yellowish landscapes, hard in tone, cool poetic scenes where real sunshine does not sleep nor winds blow. His picture, in the Louvre, of "Diogenes," is a noble piece of landscape-painting of dark green color, and many another might be mentioned; but the beautiful painting of "The Arcadian Shepherds," is, perhaps, the most typical of Poussin's pictures. It is of moderate size, a poem in the Homeric vein, sweet and deep, having

something infinite in its lines and sentiment. There is, in the foreground of the picture, a tomb surrounded by rocks and autumn-reddened leaves, like the spirit of gentle death; and there are a company of Arcadian shepherds, who are saddened in the midst of their happy life by the sudden discovery of a moss-overgrown inscription on the tomb in these words: "*Et in Arcadia ego*"—"I too have been in Arcadia." It is a picture of the imagination of a preconceived scene that never existed, a poem in color drawn from the realm of the Ideal. But Poussin, though one of the earliest is one of the foremost names of the French school, because his genius was of a lofty type without an effeminate trait, which is rare among his countrymen. He did not paint merely to please, but to express the thought of a heroic, poetic, and sublime imagination.

A little after Poussin, or about contemporary with him, was Claude Lorraine, long held to be chief of landscape-painters and who, too, was more of Italy than France. All know, who have read Ruskin's works, how this eloquent but self-opinionated critic, excited by his discovery of Turner's genius, has seen fit to depreciate the merits of Claude Lorraine as a landscape-painter by the side of his English idol, entirely unnecessarily, for both are great masters. Ruskin says in his *Stones of Venice* (vol. i., p. 26): "The base school of landscape which gradually usurped the place of historical painting and sunk into prurient pedantry—the Alsatian sublimities of Salvator Rosa, the confectionery idealities of Claude, the dull manufacture of Gaspar Canaletto"—which is especially unjust of Claude, whose poetic imagination, though it did throw an unreality over landscape, yet touched it with such beauty that he was called



the painter of the "Golden Age." The atmosphere of his pictures, their aerial perspectives which carry the eye and mind into the illimitable, the coloring not always serene but sometimes sombre with deeper tints, the tender gradations of light and shade,—of evening and morn and fiery noon,—the breadth of composition, and, above all, the exquisite finish that makes even Turner's pictures that hang defiantly by the side of the Claudes in the National Gallery of London, look a bit imperfect, muddy, and dull-brown,—these cannot lose their charm under the most advanced criticism; but that they are the highest conceptions of nature in her real beauty, significance, and force, with clouds as they are in the sky floating lightly in space and bearing the thunder in them, of nature varied with dull scenes, with striking contrasts and grim ugliness in which also there is power, Claude gives us little. He belongs to the past in which there was genius to work with, but a more imperfectly developed theory of art, especially of landscape, to work upon. After the day of classicism where the greatest genius breathed a thin air, it is refreshing to come to a more ample region where real nature—atmosphere, color, space and life—enter in and we breathe freely again.

The landscape-painter, if no other, must come in contact with nature, and so it was in France; and the nature of river-seamed France, especially of the central provinces of the Loire and Touraine, is beautiful though of a gentle beauty, mostly river and meadow scenery; but landscape is a fresh field open to the student of all nations, for if there were nothing more to see, learn, or obtain from nature, nature, I think, would close her book, and this life would hardly be worth living. It is true that in the first

periods of French landscape the classic principle of painting, where the scene is drawn not so much from nature as from an idea of nature, indescribably confined and limited it. The landscapes of Claude Lorraine and Poussin, and, in a later day, even of Leopold Robert who *posed* his magnificent Roman scenes and figures after the antique, and whose rhythmic lines were those of sculpture, were scenes that existed in the artist's thought, and were composed to fit the heroic life of the ancients, made up of every imaginable element of beauty. They were idyllic vales of Tempe and Gardens of the Hesperides, boundless vistas, sublime mountains that were the seats of gods, or cities and harbors of god-sprung peoples. They were not trees, rivers, hills, pastures, rough rocks, thistles, weeds, mud, fogs; nor were the figures common men and women in fields and villages. All was transformed by the law of the beautiful inexorably applied, like a lovely and deadly Medusa-head. It was nature according to Claude Gelée, who, fortunately, happened to be a man of genius. This thrust landscape-painting into a knowledge-press. The art was no larger than the idea of the artist. The range of nature's divine plan and everlasting variety was diminished to the knowledge of an infant.

With smaller painters the coloring too suffered; it was artificial, hard, and dry, as is the case of some recent classic painters of landscape in France, who try to resurrect the old, of which Flandrin is an example. Gérôme showed it in his picture in the *Salon* of 1888, called "The Poet," which is mincing in its figures and weak in its color. It is better in engraving than in painting—a poor test. It represents the poet Chateaubriand musing on the sea-shore and seeing the spirit of the Greek mythologies, the

old divinities of the sea and air. It is an ideal or fantastic scene which one cannot call nature. It is an impossible dualism. How far inferior to the picture of the realistic painter l'Hermette, in the same *Salon*, called "The Repose," which was solid nature, good and pleasing at the same time! The half-gathered stacks of yellow wheat, the hot noon atmosphere, the honest parental sentiment! I was often drawn back to this picture from the wearisome conventionalities that taught no lesson of beauty or truth.

The change which turned the course of French landscape into a healthier channel and made it a feature of true progress in modern art, filling it with the breath of knowledge and poetry, and checking partially at least its manifest decadence, has been attributed to various causes or sources, one of them being the influence of the English painters Turner and Constable (especially the latter) upon Theodore Rousseau, who lived for a time in England; but this is problematical, since the influence of England's art, philosophy, and literature—in a word its intellectual influence—has been of the smallest in France; it is far more likely that the example of such vigorous landscape-painters as those of the Dutch school—of Ruysdael, Hobbema, Cuyp, and others—stole imperceptibly into adjacent lands, as it did into distant Spain, so that there was in France, as in England, a simultaneous advance of naturalistic art. This is far more probable. Was there ever a painter of what might be called the elemental powers of nature—atmospheric effects, rush of torrents, movement of clouds, violence of winds, picturesqueness of rocks and woods—to compare with Ruysdael, or, in the delineation of coast scenery, of half marine and half pastoral scenes overhung with misty golden light, to compare with Cuyp? Some of

his best paintings are at Madrid, and perhaps his best is in the Bridgewater Gallery in London, so that we see how widely diffused must have been his influence. Two of Ruysdael's greatest pictures, the "Hunt" and the "Cloister," are at Dresden, and the Louvre has many of both.

Whether from the naturalistic Dutch school or some other cause, nature seems suddenly to have inspired a few choice minds of France, and there was a revival as from a hidden spring,—an indescribable awakening of power.

Paul Huet (1745-1811) was the earliest to catch the new spirit; he was a true Frenchman and pupil of Guérin, and is called one of the originators of the romantic renaissance—realistic renaissance is a better term; but those who followed him, especially Rousseau and Dupré, were abler artists who fought their way against immense opposition to a complete revolution of landscape-painting, in which the art freed itself from the tyranny of the classic idea. To nature, they said, we must go, and not first to our own minds. Nature furnishes types and is the spring. Art is second; it is the interpretation of nature. Art is human, nature divine. It is quite true that no few inches of canvass can set forth nature's glory to say nothing of its power. Art is an illusion but nature the reality. And not only is nature a bold but it is a delicate painter, using the coolest tints and the softest tones expressive of the most exquisite combinations and qualities, and forms a domain for the æsthetic contemplation in which nothing is unimportant, nothing is insignificant. A hedgehog from the right point of view has beauties. The desert has beauties. The sand-dunes of Holland and Nantucket have beauties, if their language be rightly interpreted. Nature the



most ugly is capable of art; and every period and every mind has its ideal, or its conception of what is worth expressing in art, so that nothing is common for art's purposes. The most ordinary weed and stone trod under one's feet, and the flattest landscape in which one happens to be where there is miraculous life, the marvelous play of color and the infinite gradations of light, are something that cannot be exhausted; but for all that, the law of selection is also important. It cannot be lost sight of. It is the moulding function. It makes sometimes the difference between the true and false. Such painters as Rousseau, Dupré, Daubigny and Corot, regarded this law of selection, else they had not been great painters; while some later landscape-painters and *genre* artists who belonged to the out-and-out impressionist school, like Bastien le Page, and Manet the chief-priest of ugliness, in whom the imagination is hardly apparent at all, and by whom nought but the literal is sought, though artists of power, have lost the mean between the ideal and the true. Paul Huet lifted landscape into light. He made much of the English landscapist Constable's principle that "light and air should rule all." Light gives landscape its true glory. Huet has been called "the founder of romantic landscape, expressing his own impressions in the presence of and inspired by nature." He has also been called the prophet of the new school; but Theodore Rousseau (1812-1867) was its apostle. It is on account of these men and other modern French landscape-painters, that I write this, since their works, some of the best of them, including more than thirty of Millet's paintings, have been on exhibition by the American Art Association of New York, the like of which exhibition will not probably be seen again in this country.



Theodore Rousseau began to exhibit about 1834, and has been named "proto-martyr of landscape-painting," on account of the persecution he endured from the academicians, and he won his popularity at last without the aid of the *Salon*. It is said that "for the innovation of color in his 'Interior of the forest of Fontainebleau' (this picture was in the New York exhibition) with the fresh green of a clearing in which cows grazed, no condemnation of the critics seemed too severe." He ventured to break over traditional coloring and paint the real green of spring and the tender yellow budding leaves, instead of conventional tones. And even as late as 1861, when he exhibited his "Oak of the Rock," in which the tree, receiving on its clustered foliage the down-pouring of the July sun in bright contrast to the cool shade of the under-wood, and from between boulders etched with mosses and lichens, the critics called its tone "brutal, violent, and of untempered intensity." Rousseau was a brother in art of Millet, and rose to eminence with him. He was awarded the grand medal of honor by the juries of various nations at Paris, being one of four painters, and the only landscape-painter, who has received that honor. Edmond About wrote of him: "Theodore Rousseau has been for twenty-five years the first apostle of truth in landscape. He made a breach in the wall of the historic school which had lost the habit of regarding nature and servilely copied the bad copyists of Poussin. The audacious innovator opened an enormous door by which many others have followed him. He emancipated the landscape-painters as Moses liberated the Hebrews 'in exitu Israel de Egypto.' He led them into a land of promise, where the trees had leaves, where the rivers were liquid, where the men and animals were not of wood.

This truant school of the young landscapists forced the entrance of the *Salon*, but it was Theodore Rousseau who broke down the door. In that time Rousseau occupied the first rank in landscape, above all as a colorist, but neither the Institute nor the public wished to confess it. To-day the whole world acknowledges it." Rousseau's method is that of the utmost accuracy in delineating trees, plants, grasses, rocks and clouds, but without destroying the unity of effect, and his foliage is peculiarly bold and charming, usually of a deep green with every leaf distinct against the sky, but the whole having the effect not of a careful picture but of a natural scene. There is finish of detail which, however, does not draw attention, but the whole is rendered naturally by master strokes. I quote from a recent work on French painting (*Hist. of French Painting*, by C. H. Stranahan), some words which Rousseau is said to have spoken to a pupil and which are valuable to the art-student: "Let us understand the word 'finish.' What finishes the picture is not the quantity of details; it is the truth of the *ensemble*. A picture is limited not by its frame alone. Whatever the subject, there is a principal thing to which the eyes are constantly to be borne. The other objects are only the complements of this, and interest us less. Beyond this there is nothing more for the eye to see. These, then, are the true contrasts and limits of a picture. If your picture, on the contrary, contain a precise detail, equal from end to end of the canvas, it will be regarded with indifference. All interesting the spectator equally, nothing will interest him. You will have never finished."

While Rousseau renovated landscape by going to nature and receiving its impress fresh on his mind, he did not paint an idea of nature, but the life and

poetry there are in nature. There is no intermediary. He lets nature be his teacher and have her full influence. He does not dictate to her by anything in himself, but watches and obeys her slightest teaching. He is absorbed by a love of true expression rather than of beautiful effect, and singularly enough, the result is beautiful. As a French writer, whom I have partly translated and partly adapted, has said of him :

“It was not the absolute that he desired to serve ; he aspired to represent life in its real manifestations, the marriage of the sun and shadow, of the air and visible objects, the effect of the seasons upon the fields and woods, the storms, the mysterious forests, the gay spring-time, the burning summer, the melancholy autumn, with the endless changes caused by the movements of the atmosphere and the variation of the temperature. He heard the deeper murmur of the poetry of vegetation, and the outward appearance of forms and colors did not satisfy him. There was a struggle between his own comparative powerlessness to express them, and the innumerable beauties of the real scene. What more vast field of activity could he wish? Poussin, Lorraine even, never had a thought of these new sensations. So, the result of the studies of Theodore Rousseau is marvellous compared to what his predecessors obtained. His *technique* even was different. He tried all sorts of methods to obtain the effects he desired, not merely by constant labor in a conventional way, but by ingenious manipulation, by paper, knife, and finger as well as brush, by loading on color or by scraping and thinning it, by spotting or smoothing, to get at the character of the tree or scene ; the water agitated by a thousand influences, the exquisite silvery lines of vapor that streak the profound azure of the sky, the effect of aerial distance

and infinite space, the clouds heavy with electricity, the trees that bend to the tempest, and which will return to their habitual repose when the wind ceases to blow. Sometimes when the rainy clouds overspread the sky and all is gloomy and menacing, the heavens will open and a single ray of sunlight will strike through, illumining the dripping trees and giving promise of clear weather and a sense of peace in spite of the threatening aspect of the landscape. Sometimes the day is cloudlessly serene, with a joyous sun that makes even the unromantic village gay and particolored. Sometimes a dull, melancholy, autumnal day, cold withal, clothes itself in grays like a shroud, with a kind of dead light, tinged perhaps with a purple or lurid tone on the horizon; these and a hundred more subtle effects are rendered by Rousseau's pencil; and this free interpretation of nature as it is, gives an infinite variety to subjects, as the personality of the artist is impressed by each aspect of the universe. Thus to the school succeeds the individuality of the artist, and yet, taken together, the individualities of many artists, working in the same line, develop a new school, such as has been formed in the modern French school of landscape."

In the Rousseau paintings of the New York exhibition, how audacious the strokes of his brush and how free! The sunset seen through the forest is like a concentrated fire—one dash of crimson flame in the gloom. The limpidity of the water, the deep greens of summer foliage, the white lights of giant rocks as in the picture of the Tiffauge valley—the heavy melancholy and lonesomeness of the scene of 'winter solitude' (*Le Givre*) and its rich sky of confused storm-clouds, and then the clear morning sky all cleansed of cloud and mist—what variety, what truth,



what poetry! We do not wonder the academicians were amazed, and in their astonishment unjust. Truth surprises men encased in form, as if it were a miracle, like the birth of Christ, and they angrily deny it because it seems to be miraculous while it is simply true.

Rousseau is bold and strong, but he is also stern and melancholy, and wanting in the smiling and joyous side of landscape. He inspires poetic, but, at the same time, somewhat sorrowful thought. There is little of the tender, though his pictures are healthy and bracing like the air of winter. The more soothing, gentle, and quiet aspects of landscape, its ordinary but perhaps more genuine teachings, the tranquil and divine lesson of the deepest heart of nature, were reserved for others.

## II.

Art in France is pursued with intense earnestness from the love of it. It holds a high place in French life and civilization, and the opening of the *Salon* is an event like the opening of Parliament. Paris is, assuredly, the centre of all modern activity in art. Thousands of brains are working at art's problems; and it is pleasant to think that they are not toiling in vain, and that in the new school the right path has been found to truth, power, and nature. There have been other French landscape-painters who, like Theodore Rousseau, of whom I have spoken, have formed themselves upon the same conception of nature as the basis of art and the same independent method of interpretation—"poets of nature to reflect the sentiments of man."

Born in 1812, the life of Jules Dupré covered the better part of the century. The son of a porcelain



manufacturer he studied design in his father's workshop, until going to Paris he was attracted by Ruysdael's landscapes and made his *début* by five landscapes of his own in the *Salon* of 1831—in which he illustrated the principles of the new school, or "personal landscape, that landscape *intime*" in which a natural scene is transfused with human feeling, and all parts are made harmonious while preserving the realness of nature. In his glowing pictures in the New York exhibition, his vigorous but blotchy style was noticeable, the colors laid on thickly and needing perspective to give them harmony—greens, yellows, blues, and reds, used with no stinted hand—a great deal of color but with subtle skill in occasional use of grays and neutral tones. Rarely do French artists employ high colors, but he is a bold painter with great force and majesty in his masses and tones. Two of his most celebrated pictures are "The Haymakers" and "The Shepherd"—others are "The Forest of Compiègne," "Sheepfold in Berri," and the "Return of the Flock," and, more recently, the "*Prairie Normande*."

He has exerted a marked influence on other painters, especially Troyon, who began his career as a landscapist, and I would remark, that the great animal-painters of France, such as Troyon, Rosa and Auguste Bonheur, and Jacques, are also landscape-painters of high order, introducing in their pictures the deliciously tranquil pastoral scenery of France as the environment of that still life in which animal life is placed in a fit setting, and without which it would lose half its character. In Troyon's landscapes, the light makes the whole scene luminous, and shines in the cattle's healthy eyes and touches with silvery tint the white hides of the cows, sometimes burnishing with a

warmer color the woolly coats of the sheep into which you could thrust your hand, and speaking the deep repose of nature—the stream too where the cattle are drinking and standing and in whose mirror the clouds are reflected, the windless wood, the entire unity of landscape and life. Dupré, with Rousseau, fairly routed the academicians; and they gave up the contest and received him into favor. He acted four times as one of the “forty,” thus conquering those whom in his youth he opposed, and whose fierce opposition would have destroyed him. Two critical or literary estimates of Dupré, the one of René Menard in the “*Gazette des Beaux Arts*,” and the other of Théophile Gautier, may show what the French estimate is of Dupré’s works. Menard says: “Jules Dupré became, very early, one of the favorites in public opinion; his farms, cottages, old oaks on the borders of pools with cows ruminating, his plentiful pastures where horses run with flowing manes, his mills which profile their silhouettes on a stormy sky, have a truthful side which captivates all. The precocity of his success only developed his activity; he is always at work, and gives himself up to incessant production, although he appears but rarely at our expositions. . . . One may have more or less sympathy with the works of Rousseau and Dupré, but these two masters will remain incontestably as the two grandest colorists in landscape which the contemporaneous school has produced.”

Gautier says: “Dupré’s fame is already old. For a long time, we know not why, this great artist has sent nothing to the *Salon*; and if he works, it is in the solitude of the studio. The young generation, who did not see the splendid putting forth of art which followed the revolution of July, is astonished before

the pictures of Jules Dupré, by this boldness, this zeal, this brilliancy. We are no more accustomed to these superb extremes, to this excess of strength, to this overflowing of power, to these full-faced struggles with nature. 'This excessive scale dazzles the eyes habituated to the sober regime of gray.' I would add that in Dupré's painting the personality of the man is forcibly manifested—he gets at the heart of nature by feeling (a new thing in French art which commonly lacks soul and passion) so that what he sees in nature is that which expresses himself. He is not, therefore, a pure realist, like Bastien Le Page, but mingles sentiment with truth.

He is too, as has been said, a strong colorist, it may be, possibly, too strong for the most delicate expressions of nature, which for the most part is quiet, like the Greek Gaea, mother-earth, who, potent and of vast strength and nourishing all on her bosom, and all activities, is herself peaceful, not given to violent manifestations of power, but is rather creative energy in repose.

Yet how different from both Dupré and Rousseau is Corot—world-wide apart—though of the same school, and drinking from the same spring of truth! Corot (1796-1875), pupil of Victor Bertin, sees nature and paints it through himself; but his personality differs from that of the impetuous painters we have mentioned, and he interprets a nature pensive and indecisive as the evening sky. The nature he paints is a poem without bold objects or striking colors, yet in its dark green tones and shimmering lights there is an impression undefined though true, but still "with no accentuation of the true," no branch or leaf distinctly drawn as Rousseau would draw it, and a monotone of color,—“brown, pale green, and silvery gray, with

spots of intense color to represent flowers and heaths." Figures are rarely introduced and the whole is suggestive and shadowy, penetrating imperceptibly to the heart of a scene and the inner life of nature so that he used to say "you cannot see my picture till the mist rises." There is a trick of mannerism too in his pictures that can be caught, and thus there are a great many false Corots in the market, but, after all, as William Hunt says, "some try to paint like Corot and make sloppy pictures. They misunderstand him. He paints firmly." I love Corot's haze and obscurity just as I love another's clearness, for who would have Browning to be Tennyson! Corot is a poet. His picture of "Evening" that was in the New York exhibition is as sweet and pensive a poem as Gray's "Elegy." The tree in the foreground is full of sombre effect and night-shadow, and the distance has a mystic power that speaks to the soul. We see such vagueness in nature, which never can be cut and dried, measured and formulated, and so our hearts are calmed. This indefinable mystery thrown into landscape-painting was a new interpretation that classic art had not dreamed of where all was statuesque and defined as in the Italian landscape-painters, and charming are they, like Gaspero Dughet, and, older still, Titian Vecellio, who put the Dolomite mountains and the clear blue sky of his birth-place into his pictures. I was struck with this in his great picture of "Peter Martyr," in Venice, that was afterwards burned.

Another variety of French landscape-painting, quite indescribably different from Corot or Rousseau, is that of Diaz. Diaz brilliantly accentuates where Corot softens and makes indistinct. Narcisse-Virgile Diaz (1807-1876) is a rich colorist, with pronounced effects,



and is one who would have revelled in the golds, topazes and rubies of an American autumn. He was equal to the most superb expressions of the physical universe. He was influenced by Dupré and Cabat, but was too vehement to become perfect in *technique*; and, in his case, a more academic training would have improved him; yet he loved nature ardently, and from his love he interpreted her beauty. He was given to painting Oriental scenes that were congenial to his taste, in which he mingled landscape and figures, but despising literal copying, though true to his interpretation of nature. One must possess but a dull eye to color, and have no susceptibility for the richest beauty, who is not fascinated with Diaz's pictures, some of which are in this country and were in the New York exhibition — "his gipsy camps, forest scenes, road and country views, lovely children and women, striking poems of color," but without aught coarse or melodramatic. He was a colorist first, all else was secondary. The play of light on the bark of white beeches is like a lance of sunlight in the shadow. He delights in trees and in the depths of woods, as in the picture of "Autumn in the Forest of Fontainebleau," and especially in the painting of the tumultuous "Descent of the Bohemians." There is Titianesque warmth in figure, forest, and sky. The rotting trunks of trees, and the wood-mosses, are beds of richest color. He was a child of the sun, bathing his sense in color, but never unrefined or second-rate.

Anastasie, who, oddly enough for a French artist, paints Dutch landscapes, Daubigny, Harpignies who is a solid and scientific painter with a fine eye to the picturesque and studying the essential types of nature, —of trees, plants, rocks, and water, —Cabat, Français, Marillhat, Chabry, Chantreuil, Pelouse—most of these



artists are living and producing new fruits, each viewing landscape in his own light, and there is room for hundreds of others, and for each to study nature from his own peculiar temperament and thought, and to give an original interpretation of nature, if indeed he loves, obeys, and trusts her implicitly; and this is what I claim for the naturalistic school of French landscape, that it began a new epoch and opened the way to original discovery, thus bringing some hope into art that was dying out. Matthew Arnold says, "the poet is only great when he is true to nature"; and the same can be said of the artist. This simple principle would keep the artist from making fancy-pictures of scenes he has not seen. His picture may, indeed, be painted in the studio, and may be the result of a wide experience, and sometimes may be a generalization of all his knowledge, but it must be true to facts that he has observed, else it is a sham. The French landscapists had to begin somewhere. They began to paint a tree for the first time. They began to paint a cloud for the first time. They taught themselves how to see nature. They struggled against imitative and second-hand methods. They had their agonies of ill-success. They toiled for the secret of power. They were wounded, faint, discouraged. They were brought low, but they trusted nature, and at last wrung the secret from her. Then they became powerful. But not one of them won greatness until he was a true teacher of facts, I had almost said, of scientific facts, though art is more than science, for the artist is not a mere investigator, but an interpreter, a poet, almost a creator.

Charles François Daubigny (1817-1878), the painter of Spring, was a pupil of Delaroche, though in no way his follower, for he was wholly a landscape-

painter, belonging more directly to the "impressionist" school than any previously mentioned; he strove to catch direct impressions of nature photographed on the sensibility; rapid, sketchy, and void of much detail, yet full of the fresh life of the scene, and his paintings are dashes of effect, yet marvelously real. He is endlessly charming, if not so great as Rousseau. We are glad that he lived—he has added to our happiness. His pictures are chiefly of river scenery, for he was never tired of painting his little river, *L'Oise*, on whose banks he lived—the movement, current, and ripple of water, modified by the lights and shades of sky and clouds; his clouds move, the winds rustle in the trees, the types of trees are wonderfully caught, as in the long whip-like branches of the willows in the picture that was on exhibition in New York, called "On the River Oise." The color is now cool and gray, now rich and warm. The finish is fine. The ducks floating on the crystal water are gem-like, as if painted in miniature. The execution leaves nothing to be desired. One writer says of him: "Daubigny was a painter, nothing but a painter; and painting can be taught; it is the craft—the easy and amusing craft of that great thing called art. And the craft of Daubigny's art is bewitching; in fact it was all of craft—or it seemed so. No stern requirements of drawing, as in Rousseau; none of those subtleties of atmosphere effect that drive the imitator of Corot to despair. Color, depth, and contrast of tint—that is Daubigny's whole secret. A rich and brilliant palette, a broad and flexible palette-knife, and all the fortuitous concourse of happy mixtures and startling effects; a pinch, a touch of the finger or the thumb, is no less successful than the brush in this happy-go-lucky method. So a whole

school rushed to tread on Daubigny's heels, and set to work with a will to paint river-banks, green slopes, and clumps of trees; till ere long such pictures were an article of manufacture, turned out in the painter's lodging. Indeed, landscapes on these principles became so commonplace, that landscape, which had become one of the glories of the French school of the century, sank into disrepute again. Nature was banished from it; it had lost every breath of air; it was a thing of shreds and patches—a record devoid of meaning, loveless and mendacious *chic*, trick, and nothing." This is too severe, whatever truth may be in it. Daubigny's style was more easy and made to order than that of the great painters who went before, but there must have been a strong genius devoted to nature, and to the study of her fresh beauty, that could have produced the lovely pictures that came from his brush. Painters could find worse masters than Daubigny to follow; though it were better for them to follow nature.

All these painters belonged to the revival of landscape art in France. First came what was termed the romantic landscape, or the real in nature mingled with the artist's personality, as with Paul Huet, a great step forward; then heroic landscape, heroically true I mean, when each tree, rock, and atmospheric phenomenon, was honestly true, and was a protest against tradition, but at the same time not losing the subtle poetry of nature in its realness—with Theodore Rousseau; then the landscape of feeling, in which the soul found a correspondence to its vague and pensive state in nature—with Corot; then the landscape of pictorial effect, objective, and charming the eye rather than touching subjective chords—with Daubigny; and now comes another interesting phase,

which may be called the landscape of human life, when man comes into nature, as its meaning and end, the real object for which it was made, and this is exemplified in Millet.

The great realist, Jean François Millet (1814-1875), born at the small village of Gruchy on the coast of Normandy, of peasant parents, early showed artistic talent, and Cherbourg, the town where he was reared, sent him to Paris, and he became a pupil of Paul Delaroche; but he soon discovered he had no taste for historic painting, and after a shifting life, fighting with poverty, having fixed his dwelling in the country at Barbizon, near Fontainebleau, he devoted himself to painting pastoral life, fields and woods, flocks and shepherds, ploughmen and cottagers, scenes combining figures with landscape, but both drawn directly from nature and rendering the occupations and emotions of country life; for the feeling of Millet's painting is as marked as its truth, so that while his art is purest nature it is pure poetry. Here he found a career though a hard one, with the wolf always at the door, and his genius only tardily appreciated. William Hunt said: "I found Millet working in a cellar, three feet underground, his pictures mildewing with the dampness, as there was no floor. He had never seen a hundred dollar bill."

The artist's personality, that of a sort of childlike Robbie Burns, tinged his works with something more spiritual than rude nature.

In his pictures, homely as the subject may be, there is poetry from the heart of a genuine child of nature, yet not exaggerated or done for effect; it is nature more than art, but its art at the same time is beyond nature.



Millet is an "impressionist," or better, realist, but not a sketchy and idealess one. The execution of his paintings is careful, and the coloring harmonious in tone. His pictures are finished, the fruit of thought and toil. They are not scenes without foreground or perspective, with blotches of color supposed to mean a vast deal, and ridgy hillocks of paint that look like raised maps of Switzerland, the frenzied work of an hour, but it is nature transmuted throughout with feeling and thought, and oftentimes with a calm power that has real nobility in it, as seen in such a picture as the "Gleaners."\*

Millet found in peasant life a revelation of humanity, primitive though melancholy, and being able through his own life thoroughly to understand it, he interpreted it sympathetically; as a French author says: "The peasants of Millet are not the peasants of any other painter; he has painted the grand symphony of the lonely country which has no real relations with civilization, and yet he never forgets that his inspiration is in life, and the life of humanity. You see the power of sincerity! The peasants of Millet attain a grandeur which one can compare with the figures of Greek and Roman art. It is as lofty but in other forms. He is also in affinity with Rembrandt, although his coloring is not of the same kind as that of the Dutch master, but they approach each other by the austere simplicity of their works, by a large style in which one sees a contempt for pettiness and prettiness, for pumiced smoothness, and all that appeals to the mediocre or *bourgeois* intelligence. The mother in giving nourishment to her infant does it as fated

\* This noble painting has come into the possession of the Louvre Gallery by the bequest of its recent owner.

duty ; the hoe-er sows blood and water to fertilize a hard and exhausted soil ; the animal, man, resigned, accomplishes the task that has been set before him."

One thinks, in looking at his pictures, of the legend of John Ball, the priest, in the Wat Tyler rebellion of the reign of Richard II.

" When Adam delved and Eve span,  
Who was then the gentleman ?

Millet loves the laborer of the field as a type of humanity. No circumstance of this life is forgotten, and every feature has a necessary importance, and one also necessary to the production of a work of art, of a scene of this " peaceful drama, penetrated by fatigues more than by satisfactions." It is this human sentiment of regard for the lowly—" that a man's a man for a' that"—that, I think, has given this artist his popularity quite as much as his talent.

But Millet is, perhaps, the best representative of the great realistic movement which emancipated art from the tyranny of academic tradition ; and though he may be criticised on the point of color, and his gamut of color, as some writer says, contains confused notes, and his drawing has been found fault with, yet his work, as a general rule, is correct, and the impression is forcible ; it is full of the mystery of being and of things. Old æsthetics are forgotten ; the poet-painter has striven manfully with the truth of to-day without the aid of the classics, and he is satisfied with nature as it is ; it contains enough for him. He wants nothing more. He finds a deep interest in common objects. " The man with the hoe of Millet has the religious grandeur of a figure of Overbeck."

The little picture of the "*Angelus du Soir*" that

was on exhibition in New York, smothered in a bed of crimson velvet, has, many people say, been made too much of. It was knocked down at an auction sale for 553,000 francs,—an unheard of sum, and a sum that many would think might have been better devoted to benevolent purposes; but was this worse than giving \$100,000 for a horse? It was no fault of the little picture that it sold for so much, any more than it was the horse's fault that it sold for so much! Besides in the case of the picture, there is something else to be said.

In a school of art, which, like its corresponding school of literature, was growing worse and worse in sheer materialism and coarse vulgarity (*banalité*)—here was a picture which reasserted the sentiment of respect for things pure and divine. It was a unique thought to paint the influence of sound on the devotional sense—and was not this worth the money?\*

But could not almost anyone have painted such a simple thing as two stiff, awkward laborers, a wheelbarrow, a spade, and a point representing a church steeple? But why did not some one else do it; the same thing was said of Garrick's acting—anybody could act like him because it was just as people did act. He brought art to nature, and so did Millet.

The bent legs of the man in the "*Angelus*" have been criticised; and, it must be confessed, the trowsers do not look as if they had legs inside of them,

\* "I could never hear the Ave Maria bell without an elevation, or think it a sufficient warrant, because they [the Roman Catholics] erred in one circumstance, for me to err in all, that is, in silence and dumb contempt; whilst therefore they direct their devotions to her [the Virgin Mary], I offer mine to God, and rectify the errors of their prayers by rightly ordering mine own."—*Sir Thomas Browne's "Religio Medici."*

but would we look for the roundness of limb of a Greek athlete in a poor field laborer who had hardly enough to keep body and soul together? The peasants of Millet are not the herdsmen and goatherds of Theocritus and Greek pastoral, with their pan-pipes, brimming milk-bowls carved with old legends, and song-strifes while stretched lazily elbow-deep in flowery beds and crowned with rose-wreaths,—but they are smileless, songless, children of toil. They are not the most pleasant objects to look at for they not only express labor, but bone-weary labor, leaving its impress on face, limb and posture—just as a sailor's back is bent and his hands crooked like claws; yet art is not merely to please, though that is one of its objects in a world of tolerably rough moral scenery, but it has other objects; and, usually, Millet contrives that the thought of the beholder should be directed to something higher, so that we find ourselves looking not for beauty of body but beauty of soul. Yet we should not make the mistake in regard to Millet's pictures,—that they are bad paintings. They are not poor paintings even if they depict poor people—any more than Balzac or Dickens are poor writers because their subjects lay among obscure classes. Millet is not wanting in great merits as a painter. This picture of the "*Angelus*" (not by any means his best) represents a French plain or wide waste such as one sees immediately to the south of Paris, and especially, the vast monotonous plain of Le Beauce on the road to Orleans. The aerial distance is admirably given, and the gradations of light in a day drawing to a close, are exquisitely rendered. The face and kerchiefed head of the woman, if not beautiful, are not without a certain French peasant comeliness, for Millet's women are by no means such harridans as are



some of Bastien Le Page's rustic women, and even his inspired peasant of Domrémy. They are handsome with healthy nature. Indeed, some of the visitors at the Exhibition, it has been reported, have supposed that the "*Angelus*" was a love scene, and that the poor man was awaiting in anxious suspense the answer to his proposal. All of Millet's pictures have a touch of the same melancholy which is a feature of modern French art, as of modern French literature which loves to dwell upon the miseries rather than the joys of life, and echoes the undertone of a pessimistic philosophy that has dropped hope for humanity out of it. While the people still labor, and groan, and starve, democratic art necessarily reflects the gloomy side. The "Potato Harvest" is under a rainy sky. It smells of the fields. The only higher education the artist had received was a smattering of Latin, so that he could read Virgil, which was his favorite reading, and you see in his pictures these Virgilian scenes—the rude agricultural implements, the fresh-turned furrows, the poetic sense of earth's nourishing life. His picture of the "Grafter" struck me as being especially Latin and there was a Roman simplicity about it. Take off the blouses and put on tunics and you would have a Roman rustic family scene. The men have a proud, strong look. But there is a religious sense deeper than poetry in Millet's pictures, though devoid of religious symbolism. "The Sower," "The Gleaners," "Blind Tobias," and the "Sheepfold" with the rising moon, are biblical in tone and sentiment, and are as old as Ruth and Boaz. They teach us higher truth under the veil of nature's commonest forms, like the parables of the kingdom of heaven. The "Sowing of Potato Seeds," notwithstanding the stiff outstretched arm of the young woman

who throws the potatoes into the hole which the youth is digging, has some play of tender sentiment; but Millet is not sentimentally given—the lesson of toil has entered like the iron into his soul. He cannot utter light thoughts. He paints a woman with her sleeves rolled up at a wash-tub, and he gives her a muscular arm and a mahogany-bronzed face like a man, yet even with these features she is not ugly, she is not repulsive like Courbet's women and those of the out-and-out "impressionist" school, but she has dignity, health, good features, and feminine nature. The tone of some of these pictures is anything but hard, the coloring is sometimes warm, the drawing is true, and the lines have breadth, decision, and freedom, in which not a trick of art can be discerned, but only the hand of a master who is recording the life of the brotherhood of toil, and working for his own daily bread and that of his wife and children.

Thus we require of the landscape-painter that he shall render nature in her simplicity and even familiarity, not asking him to seek the sublime, only asking him to avoid the worst coarseness of the Dutch painters; but he may find his scenes near home, or wherever he can find pure nature; where the light is as true a magician, the water as clear, the clouds as luminous and sun-tinged, the grass as green, the woods and weeds as richly colored, and humanity as interesting, as in Venice or the Roman Campagna. A healthy change has taken place in modern art, and we owe it greatly to the French landscapists. The point of view is altered. The artist does not seek the remarkable but the true. He finds nature everywhere, and everywhere remarkable. If he have poetry in him, he will see those natural objects that correspond to his moods and awaken his sensibilities.

I grant that it is better for him to seek scenes that are not *too* familiar and that are somewhat remote; and that is something which any artist can do in an hour's tramp in the country, and can do so, simply because here nature is unspoiled, her repose is felt, and she can teach genuine lessons to one who loves her; the painter's brush, brain, and soul must do the rest.

I should like to speak of Leopold Robert, of Bastien Le Page and Jules Breton, who have followed Millet as painters of *genre* landscape, and of Vollon and others, most of them "impressionists," yet great painters—but I have not space to say much more.

Bastien Le Page, too early taken for his fame, woke a mighty enthusiasm in French students. He was a disciple of Millet but especially of Cazin, and he boldly adopted Gustave Courbet's maxim "*le beau c'est le laid*," but his power lay in going to contemporary nature, and he produced some noble works, such as "*Foins*," "*Soir de Village*," and especially "*Jeanne d'Arc*," which last is in the New York Metropolitan Museum. The students of the Julien studio told me, that Bastien Le Page knew how to paint the human body better than Cabanel or Bouguereau (whom they laughed at) because he made it as it was. He gained his first reputation by his realistic portraits; but he lived, like Millet, in a world of country life, studying the actual scene and the living beings in it. His pictures are not transient impressions, but are thoughtful and personal; in this way his works have a deep influence, rude as their subjects are. His picture of "*Foins*," now in the Luxembourg, is utter realism; representing two laborers, a man and a woman, taking their noon rest in the field, the man lying on his back at full length, with his hat over his eyes, and the

woman sitting up and staring right on, as if thinking of her hard lot. I thought at first the man's lanky form was a parcel of old clothes strewed on the ground; the woman is a coarse common type with rough shoes to which the straw and dirt adhere. No beauty, no picturesqueness even. But there was something about the picture which I could not get away from. It was truth. The hard misery in the woman's face, the lack of hope, or change, in the straight narrow road of bone-breaking toil till death, the arms full of muscle and with little flesh, hanging crookedly down, the grinding machine just stopped for half an hour. There are brains and force in this picture; nor is artistic skill lacking, for to be a realistic painter one has to learn how to paint. This is taught in the thorough *atelier* system of Paris. French painters excel all others in drawing, and in the knowledge that belongs to an artist and the proper handling of his materials, even if the poetic power be absent which we see in the English, Spanish, and German modern schools, though these are immeasurably behind the French school in culture. Such poets, indeed, as Pradilla, Preller, Piloty and Burne-Jones, are not to be found in France, but there is no failure in scientific base. There is no miracle but trained work. Le Page's color is poorer than many of his contemporaries, especially in the "*Jeanne d'Arc*," probably his greatest work, which is full of faults but also full of power. The representation of a homely girl in the back-yard of a rough farm-house, but lifted out of herself and her surroundings by the heavenly voice and vision, her face convulsed with the soul's agony struggling through it, was a shock to the historic imagination; but its undaunted assertion of the principle of the real in art, roused violent partisanship, and, probably, will



have an influence upon future art that its actual merits would not justify.

Jules Breton belongs to the same school of pastoral painters; but he, on the contrary, regards beauty more than truth. His Brittany "Maiden Sifting Seed" represents the healthy life of labor in the fields. There is a quiet poetry in his pictures, a dreamy sunshine and a refined tone, but he lacks the strength of Millet and Le Page. His rusticity is more picturesque than spontaneous, or that of a painter who is himself a peasant and part of his own pictures. In his processional scenes, such as the "Benediction of the Grain" and the "Confirmation," he shows that he does not, at least, avoid religious subjects, but it is with him evidently more for the sake of the Normandy landscape with the gleam of the solemn blue sea and the effect of white robes and innocent faces, than for any deeper lesson.

## MURILLO.

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Fifteen years after Wellington drove the French out of the Peninsula and opened the country to Englishmen, David Wilkie went to Spain and found a new world of art, which, though it greatly fascinated him, he did not seem to be able to comprehend. Its richness, color, depth, boldness, fairly bewildered him. Since that time, more sympathetic artists, with something of the native fire of the Spaniards themselves, such as Henri Regnault, Clairin, Bonnat, and the brilliant painter, Fortuny, who, though a Spaniard by birth, was educated in Rome and Paris, have lived in Spain, and, under its own skies have studied its art in the old churches, the old houses, the museums, and, above all, the Madrid gallery, into which the treasures of Spanish painting have gravitated, and which, with the exception of two or three masterpieces at Rome and Dresden, is the finest gallery in the world. They have experienced the inspiration of this art; and the power of Spanish painting in nature and color has been at length recognized, and is exercising a decided influence on European art. It falls in with the new realistic school of French painting. Students now go to Spain as they go to Italy. They revel in its light, color, the grandeur of its mountain scenery, its semi-African vegetation, its bull-fights and motley festas, and find this tropical nature and passion reflected in its art. But this was not so always. The exclusiveness of Spanish civilization, the ignorance and superstition of the people, the geographic isolation of the Peninsula and the difficulties of travel, have

made Spain almost as closed a country as Persia, and, for that reason, its painting has not been well known. It has been almost despised, especially in England, as one may see in allusions to Spanish art in the letters of a man of culture, like Abraham Hayward. Writers even upon Spanish subjects have passed it by. Washington Irving discoursed charmingly of Spanish history and legend, but had no eye for Spanish pictures; and yet painting is the form in which Spanish genius shows itself. This race has manifested more decided originality in painting, than the French, resembling the Italians. But this has been conceded only by the force of facts, by the spoilation of their galleries and churches, and by the comparison of their glowing paintings with the colder productions of other schools. Velasquez, it is true, has been vaguely felt to be a force, because he belongs, like the old Greek, to the school of progress whose principles of nature form a true advance in art and the art of the future; yet even Velasquez, until recently, has not been acknowledged to be the unequalled realistic painter he is. It is, indeed, a singular fact, that this indifference to Spanish painting, should have arisen from the sheer ignorance of those who have never seen it at home; for no one can rightly judge of Spanish painting, above all of Velasquez, who has not seen it in Spain.

Another reason why Spanish art has been so slow to be appreciated is, that, until the seventeenth century, the age of Zurbaran, Ribera, Velasquez, and Murillo, there was not much in Spanish painting which is really national, although the Spanish is an artistic race; it was an exotic from Italy and the Netherlands. The frescoes of Toledo cathedral in the style of Giotto were executed by Starnina, a Florentine; and the altar-piece in Seville cathedral of the

“Descent from the Cross,” at whose foot Murillo wished to be buried, was painted by Campana, a Fleming.

Spanish art, also, is unattractive and monotonous in subject-matter. It is not transfused by new ideas. It never caught the light of the Renaissance. From the beginning it has been rigidly moulded by the church, and it ran into the “black-agony” school of the Inquisition whose colors were rubbed in with fire and blood. Painters like the Ribaltas and Ribera deepened shadows in order to bring out lights of miraculous supernaturalism. In looking at the picture of an old Spanish master you think of a cowed monk standing behind him directing every stroke. Yet there is warm color, bold chiaroscuro, intense feeling. These black pictures, seen in the obscure light of Gothic churches, together with images of the Madonna, crucifixes, skeletons and skulls of saints adorned with flashing jewels, have a wonderful power. There is power in their very place and association. They form part of a majestic ritual, of the harmony which has filled the vaults of these Spanish cathedrals for centuries, and the sweet and solemn hymns to the Virgin. They were pictures consecrated to a higher use of aiding the devotion of good Catholics; in their design they were purely religious, having been painted by monks, or by ascetics who had wrought their minds into a state of ecstasy. The religion of this passionate and imaginative Spanish people expressed itself in art, or art formed a vehicle of worship and a symbol of infinite things, which calmer blooded Protestant races can no more understand than they can, without bigotry, deny; if not the highest and most spiritual, it is nevertheless a ladder of the soul; as in Ribera’s picture of “Jacob’s Dream” the coarse,



dark-browed Spaniard who lies asleep on the earth under a tree, sees the sky open and angels ascending and descending.

It might be added that, as sacred and ecclesiastical paintings, they have retained their original coloring except as time has dimmed them, and have rarely been meddled with or retouched; and this rigidity of church censorship has likewise exerted a moral influence upon Spanish painting, so that it has, with hardly an exception, preserved, with its somber conventionalism, a dignified decorum, and avoided the looseness of Italian painting and the indecency of French. But we turn to an exemplification of all the richest and best qualities of Spanish painting.

Bartolomé Esteban Murillo was born at Seville in 1617 of humbler parentage than that of Velasquez; and poverty, whom his favorite saint Francis had wedded, was his hard but stimulating teacher. His artistic life began in childhood and he was placed under the charge of the painter Juan de Castillo, a distant relative, who taught him to draw correctly. When his master left for Cadiz, he was left, so to speak, to his own resources both for art-education and support. He commenced by making pictures for the *feria*, or market-fair, to be sold for a song to the people, like looking-glasses, knives, and pottery; the traveler is shown some of these colored sketches that have been kept in the families of the people as heir-looms. He had his subjects at hand—fruit, flowers, and pans, the women of the market-stalls, and the boys of the streets—and he acquired suppleness in hitting off these in a rapid way; but even then his favorite themes were saints and madonnas, though, as a general rule, a "*pintura de la feria*" was a name, as now, for the veriest daub. These hasty works

served him in good stead, and, especially, when in 1642, seized with a desire to go to Flanders to see Dutch art, in imitation of a student friend, he bought a quantity of canvas, and cutting it into small squares, made sacred pictures of a saleable sort, which were disposed of to traders for religious propagandism in the Americas. By this he raised enough money to get as far as Madrid, and when there went at once to his fellow Sevillian, Velasquez, then at the height of his prosperity as court-painter, who befriended and gave him every opportunity to copy the works of great masters in the already ample collections of Madrid and the Escorial. He made copies with discrimination from Titian and Ribera for color, from Van Dyck for neatness of *technique*, and from Velasquez for nature and freedom of manner; and so rapid was his progress that his friend would persuade him to go to Rome for further instruction under royal patronage; but he refused to do this, trusting to his genius; and he, at least, grew right out of Spanish soil, and there was no foreign art (as the taunt has been flung at Spanish painting) in him. After remaining three years at Madrid he returned to Seville, and lived there contented and laborious; and there stands his statue in the Plaza del Museo and seems to be the genius of the place, for what were Seville, "pearl of Spanish cities," with its cathedral and "egregious Doctor," its memories of the Moor and his conqueror St. Ferdinand, its orange-gardens, golden tower and silvery Guadalquivir, without the gentle Murillo.

Murillo's first leap into fame was his enthusiastic offering of gratuitous service to the Franciscans to adorn their convent, and this he did by the production of some large pictures of scenes from the life of St. Francis and his disciples, in which he struck out from

the conventional path and put new life into the treatment of religious, or semi-religious, subjects, producing homely and vigorous paintings of common life transmuted into spiritual, as in the kitchen-scene where angels are cooking the sleeping saint's dinner; and in "Rebecca and Eliezer at the Well." These were in his first style. The three styles we hear so much of, and that, unlike the three styles of Velasquez, were not those of epochs of life, but employed alternately to suit his purpose best, were the *frio* (cold), with clear outline and treatment of light and shadow resembling Zurbaran's severe style; the *calido* (warm) with richer and mellower colors; the *vaporoso* (misty) with the outline lost in light and shadow as in rounded forms of nature. Besides these convent and altar pieces he painted others of *genre*, though the themes were, for the most part, religious. Such was the picture now in the Prado, of the "Holy Family with the Bird" (*Del Parajito*) in the second manner. It shows a carpenter's workshop. Mary is spinning while Joseph rests from his work to watch the child Jesus, who stands between Joseph's knees holding a white bird in his hands and plays with a little dog. Though the faces are of a peasant type they are innocent and holy, there is a realistic charm in them far exceeding the awkward picture of the "Holy Family," by Millais, and other Pre-raphaelite pictures of the same theme. In this early part of his career, probably, most of his delightful beggar-boys, the best of them in the Hermitage, at St. Petersburg, were painted. His low-class life was not vicious, but it was the life of childhood—thoughtless ragamuffins with a tremendous appetite and uncertainty how it was to be satisfied—recollections of his own youth when a few coppers and a melon made him happy as a prince. How he

must have loved these little beggars! There was a humanity in Murillo, that, as in Cervantes, Shakspeare, and all great men, transcends the local and national and makes them a part and property of the race. Among his next productions, when his hand grew firm, the "Adoration of the Shepherds" was the most beautiful—the rough-clad shepherds, the simple sheep and cattle, the sweet-faced mother, the light proceeding from the body of the infant as in Correggio's picture at Dresden—and if any representation of this old subject by the greatest master of any school excels this in nature, correct drawing, grand freedom and noble simplicity, I will cease praising Spanish painting.

To this transitional realistic style, drawn from the popular life, belongs the interesting picture of the "Education of the Virgin," in the Madrid gallery, in which an earnest little maiden kneels by the side of her mother, her only ornament being a white rose in her hair; but this picture, as well as one of Zurbaran's of the same theme, was regarded with suspicion by the Spanish Doctors, on the ground that the Virgin did not need to be taught anything or to learn Hebrew, being inspired with all knowledge! About this period were executed his "Conversion of St. Paul," the light broadly Rembrandtish; the "Annunciation;" the "Vision of the Virgin to St. Felix before his death;" "St. Anthony and the Infant Jesus" who is seated on open Bible; "Jesus Christ according to St. Francis the Jubilee of the Chapel of Assissi" with falling roses; and the great painting of "St. Anthony of Padua" (1656) now in the Baptistery of Seville Cathedral, a section of which was burglarized and brought to New York, but recovered and returned. This picture, with its limitations of the superstitious and sentimental, repays a visit to Seville, by any one



fortunate enough to see it by the light of day. The divine child slides down from the regions above on a path of glory attracted to earth by the love in the saint's heart, while the upward gaze of devotion in the face of St. Francis, the sweetness of the opening vision of the celestial home of childhood, the magical effects of light varied with softest browns and yellows, the rose-tinged clouds, and the infinite vagueness of the supernatural element—these caused the artist to be called "*el pintor del cielo*" (the painter of heaven). He filled it with happy spirits. He imagined a new order of blessed inhabitants; and if there be such a thing as mirth, I had nearly said fun, in heaven, he has represented it in his cherubs. Out of the mouth of babes praise is ordained. Theirs, though infantile, is the wisdom of love. They are like sparkles of heavenly joy. Their lightness and grace, floating on clouds as light as they, never have been approached by any other painter.

In the same year, Murillo was commissioned to paint four large pictures for the church of Santa Maria la Blanca, and two of them were intended to illustrate the legend of "Our Lady of the Snow." These two are now in the Academy of San Fernando at Madrid, and upon them one has said "he poured out all the treasures of art, all the wonders of the palette." The first of them, "The Dream," is in the *vaporoso* manner, where the senator, a dignified figure, has fallen asleep while reading; his wife also slumbers, and how fast asleep they are; but they dream of a vision of the Virgin who points to the spot on which the church is to be built—the great Liberian basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, that stands on the Esquiline at Rome, at a spot where snow fell miraculously in the month of August! The appearance of the upper celestial group

is surrounded by a radiant light, and heaven comes down into the little room. There is the blending of natural with supernatural, of strongest light with deepest shadow. The second picture is the "Fulfilment," representing the meeting with Pope Liberius, who hears their story, while a vision of the procession to the Esquiline is seen in the distance. Secure in those regions of pure imagination, of the poetic ideal, he had a confidence of touch that shows how faith could remove mountains of material obstacle and bring down angels.

In 1660, Murillo, in spite of immense opposition, opened an academy of painting in Seville, the expense to be divided among the members, and the scholars to pay what they could afford, but upon admission each student was to make this confession of faith: "Praised be the Most Holy Sacrament and Pure Conception of our Lady." Owing to the impractical character of Spaniards and the jealousy of artists, the academy did not survive Murillo; but this leads me to say that Murillo was the painter of the Catholic doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. This dogma was a favorite one in the Spanish church, particularly during the reign of Philip IV., and, on the very year of Murillo's birth, 1617, Pope Paul V., at the instigation of Spain, issued a bull which forbade the teaching of anything contrary to that doctrine. There was great rejoicing over this at Seville. Not only the ecclesiastics, but the artists, who were the exponents of ecclesiastic ideas at that period, set themselves to the proclamation and representation of this decree; so that it came about that Murillo was born into the spirit of this singular dogma, and, a man to whom everything pure was congenial, with his mystical nature, he became, as was said of him, "painter of

the Conception"; and he executed some twenty representations of this subject. All who have visited the Louvre remember the "Immaculate Conception," which was originally painted by Murillo for the Church of the Venerables at Seville, and, it is to be suspected, has been considerably repainted by French hands. Lovely as it is, with hands folded on breast and eyes glancing upward, in blue mantle and floating robe, it is less lovely than the two pictures in the Prado gallery at Madrid, of the same theme, though more beautiful than the larger one in the Seville Museum, represented with the globe beneath her. The faces in the Madrid paintings are of very youthful age, and of such ineffable depth of innocence that the atmosphere around seems purer; and with the mysterious halo fading into night, and the groupings of cherubs holding lilies, roses, and palms, buoyed on cloud-wreaths, colored in the misty indistinctness of his dreamy and softly shadowy brush, they are, truly, heavenly visions, however removed from our habits of religious thought, and false when tested by Scriptural truth. The religion of Spain was and is the religion of the Virgin Mary.

Belonging to the same style of mystic representation, are the "Infant Christs" of Murillo. One of the sweetest of these is the "Child with the Lamb" in the Prado—the child-shepherd form, which Catholic art delights in, as if flying to the farthest extreme of the terrific representations, on the façades of the great cathedrals, of Christ as Judge. The most charming of these, and, indeed, the most delightful picture in the world, of children, is the "Jesus and St. John" (*Los Niños de la Concha*) where the little Jesus is giving John water to drink from a shell. Childlike loveliness could no farther go.

More pathetic and devout than these, and where profound religious feeling is manifested, even if it run into peculiar Roman Catholic channels, are his Franciscan paintings, and especially the one now hanging in the Seville Museum, of "St. Francis embracing the Saviour on the Cross." This picture is of marvelous tenderness. The saint is standing with one foot on a globe as if he were putting the world under him, and close to the cross. His left arm embraces the body of the Saviour, who hangs by one hand, and places the other with brotherly affection upon the shoulder of St. Francis, whose upraised eyes full of reverence, pity, and love, are fixed on the face of the Crucified—condescension and gracious confidence on the part of the Suffering One, love and deathless devotion on the part of the disciple—while the gloomy sky lowers over both, relieved only by the supernatural light about the form suspended on the tree. You may characterize the picture as the expression of a fantastic affection, in which there is more sentiment than reason; but this Francis of Assissi was a real man, who, for the love of God, put the world beneath him and trampled on its riches, honors, and hopes. Like the missionary Damien, he gave up all for Christ and his little ones. He rose above the material into a state where spiritual things became real. The Divine Presence haunted him. He saw what he believed. He so loved Christ that he brought him before him. He would suffer with him, would be a partaker of his sorrows, and through grief like his he would ascend into Christ's holy and divine life. Of ardent nature and with the imagination of a man of genius, and living in an age of faith in miraculous manifestations, his life was tinged with the ideal, the supernatural, and the stupendous facts of religion



became the realities of his personal experience. This, the painter, a man of like faith, of burning imagination, would represent; so that this is the most profoundly affecting of his works, and of all pictures that were ever painted.

I claim for Murillo that he is a great religious painter. He is absolutely so in respect of religious feeling. He is a true interpreter of divine things, more truly than the masters of the later period of the Italian Renaissance, because he was a believer before he was an artist, because he was a genuinely religious man with the holy fire of devotion consuming what was base and earthly in him, not prostituting his genius to unworthy subjects, and, Roman Catholic though he was, appealing to the deepest heart of true worshippers in all ages and nations, whose motto is, like that of St. Francis, everything for the love of God.

Murillo was at the height of his power as a painter from about the period of 1671 to 1674. He was at that time a lay member of the Holy Charity, in Seville, whose Hospital, that had fallen into decay, was to be renewed in great beauty and richness. Don Miguel Mañara, Murillo's friend, and mover of this enterprise, a man who had deeply sinned and deeply repented, enlisted the artist's sympathies in his pious work, and the eleven great pictures he produced proved to be the crowning achievement of his life, and established his renown as the first painter of Seville, and among the first in the world, exhibiting the immense scope of his genius, and that only can be realized in the atmosphere in which they were painted, and in these very pictures, made to adorn the church of the Caridad, where some of them still are—how yellow and mellow they look in that dark, cool, beautiful old church! Five were stolen by Marshal Soult and carried off to France.

The spoliations of the French in the Peninsula and during the military occupation of Spain, the robbery of works of art and destruction of churches and historic buildings, like those of the University of Salamanca, form one of the most painful chapters in the history of art, and show an innate vandalism, which all the brilliant civilization of France cannot excuse.

Of the six pictures that remain in place, "Moses striking the Rock" (*La Sed*) is, perhaps, the greatest. The parched desert, the rock, the agony of thirst shown by the groups of men, women, children, camels, and cattle—one woman turning her face from the infant at her breast in order to quench her raging thirst—are powerful in design. In the "Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes" the face of the Saviour is not so spiritual as in other pictures, but the landscape, grouping, invention, variety and breadth of composition in both these paintings, show that Murillo is not merely a painter of cherubs and gypsies, but of works of the broadest scope of composition, having in them thought and everything that goes to make a great picture. Most remarkable of the series, is "St. Elizabeth of Hungary washing poor patients," called "*El Tinoso*," now in the Fernando Gallery of Madrid; having escaped Soult's clutches. It unites the excellences of the three styles, more especially the "*frio*" and "*calido*," with fine effects of atmosphere, and of the management of light, which, more than anything, shows the great painter. The local disengagement of the principal figure makes it stand out as if alive. The faultlessness of the drawing, the luminous shadows, the treatment of light, the inimitable skill in the disposition of different groups, exhibit a mastery of *technique* as well as of coloring. The beautiful saint arrayed in the dark robe and white head gear of

a nun, surmounted by a small coronet, washes the scald head of a beggar boy (*El Tinoso*). Without describing it further, it deals with loathsome poverty and disease; it is, in some respects, repulsive. It does not smooth over matters. The patients are squalid, the rags dirty, the miseries unfeigned, but the contrasts are splendid. The white delicate hands that lave the sores, and the queenly figure who presides over the unpleasing scene, "the mouth that trembles with pity and the eyes in tears," while the graceful head slightly turns away, are a lesson of charity where art becomes preacher as it may and ought oftener to do.

The few portraits Murillo made, prove him to be at home in this field—his realism aiding him in vigorous individuality of expression, but he did not make so many or striking portraits as Velasquez, owing to the fact that he did not live at court, and come in contact with distinguished people. His landscapes also are pleasing, but as a general rule, they lack the glow—"the gamut of colors" as it has been called—which makes the charm of his other pictures, but depth, serenity, and a sort of unearthly repose with more of heaven than earth, and partaking of his gentle meditative nature, are to be found in the landscapes introduced into his religious pictures.

As compared with his great contemporary, Velasquez, Murillo was not less original, but he was not so supremely intellectual and inapproachable an artist, and he exerted a more direct influence upon contemporaneous art, especially as a colorist. Velasquez was hard and scientific, and kept his feet on solid ground, and was too exclusively intellectual to be a religious artist. Regulated power, with endless reserved force, a disdain of all littleness, and a moderation that, like

the Greeks, had "nothing in excess," a genius which was so sure of itself that it dealt in no strategems of effect, no "*tours de force*," but painted nature as in reality—for nothing was too high or too low for him—and all combined with an unerring skill to effect what he conceived, were his characteristics. But Murillo had, above this, a self-abandonment, an elevation, and a purity that, sometimes, like Mozart in music, took flight from earth to heaven. He struck a tenderer and loftier chord. But he did not in the mean time lack homely vigor. He copied Spanish nature pure and simple. He broke through the gloomy rigidity of Spanish painting and introduced nature, beauty, grace, humoristic freedom and realistic force, excelling Velasquez in coloring, as he did Velasquez and all others, in feeling. There is indeed but one Murillo, and though we sometimes call him the Spanish Correggio, yet in this we by no means describe his original power, for Murillo had more depth of passion and was stronger than the sweet painter of Parma, and while he had the same angelic grace his gaze was more steadily fixed upwards.



## ART IN EDUCATION.

### I.

True education aims to produce a harmonious development of the nature, neglecting nothing essential and cultivating nothing disproportionately, or to the total exclusion of other things; for one may be educated to a certain extent and in a certain direction, and be far from being a man of culture and whole regions of his being may still lie barren and waste. The training of the moral nature, of conscience and will, of those faculties which have an immediate relation to principles of character—this undoubtedly lies at the foundation of a true idea of education. It may be also taken for granted that the discipline of the knowing and reasoning powers comes next in point of importance, and indeed occupies that middle place which makes education to mean nothing, unless it mean the right development and orderly exercise of the distinctively intellectual faculties. But this is not all. There is still left a portion of the being whose place is harder to define, belonging partly to the rational and partly to the affectional nature; it is the region more peculiarly of the imagination and the sentiments, in which lie the springs of feeling for the true, the beautiful, and the good. How broad a region is this! How narrow the view which would suffer this to run to waste, which would allow this rich portion of our human nature, that which makes it genuinely human, to be forgotten! The imagination is the creative power of the mind. It is that which makes all things new. It is that which gives one man's speech a freshness and vital power, which

another's of equal force of thought does not have. Should this noble quality of the mind be left out of the account in any comprehensive idea of education or life? The Germans say that "the true art is to live beautifully;" if so, we can ill afford to neglect the cultivation of the purely imaginative and æsthetic part of the nature, or of that true art which presents to us so many hints of a beautiful life, and which gives harmony, glory, and finish to the whole.

1. The study of Art, or æsthetic culture, should be introduced into education because art comprises so great a portion of the life of mind, and is as genuine a department of the mental nature as reasoning. Who can deny that it took as truly mind, and, perhaps, as much mind, to build St. Peter's cathedral, or to compose the music of Sebastian Bach, as to write the "*Mechanique Celeste*?" In treating of the artistic mind we are not confined to architects, or musicians, or sculptors, but we must reckon in the poets. Homer, Euripides, Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Browning, creating fresh worlds of the imagination, bodying forth new forms of beauty, truth, and power, were as genuine artists as Michael Angelo and Beethoven. Theirs was mind moving in the region of ideas and from the pure impulse of delight in beauty and truth, creating ideal works that reflect the inward emotions, hopes, and conceptions; and could any one be called an educated man who knew nothing and felt nothing of the new world of thought, action, beauty, feeling, and power which such works reveal?

2. True æsthetic culture would introduce into our system of education a new spirit of freedom. The highest idea of life is the union of law with liberty, the obedience of duty because one sees the beauty of truth and delights in it from the heart. It is the

province of education to bring out this real beauty of truth so that it shall meet the best desires and susceptibilities of the mind, and shall be followed freely by the truth-seeker. As a people we have freedom much on our tongues but not so much in our spirit. We have brought down everything to the dead level of the actual. It is the thing which is, which answers the present purpose, which meets the present emergency, which constitutes the present success, which is visible and palpable, and not the thing which should be, which aims at the possible truth and the noble ideal. *Æsthetic* culture would flow into our educational systems as an influence freeing us somewhat from our utilitarian spirit and elevating the national mind. Our practical character is our strength, and it is the glory and strength of our American system of education as contradistinguished from much that we find in the highly theoretical European systems; but while we would not weaken this strong practical American quality, we would counteract its tendencies towards an ignoble and materialistic conception of life. Art would come in to aid in this contest with the money-worshipping spirit. It would tend to deliver us from this gross bondage of materialism. It would inspire us to follow truth because of truth's superior attractions, because of the delight which the sight of the intrinsic loveliness of truth inspires. It would raise us into the world of ideas and give a glad freedom and play to the spirit. We are an intensely practical people, why should we not also become a free and happy people?

3. A genuine *æsthetic* culture avoiding the corrupt tendencies of Art, would bring into education an ethical element and influence of no mean power or value. Art is not often regarded as a moral power;

but in man's complex nature everything which bears upon the formation of character assumes a moral importance; for though our life is not altogether made up of moral acts, we cannot lose sight of those more subtle antecedent conditions, affections, tastes, and sympathies which lead to moral action. The will is moved by a thousand invisible impulses of motive and imagination, and these bear an important, though sometimes indefinable, part in the general working and moulding of character. Schiller says that "every man has a pure ideal man within himself;" and if so, it is the part of true education to recognize and arrive at this pure ideal of manhood. Let Art be purified and used in the great plan of a higher and more perfect idea of education, since it will not do for the taste and imagination to be in direct opposition to the sense of duty. If so a man must sternly deny his taste and follow the path of duty; but he is incomparably a stronger man when taste and duty harmonize, and when he can give all his powers to the glad obedience of Truth. Savonarola, centuries ago, conceived the idea, but the idea seemed to have been almost extinguished with his life, that the imaginative faculties had a place in our being, and that external nature was the symbol of internal ideas and was made for the education and joy of the mind. In education he claimed "that youth should not receive a lesson of Paganism without receiving at the same time a lesson of Christianity, and that they should be equally instructed in eloquence and truth." Dante, two centuries before, had wrought upon the same high conception of art as a moral and educational influence, and from him the religious painters of his epoch, Simone Memmi, Cimabue, Giotto, Orcagna, drew their inspiration. The sculpture gal-



lery of the "Purgatorio" stands as a monument of his belief in the power of art to assist in the purification and elevation of the struggling human mind; and why some of those noble subjects for sculpture with which he adorned the cornice of the mountain that led with rugged steps up to Paradise have never been put into marble, I know not.

4. The study of art affords a counterpoise to certain narrowing and injurious tendencies in the common forms of education, by presenting truth in a more natural and concrete form. The first thing, doubtless, in a practical education is hard study,—the discipline of the mental powers. This makes the mind accurate. It sharpens it. It teaches it how to think. It is the purely scientific process, whether employed in the study of mathematics, or the languages, or any other branch of education. This, undoubtedly, comes first. The mind must learn to analyze, to separate, to reflect, to arrive at facts by the severe and narrow path of logical induction, and so science comes before art in education, as it does in life. There is first truth, then beauty. There is first utility, then art. Art itself is in no slight degree built upon science, and one important department of art is the scientific analysis of nature. But the scientific process, every thoughtful mind will acknowledge, has its evils and its perpetual evil tendencies, for dealing almost entirely with analysis, it inclines to overlook and sometimes to lose the living synthesis of truth. It fails often with all its patient labors to come to the unity of knowledge, and the clear light and perfection of truth; and thus science has confessedly its perilous side. It is often in a striking degree partial and incomplete. It sometimes leaves the mind totally in the dark. Employing almost exclusively the logi-

cal and reasoning faculties, it leaves out of account the freer intuitions of the mind and the illuminating power of the imagination. Art makes use of these, and frequently through its clear and rapid intuitions it comes at the wholeness of truth, where science sees but in part darkly. Art aims at unity. It looks to the beautiful whole. It is nothing if it do not arrive at distinct results, at well-rounded and perfect forms of truth. It cannot stop half way. It cannot abide in partial or confused ideas, and it strives always for the highest ideal perfection. While it has much then to do, even as science has, with the sensible and the real, it does not too much incline to materialistic conceptions of truth as science does, but is seeking for higher things, is ever climbing toward the region of ideas, is ever striving to escape from the sensuous and the earthy to the ideal and spiritual. While, therefore, art can and should never take the place of science, nor is it at all of such primary importance in education, yet art may come in to correct and modify whatever evil and sceptical tendencies there may be in the one-sided processes of science, may come in to show to the learner the glorious truths of nature in their entirety and vital forms. True art leads to loving reverence of truth. It finds beauty and goodness in all the works of nature, even in the least, in the stone and the weed as well as the mountain and the sky; in the sentiment of the heart as well as the thought of the brain and labor of the hand.

5. The study of art leads to the more careful cultivation of the perceptive powers. Perception is indeed the fundamental law or method of art. It is a great thing to teach the young to observe accurately, to observe nature, not merely to see, but to perceive, the

objects of nature,—to see them with the inner eye of the mind. Art is formed on nature. Close study of nature is the solid base of an artistic education. The artist must learn the structure of the earth, the structural character of rocks, the laws of light and color, the principles which govern the botanical and vegetable world, in fine, the laws of the natural world. Art leads the mind from the study of books which are the works and ideas of men, into the free unbounded fields of nature—into the study of God's ideas. This is always a healthy and liberalizing process, and affords mental exercise and discipline of the most pleasing kind. It introduces variety and freshness into a course of education. It lets nature's sunlight and air into the study. Young men would not come out of college book-worms or mere scholars, but men of healthful, fresh, and independent minds, with the eye open to see the beauty and glory of the universe lying about them.

6. Art in education assists in the study of all other branches of knowledge. Beauty of investiture lends force to truth. The laws of thought and expression in the manifestation of truth, flowing from an inner law, are the same in the writer as in the artist strictly speaking,—the same elements of vital unity, fitness, proportion, and the like. All kinds of culture tend powerfully, though it may be insensibly, to the forming of a clear, vigorous and elegant style of writing, without false ornament or false strength. In classical or historical studies art likewise lends practical assistance. The careful study of the Coliseum forms a chapter in Roman history just as important as a book of Livy or Tacitus. Some one has said that it would be a good plan to hang up in every Latin school in the land a correct representation of Julius Cæsar

marching into Gaul at the head of the 10th Legion glittering in the rich armor he was accustomed to wear; for many boys, doubtless, imagine Cæsar, in his looks and costume, to be not unlike General Scott or General Grant. Our classical school books and dictionaries are, fortunately, taking advantage of art in their illustrations of ancient architecture, coins, costumes, manners and customs.

Art aids in the pursuits of natural philosophy and the industrial sciences. Accuracy of eye, good taste in form, color, proportion, comparison, actual skill in drawing—these further in a hundred ways the studies of the astronomer, the geographer, the mechanic, and the civil engineer. I once heard a distinguished geologist lament that he had neglected the art of drawing when young, so that in his travels and researches into nature he was much hampered by not being able to sketch rapidly the broad physical conformation of new lands, and the more minute details of rock and vegetable phenomena. How often, too, in common life, the skill of the ready draughtsman is called in requisition, from the planning of a house and the laying out of public grounds and cemeteries, to the sketching of a simple article of furniture, of a passing scene, or a rare tree, plant, or leaf, met in the daily walk.

7. Art in education has an interesting social bearing, and exerts a powerful and genial influence on the common intercourse and life of a community. It draws out kindly feelings and softens natural harshness of temper. It rebukes the tendency to indulge in small rivalries by affording a broad theme of conversation and of rational enjoyment in which there is little opportunity for petty controversy, and where all can enjoy a feast of good things prepared by him who



made all things good and beautiful in their time. (Art being sincerely human, and altogether universal in its aim, tends to unite the sympathies of men, and to awaken interest for everything human. Those very things in man that philosophy and even morality are sometimes inclined to pass by and despise, Art kindly takes up and cherishes—like trampled flowers. It would be an improvement when Art could enter somewhat more into the common conversation and intercourse of young men. It might take the place of other things not perhaps so improving. Music and singing are already doing good in this direction, tending to promote kind feeling, and to increase the rational happiness of social life among the young men of our American colleges as in those of the old world. It is surely better for students to sing in companies, as in the old German university towns, making the streets echo with the well-sustained and ringing chorus, than to make night hideous, as formerly, with "calithumpean" bands and brutal yells.

When we come to speak of the actual introduction of Art into our present system of education, or of the establishment and working of a School of Art in a University, there is more difficulty, because it is comparatively a new field. Although separate schools of art exist, such as the Royal Academy of London, the *École des Beaux Arts* of Paris, the Munich School of Art, and the Schools of Design in New York, Philadelphia and Chicago, yet we believe that the School of Art established in connection with Yale College, is the first of the kind directly connected with a university plan of education in the world. There are new questions to be met. How far shall the study of Art enter into a regular academic course? How can it find a place without displacing more important studies?

Should it constitute a purely professional school, by itself, rather than an academical course of study? What system or process should there be to produce emulation and interest? Ought actual exercises in drawing, painting, modeling, and the praxis of art be required of academic students? or would simple lectures, and the most elementary illustrative class instruction be sufficient? Should a thorough education in any one department of Art, say of Architecture, be aimed at, or only the general presentation and discussion of the subject of Art? Ought scholarships to be instituted for the continuous prosecution of artistic study by those who evince decided talent or desire to study? Should such a school aim to make professional artists of a few, or confine itself simply to a general diffusion of the refining and elevating influences of such an institution among the many?

These and similar practical questions are to be settled before a University School of Art can work itself into the general plan of study, and go into successful operation. It may be, however, that by once making a beginning, these questions would settle themselves. In any systematic study of Art, there would necessarily be three grand departments: first, the theoretical, or instruction in the fundamental principles of æsthetics, in what might be called the philosophy of Art as related to the constitution of the human mind and the universal laws of truth; second, the historical, or instruction in the development and progress of Art in the various epochs of the world's civilization and in connection with the different phases of human thought and life; third, the practical, or instruction in the *technique* and practice of Art, and the varied details of artistic education. Of course each particular branch of art would demand its own special

course of study and instruction. Architecture as a useful art, would perhaps form the chief study and every-day employment of an Art School. It would be its central theme. The rules of Architecture are definite and scientific, more capable of being taught to the many than those of any other branch of Art, and its study would produce certain and direct results on general education; and why should not good architects be reared by a college, as well as good chemists or physicians?

To aid this course of artistic instruction, there should be good models in all the departments. A museum of pictures is indispensable, but only if they be good pictures, if they be judged of qualitatively instead of quantitatively. On no point, we think, should there be a stricter censorship than here. A man may be allowed to have a tolerable painting in his private parlor, for, perhaps, it is the best he can afford; but good models are imperatively needed in a school of Art. To be sure, we cannot expect to have the riches of the Old World galleries, or the best pictures in the world at first; but no absolutely bad picture, false in drawing, crude in conception, glaring and unnatural in coloring, should be admitted. In sculpture, since original works of great merit are at first out of the question, plaster casts of the most celebrated statues, taken from the originals, and not second hand, are required.

In architecture, models, elevations and plans, with a good collection of architectural photographs, would be needed; and a room devoted exclusively to engravings, illustrating the history and progress of that interesting art, would also be an important addition. These, with the various instruments and technical appliances requisite for the thorough fitting out and

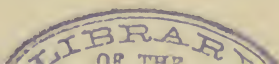
furnishing of a School of Art, and, above all, proper instruction in the different departments, would be an affair of considerable magnitude, and would call largely upon the generosity of the true patrons of education in the land; and while we have no royal or noble patrons of our schools and seats of learning, there is, happily, a strong spirit of affectionate loyalty among the alumni of our colleges towards the parent institution, and a desire to make them all that the needs of an advancing civilization demand. There is also a growing liberality among our merchant princes towards all that fosters a broad idea of education. There is also an increasing love of art in this class. The steadily growing appreciation of art and artists in the city of New York, from the time of Jarvis and the founding of the Academy, to the present, when such great sums are given for the paintings of our native artists, forms in itself a remarkable history.

## II.

Mistakes may be honestly made in the problem of education but we may be sure that there is some false philosophy at the bottom of a wrong theory of education. The philosophy whose tendency is to view the human mind by separate sections, as it were, or as a congeries of faculties, each distinct from each, and which assigns its own value to mental powers, giving to some undue value, is apt to make the so-called intellectual faculties an exclusive object of care, losing sight of the primary truth that the mind is one and indivisible; that it acts as a whole and in every act all its energies enter, some more and some less; that there is a vital interplay of functions in mental acts, intellect in feeling and feeling in intellect — the rational nature resting on the moral



and the moral moved to activity and choice by the sensibilities and imagination—so that however convenient this metaphysical classification of the mind's faculties may be for the analysis and study of philosophical concepts, you cannot erect such distinctions in the inner spiritual substance of the mind, and to do this leads to grave mistakes; for you cannot really say that one part of the mind is of more value than another and that any part of the mind can be ignored, or affirm that it does not belong to mind as mind and therefore deserves no special attention—this view, which gives supreme consideration to what are conceived to be the purely intellectual powers, has been, as a general rule, the educational theory of our schools and colleges, to the great detriment of the moral and æsthetic nature, and also to the intellectual itself, for the intellectual powers suffer loss by being rudely separated from their organic relations to those other parts of the rich spiritual being of man no less important and in one sense no less intellectual, and which, indeed, come nearer to the mind's divine image, and its essential life and excellence. Shall we go on training the mind upon this narrow theory? Shall we forget that the soul is one and divine in every part? Shall we continue to educate the surface, leaving the depths untilled? If education is to have breadth and completeness, that side of the mind representing both the intellectual and moral where lie the springs of feeling for the true, the beautiful, and the good, where are the actually productive powers for the attainment of highest truth as well as for achievement in art, and in which so much of the power and glory the soul dwell—is not to be neglected. A philosophical as well as practical education cannot be measured by the knowledge of books—that is a small part of it. The



mind is to be developed—its perceptive as well as reflective powers are to be educated, the creative faculty which especially lies in the imagination, as well as the critical, to be cultivated; and one of the chief works of that inspiring thinker, Ralph Waldo Emerson, was, in my judgment, to develop the place and power of the imagination, and its intuitions in literature, art, and philosophy. The æsthetic nature should be so generously nurtured that life shall not be, even for those not blessed with wealth, a mere hand-to-hand fight for existence, but the beauty of the world shall be opened to view, and the powerful secrets and riches of nature in and about us revealed. Man should learn his place in nature and how to use its forces with skill. “One main portion of education,” says J. H. Newman, “of the labors both of school and university, is to remove the original dimness of the mind’s eye; to strengthen and perfect its vision; to enable it to look out into the world right forward steadily and truly; to give the mind clearness, accuracy, precision, to enable it to use words aright, to understand what it says, to conceive justly what it thinks about, to abstract, compare, and reason correctly.” Now there are few things better fitted to produce this mental clearness and skill than the study of Art accompanied with practice, especially of Greek art, with its clear appeal to the reason of things, and its foundation of principles laid deep in nature; and I would enter a plea for the serious study of art in education. Art should be taught in our schools and colleges in as thorough-going a way as mathematics. At present I would however only look, very briefly, at but one of the familiar practical aspects of the theme, making as a suggestion which none, I presume, will deny, that the study of art educates taste.

The relation of art to taste, is the simplest view we can take of the subject, and is all that some know or think of the uses of art in education, but which, though on the lowest plane, is not without importance. Taste is an object if not the end of education. Aristotle said that "youth should be taught to acquire a correct knowledge and judgment in matters of artistic taste." Man, if not evil, is by nature barbarian; and one who claims to be an educated man with a college diploma in his pocket and who is still a barbarian in his tastes, has failed in one legitimate object of education, which is to drive the brute out of him and humanize him. Merely to give a man knowledge is but to tattoo him and sharpen his war-axe. He may be a good mathematician, logician, a critical scholar and keen scientist, if he remain a boor, unpenetrated by the spirit of truth, without mental ennoblement or sense of the laws of honorable conduct, and of the refinements and glories of the mind in literature and art—a Philistine in the camp of the children of light—he is below, in point of real culture, many a backwoodsman who has come in contact with nature's greatness, and learned something of her largeness and gentleness. He is intellectually veneered and not subdued through and through, gentled, permeated by the refining spirit of true soul-culture that makes over the whole being, taking out of it the crudeness of a lumpish barbarism, and restoring to it the properties of a broad, genial, and genuine humanity.

The difficulty in the matter of taste in education is, that it is not regarded as an essential element of education, and is left vague and undetermined. There are usually in every community some who are reputed to be persons of taste, having arrived at this reputation by occult and mysterious ways no one knows exactly

how, and who are commonly referred to as critics in matters of art, manners and education ; they are men of taste, it is said—an indefinite term ; whereas Taste is a science ; it has its own exact laws and principles, which must be learned by study and practice, by observation and comparison. What is taste ? Whatever it is or is not, it is a mental act. It may be defined to be, subjectively, the susceptibility of the mind to the fit and beautiful, and, objectively, the mind's intuitive recognition, or determining choice, of the fit and beautiful in preference of its opposite. Taste refers to the innate sense of beauty. Beauty of object whether in the idea or in the concrete appeals to this mental susceptibility to the beautiful, as right appeals to the moral sense. The æsthetic sense does not stand alone. It is affected by other qualities. Into this internal power of the mind to recognize beauty and its delight in it, seen in every man from artist to savage—though the purely artistic capacity is seen more rarely—the keenest perceptive and reasoning powers, the imagination, the will and the moral sense, enter as related powers, modifying and regulating æsthetic perceptions and bringing them, as thus trained and regulated, nearer the true standard of taste. Taste is the constitutional susceptibility of the mind from which the imagination forms its particular conceptions of beauty, of which the reason, or the intellectual power, determines the truth and just limitations.

Hence the need of educating the mind in the principles of taste, that are as clearly defined as those of science or virtue. Art leads to this study of the principles of beauty, in nature and the mind, and erects the right measures of the science of taste, that are ever progressing and reaching toward the ideal and



perfect. The recognition of the need of specifically training the æsthetic judgment to give to mind what Matthew Arnold calls "symmetry," is beginning to be felt more and more in higher education, in fact in all education. Broader views are happily prevailing. The establishment of schools of art in connection with our colleges, in which Yale has taken the lead in point of time in our country and even of the universities of England, shows the advance of ideas, the value of which is perceived by the more thoughtful among the people. It is not a solitary instance where a business man recently sent his son to Yale in preference to some other college, simply because there was a school of art at this college, where he hoped that the son's mind would be opened to the higher worth and glory of the things he studied, and be purified of the grossness of a mere materialistic civilization, of the worship of money. He wished him to come out of college on a higher moral plane, a gentleman and a scholar with refined tastes, for "honor nourishes all the virtues and all the arts." He had been disappointed with college results, thinking, good simple man, that manners and manliness were compatible qualities, springing from the same root of real nobility of character. He had perhaps noticed with wonder how little good taste there is sometimes among educated men and what unpolished and ridiculous people they may be. Their knowledge has not been turned into life nor their thought into expression. They are grubs with no wings moulted to fly into the sky and sunshine. The painter Masaccio's name meant "lout," but he at least knew something about painting, as the wonderful frescoed walls of the church *del Carmine* at Florence, testify. But you enter a house and among evidences of scholarly intel-

ligence showing that its owner is a university-bred man, you see hanging on the walls paintings on a par with the most wretched chromos—catch-penny spawnings of fourth-rate city auction sales. How incongruous this! Pictures, I know, depend a good deal upon a man's pecuniary means—he would have good pictures and beautiful things if he could afford them—but vastly more upon his taste. I grant also that taste for art has to be cultivated, that it is not at once perfected, but passes through different stages of development—this has always been the history of the individual and the nation—but still a man may be taught to know what a good picture is. A cultivated person should be able to judge with some correctness of the qualities of a picture, a building, or a statue. Michael Angelo, it is said, carried the compasses in his eyes: and, in an inferior degree, the educated mind should possess these instinctive measures of accurate æsthetic judgment and knowledge. The principles which govern taste in art are arbitrary, colored though they be by individual genius and temperament, and they must be studied like anything else to be known. A picture, if it be a true work of art, even if it awake the poetic sense, has a foundation for such effect, and is a subject of criticism, and comes under the immutable laws of beauty and good taste. Many things enter into a picture, some as subtle and delicate as light, but in no department of art is there such exact scientific knowledge demanded as in painting. To understand a picture, much more to criticise it, one should know about forms and properties of matter, sky and air, color and light. He should study the laws which govern the distribution and values of light and shade; the principles and harmonies of color; distance and perspective; anatomy;

the great art of composition by which alone the effectiveness and beauty of grouping are preserved ; and, above all, the laws of expression, in which the soul's emotions are portrayed and to which they make their appeal. He should understand drawing, which is the basis of painting. The academic student who has studied drawing as a practical science and mastered the numberless varieties of expression in the human figure by copying antique casts and the living form (the object of all drawing) in the art school, is he not better able to judge at a glance of the correctness or incorrectness of the drawing of a picture? Drawing has been called the surest means of cultivating taste, for it brings the severe exercise of eye and hand to aid the mind, and fixes the mind upon right standards of taste in the antique and in all art and nature.

But we would not view this matter of taste in an extravagant light, or out of its just relations and limitations. Other qualities are of more importance—manhood generally. Honesty is better than taste, for a swindler may have exquisite taste in some things, though, in a truer sense, righteousness is always good taste. An act of charity, of self-sacrifice, is infinitely more beautiful than a carving of Praxiteles, which was worth a city's ransom ; but good and scholarly men commit an error when they rate taste as having no value either moral or otherwise, for taste has its revenges. One of these despisers of Art, perhaps, builds a house, and spends a good deal of his hard-earned money on it, and the house is hideous. It is a barn. It has neither dignity nor convenience. He writes a book, and crowded as it is with ideas and erudition, it is devoid of artistic form, a lumber-house of material confused and ill-arranged, in which the laborious processes of thought are awkwardly dis-

played, and the choice results of thinking entirely lost. The gold of taste eliminated, it is lead. He mounts the lecturer's platform, or the pulpit itself, and a total lack of artistic sense is painfully apparent in the dry and mechanical treatment of living truth, in uncouth word and phrase, in cramped inverted style, in occasional coarseness and a rank luxuriance of imagery, for nothing, Goethe says, is so terrible in style as an undisciplined imagination—in inapposite thought falling dead on the audience, and, above all, in the want of clear method and point, so that the most profound thought and the most spiritual wisdom bear no lesson or fruitage for the famished mind. I do not mean by this that homely force of thought or word should be a whit weakened, but that it should be made stronger, more polished and fit. A little taste, like a little faith, would save it. And taste is not always a little thing, but has a moral reach and significance, even as it is said that a blunder is worse than a crime, though I do not like the saying. But all of us, in infelicitous moments, have discovered to our cost that taste is not quite a trivial matter. It may make or mar a man's fortune; cause or prevent a charitable gift; make or spoil a good speech; clinch or lose a friend; build up or destroy a literary or oratorical reputation; secure a bargain or a wife; when joined to rare intellectual gifts as in the case of our late lamented minister to England, Mr. Lowell, bring a proud nation to one's feet; bind a Swinburne and Walt Whitman to earth or raise a Longfellow to heaven; and even be needed in making a true translation of Holy Writ.

Among the Greeks there was such a real love of art that even the common people, on some festal day, as they walked up the wide steps that led to the Propylæa



at Athens, doubtless thoroughly appreciated those graceful bas-reliefs cut on the frieze of the little temple of Nike Apteros, as well as the architectural perfections of the great temple above—they could make just criticisms upon Pheidias himself even as they could hiss a mispronunciation in a play of Sophocles—and, in like manner, the people of Florence undoubtedly understood and heartily enjoyed the lovely gates of San Giovanni—these things appealed to the sense and love of beauty in their own hearts—and so it is that it is necessary for the taste of the people to be somewhat cultivated and raised into sympathy with the beautiful, if we may look for true works of art, for good taste to be shown in public buildings and monuments, in houses, parks, and gardens, in social manners and observances, since the supply is equal to the demand. But a volume could be written on the special art-education of the Greek people. Loving beauty as they instinctively did as a race, they were trained in the principles of art in the gymnasia under the class of “muses,” including music, architecture, sculpture, painting, rhythmical dancing, rhetoric, and poetry. Their great artists sprang from the class of the active-minded laboring people.

Artistic tastes and sentiments must, therefore, have some cultivation, or have made some progress in the community, through the accurate artistic instruction of the people in the schools, if we are to expect the prevalence of good taste in its outward expressions, since taste is a subtle, quick, pervasive thing betraying itself like the ointment of the right hand, and showing itself inevitably in all popular character, speech, opinion, and work. The style of conversation that prevails among vulgar people—seasoned with bad grammar and slang terms—sometimes aped by

educated persons who ought to know better—is a reflection of the inner man of the heart. The style of amusements, of music and drama that the people like, they will be sure to have. A low sensationalism, irreverence, and indecency, misnamed wit, and a loose style of writing, will characterize public journalism where the people crave this sort of matutinal stimulation. Personalities will be preferred to substantial ideas and solid facts. The pictures and works, falsely so-called, of art, which have a decidedly immoral tendency, are the direct result of the corrupt popular taste. The market is supplied with what is called for. Where there is no estimation of true art as yet, and where there is no proper soil for it to grow in, we may expect monstrous and grotesque growths, mushrooms and toadstools. We may expect it in our houses and church architecture. We may expect it in our speech, looks and clothes. We may expect it in our music and religious worship. We may expect it in our public monuments.

The old Greeks made public buildings, and monuments, not from a motive of display or of gain, but they were incited by the unselfish love of beauty which they delighted in, and therefore they built nobly and for eternity. The beauty itself with them was the highest utility. The works they wrought, even the least things—every fragile vase and cup—remain after so many ages models of pure taste. The goblets of gold have been lost or melted, but the little fretted Greek urn we keep among our immortal treasures.

“ O Attic shape ! fair attitude ! with brede  
 Of marble men and maidens overwrought,  
 With forest branches and the trodden weed ;  
 Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought  
 As doth eternity : Cold Pastoral !

When old age shall this generation waste,  
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe  
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,  
'Beauty is truth, truth beauty,'—that is all  
Ye know on earth and all ye need to know."

Art, then, in a word, cannot be expected to make much real advance in a community where it is not as yet intelligently and genially nourished, where it is not made a specific element in the education of the people, where no just standards are formed. But we should not be discouraged and we should wait and strive for a better state of things, and it will in time with other good things in education and life, be brought about.

### III.

We do not always think how much we are indebted to art for the very history of the world; that no civilization has existed without its art and that we should know little or nothing of some nations if fragments of their artistic expression had not been preserved.

"How cold is all history, how lifeless all imagery, compared to that which the living nation writes, and the uncorrupted marble bears. How many pages of doubtful record might we not often spare for a few stones left one upon another."\*

While the Assyrian sculptured his human-headed bulls symbolic of kingly and religious power, the Greeks deified humanity, and the human form became an embodiment of intellectual ideas of force and symmetry, as well as a reflection of political conditions; the democratic freedom of the Greek state and its life under sunny skies were mirrored in the processions of citizens and maidens carved on the friezes of

\* Ruskin.

temples. Rome's idea of centralized law is strikingly expressed in its massive bow-headed architecture, and the debased luxury of Roman life speaks still in its domestic decoration. Spanish religious painting, monotonous and gloomy, though lighted up by the devotional fervor of Murillo and the vigorous naturalism of Velasquez, reproduces Spanish character and civilization; and the episode of the Moorish inhabitation of Spain, lasting almost a thousand years and disappearing as suddenly as it began, would have left literally no trace had not the mosque at Cordova, and the Alhambra with its frail architectural flowers that have survived earthquake, war, and time, been left. Nothing, in fact, is more exquisitely responsive to popular life than art; for example, music; how instantly we note the variation of the music of northern and southern nations, and how marked the difference between the fitful harmonies of the Slav and the thoughtful music of Germany. In Christian ages higher spiritual ideas were wrought into art, but struggling still with impressions of power and awe, as in the terribly realistic representation of the Final Judgment on the front of the Bourges cathedral.

Art thus forms an historic illustration of immense educational value, being the inevitable expression of the human mind, and, in fact, constituting a kind of *tiers état* of the mind's products—religion, science, art; and this classification is especially true if we regard literature as being art, or one department of literature, that of the imagination, which De Quincey calls the "literature of power." The first of these, religion, all agree to be necessary; the second, science, to be useful; but the third, art, is held for the most part as neither necessary nor useful, so that it is thrust into the background, above all by a practical people; and



yet it is a power which cannot be put out of sight, and its function, as has been remarked, is especially to be seen in furnishing ideals of taste.

Taste supposes a correct standard. We have described taste as the susceptibility to the fit and beautiful in preference to its opposite, and this finds a hundred applications; and nations, as well as men, need to be cultivated in their taste, and it becomes a matter of great importance because art is so closely related to life, and because the training of the imagination is a great force to raise a people above low living. The more a man becomes

*'Im Ganzen, Guten, Schönen,  
Resolut zu leben,'*

the more he emerges from the environment of circumstances into universal humanity and cannot be or remain a small and mean man. Those who can measure themselves with beautiful things are, in the process, themselves beautified; for man is part animal, and the brute must be driven out of him that the sensual may not dominate the spiritual; and that the whole nature may be refined, gentled, humanized.

In America, whose material resources have been so rapidly and astonishingly developed, and which is in danger of being given over wholly to money-making, it is needful to build vigorously upon the spiritual side and to awake a sense of the worth of things that cannot be bought or sold. Our life has one great want, it lacks poetry, which is the wonder-working principle that keeps the civilization of a nation from losing its vitality and lifts it into the region of inspiring ideas. That nation will fall like the image of gold, iron, and clay, which is not permeated and vitalized by ideas, and which has no higher intellec-

tual and moral life ; and, among other powerful agencies, the love of art is a spiritual force, that would exert a counter-attraction to the excessive practical activity of the American character, modifying the influence of what Herbert Spencer calls our "over-civilization," or an unnatural stimulation to habits of trained activity in industrial pursuits that leaves no time for healthful relaxation or enlarged thought. Work for the mere sake of work rather than work for the sake of life and its higher ends, does not, unfortunately, tend to enlarge the character ; and this is one advantage of artistic work that, though severe labor, it is genial, and it is the play-movement of the mind tending to the development of individuality and freedom.

"Architecture," an English writer says, "is the leading art for the social and imaginative culture of the working-classes, and it should not be a degradation to the artisan." The "unknown craftsmen" who were humble members of the great masonic guilds of the middle ages, and worked for what would now be a pittance, were the bees that reared the hive, each inspired by his work, each, in a sense, a creative artist, whose hopes, fears, doubts, agonies, faith, love, and genius were built into the vast structure, and this gave it its unity and spiritual language. This free inspiration of the building art, of the architect or workman, is, assuredly, not yet ours. Richardson, who made his home in Boston, but left the stamp of his mind in all parts of the country was a great genius, one of the most original architects of the century, and his influence is still deeply felt so that there has been a marked improvement in American architecture during the last ten or fifteen years, but in our fast-growing cities it is essential that true principles of constructive art should more and more prevail.

Our architecture is still uncertain (for we shall have to wait some time yet for the great New York metropolitan cathedral that is promised us), and it has as yet nothing distinctively American; it does not express the leading ideas of our civilization—its freedom, large humanity, and democratic simplicity. In public buildings we aim at effect rather than adaptation. We crowd styles. We have no respect for historic law. Yet it should not be forgotten that tastes differ; and, as an example near home (if such an allusion be permissible), some might have wished that the costly buildings recently erected at Yale University had been more a reminder of the history of the college as descended, like Harvard, from England and the English universities, and that the style had been uniformly academic English, which style, with its plain interspaces touched by rich ornamentation has a majesty and pleasantness withal, and is capable of being reproduced as is seen in the newly-built college of Baliol, Oxford. It would thus have been a lasting education as useful as books. But others, it is but right to add, prefer the present variety, and hold that we of the new world should strike out an independent path. Taste in domestic architecture also would prove that great sums could be better expended in building than in the erection of *châteaux* in crowded streets, ugly and dangerous flats of a dozen or more stories, and huge houses with florid carving but no architectural relief. In interiors, artistic decoration following the laws of harmony and the right distribution of color would take the place of chaotic splendor; and slender purses, with intelligent taste to use them, would be quite enough for this. Parks, gardens, cemeteries, monuments, music, worship, the drama, furniture, dress,

manners, conversation, made amenable to laws of rational taste, might effect an æsthetic revolution beyond the wildest dreams of the prophetic Oscar, restoring manliness and nature in place of a servile copying of old-world types, and much of idealess ostentation.

Allied to the function of art in regulating popular taste is its office in the higher education, and its earnest study at this juncture of our intellectual history, emerging from its elementary into the thoughtful stage, is what is particularly needed to give to education completeness and liberal tone, preventing the narrowing influence of the exclusive pursuit of analytic studies, letting in nature to the mind, and lending it suppleness, grace, and serviceable quality. The discipline of the critical powers is, after all, but half of education, and the development of the productive powers, those that reside chiefly in the higher reason and the imagination, is by far the most important; and this is no superficial or easy task, for the beautiful is hard, as the Greeks said. The striving for perfection, the development of the perfect idea of mind working from a deeper inner principle, which Plato had before him as the absolute intellectual ideal, is a most difficult and lofty aim; but the influence of such a high ideal of education would make itself felt in the university to raise and widen the whole intellectual life, especially in its relation to literary studies, which should be taught in a living way, even as Hesiod and Homer's songs find their best commentary in the pictured vase, and in that art which had its root in the Hellenic life and spirit.

There is, too, great room in our land for improvement in the more general field of æsthetic education;



and there still is found a lamentable crudeness among educated classes in this respect, where often there is learning but no proportional æsthetic perception or appreciation of art, as underlying universally all the pure productions of mind.

Art-study would be especially healthful in its influence upon literary culture. What man can read with delight the poetry of William Morris, reverberative of the sea-like harmonies of Hellas, who is not imbued with the reposeful spirit of Greek art; or what man can have the deepest joy in Browning's verse who does not live and breathe in the time of the great masters of painting of the Italian Renaissance? Art, too, has its relations to style. It is strange that no more particular attention is given in our schools and colleges to the style of writing, where scholars heap up erudition without equal power of imparting it. Many are the examples of literary men who do not win success commensurate to their merit as thinkers because of a heavy and lifeless style. Style sometimes floats a literary work down the stream of time. Knowledge lies an inert mass until quickened into creative forms of writing and speech. Style depends largely on æsthetic culture and familiarity with the best models; and, in the study of art, of such a clear-cut art as architecture, and, above all, of sculpture, with its suggestiveness, moderation, unity, and power, the element of form, which is the great thing in style, is developed, giving fine perception of the fit form in which thoughts should stand, like a nervous athlete, so that the style, not only of books but of writing in newspapers and letters, of speech in the pulpit, at the bar, on the platform, and in social intercourse, may become clear, forcible, and individual.

Art should be taught in the university in a broad

way, practically and theoretically. Students who have finished their education in this department should receive a diploma testifying to their capacity, and their works should have place in a public exposition. The university should furnish examining boards and hold examinations for all persons who, under certain conditions, might apply, so that the exposition would be virtually open to all, and in this way supervision could be exercised over the growth of art, that it might not run into worthless exuberance.

That the benefits of art-studies are beginning to be appreciated by the people, is seen in the establishment of schools of art in connection with the larger universities and in the founding of the Archæological Institute at Athens, which is so closely allied to our universities, and half of whose object is the furtherance of art. There has been an advance in this respect of which the next generation will reap the benefit. The use of drawing in common schools in its influence on eye, hand, and mental training, will have a favorable effect upon artistic industries and artisan labor. The Cooper Union in New York, the Dwight School in Boston, and the Cincinnati School of Design, have accomplished great things; and the inventive genius of the people, which is the practical side of art, has cut for itself a channel, so that fields of occupation that are new, inviting, and remunerative, are opening to young men and women, in building, wood-carving, engraving, etching, painting on glass, pottery, and mural ornamentation. It is for rich men to recognize the fact that the nourishing of art pays back a hundred fold, and that there are few more direct modes of patriotic effort. Crowds throng the Metropolitan Museum of New York; is it to be supposed that they are not imperceptibly educated

and elevated? Art, which has been held to be the possession of rich men, to belong exclusively to a few, is now to belong to the many, to be democratic in impulse and aim, something for the cultivation and joy of the people; and art will be a gainer in inspiration, breadth, and power, when it feels the mighty currents of popular life. The Olympian Zeus could never have been carved for a petty tyrant. The great buildings, from the pyramids down, have been made by the people; as De Lesseps said, "*Ces petits gens ont fait les grands œuvres du siècle.*" Giotto, Donatello, Correggio, Murillo, sprang from the popular stock which was planted in the common life. Peter Vischer, Hans Sachs, and the Meistersingers had no golden door opening to them but genius and love. The people are coming to take what belongs to them. They will have the best and highest things. They will have not only food and freedom, but mental emancipation, science, art, happiness, and spiritual life. Preachers no longer hold the key of religious knowledge, but some in their flocks are pressing ahead of them. Scholars who keep their lore to themselves, find it dead on their hands. The people, as well as princes, will have palaces. In England the founders of public museums, art-galleries, libraries, parks, and gardens, are men of the people. And what an example of far-sighted beneficence is that of Mr. Slater, who so modestly presented to the city of Norwich, Connecticut, a noble building for art purposes in memory of a father who had made the gift of a million dollars for southern education; both of them manufacturers of textile fabrics and from the ranks of manufacturing industries! Already the benefits of this institution are perceptible; mechanics visit it to make copies of Greek patterns and Renais-

sance decorative work, and in this way to become "artisan artists." It needs but the awakening of the artistic sense in even the uneducated and uncritical mind to produce the effects of a new creative period in the industrial arts and make them truly artistic. Money here is well laid out and brings in immediate and large returns. Some of our university art-schools necessarily expensive in their equipment are greatly in need of pecuniary reinforcement to do their highest work. They do not fall exactly into the category of philanthropic institutions, and their value can be appreciated only by the thoughtful and unselfish, but permanent honors await those who aid them. Wealth would thus be transmuted into something beautiful; this in turn would react upon American art; and public works, instead of being dull and inartistic, would express the finest conceptions of the imagination.

"The art of a given people at a given time is due to the physical, intellectual, and social conditions of that people at that time." While conceding the truth that may be in this proposition of Taine, while perceiving that our American intellectual sympathies are almost wholly developed toward the training of those qualities that aid in business occupations, and that our artistic culture itself up to this day depends upon the old world, yet let us feel no discouragement. We have had and now have admirable artists. There must be a beginning. French art, if we follow its lead, is now the first in point of technique; and Art, to amount to anything, must be laid deep in knowledge and true principles, for it is absurd to talk of a school of to-day, or of America, which cuts itself off from the achievements and traditions of the past, since art, like science, is an evolution brought about by a



thousand unseen and distant influences. It is to be hoped that American art will at some time assert its origin; until it does it cannot be great. But genius is of no country. It may be that not in the Atlantic States, where we have been looking for it, and where culture is still essentially European, the American artist or poet will arise touched by the sympathy of a nature which develops his power; he may spring from somewhere further west where American sentiment is strong and the spirit of democratic freedom untrammelled. Nature is grander in the central territories. On the Pacific slope there is growing a people commingled of all elements, among which is, conspicuously, the artistic, and a race whose beauty, and complexion even, begin to show effects of the soft Pacific atmosphere, that woos the artist at every turn. There, it may be, art will bloom with spontaneous beauty as a plant of American soil, stimulated by a deeper spirit of humanity; and there, also, it will be near enough to feel something of the mysterious influences which flow from the original summits of inspiration, from Asia the birthplace of religion, song, and art.

## ART AND RELIGION.

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What makes a great picture? It is the expression of soul; and soul is the essence of the divine in man. What care we for the costume, the decorations, and surroundings of form when the individuality and strength of soul speak in and through it? It seems of little consequence that some of Albrecht Dürer's figures are so totally devoid of beauty while they have such absolute force and truth of spiritual character. Sebastian del Piombo's portrait of Andrea Doria, in the Doria palace at Rome, owes its grandeur not so much to the subtle charms of Venetian coloring and Michel Angelesque drawing as to the magnificent conception it gives of a heroic humanity with its conflicts. It is the soul that communicates worth to human actions and works. When Savonarola said "You may separate me from the church militant but not from the church triumphant"—the light that shone on his coarse features and irradiated his eye that had already caught the splendors of eternity, was the light of soul, the light of the divine in his nature; and whenever the soul is manifested in art, then art reaches its true greatness, then it becomes an emanation of the divine, and all recognize its power. There is this deep element in art, and this being true there is seen to be an essential connection between art and spirit rendering it useless to think or treat of art without having reference to those things which belong to the soul's life.

The relation that art holds to religion is a subject by no means new, for Plato, in his treatment of ideas,

discussed it on its ethical side at least with a subtlety and depth not since excelled ; and before Plato, Art was. Its origin is in the mind. Man may be as truly defined to be an artistic animal, as a religious animal ; and although in religion the idea of God predominates, and in art the idea of man, yet higher or lower in man's spiritual growth, religion and art have a common root in the constitution of the soul, and relations real and inseparable.

There are many different systems of æsthetics, but in all of them that are of any account it is admitted, that there is a quality of sensibility, which is the mind's power of receiving impressions from the outward world. It is feeling, but not altogether of the senses. This susceptibility not only feels but acts ; and, when roused to action by impressions from objects, it is a power capable of recognizing itself, and of reproducing these impressions, being the correspondent within to the nature without ; and it is thus a permanent quality to which we give, with other elements combined, the general name of imagination, the image-making and idealizing power, the faculty that receives and communicates the form of things (*form-sinn* as the Germans name it), even as the intellectual faculty receives and communicates the truth of things.

This instinct, when acted upon by correspondent objects, seeks to reproduce the essential form of these objects, since they exist in the mind only in their forms—and some philosophers deny any other real existence to objective matter—and in seeking thus to reproduce the form of things, by a law of the mind it strives to reproduce the perfect form, in which the mind delights, and was made to delight. The mind's susceptibility to be impressed by the world of nature

through its organ of the imagination, which not only receives but imparts impressions of objects and is full of energy and creative power, is the mind's function (as it has been called) of form, and necessarily, in a rational nature, of perfect form, or of beauty, and herein dwell the original ideas of beauty. If the imagination works simply in order to body forth the form of things as an "idealized imitation," to interpret nature in all its forms, it works artistically, and its products are what are termed art.

We see thus in all mind, though in a less degree in most men but supremely in the artist, this instinct of form, this artistic faculty by which it must and will express itself in the domain of art, just as surely as it must and will express itself in the domain of knowledge; and, indeed, so related are the mental powers, that as we cannot keep out any of them from the æsthetic faculty, so we cannot keep out the æsthetic faculty or sensibility from any of them, and we cannot say that in the investigation of truth, even of religious truth, the imagination, which is the organ of the sensibility, can be excluded; for if we do, we shut out the great prophets and preachers. Kant goes so far as to say in discussing the objective validity of our æsthetic impressions, that the meaning of beauty is to symbolize moral good; and Ruskin classes the æsthetic faculty among the spiritual powers that are typical of divine attributes, such as Infinity, Unity, Repose, Symmetry, Purity, Moderation. The highest conception of art that has yet been held though not the only one, is, that it is the interpretation of the soul, in its varied forms, feelings and experiences, and, of course, embracing its loftiest thoughts which rise to the divine in man and nature, and set forth the qualities which belong to the divine. While not



dwelling longer on the metaphysics of the theme, do we not see that when we come to treat of the relation of religion and art we find this relation in the mind, so that art belongs to man as a religious being, and to the manifestations of his religious as well as his intellectual nature. If you regard religion as a mere dogma, as a matter of the logical reason, it does indeed confine itself to but a portion of the mind, but if religion is a life dependent on a power out of itself, and drawn from higher spiritual sources through faith and love, it is comprehensive and enters into all being and consecrates every power and sensibility, and its relations to the artistic faculty are of a vital character implanting therein its divine ideals.

To bring this subject into something like method and to discuss it in a practical manner, I would say that the relation of Art to religion is seen principally in three aspects: in the advancement and education of human life, in morality, and in worship.

1. Viewed in regard to the advancement and education of human life, Art is one of the great facts of human history, and is as wide in its manifestations as human life itself; indeed, it has been said that "the history of art is the history of man"—which is true, since man has developed himself along the line of art as well as along the line of science, and, hitherto, more so; and some thinkers have put art in the education of humanity or as an agent by which man lifts himself out of a state of barbarism and ignorance, before science. He who had the ingenuity to chip a flint into an arrow-head and tie it to a reed; he who piled trunks of trees together and put a slanting roof of boughs over them; he who set up a stone where he had a dream or vision of something; he who scratched an outline of his dog or reindeer on a bone;

he who formed two articulate sounds to communicate to another what was in his mind; he who took a rhythmic step to manifest his inward joy; he who heard the voice of nature in him and had thoughts which, could he express them, would have been poetry—he was the artist, and he did a great work to help on the race's civilization. Art is a fundamental factor in the development of humanity under all its possible conditions. Art and science, indeed, divide between them the world of practical knowledge and action. John Stuart Mill has summed up the difference of the two in these words: "Science consists in knowing, art in doing. What I must do in order to know is art subordinate to, or concerned in science. What I must know in order to do, is science subordinate to or concerned in art." This, to be sure, is the conception of art, and applies to the generic use of the term and to all productive forms of human skill, even the most industrial and mechanical; but the present subject applies to the idea of art as confining itself to the higher production of the mind which has in it the love of perfect creation, in a word of the æsthetic arts, which are the varied expressions of that active power in man of creating the representation of real form of whatever is represented in the idea, or, more specifically, in the imagination, when awakened to act by its joyful feeling of sympathy with nature in all her forms whether grotesque or lovely, but especially with what is typical, perfect and beautiful. Now take away these—what we commonly call the Fine Arts—from man's life and his advancement from a crude to a higher type of civilization, and what a blank you have left. You blot out and destroy some of the loftiest ideals of life. We are forced to recognize the truth that Art has been man's teacher from the earli-

est times in what is higher than his matter-of-fact existence, giving him thoughts out of and above himself. Art has been in some nations the highest expression of the popular aspiration and life. The spirit and character of every nation that has existed has been reflected in its art, as the forms of the ancient pyramids in Nile-stream. What would be left us of Egypt, Assyria, India, Greece, Etruria, Rome, the Byzantine Empire, Mediæval Europe, Italy, Germany and France of the Renaissance, if art were swept out of them? In religion what would be left, since art in every nation sprang directly from its religion, and has been the instrument of religious expression, from the Psalms of David to the Latin hymn and the Gothic cathedral?

You may answer that this had nothing to do with the real religious advancement of the race; but this is contrary to the teaching of St. Paul who says "first the natural and then the spiritual"—through the outward form like a protecting sheath the grain of spiritual truth has silently ripened; and surely it is not wise in this scientific age, for religious interpreters to lose sight of the fact that poetry and art lie nearer the spring of religious affections than science does, that art has relations to religion which are eminently educational, and that art is one of the world's progressive forces. Says Herman Grimm, the author of the "Life of Michael Angelo":

"There are three means of instructing mankind as to what has happened or is happening—plastic art, poetry and history. Of the earliest Egyptian times, all knowledge is wanting of deeds and personalities; we have only names and works of art, but the latter so eloquent, so convincing, that we do not need written documents to persuade us that men thought and felt

as we do to-day . . . and there is another example : we are accustomed to look upon the ' Reformation ' as a movement growing chiefly out of literary antagonisms. The political and moral incentives, whose combined working brought about the final great result, have often been analyzed ; but what rôle art here played will be generally known only when the influence of religious art in Germany, and its peculiar nature up to the time of Dürer, has been thoroughly examined and its historical connection demonstrated. Prior to the reformation, the ideas of religion and the contents of sacred history were familiarized to the people mainly through art. Painted walls took the place of books. This poetry without words was quite as intelligible as written poems. God's temples filled with masterpieces of sculpture-painting were the manifestation of ideas—symbols of devotion. Dürer, who was a disciple of Luther, in his pictures of scenes from the Old Testament, made his compositions at once picture and text. (They were full of the new spirit and life of the Reformation.) These engravings were scattered over Germany in thousands of copies and imitated everywhere even in Italy ; and these life-like, speaking pictures with their wealth of religious meaning, prepared the people in a wonderful way for Luther's translation of the Bible.\* Luther indeed was broad-minded enough to appreciate the value of art in religious instruction, and he declared that no teacher was fit to teach who did not understand and love music. His sympathies went out also to other arts of expression—to painting and poetry.

2. Let us look secondly, at the relation of art to morality, since it has been affirmed that art has no

\* *Literature*, p. 201.



moral quality, and some have gone so far as to say that art is opposed to morality. I have not space to do more than to offer here an argument or two to prove not only that art is not opposed to morality, but that what is immoral cannot be true art. First, as an expression of mind, art must be in harmony with truth. Truth is not precisely beauty, though the summit of truth is beauty, but there can be no artistic beauty which is not true. Art occupies a middle ground between nature and morality, and while it is neither, it cannot be false to either. Art is not bounded merely by outward and physical forms of things which it copies, but it aims to be true to the deeper moral idea and truth in nature. Since nature, which is the chief field of art, is full of God, is the manifestation of the indwelling God, then the soul of art is moral and religious. This gives it its noble expression. Fidelity to truth natural and spiritual, real and ideal, is the aim of all art. Art is rotten and baseless without it. A work of art, if it do not purpose to teach morality, yet, has an ethical element, or it has no greatness, as an oration (which is speaking art) that does not recognize justice and which is merely sophistical, is not great; or a novel, which as a work of art does not set about teaching morality, but if it do not stimulate men nobly while delighting them, if it do not raise their moral sense, had better never been born. This makes the difference between a Thackeray, a Charles Kingsley, and even a Charles Reade, and those romancists who seek to amuse by methods morally degrading. In order, however, to show that what is immoral cannot be true art I would say again, that art is essentially social; or it is for the enjoyment, not of one, but of many. It can only appeal to emotions that are common to society and which express themselves in

mass—I mean in a public and sympathetic form ; and as no immoral, that is, anti-social sentiment, can permanently utter itself in this concreted form, art must avoid the immoral as one branch of the inartistic, if it means to live and please all countries and ages.\* An artist of genius may pander to the sensual and base in human life, but the question remains, does not this moral blemish constitute an artistic blemish? On the principle named it certainly does and thus what is immoral is inartistic, and what is inartistic must perish.

Not a great while ago my attention was called to an article in a religious newspaper on the influence of art in Germany ; in which it was stated that at one of the art-centres of Germany, Munich, there was much open profligacy, and this state of things was charged to art. I respect a manly defence of morality, let it cut where it will ; but while this article had an honest aim and contained some truth vigorously set forth, its statements were sweeping and its conclusion illogical. The evil is not confined to European art-cities, but is prevalent throughout Germany and old world civilization. Berlin, which is a center of civil and political power as well as of trade, is, perhaps, even more ill-regulated than Munich. One in fact might as well say that in an ecclesiastical city of Protestant England, where peculiar attention is paid to religious observances and holy days, but where, as shown indubitably by statistics, the standard of popular morality is low—that this low moral standard is occasioned by religious worship. In this article the effect is put for the cause. Art is not the cause of the evils mentioned,

\* Mr. A. S. Murray quotes this argument from *Mind* of October, 1876.

certainly not true art bordering even as it often does on sense—but art, like everything else is influenced by the moral state of society which, whether good or bad, has been brought about by many profound causes. This is the case in Germany, where, at present, the materialistic philosophy affects everything like a poison in the soil, and is the fashion among educated young men and students of all departments, which philosophy is easily turned into life. Art feels this sensitively, as a most delicate instrument of the thought and life of the people. Art ministers to the higher part of our nature but if corrupted wherewith shall it be renewed—it is itself corrupt and corrupting.

The writer of the article which has been referred to, said also that in Germany art had become superior to religion, *is* religion, and takes religion's place in the whole life of society. This statement I should discredit in regard to the mass of the German nation, who are a genuinely religious people, but if this be so whose fault is it—that of art or religion? If religion cannot hold its own in Luther's land, of course the next best thing will take its place, and it will be so in every country. Religion itself has at times been completely divorced from morality, and can we wonder that art also sometimes has been? Pictures and works of art of an immoral character are the result of an immoral spirit, consciously or unconsciously, in the artist, and in the public to which he caters. The supply is conditioned upon the demand. If improper pictures are set for exhibition in galleries and shop windows, it is because public sentiment asks for them, and there should be a public sentiment aroused which would abolish them more speedily than the police. But why does the public crave false art? Is it not because the life of the people is not morally reformed

and purified? Is it not because Christian faith has not been made practical? Is it not because the sense of beauty has not been developed, and the popular eye has not been educated to find pleasure in noble forms and harmonious colors? It was better when in a superstitious but simple community, a picture that had in it the dawn of devotional spirit and nature, was borne about the streets of a city in the procession of high and low, with joyful music of trumpets and songs, as if it had dropt from the sky. As well might it be said and with more truth that because Munich is a principal beer-center, that there is a debauched tone of social life there. This style of reasoning is essentially weak. Anything might be proved from it. Shall we have no more science because some scientists work against whatever is spiritual in nature? Shall we have no more preaching because there are false teachers? There is nothing more urgently needed in America, than to erect a spiritual kingdom, in opposition to the oppressive kingdom of materialism that overrides everything. Our intense pursuit of wealth generates a selfish and gloomy spirit. The conflicts between capital and labor, the bitterness and hatred that are engendered, spring from this unsatisfied state of mind, and whatever has an influence to build up the spiritual side of the nature, to make men more happy, loving, and contented, awaking the sense of pleasure in beautiful objects that God has made, would tend to calm this agitation, and to do away with this suspicious and sullen temper among the people; the fountains of our social life would be sweetened; and the entire kingdom of mind would be infused with a new healthy spirit of love and joy—no divine faculty, like the function of art, would be ignored, until a broad culture, which embraces the wide regions of the im-



agination and the poetic nature, take the place of an exclusively narrow utilitarian conception of human life.

3. In regard to the relations of Art to worship, an act of worship is an act of freedom rather than of strict duty—an act of the free soul which joyously seeks to please, beautify, and crown with honor and praise the dear object of its love; and here then is seen the delightful service of art, which is itself the handmaid of beauty, and only beautiful when perfectly free and unselfish. Art is not religion. It can never take the place of religious worship. One breath of religious trust avails more than a crucifix of gold chased by Benvenuto Cellini. The simplest act of self-denial is worth more than a statue of Praxiteles that brought a city's ransom; and let it be fairly understood that a work of genius does not come into the same plane with a religious work; but, at the same time, a work of genius ought to have God in it, and speak of and lead to God. Victor Cousin said: "Art does not extend to religion; but like religion it approaches the infinite, one of whose forms it manifests. God is the source of beauty as of truth and of religion; the loftiest aim of art is to awaken in its way the sentiment of the infinite."

It is interesting to see how art, under the most unpropitious circumstances, instinctively aims for the infinite, and how the religious nature of an artist comes out in an unexpected manner, as if a spring of inspiration had suddenly opened in him. A true artist must necessarily put the best that is in him into his works, and thus at some time and in some way he must express his higher religious nature. And so it is that in the earth-clinging glory of Rembrandt's genius, like cloudy mists, there was shot a golden ray of

something supernal athwart his homely Dutch scenes and forms ; and the classical lines of Leonardo Da Vinci were made purer by some higher instinct working secretly in him, until they culminated in the celestial grace of that consummate picture of the "Last Supper," whose spiritual character has nourished Christian faith. It is also quite noticeable in regard to the prince of painters, Raphael, that leaving his classical and historical scenes, his graceful Galateas, and even his pure and lovely Madonnas, toward the close of his short life he drew more and more to the representation of Christ and his eternal triumphs, avoiding the earthly strife and suffering. With the exception of "Christ bearing his Cross," and the "Pieta" in the Louvre, he seems to care only to express the greatness of divine things (the *Loggia*, the Mosaics in the Chigi chapel, the "Vision of Ezekiel," the frescoes of the Magliana) and Christ's glory throned on clouds in the "Transfiguration" and glowing with superabundant light.\* Poor Doré, who died prematurely, thirsting for something higher which art had not given him, and who had convulsed the world in laughter by the extravagance of his Rabelaisique genius, equally astonished the world by his depth of serious feeling in the religious pictures which he painted toward the end of his life. But if such a man as Doré who recited his college lessons on the blackboard by means of pictured diagrams, had desired to express or confess his faith, how would he do it more naturally than by his pencil? The profoundest struggles of souls have been rolled upon the canvas in waves of mystic darkness and throbbing light—as in another art, a German lady who was a masterly musician even

\* Muntz's "Life of Raphael."

in Germany, told me that her highest religious thoughts were spoken in musical language, and that she worshiped in music. I have referred to Doré, not as an artist of the first order, but only because his is a case quoted on the other side that art is for amusement and not for religious thought and purpose.

There has been of late, in all religious denominations, an irresistible tendency towards a more elaborate ritual in worship, though not always proceeding from the truest principles whether liturgic or artistic, and this is connected with a new-awakened interest in music both ecclesiastical and of opera, so that it is just now here, as in England, fashionable to go to church—there may be worse fashions—where good music (and there has been a wonderful revival recently in England in church music) and a soothing appeal to the æsthetic sensibilities, are assured; and this, whether right or wrong, shows that there is a felt want of something in worship, especially in the worship of unliturgical churches, which is not to be met by pronouncing the whole movement wrong, or saying that the æsthetic principle may not come into religion at all, for whatever mistakes have been made, the counterfeit cannot take the place of the true, and if false fire have been mingled in the sacrifice there is still the pure flame. The error of the High Ritualists, for the most part devout and self-denying men, is not in the fact that they have striven for and established a more elaborately ordered system of public worship, but that they have set too high a mark on form and made it religion, and have arrogated the supreme authority of the Church to this ritualistic order, demanding that faith should be run into a mould which is neither Reformed Anglican nor proper Catholic. I do not, however, condemn the Ritualists

that they have laid hold of Art to aid in the offices of public worship, because they have here laid hold of a principle which is true when held in moderation, and which will, in the end, serve to bring out more clearly the higher uses and the divine powers of Art.

The work of art in the world has not been so much to teach the head as the heart—it has refined the sentiments, leading them from the low to the lofty, and, above all, in worship, which is the offering of the affections in a service of praise to the All-Perfect and All-Loving ; and it is thus the medium by and through which the soul may express its thoughts, and this outward expression reacts upon and intensifies the feeling. The soul must be present in worship, whether private or public.

But where many pray together there cannot be wholly this subjective or impressional worship ; there must be also some prescribed form more or less simple, by which all the people may be quickened in a lively faith, by which the divine life, the real feeling, the true spirit of Christian love that is in the people, may be brought out into a clearer and more manifest consciousness of the life of God ; and it has been thought that the first Protestant reformers and after them the English Puritans, in their iconoclastic zeal to do away with every vestige of Popery, went too far in destroying the entire ritual of the Catholic Church, much of it (especially its hymns) derived from the earlier apostolic and the old Hebrew worship, and reducing worship virtually to preaching—a discourse—giving little opportunity for the imagination and sensibilities to have play ; and, at the same time cutting off from the devotional forms and past historic life of the Church.

“Thou prayest not, save when within thy soul thou prayest.”



However this may be, the time has come to reconsider the matter of Public Worship in the light of an intelligent faith. We cannot begin by absolutely denying Art in worship. The æsthetic element, which is part of man's nature, may and should be employed in worship, if rightly understood, and there is an indescribable loss, a want of the nature unmet, without it. It is, as we have seen, the expressive, the form-producing power; and, although in these days art is sometimes arrogant and polemic in regard to worship, claiming too much, that does not militate against the truth that without art we could not even have preaching, which is the orderly manifestation of truth, or sacred song, or the simplest forms of worship, and the real question then is whether we shall have true or false art, Christian or unsanctified art. Shall we have Christian symbolism or pagan symbolism? True art is governed by its object. This principle has been neglected. The music, for example, in some of our churches, with its audacious movements crude in novelty and irreligious in spirit, without regard to true principles of art as applied to religious service, are enough to make angels weep and do not promote humility in men. Sometimes in a church a huge organ stands directly behind the pulpit, whose roar is so near that the preacher (heaven save the mark!) must receive the benefit of it like a full-blasted cyclone; and yet who would exclude from our public worship the organ, that soul of the temple, which some one has called "a church within a church," and still it should be touched by a master and attuned hand! Where there is perfect harmony in the music of a choir and congregation, being directed by the pure and severe spirit of ecclesiastical music, indulging in no affectations of execution, the spirit of individualism

is abolished, the spirit of humble devotion takes its place, the egoistic and special emerges into the universal, and the united soul of the congregation rises in one incense of praise. Pure church music, especially of the ancient choral, becomes a vehicle of penitential emotion, often suffusing the sinful soul with heavenly dews and awaking the intuition of immortality. I remember a musical service in York Minster, of which a choral by the English composer, Smart, in F. Anthem "Jehovah Lord God" was the principal piece; and the singing of the boys' choir on this occasion was wonderfully pure and uplifting. Some of the voices were soft as silver flutes while some had a clear metallic edge whose pitch though never sharp seemed to pierce through all other sounds and soar like an arch of melody sweet and ravishing, and vibrating on the ear as an angelic song; and when all voices were combined with the full power of the organ in a storm-burst of harmony rolling through the high-vaulted cathedral, it was "exceeding magnificent," and greatly inspiring to the religious sense. A friend of mine who had suffered the most desolating sorrow that a man could meet in this life who had not committed crime, once assured me, that some of Beethoven's music, especially the second movement or adagio of the Fifth Symphony—" *Durch Nacht zum Licht*"—had been to him a source of real religious strengthening, in which his mind at length found a means to collect its forces, and seek God and live again from the profoundest despair.

There is indeed a certain religious chord in music which, when touched, vibrates in the innermost being, as those know who have heard devotionally rendered the "Masses" of Mozart, the "Elevations" of Battiste, and the Church Music of Mendelssohn. We have in

our country much to learn upon this subject—how dull the music drags and how slow it mounts, not like Elijah's fiery chariot—music, which is peculiarly the expression of religious art, the breathing of devotional emotion, and which springs from the inmost spirit rising to its source of Divine Love, to Him who is a Spirit!

All nature, even the most ugly, is capable of art, for there are varied ideals of beauty, and every age and every mind has its own ideal, or its own conception of what is worth expressing in art, so that nothing is too common for art's purposes—the most ordinary weed or stone trod under one's feet and the flattest landscape in which one happens to be where there is miraculous life, the marvelous play of color, and soft gradations of light and shade—but still, for all this, as I have before said, the law of selection is important. It is the moulding function. It makes sometimes the difference between the true and false, especially in religious art. Architecture, for instance, should exclude the merely ornamental and seek the purest order and congruity, which is the law of constructive art, above all of church architecture. Some of our costly modern churches have nothing at all in them of the spirit of the old churches which were inspired by religion. I grant that in Germany and England modern churches have been built as genuine in Christian sentiment if not so vast as the ancient churches; but the true (though misnamed) Gothic edifice, had that mystic complexity and that awful elevation which an earnest even if imperfect faith imparts, seeking to embody a conception of God, and to make a house for him to dwell in. It symbolized in its cruciform plan, its deep-dyed windows and mysterious carvings, the passion of our Lord; sub-

duing and at the same time kindling the imagination of sinful men in rude ages, and teaching their hopes to climb to the Source of hope. This perhaps never can be and never ought to be reproduced, but neither do these modern churches, many of which manifest no taste based on right principles of ecclesiastical architecture, express the idea of Protestant worship, where the spiritual predominates. They are not Christian in architectural symbolism, but often are simply heathen. They have no true Christian expansiveness of sentiment or lovely majestic attractiveness. They are hard and repulsive. They do not speak of Love, Hope and Righteousness. The poor have no place in them, because they are not simple enough for the worship of universal humanity. Christianity, it must be acknowledged, at first opposed art as a pagan fruit, but when it was perceived that art was no more pagan than Christian, and that it was a pure manifestation of mind, as truly as philosophy, literature, or religion, Christianity took it up, at first hesitatingly, but infusing into it new spirit and ideas; yet it is even now regarded with suspicion, and has not obtained its right place in modern civilization and the religious life.

When a more humane culture shall prevail, and when art is intelligently understood, and it is seen how genuine a thing it is, and when this idea is grasped with the boldness of truth, and men perceive that the external, the decorative and sensuous, is but a small part of it, and that it enters into all life and that religious art especially springs from the profoundest spiritual life—until this true idea of art prevails there had better be, indeed, no art attempted, there had better be no display of an ambitious, vulgar, half profane and utterly imbecile art introduced into



our churches. Let us have the true or none. Art should be acknowledged and honored and not be foisted in apologetically or under false pretences. As belonging to man's original powers it should take no secondary place as by sufferance. It is a divine thing—let us make it so. Art cannot be shut out if we wish—this is my argument, because art is planted in mind for good purposes, and I believe we shall have it in a higher state of being in its essential forms; for religious art is spontaneous and inspired by faith, like the songs of the early church, and when it is thus true, when the outward is made subject to the inward, and the interests of the kingdom of God rise above earthly interests, then Art may be freely called upon and gladly recognized in all of its branches as a powerful agent in the expression of religious feeling in worship, being itself disinterested and ideal, and thus helping self-sacrifice and real goodness; and then there will be less danger and less fear of form. What is form in worship? Form is symbol. Symbolism means literally binding together, the bringing together of the seen and the unseen, the human and divine, in their relations. Now in a litany, the sorrow itself may not always be expressed, but only its likeness, yet it forms a medium, it gives an opportunity for the expression of godly sorrow, and affords vent to the heart God has touched. Kugler says: "The origin of art lies in the need of men to fasten their thoughts to a firm place and give them expression." This is the place of form in public worship. The great law of ritual in public worship is the law of representation; and this is what true art is and does. It is the formal manifestation (not necessarily mere form or having anything heartless or artificial in it) of its deeper thought, feeling

and inspiration. It voices the beauty which springs from the soul's own purest nature, and its joyful perception of the spiritual being and perfections of God.

Religious art is a field which is still open. As an expression of national faith it takes on the character and spirit of that faith. In a fresh world like that of America, where Christianity, it is to be hoped, shall have a freer development than it has ever yet been able to have amid the repressive influences of the Old World civilization, there may be possibly a renaissance of religious art from a purer and more divine and yet more human source. The mythology of Christianity, lovely as the evening star with its mystic glories and soft splendors, may fade away in the clear light of this Western sky; for here are not the Latin races who are led by that beauteous mystic star; here are the English and German races who walk in the common daylight of reason, and whose intellectual powers, even in religion, are cultivated, it may be, at the expense of the imagination and sensibilities; yet we are free men as were the contemporaries of Dante and Giotto; we are of the stock of those who built the cathedrals of Northern Europe; we have the same struggles, sins, hopes, fears and joys that they had; duty, self-sacrifice, faith, love—these are still the most beautiful things; and from this inner source of the soul art is not excluded; she may come to this spring like an angel to stir the waters, and to soothe, to raise, to purify. The artist mediates as interpreter between the material and spiritual. Yet art, as I have said, is not religion—it cannot do the work of religion or morality; but art may aid religion and the life of goodness; helping to liberate men from a selfish animalism. Those tremendous pictures on the walls of the Pisan Campo Santo, and those carved on the face of

the old Cathedrals, of the Last Judgment, Heaven, and Hell, *kept men straight*, and spoke, in their day, to the conscience with power. They lifted before the eyes of men loftier ideals than those of market-place and camp. They were teachers too that did not change. When the Church doctor was led by ambitious learning into error, and the priest through luxurious living lost the key of the interpretation of the Word, and the Church herself became leader of vain ceremonies, or tyrant and tax-gatherer, not having care that men should be righteous, the artist was a preacher who spoke to all the people, whose message was a universal one to be read as an open book by rich and poor, learned and simple, old and young, manifesting invisible things through lively symbols, and, above all, in those warlike and oppressive ages, keeping before the eyes of the meek the mysteries of divine sorrow, suffering and love, and so of hope. The sincerely religious character of St. Mark's cathedral at Venice, more than its superlative magnificence of adornment, has preserved, even to this day, its spiritual influence upon the mind. Though the Rialto is now given up to hucksters' shops and old clothes' dealers, and the Carpaccio frescoes in the Schiavoni chapel are faded, and Tintoretto's vast pictures are blackened with age, and the prestige of the Roman Catholic church itself is diminished, so that the once powerful priest will now accept willingly coppers and gleefully francs, and the vesper bells sound over the water of the lagoons mournful and low, yet St. Mark's preaches its gospel to the people of this age as well as the men of past ages, solemn, reproving to an indifferent and frivolous conscience, uttering the sharp and dividing words of the Spirit, awing and delighting the soul by its interior perspectives full of spiritual mys-

tery and golden glory, with ruby, sapphire and opal flashing in the gloom like the lightnings of prophecy ; and, on the outside walls, blossoming like a gigantic flower, many-colored at the base but pure as a clustered lily at the summit, up which white-robed angels seem to climb into the blue sky, and surmounted by the Christ, who is the ascended Lord of the world ; and so Art, if truly consecrated, may lead from all that is earthly up to the praise and glory of God.



## BOURGES CATHEDRAL.

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Setting out in the dusky light of early morning from the '*gare d'Orleans*' at Paris on the train to Orleans, passing through the river towns of Choisy, Bretigny and Étampes, and crossing the Loire at Orleans with its two square cathedral towers—the only Gothic cathedral of the first-class erected in Europe since the Middle Ages—and then by the road from Orleans to Sanscaire through the rather dreary country of central France, I arrived by noon at the city of Bourges, the ancient capital of the province of Berri, still surrounded by its Roman and Gallic ramparts and with memories of Julius Cæsar and the siege of Avaricum. It is situated on the confluence of the Auron and Eure rivers about one hundred and fifty miles south of Paris, a town of forty thousand inhabitants, which has always been and is regarded as a point of great strategic importance, and at present is full of military work-shops and troops. Its old walls are laid out as a promenade, and though it has some well-preserved mediæval buildings, that which forms the chief attraction of this otherwise somewhat uninteresting place in the middle of a flat and almost barren plain, is the majestic cathedral of St. Étienne standing on the summit of the low hill on which the city is built, and commanding an extensive panorama. Majestic is the word—no other fits it so well. Even at a considerable distance the building fills the eye, seeming to dominate the whole region, but it grows more impressive the nearer it is approached, and when one stands in front of it nothing can exceed its venerable

majesty. Immediately upon arriving at Bourges, I made my way through narrow streets, but ever ascending to the small open square, from which towered the time-worn front of the massive structure. I have seen the greatest European cathedrals but none surpassing this at first view; and I have a peculiar feeling toward the cathedral of Bourges, because it is less sufficiently appreciated than other cathedrals of France; and because it was before unknown to me as so surpassingly magnificent an edifice, and one possessing certain architectural features that no other French cathedral has. Therefore it produced upon me the effect of surprise. Its western front of five portals, much carved and gray with time, is grand, but its interior, despoiled and bare though it be, is grander, with its mighty piers, like pillars of heaven. The other immense and very lofty columns of the nave, with clusters of round pillars projecting detached on their faces, its great painted glass windows of the 12th and 13th centuries, its superb rose-window, or flower-wheel, at the west,—these make it perhaps the finest interior in France, and said to be the largest—larger than Amiens—though this is doubtful; for while Bourges is one of the largest churches in France, covering 73,170 square feet, it is one of the shortest, being only 405 feet in extreme length; yet owing to its central aisle being wholly unbroken in its lines, it appears one of the longest.

The main points of interest of the cathedral of Bourges may be thus summed up:

1. The west façade, of later date than the rest of the building, and its five portals, with their great richness of carving, the decorated leaves of the doors, and the Renaissance tower.

2. The central aisle 117 feet in height and its lofty

colonnade with the subordinate side aisles, of which I will speak.

3. The painted glass windows of the 13th century about the choir and apse.

4. The subterranean church with the sepulchre of the Duke de Berri and the marble statues.

5. The exterior of the apse which is grandiose and almost faultless.

6. The two side Romanesque portals, more ancient than the rest, and their windows of later date belonging to the 15th century.

7. The sacristy, one of the finest pieces of Gothic architecture anywhere to be found.

As to epochs of construction the ancient crypts belong to the 9th or 10th centuries; some columns and parts of the chapel of St. Solange and a portion of the lateral portals belong to the 11th century; the subterranean church and the corresponding part of the upper church to the 12th century; the four bays of the choir and the front portion of the nave to the 13th century; the grand window and three portals of the façade to the 14th century; all the lateral chapels, the sacristy, the double arches and a part of the vaultings of the grand nave, and the tower, the bas-relief of the middle portal, and the windows of the chapels, to the 16th century; the windows of the baptistery to the 17th century; and considerable new work and decoration to the 19th century, thus growing up century by century as the slow work of ages.

The cathedrals of Amiens, Bourges, Rheims, Chartres and Paris, are the finest in France; and these five churches by their dimensions, the beautiful disposition of their plan and the nobleness of their architecture, merit being classed as cathedrals of the first order; and

while this truth is incontestable, and is admitted by all competent archæologists, what rank among them does the cathedral of Bourges hold?

This is difficult to say, as each structure has merits and beauties peculiar to itself, and has too its faults; but each church surpasses the others in particular features; and yet no edifice produces a more profound impression than the cathedral of Bourges. Its æsthetic features are unity, majesty and nobleness. Its ground-plan consists of five naves separated by four rows of pillars, and by side chapels; its vertical plan consists of three superimposed vaults, three rows of windows and a double triforium; and its architectonic effect may be described under the qualities of faultless regularity in plan and detail; a beautiful harmony which reigns in the whole, though a greater space in the second naves and more height in the third, would have been desirable; the unity of construction and style, so that although the nave was built half a century after the choir, the difference of style is not perceptible; and the absence of those positive faults which are sometimes seen in even the great cathedrals.

The distinctive or unique character of the Bourges Cathedral, comes from the originality of some of its features, giving rise to the saying, "There is but one Bourges." It presents some singularly happy architectural combinations that are not found elsewhere. One most striking instance of this originality, is the multiplicity of its architectural parts.\* In other cathedrals the plan generally adopted is that of

\* I am indebted to the work of M. l'abbé Barreau for many of the architectural details, and have translated somewhat freely from this work.



a Latin cross formed by means of a transept or cross-bar, and the principal nave is surrounded by a low side (*bas coté*) running around the sanctuary upon which the chapels open; if this low side is double, as at Paris, and runs behind the choir as at Rheims and Amiens, and around the choir and the sanctuary as at Chartres, the vaultings are of the same height; but Bourges is an exception to this general rule; for here each nave has its own row of windows, its triforium (interior gallery), its vaults and its own particular roof, which gives a vault, a triforium, and a row of windows, in addition to those of the other cathedrals. Thus the vertical plan presents eight superimposed parts or distinct zones, running through the church in all its circumference. The eye, then, in raising its gaze gradually upward from the floor to the ceiling encounters the lateral chapels, the first vaults, the first triforium, the second row of windows, the second vaultings, the second triforium, the third range of windows, and the grand vaults.

Another instance of originality is the extraordinary height of the pillars and the boldness, immensity and lightness which result. If some might say that the details of architecture in Bourges Cathedral are too various, others would with more justice admire the prodigious effect which is produced by those multiplied parts that rise one above another, and which extend one behind the other; which give the effect of looking through a vast forest of pillars, and make, in this austere religious style of architecture, an impression of movement, boldness, contrasted oppositions, and the interplay of innumerable lines and forms. There is even a light gracefulness which is rare in this style of architecture—the naves appearing divided by separate rows of columns in this re-

spect resembling Antwerp Cathedral. The double triforium, the three vaults and the three ranges of windows, require, in the pillars, this great elevation which doubles the effect of extent already produced by the gigantic proportions. To supply the second nave of a triforium with windows and vaultings, it was necessary to give to it and to the pillars which separate it from the grand nave, an unusual height not attained by any other cathedral, not even Cologne. Herein lies the sublimity of Bourges Cathedral and the triumph of its architecture. The builder has concentrated his skill upon this sublime impression, and has made all parts concur in the perfection of this feature; and he has succeeded in creating something almost superhuman in the incomparable colonnade of the grand nave. This upward soaring of the columns forms in architecture, the summit of audacious design beyond which it is not possible to go without rashness.

Some critics also blame this very loftiness of the pillars as transgressing the rules of proportion, but the best judges see in this experiment which is the utmost possibility of ogival art, one of the chief beauties of Bourges Cathedral. They see the faith of the builders; the interpretation, in architecture, of those simple and sublime prayers — "Lift up the heart" — "Our Father who art in heaven."

A Roman Catholic writer says, "In Christian (Gothic) architecture matter obeys no longer the law of gravitation; it becomes light as thought, transparent as the image of truth, and lifts itself into the sky, seeming to sing "*Magnificat anima mea Dominum.*" The lofty capacity of the interior of Bourges cathedral extends even to the wall, that is to say, to the triforium and the windows of the second nave which excels by nineteen feet the height of Amiens,

and even that of Beauvois by seven or eight feet. In other churches, as in Notre Dame of Paris, the nave itself arrests the eye and fills it; but at Bourges one sees the large vaults and openings of space of the side naves, and takes in the whole at a glance. In other churches with five naves, the four lower courts or naves are nothing but cloisters, or walks opening upon the principal nave; here the dimensions are almost doubled by the second nave which really makes part of the principal enclosure, and the spaces are set back to the third and other naves. One feels the free air of the Bourges Cathedral and breathes at ease. He is struck with this vast freeness, this something of amplitude and immensity, which strongly reminded me of a colossal red-wood grove in California.

Another unique feature of Bourges Cathedral is its severity of ornamentation. Without some knowledge of artistic archæology or instinct of the beautiful one might think that there was a meagreness of ornamentation in this simplicity, since there are no entablatures to arrest the eye, no parts or points of elaborate decoration which attract to the prejudice of the whole, but the result of this severity is an effect of solemnity which is not diminished by the varying caprices of the sculpture. It is the reserve of a queen clothed with power as a garment and who needs no other ornamentation. The mouldings of the numerous columns with their capitals, the arches which they support, the rose-windows, the thousands of ogival vaults of a vigorous design, with the gigantic proportions and half-light of the windows, all the combination of this noble magnificence, make an impression of awe and impose a reverential silence of soul.

That severity and poverty of ornament are not synonymous, is seen in the fact that the Cathedral of

Bourges is adorned with 2662 pillars and smaller columns whose capitals are of varied design of carved leaves; 322 canopies and pinnacles of statues of different proportions; 1700 statues in stone and marble; 2650 human figures painted upon the windows—in all whether painted or carved 4350 figures; sixty enormous isolated columns and forty-eight pilasters supporting the interior vaults, and one hundred and fifteen cross-arches. The entrance to the edifice is by seven embayed doors, while eleven great staircases lead to the towers and down to the subterranean church. The interior is lighted by one hundred and eleven windows, and thirty rose-windows placed above the lights of the chief nave; nineteen other windows in the lower church; in all one hundred and sixty bays which distribute the light in the interior, and there are more than one hundred doors which communicate to various portions of the edifice.

Last of all Bourges Cathedral is the only one which has no transept. Although this is looked upon by some as a fault, yet by others, and among them I must reckon myself, it is regarded as the very ultimate perfection of Gothic architecture, giving a unique and unsurpassed unity to the interior.

As to minor details, the iron and scroll work about the choir is magnificent, but of more modern date, though in the style of the 13th century. These details are endless in invention when we regard the iron and bronze work, the wood-carving, the stone sculptures, the inlaid marble, the mosaic work, and, above all, the stained glass. The windows of Bourges Cathedral have a European reputation. Some of the figures painted upon them would be worthy of Raphael, although they go back to a time anterior to the 13th century, and, of course, in this very early



glass one cannot look for the perfection of drawing in the figures, but they are excellently well done, though the chief aim is at brilliant effects of color, and of the mysterious modifications of light. In this cathedral one may find the best example of polychromatic decoration in the most beautiful epoch of the ogival art. The whole history of Redemption is painted upon glass, from the child in the manger to the cross, the acts, the parables, the passion, and then coming down through the history, real and legendary, of the church. The infinite riches of invention in these paintings is often passed by, but days and months might be spent by the student in a critical examination of them. The medallions, the roses, the lancet-windows, the great end-windows, the large lateral lights of the nave, together with those of the numerous chapels, form a treasure-house of rubies, emeralds, gold and jewels, through which the light pours, tinted and softened, not in spotty reflexes or in glaring, white and colorless light, as in modern stained glass, but with a mellowed radiance enhancing and harmonizing with the varied details of the Gothic style, as if the setting sun with its multifarious rays and colors streamed through a vast forest.

Not to speak of the interesting subterranean church I will say a word concerning the exterior of Bourges Cathedral.

The plan of the façade may be thus sketched: six well accentuated strengthening walls, or counter-forts (*contresorts*), divide it into five vertical zones corresponding to the five naves. Four of these counter-forts support the towers, the two others sustain the thrust of the arcades of the great nave; these two last strengthen the stairs and are crowned by Renaissance lanterns. Between the counter-forts are the five

external doors, and above the portals, the windows which light the towers, and the grand and side naves.

The towers have four stages marked by as many galleries with balustrades connecting with the new tower, which, constructed in the Renaissance style, terminates in a platform ; the other tower built at the same time and more in the style of the church, is covered by an ugly roof in the form of a low pyramid.

The capital fault of the façade consists in the difference of style in the height and ornamentation of the two towers, which one would think ought to have been similar. The north tower having fallen in 1506, was rebuilt with a richness that one cannot but admire but which does not harmonize with the severity of the ancient style of the other tower. That, also, threatening to fall, it became necessary to prop it by an enormous buttress whose presence is to be deplored. This old tower has for its only ornament the rolls, and the little columns and their capitals, which form the frame of the bays.

The principal ornaments of the new tower consist of balustrades, and arches of the galleries and of the counter-forts, decorated with six stages of small spires placed on them making a retreat, and so disposed that above the pinnacles of the first stage the spires of the second spring, whose mouldings and little columns pass between the pinnacles of the second stage, and so on. In all this there is richness of ornamentation and perfection of work ; but the plan or system of construction, less happy than learned, gives a sort of stiffness to the tower, and does not mark its different stages with sufficient clearness.

It would take a volume to describe the new tower and the thousand curious details with which it is covered, in which the carving of the sculptor vies with

that of the silversmith. The Renaissance has lavished on the portal its arabesques, its twisted columns, its carved fringes, its cuttings in dentils, much of it unhappily broken by the iconoclasts. The tower-portal itself would show very fine carvings were they not eaten away by neglect and time. The architect has employed all the resources of his art to disguise by lines, simple but ingenious, the ponderous pier, between the two arcades, which supports the interior angle of the tower. One could pass a day in mounting or descending the staircase, and studying the bizarre masks placed upon each of the junctions of the lines of this hexagonal well, upon the galleries in the remote corners where the finish is as lovely, quaint and perfect as in the more open parts. The fantastic animals, serving as corbels or cariatides, in postures of strain and effort; satyric figures, such, for instance, as folly teaching an ape to read, while the poor scholar does not comprehend at all, and the instructress in despair repeats the lesson at the top of her voice.

The façade is reared upon a staircase of fifteen steps which would have given much spring or soar had it been otherwise arranged; as it is it oppresses the doors because the flight is too rapid, and the landing place is too large. The ancient staircase which this replaces was far better designed.

Among the great cathedrals that of Bourges is the only one which presents the *coup d'œil* of five portals in the front, under whose arches are marvels of mediæval iconographic sculpture. The space between the extrados of the first architrave and the sub-base of the second is carved in sixty pictures, fifty subjects being taken from the Old and New Testaments. On the grand portal is sculptured the Resurrection of the dead and the Final Judgment, forming the awe-inspir-

ing central sculpture-group. In the balance of Justice are weighed the good and bad actions of men. The elect are conducted by the angels to Abraham's bosom, the damned are dragged by devils down to hell. This tremendous scene is full of the most energetic action, the artist working as if he enjoyed it, throwing himself into the happiness of the blessed, and, with a ferocious joy, representing the infernal activity and the insolent raillery of the demons who push and drag their victims down. Two robust devils blow the fire of the great caldron in which the condemned are boiling; another demon watches the balance, and devours his victim with his eyes; but this time he is deceived, for the balance kicks the beam for good works, and the soul that is weighed is found to be right, and a blessed angel is waiting to waft it to heaven. Jesus Christ is seated on his throne of Judgment, surrounded by a host of angels bearing the instruments of the Passion, with the Virgin and St. John the evangelist on their knees, when Christ pronounces the sentence. This is curious, and the later Catholics, who wish to assert the Virgin's divinity, declare that this is the attitude of mediation. The sun and the moon appear as irrefutable witnesses of the crimes committed in the light of day and of deeds of darkness done in the shade of night. Below the zone of the resurrection, there are sculptured many allegorical subjects, among others, the heavenly woman and the worldly woman, the first bearing a rich vase full of good works and clad in an ample robe, the second with empty hands and clothed only with her long hair emblem of earthliness.

On the door at the right the life and works of St. Stephen to whom the church is dedicated are portrayed; on the door to the right of this the life of St. Ursin is represented; on the door to the left of the



grand portal the life of the Virgin Mary is sculptured, and the first carving of this series is the only one preserved belonging to the 13th century. Then there are the sixty-two bas-reliefs from the Old and the New Testaments, rich and full, with scenes from the creation of man to the ascension of Christ. It is a Bible in stone for the simplest wayfarer to read. The bas-reliefs of the grand portal were restored in good taste, in 1841, but, unfortunately, in Roman cement, not in stone. The statue of Christ placed in position in 1838 has merit, but the statues of St. Stephen, St. Ursin, the angel and John the Baptist, are not so good.

A beautiful iron work *grille* was, it is said, made to be placed at the base of the staircase of the new tower, but the style of the architecture not admitting it, it was rejected.

On seeing the plan of the interior that of the exterior will be readily divined; three roofs with low pitch; three entablatures with crochets and carved leaves; three ranges of windows (four in the apse) for the grand nave, each of them composed of three lancets surmounted by a rose; two lancets for the second nave, and one for the third. The chapels, reared afterwards between the counter-forts, form a terrace at the height of the three naves; and below each of the entablatures and above the windows is a suite of rose windows, two for each bay, which light the vaults and break up the dense walls in a very happy way.

The means of support are by the counter-forts, each one of which is sustained by four buttresses. Upon each there are applied two arches of which one, the inferior, sustains the vaults of the middle nave, the other is applied to the prolongation of the pilaster of the same nave. There are two other buttresses, at different heights, which support the wall and the

vaults of the grand nave. The counter-forts are squared and without other ornaments than the projections and the copings with which the little roof of the gable was formerly terminated. Towards 1835 these were surmounted by a pedestal bearing two small hexagonal spires of the same height, reunited by a pierced arcade. The balustrade of the grand nave was erected in 1835. These last constructions are of an incorrect and modern style, and the balustrade is extremely ugly, the minarets squatty, the architraves belong to the 14th rather than 13th century. Notwithstanding this, these additions lend life, lightness and height to the mighty structure whose rigid lines would not be sufficiently disguised without such a forest of pinnacles which give, besides this, equilibrium and poise.\* There are three points in the details of the sides which are worthy of special notice, viz: the graceful apse of the chapel of the '*Sacre Cœur*'; the porch whose interior is so rich and whose exterior was so simple until 1845; the projecting portion of the sacristy which contains the old library.

The two lateral portals are of the most beautiful period of the Romanesque style, at the commencement of the 12th century (their construction being between 1130 and 1140) and are anterior by nearly a century and a half to the nave to which they give entrance. They are remarkable for richness and a wonderful firmness of execution. One writer says: "Bourges preserves, in its lateral portals, the most beautiful fragments of the art of the 12th century."

The statuary has the faults and types of that early epoch, a general stiffness of style, the figures being

\* Viollet le Duc.

swathed in draperies plated in close folds, the borders of the robes seamed with pearls and embroideries, pointed shoes, and the absence of all freedom in the limbs and expressions. The great statues owe their excessive length to their double function, taking the place as they do of columns.

The portals have the benefit of a construction which, by prolonging the line of their front by the receding bases and the columns of the porch, give them depth and increase the mysterious beauty of their approach. The statues are not, as those of the 13th century, set against a wall, but placed in the angles formed by the piers disposed in a retreating line, and each statue is sheltered under a dais known by the name of 'Jerusalem the heavenly,' composed of small carved constructions very varied. Every door is preceded by a square porch of simple and elegant construction, open in all their structure, and each presenting two grand arcades separated by a slight monolithic column and surmounted by a rose of six lobes, belonging to the advanced 14th century architecture.

While the great southern door is the richest in detail, the northern, consecrated to our 'Lady of Mercy,' is the more simple, but, in some of its portions, is of an admirable variety and perfection of design. The graceful frieze of the lintel is especially worthy of notice, inspired, to all appearance, by some Roman monument existing at that period, and the capitals are foliated with admirable grace. The faces of the portal are ornamented with six embossed columns, and the two nearest the door are statue-columns. On the tympanum is seated the Virgin Mary holding on her knees the Infant Jesus, who receives on his right hand the gifts of the Magi, and on his left those of

the shepherds. There is much originality in the construction of this porch; in the place of crotchets to adorn the gorges of the arcades the artist has sculptured odd figures, satyrs and apes, giving at the same time animal and flower resemblances. The southern door is the more florid of the two, and is literally covered, but without confusion, with beautiful carved decoration in the Roman style. It is composed of six statue-columns separated by as many piers, sustaining four archivolts; with a tympanum and a large lintel that serves as a base. The three statues on the left, the middle, and the right, wear the crowns of the kings of Judah. One figure farthest removed from the door on the right is that of Moses bearing the tables of the law. The capitals are in themselves Biblical histories, as that of the punishment of Adam and Eve, the sacrifice of Abraham, Sampson slaying the lion, and sometimes legendary sacred subjects. The tympanum represents a theme that is reproduced in many other Roman churches, of Christ in a glory surrounded by the four animals of the evangelists. The rich architecture of the lintel is formed of twelve niches in which are statues of the apostles, and the four archivolts themselves are formed of angels and saints. A beautiful statue of St. Stephen of the 12th century adorns the extremity of the porch.

One must walk around on the outside and place himself in the public garden of the archbishop, at the end of the walk, to enjoy the grandiose sight of the immense development of the apse of the cathedral, which is one of the most beautiful in France and a fine point of the edifice. It has nobleness without irregularity, and is of marked simplicity, graceful and full of noble harmony. The eye measures with astonishment the bold stride of the light buttresses



across the three apses, and the whole has been compared to a vast tiara whose flowers are pinnacles, and whose brilliants are the painted windows on which the sun dazzlingly shines.

The five apsidal chapels are constructed upon a very original plan found nowhere else, resembling five half-turrets fastened upon the sides of the cathedral; and they have for roofs octagonal pyramids of stone and for supports reversed half-cones resting like corbels upon square plinths, of the same form as the counterforts with which they regularly alternate. The bases of each chapel externally are supported like crutches, upon two columns, which complete this interesting design, than which one could imagine nothing more unique. The architect has had recourse to this ingenious expedient in order to gain space by the size of the chapels to place at equal distances the windows that light the subterranean church.

The architectural description of Bourges Cathedral may be summed up in the words of Ferguson in his *History of Architecture*: "In the cathedral of Bourges greater value is given to the internal than to the external dimensions; where the cathedral, though one of the finest and largest in France, covering 73,170 square feet, is still one of the shortest, being only 405 feet in extreme length; yet, owing to the central aisle being wholly unbroken, it appears one of the longest, as it certainly is one of the most striking of all. This cathedral possesses also another southern peculiarity of more questionable advantage, in having five aisles in three different heights. The central aisle is one hundred and seventeen feet high, those next to it sixty-six feet, the two outer only twenty-eight. These last do not appear to belong to the design, but look more like afterthoughts (I hardly agree

with this and do not consider the harmony of the building destroyed but rather heightened by this arrangement, and at Milan, Bologna, and other places in Italy, where this gradation occurs, Ferguson himself admits that where double aisles are used, it would be better to have them of different heights). Bourges Cathedral is singularly beautiful in its details and happy in its main proportions; for owing to the omission of the transept, the length is exquisitely adapted to its other dimensions. Had a transept been added, at least one hundred feet of additional length would have been required to restore the harmony; and though externally it would no doubt have gained by such an adjunct, this gain would not have been adequate to the additional time and cost incurred"—nor, I venture to add, would the sublime beauty of the interior have been preserved. Bourges Cathedral shows us how strong the influence still of the Italian Romanesque was felt in Southern France, imparting to Gothic architecture a gravity and severity elsewhere unseen, an equilibrium of forces, a solidity and lightness, and a unity that pervades the organic structure of innumerable parts—a classic and Roman simplicity—lost in the endless and sometimes apparently meaningless ramifications of the Norman and northern Gothic.

Bourges cathedral is full of religious power; there are few edifices which can compare with it in this respect. It rises like a mount of God from the bosom of the busy city; and its gray weather-beaten front, and the interior, though so rich and lighted in golden spots by a bright November sunset, seemed to me most grave and solemn with the awful thought of the divine presence. The men who built it were earnest men. They believed in God, and in the devil too, if in a crude way; and, oddly enough, the diabolic

sculptures over its main entrance and mingled with the flower-leaves of the capitals, now and then redolent of grim humor, as when a scared devil runs away curling his tail between his legs, and another big one slings a miserably small sinner by the hair just as a cook wrings a chicken's neck—even these do not destroy the sober impression. The foliated capitals, especially of the eastern '*portail*,' with their short and stiff leaves and their deep under-cut carving, are much in the Byzantine style. Here too, one sees in the windows, the oldest bit of painted glass in France, with the colors as deep and brilliant as when first made. The windows are some of the most remarkable to be found, and each nave has its own method of lighting, while the twenty-five great lights about the apse are superb as with ruby and crimson jewel-work, or as if the richest Persian carpets were made of glass and gems and then illuminated. The windows too above the choir and in the triforia, rosettes and lancets, and the grand rose-window at the West—a vast glowing flower-wheel—show what these builders thought of the effects of light, as if the church, though earthly, were meant to catch and concentrate the light of heaven and to lift the soul into its splendors. Chartres, it is affirmed, can alone compare with Bourges in its oldest glass belonging to the 13th century; and, taken collectively, no cathedral in France, not even Troyes, can equal it in the quantity and richness of its painted glass of the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries. But I will rest at having set forth feebly some of the glories of this cathedral which, standing as it does a little aside, seems not to have attracted so much attention as other ecclesiastical buildings of France, where the Gothic architecture flourished in its greatest originality and excellence.

## THE ZEUS-ALTAR OF PERGAMON.

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The great altar of the temple of Zeus at Pergamon which has been brought to light by German sagacity and energy and transferred bodily to Berlin, was dedicated by a successor of Attalus I about 197 to 157 B. C., and exhibits unique sculpture ornamentation. After the time of Alexander Greek art fell into decay, but Greek genius survived in the Rhodian and Pergamenean schools of sculpture, and the domestic architecture and mural decoration of the Hellenic provinces of Southern Italy. Yet there was no great architectonic monument of that period (say about 200 B. C.) which manifested the comprehensive artistic capacity of the Greek race; and the period has, for this reason, always been spoken of as a blank between the Greek and the Roman art epochs. The magnificent altar of Pergamon seemed to fill this void. Here was an original monument of elaborate character and vast proportions. It arose in the time of the warlike dynasty of the Attalidae, who were Hellenic in race and taste, probably in the reign of Eumenes II (197-159) when the historic circumstances were much like those that preceded and produced the buildings on the Athenian acropolis. The heroic strife of the little kingdom of Pergamum with the Gauls who overran Asia Minor and Italy even to the gates of Rome, awoke Greek genius and made it creative once more. It was the fight of the gods against the giants, of Greek civilization and ideas against barbarism and earth-powers.

Sculptures that are in the Roman Capitol and the Villa Ludovisi, above all the "Dying Gladiator" so



called, were the results of this awakening, but the great monument on the acropolis of Pergamum was its more concentrated and comprehensive product. Pergamum, or Greek Pergamon (the modern Bergama where are the ruins of the Christian basilica) is situated near the west coast of Asia Minor, in the province of Mysia, on the river Caecus twenty miles from its mouth. In fact, two rivers, the Caecus and the Selinos run on each side of the old city. It is not so very distant from, but not to be confounded with, the Pergamos, or acropolis, of Troy; but like Troy, Halikarnassus and Ephesus, it is associated with the best art and literature of the Hellenes of Asia Minor.

The discovery of the altar of Pergamum, dedicated to Zeus Soter, was made by the Germans Carl Humann and Bohn. Humann had visited the site as early as the winter of 1864-65, and walked up from the modern town, past the basilica and over the mount of Pergamos 1,000 feet high where stood the royal city of the Attalidae, remarking at the time the promise it gave for the discovery of antique remains. Corinthian columns and marble blocks lay around, half hid in the bushes; but it was not until the summer of 1866 that the work of exploration was begun to be thought of. A sculpture relief of a lion had been rescued from the hands of the chalk-burners, which was afterwards found to belong to the Altar-group. Another high-relief of a god was discovered in 1869; but in September 1878, under the stimulation of Ernst Curtius' researches in Olympia, the exploration of Pergamum was fairly begun, continuing with intervals of relapse until March 1880. The Crown Prince of Germany, the late Emperor Frederick III, took an ardent interest in it, as well as Conzle, the director of the Berlin Museum, and all the university and classical scholars

of Berlin. A sentence from the Latin writer Ampelius in relation to Pergamum was relied upon as giving promise of rich discovery: "*Ara marmorea magna, alta pedes quadragenta, cum maximis sculpturis—continet autem gigantomachiam*"—(a great marble altar, forty feet high, adorned with many sculptures, and which also has a representation of the war of the giants)—this awakened anticipation thus directed to a particular point and object; but where was the altar to be found?

The ruins of some considerable edifice were first laid bare by Humann to the northeast of the present city and half way up the mountain, on its southeast terrace. Ten blue marble Roman-Corinthian columns were found, but being nearer the modern city its materials had been used for the building of fortifications, and otherwise dispersed and destroyed; yet the area of a marble hall, 250 feet long and 120 wide, with architrave, frieze and columns, was clearly made out; and other smaller courts, and an eight-sided altar were discovered, bearing the characteristic features of a Roman gymnasium of the first half of the second century before Christ. But where was the great altar?

Higher up the mountain to the northwest and nearer the crown, there is a wider terrace encumbered with the remains of old Byzantine walls and Turkish towers, mingled with more ancient ruins, blocks and foundation stones, and on this plateau with a broad view below to the south, east and west, lay, without doubt, the foundations of the city of the Attalidae, Pergamon. On the northeast corner of this plateau, higher still, were tumbled heaps of carved marbles, architraves and mouldings, and the capitals of 66 Doric pillars, which form the remains of the temple

dedicated to Julia, the daughter of Augustus, or, as it was called, the Augusteum. But not yet the great altar to Zeus. This, Humann thought, did not stand on the summit of the mount, for the relics of such an immense construction would, in this case, appear in a heap of debris; nor also immediately under the Byzantine wall where blocks of it would have rested on the hill-slope; and there only remained a space between the Byzantine wall and the line of the third Turkish fortification wall; and here, indeed, was a hill of rubbish and ruin; and into this hill on the morning of the 9th of September, 1879, Humann with fourteen workmen began to dig; and, on the next day, they were rewarded with the discovery of two high relief-sculptures, and soon the foundation-work of the altar itself was reached; and, day by day, the uncommonly firm and uninterrupted lines of the altar-form were laid bare; on the 18th of September eleven relief-sculptures of the gigantic frieze, and, afterwards, the Helios group, the Moon-goddess, the lions, the Apollo-group, the Telephos series, and so on, were uncovered, until Humann wrote back to his friends in Germany, "We have found an art-epoch, one of the greatest that remains to us of antiquity."

The continuation of these strenuous labors of excavation and the shipping of the marble slabs and fragments on which were sculptured the "*Gigantomachia*," to Germany, I need not further relate.

The sculptures (which will form the subject of this paper) were carved upon the frieze of four sides of the altar, and upon the sides of the Ionic pillared building which flanked the steps, and ran around the open court of the Zeus-Altar, whose unity of design and creative power make it something original and grandiose. The names of the gods and the giants were

once inscribed severally over each of them on the architrave and frieze, but these names except in two or three instances, have been obliterated, or separated from their objects; and yet the figures, especially of the divinities, are, generally speaking, easily made out. Many of the plates were found built into modern walls, so that it is extraordinary that so much, and such perfect fragments, have been recovered.

The Berlin Museum appropriated its rotunda, and another large hall, formerly the Assyrian and now called the Pergamon Hall, and a part of the Hall of Heroes, to these remarkable marbles, which are, perhaps, its greatest treasure.

The whole of this conglomeration of fragmentary sculptures, forms, in fact, something new and unanticipated in art; rounding out in a superb manner a period of Hellenic Art which had been lost in the mists of a time of general decadence.

On entering the rotunda of the museum one is struck with an impression of grandeur. Groups of powerful forms in yellow white marble, Greek and yet not Greek, Pheidian and yet strange and tumultuous, surround the circle of the hall.

On the left to one entering first comes the Zeus group. The figure of Zeus, father of the gods, striding on with wide steps and shaking in his left hand the aegis, under which a youthful giant, apparently struck in the shoulders, spasmodically sinks in a heap, is seen. With the lightning in his right hand Zeus directs the bolt against another giant, who appears in relief, in back view, with a lion's skin wound around his left arm as a shield, and his right swinging a rock. His pointed ears show his wild nature. His under limbs end in two snakes. The eagle of Jove fighting with his talons flies above. On the other side a giant



with shield and sword is falling, with bowed body, one hand outstretched and the other propped under him for support. The flaming bolt has bored through his thigh. The forms of these are anatomically fine, and would be worthy of the best period of Greek art. The youth and age of the figures are marked, and the muscular development of shoulder, back, and pelvis is of the best *technique*, while the fire and action are almost unequalled, forming a raging scene of conflict of tremendous forces.

More in the middle of the rotunda to the right is the Athena group. Athena Polias, daughter of Zeus, and tutelary goddess of Pergamum, with aegis on her breast and round shield on her arm storms along with resistless might, aided by her sacred serpent. She winds her fingers in the thick locks of a beautiful young double-winged giant, who is pulled down by the snake.

The motive of this group, the expression of the uplifted face of the young giant, and the biting of the serpent in the side of his sinking form, recall the group of the Laocoön, which must have belonged to contemporary art and probably to the neighboring school of Rhodes.

On the left of Athena the goddess of "Victory" flies, who holds out a crown to place on the head of Athena. Beneath, rearing herself from the ground, is the mother of the giants, the earth-goddess Gaia, holding a horn of plenty, and stretching out her right arm deprecatingly toward Athena. At both ends of this group are the forms of dead giants now nearly obliterated.

The series of the Zeus and Athena sculptures were bound together as forming the central link of the whole composition, representing as they did the

principal divinities of the Pergaminian acropolis, and held a prominent place on the eastern side of the Great Altar.

In the same rotunda, further still from the front entrance, one sees a row of slabs that belong together, and make another group of contending divinities.

The sun-god Helios, clothed in a long robe and driving a chariot in the Greek fashion, is a most graceful figure. In his outstretched left hand he whirls a whip. A dead giant lies under his horses' hoofs. Another giant, a heroic figure, with a lion's skin wrapped around his left arm, opposes the chariot of Helios; he probably swung in his right hand some weapon. The horse of a goddess riding by, sheers and turns his head at sight of this figure, and gallops swiftly to the left.

A goddess in a rich garment and cloak, preceding the chariot of the sun-god is probably the goddess of the dawn, Eos, who commonly is not represented as riding, but on foot or flying before the sun chariot.

The horse of Helios, seen on the outside, has a head like one of Pheidias' horses, but his form though full of vigor, shows marks of decay of style.

To the left of the Helios-group is a single slab of special beauty of workmanship, representing a female figure riding sideways upon a horse or mule, clad in a light chiton, and although its original place in the composition is not quite clear it is undoubtedly intended for Selene, the Moon-goddess, whom the Greeks often represent as riding.

Again to the left comes a single slab with a span of Hippokampen, or sea-horses, that have long fish-like bodies and with a yoke on their necks that probably drew the chariot of Poseidon; and beneath them water is designated.

In addition to these groups are many independent fragments of figures in the rotunda, whose relations to each other in the conflict are somewhat more doubtful—as the powerful limbs and lofty form of the Apollo, full of natural freedom and force, who stands over a fallen giant that has been struck by his arrow; and to the left a giant who contends with a lion, that has his head bent under the giant's arm.

To the right of the Apollo, a span of fiery horses, in rough relief for effect, spring over a fallen giant, the chariot of which, only the yoke and pole remaining, bore a god carrying a shield and wearing a fluttering robe.

Lastly follows a relief of the crowned Dionysos in short rich vesture with high girdle, accompanied by his panther that fights by his side. Two boy figures of satyrs go with him whose forms are almost concealed, though the face of the hinder one with goat-neck is seen; this slab formed a corner of the Altar and was apparently on the right of the steps.

There is also the separate figure of a headless and armless Zeus, hurling lightning, which, being found in the neighborhood of the altar, and resembling the Zeus figure in the group of the Altar relief doubtless belongs to the Zeus-Altar sculptures.

Can this giant-war signify something nobler—say Freedom? Or is it the far-off shadow of the fall of the rebel angels dimly portrayed in Pagan type and figure, since Milton's *Paradise Lost* could not be better illustrated than by these sculptures. The superb effect of these colossal figures, raised high, with strong light and shade playing on their distended muscles and snaky limbs and scales, the fire, the violence, the battle tumult, is more grand than beautiful, or merely pleasing; for which last effect the Greeks did not strive,

as the rage of nobler things was in them and guided their artistic sense to seek effects in sculpture of a higher kind than the ornamentation of buildings, especially of religious buildings. What they would carve on an altar, above all, was intended to direct the minds of worshippers to revere the divinity to whom the altar was dedicated, and on this particular shrine it was to Zeus, father of the gods and men, who led the war against the earth-powers, and whose dominion was peculiarly menaced by them.

Leaving the rotunda, one comes into what was formerly the Assyrian, and now the Pergamon Hall, at the end of the Hall of Heroes, which is also filled with sculptures of the giant-war. Near its entrance Hekate and Artemis are recognized with their hounds; and Boreas, the mightiest of the wind-gods, with sturdy legs. He is clothed in short vesture with a shield on his left arm, and whirls a sword against a giant who sinks on the ground. The goddess Hekate is clothed in a long robe, and is poisoning a torch against a winged giant, while her hounds mingle in the fight and bite furiously. It is real fighting and tremendous action. The heads and folds of the immense pythons that oppose her have a venomous twist and life to them.

This goddess Hekate appears with three heads, and her three right arms bear torch, shield and lance. Her sandal is richly carved. Next her is a young giant of heroic mould, the legs powerfully sculptured, supposed to be Orion with helm and shield, who opposes himself to Artemis, with her bow, and who has her right foot upon the breast of a giant extended along the ground, whose left hand is beautifully carved. Between Orion and the goddess is the figure of an older bearded giant of vigorous build and ending



in snaky legs. His neck is seized by one of Artemis' hounds, and in the death-struggle he has gripped the head of the dog and bores his eye with his finger, while his serpent left leg far extended bites the shield of Hekate.

Then follow figures of other goddesses, one of them as beautiful as the divinities of Pheidias, and winged giants with snaky limbs and sometimes with lions' heads.

There are many powerful foreshortenings, and the narrow spaces are most skillfully used and filled with struggling figures and suggestions of such figures; and one face, noble and worn, is like that of Lucifer with traces of celestial beauty.

Writhing in the folds of serpents some forms and heads of supernal loveliness might typify the heavenly in man dragged down by the earthly.

But the faces of the giants, while strong are not brutal, and some of them are full of dreadful earnestness; and there is much in this composition that we cannot now understand, and of deeper interpretation than we may conceive.

I was struck with the fact that the earnestness and nobility of expression is not always on the side of the gods, as if the artist's sympathies were enlisted entirely for the divinities; although they are represented as overcoming in the end with a resistless might. There is evidently a profounder meaning that we have not yet arrived at.

Viewed technically, there is somewhat too vigorous a display of muscle and contorted limbs for the best art, showing that the art of Pheidias had lost its suggestiveness and sunk into realism, like Michael Angelo's delight in muscular development. This, however, is not the character of all the sculptures, and

one of the most beautiful and best-preserved figures is that of a goddess in long rich garment, fluttering veil, and knotted fillet upon her head, which is perfect Greek poetic art.

The carving of the serpents and the anatomical expression of the human form, with the great muscles hollowing the pelvis and ribs contracted by pain, reminding one, as I have said, of the Laocoön from which these sculptures are perhaps not far removed in point of time, is conspicuously seen in one of the groups consisting of a giant, an eagle, and a serpent. In this fragment one is struck with the effective and elaborate carving of the eagle's broad wings, and with the contortions in the neck of the snake, where the marble seems to writhe in live serpentine folds.

At the end of this Hall are many other fragments and statues dug up on the Pergamon mount as well as a colossal torso of Athena with aegis richly composed, (if one might say so,) of small twisting adders, and supposed to be a free copy of Pheidias' statue of Pallas in the Athenian acropolis.

There is also a Prometheus group on Mt. Caucasus, with Herakles, who, armed with a bow comes to the rescue of Prometheus.

On the opposite side of the Hall are arranged another long giant-war series of slabs, as if they were the relics of a battle-field, in groups whose varieties and combinations it would be difficult to describe and must be seen; and when one remembers that we have here only the poor broken remains of the colossal original work, we stand in astonishment at the variety as well as unity of a design so boldly conceived and carried out.

First a quivered goddess with long locks flowing on her shoulders brandishes a weapon, and seizes with

her left hand a snake-ending giant who strives not to fight but only to free himself from her grasp.

Then comes another goddess who treads scornfully upon a young giant who has fallen, and who grips the death-bringing spear that she thrusts with both hands into his breast. There is a total mercilessness in this war. The picture is evidently painted by the gods who seem to prosper in almost every instance, though their antagonists are unyielding and formidable.

Now a four-spanned chariot of winged horses rushes madly on, crunching its way over dead bodies,—perhaps the chariot of Zeus. These bodies are naked, but with helmed heads, and, like a Lochiel, fall with their back to the ground and their face to the foe.

Then a lion rushes along fastening upon the shoulder and thigh of a giant whom he bears down.

After this comes a long row of figures that probably covered the southwest corner of the altar structure.

Another corner slab contains the figure of the goddess of the Phrygian mountain near by Pergamon, Rhea-Kybele, who springs upon her lion and thus rides into the field, the robe leaving the full development of her mighty form visible. A flying eagle of Zeus holds an unspent thunderbolt in his talons.

The goddess Kybele unlike her usual peaceful aspect is armed with bow and quiver, and before the goddess-mother runs a powerful and bearded naked human form carrying a ponderous hammer, who represents one of the Kabiren demons that sometimes accompany this goddess and belong to the same family in the Pergamon ritual.

All these figures are so placed that if set up, or arranged as they were originally in the perfect structure, they would stretch around the three sides and a part

of the front of the four-sided altar, with the exception of the broad flight of steps that ascended to the central space itself. The actual place of offering was in the center area up the ample flight of steps. The water-gods and Tritons, Nereus and Amphitrite, were carved on the north side of the steps, the Dionysos on the south, the Zeus and Athena groups on the eastern end of the structure.

Divinities of the earth, sea and sky, the whole cosmogony of the Greek mythological system, are in arms to defend their dominion against the determined assaults of the lower powers. St. Michael and the dragon, Lucifer and his angelic host, the battle of heaven and hell so portentously revealed in the Apocalypse, may here be obscurely shadowed forth, as a wild pagan rendering of the conflict of good and evil, of heavenly and earthly, of the higher and baser passions of the soul assisted by supernal powers both evil and divine.

The altar was large enough for a hecatomb to be sacrificed upon it, as was doubtless occasionally done, showing, as no other remains of antiquity do, the gigantic scale of the sacrificial system of the ancient heathen nations near the rise of Christianity and the time of St. Paul and St. John.

The technical execution of these sculptures is free and vigorous. Some forms and especially heads have the beauty of the best epoch; and, evidently, the cunning of the Greek hand which was transmitted from Pheidias down through the schools of Skopas and Lysippus, had not failed, but was only diminished by the political circumstances of the Hellenic people, breaking them up into separate sections and destroying the national unity; but when, as in the case of Pergamon, the same set of circumstances which cre-



ated Athenian and Peloponnesian art arose, though on a smaller scale and in less prominent kingdoms, the same results were produced ; they were the same, but still the sun of Greek art was setting, and it set in a storm. Though superb in its effects it had lost its morning glory and noontide repose, and was strange, tumultuous, lurid, appallingly mournful as showing the breaking up of old ideas and faiths, without as yet the rising of new hope and the faintest beginning of the brighter and purer civilization to come.

I will add a word upon the literature of the Gigantomachia.

The mythology of the Gigantomachia in literature begins in the *Odyssey*, where the giants are represented as a wild colossal race as if hewn from granite, and of fearful strength, who had their origin in the West-Okeanos ; and whom the gods exterminated on account of their audacious pride.

Hesiod represents them as springing from the earth, clothed in armor, with spears, created on purpose to execute the revenge of Gaia against the Olympians. They are ever earth-born, allied to men, and like men mortal, so that the name *γίγας* comes from *γηγενής*—sons of Gaia, earth—the original offspring of the nature-power as opposed constitutionally to the super-terrestrial powers, the gods and god-derived heroes.

The saga is a popular one and runs through Greek epic poetry, and is also frequently illustrated in Greek art upon the earliest vases, altars and temples.

Hesiod's armored giants are like the Cadmos brood, and the iron men that sprang from the sowing of the dragon's teeth.

In the 5th century, B. C., as represented in the sculptures of Pheidias, they were monstrous wild men clothed in skins, and armed with rocks and trees, and

then they became confused with the barbaric and half wild nations that the Greeks fought with.

At and after the period of Alexander the Great, the giant forms in sculpture underwent a singular transformation. The bodies end in serpent-legs that begin about the middle of the upper thigh but are not terminated in a snake tail, but with a snake head, as art wrought this out from the first idea of a snaky fold-ending, the serpent being the earth-symbol.

Sometimes in this later art the giants are represented as having wings which would enable them the more readily to scale Olympus ; and sometimes they have men's bodies with lion and animal heads.

Enkelados, who plays a great rôle in Greek epic and whom Athena bound under Etna ; Porphyriion, mentioned in Pindar as the foe of Apollo ; Polybotes whom Poseidon chased through the sea to the isle of Kos ; Ephialtes who contends with Apollo, and, above all, Alkyoneus, entitled by another name on the Pergamon altar, and immortal in the land of his birth, these all play a part in sculptures and vase figures, as well as in Greek poetry.

The scene of the giant-war was, in the earlier literature laid in the peninsula of Pallene, in Greece, riven by a bay of the sea from Mt. Olympus ; in the fifth century B. C., the war was represented as being in the fields of Phlegra ; and later on in the Italian Campania between Cumae and Pozzuoli. In other places also, and in Asia Minor, nearer Pergamon, the scene of it was laid ; and it was also blended with the war of the Titans against Olympus.

Plastic art seized eagerly upon it as a forcible subject of religious illustration, and it was of so deep a meaning that the war of the giants was carved by Pheidias on the inside of the shield of the great statue

of Pallas Athena on the Acropolis, adding the figure of Herakles to the number of the gods.

New meanings, says Preller in his "*Griechische Mythologie*," were attached to the myth of the giants storming Olympus when the wild Keltic hordes from the north innumerable as snow-flakes, invaded Hellas, and who were likened by the Greek poets to the earlier giants, and their defeat is ascribed to the power of the gods.

And, above all, Pergamian art was inspired by the victories of the Attalidae over the Gauls; and no where was the idea represented with more artistic richness of conception, dramatic imagination, brilliancy of design and plastic power, than upon the great altar of Zeus Soter at Pergamum.

I have invented a theory, perhaps fanciful and therefore modestly put forth, in regard to the literature of this subject that I have not seen advanced by any one, and that ranges in time higher than Greek literature, or Hesiod and Homer, and goes back to the oldest book of literature, Genesis. The Hebrew "Nephilim" of Gen. vi, 4, translated in the Septuagint *γίγαντες*, "giants" are spoken of as descendants of angels and human mothers.

"There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God (married) the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man and beast, and

the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air ; for it repenteth me that I have made them." The mingling here of the two races celestial and terrestrial produced a colossal, and it may be beautiful, but wicked and violent race—like the Suras and Asuras of Indian mythology. This monstrous progeny to be cleared from the earth which was to be baptized and purified, caused the deluge. The elemental forces of heaven and earth were let loose and warred together. In the sculptures of Pergamou the thunderbolts of Zeus, the water-horses of Poseidon riding the swelling waves, the aegis of wisdom and righteousness of Athena which protected the ark of true worship, and the strength and beauty of the giant brood itself often winged like angels, the forms of lions, horses and writhing serpents portrayed on the Great Altar of Zeus—in these we may have a dim, distorted and fragmentary pagan record of this mysterious event of the deluge, which in all probability found its fulfillment somewhere in the Orient, or in that part of Asia where the human race first populated the world, and where the earthly and divine first met in open war, as afterwards they were, in that same land of supernatural event and revelation, reconciled in everlasting peace.



## CRITIQUE OF A GREEK STATUE.

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Pure art which clothes form with a spiritual garment manifesting the beauty that exists in the mind and that is the expression of an idea of the best which is in man, of his worthiest self, cannot be corrupt or corrupting, let it originate in any age or under any form of religion however false, like the lily which springs from the black mud of the swamp. If there be truth in the doctrine of Aristotle that matter is resolved into form by the spirit working in and through it, and that in body and soul there is but one substance, we might confidently say there dwells in most of Greek sculpture which is the embodiment of idea in form, a pure spirit—above all in the statue of the Venus of Milo. But there is a mystery which hangs about this sculpture-piece enhancing our interest, and which makes it remain still a puzzle of critics. Where was the beautiful stranger born, and where has she wandered from? What is she doing? What is her motive and character? Is she a spirit of heaven or earth? The whole matter is yet unsettled. This ancient statue, strange as it sounds, belongs to us of this generation, for until our time no one had seen or mentioned it of whom we have any account. There are some things that have risen to immediate greatness by their inherent power; such was Pompeii when its wan face was uncovered from under the pall of sackcloth and ashes; such is the Hermes of Praxiteles, and such the Venus of Milo.

This statue, as is well known, was brought to light in 1820 on the unimportant little island of Melos, now

called Milo, one of the southernmost of the Cyclades, by a peasant digging in his garden—we would say potato-patch—at the base of the Acropolis, in fact uprooting the stump of a tree which disclosed a hollow space or cave; and the marble was found covered up, as if purposely hid, in a niche of the wall of the old city, or more particularly in the crypt of a small Christian church where, in the 7th century, it had been worshipped as a Madonna—this statue which had also been adored in ancient pagan days as a divinity. Some other fragments were found in the same small bricked enclosure; and the French consul, the Marquis de Riviero, bought the statue for a song and sent it to Louis XVIII, who had it placed in the Louvre. It was seen to be made of two pieces, the lower block comprising the drapery, and the line of junction being just below the hips. In setting it up wooden wedges were clumsily introduced giving too much pitch or inclination forward. These wedges have been recently removed and the equilibrium restored, which is a great improvement in posture. Two years after the statue was found, a fragment of a left upper arm and of a left hand holding an apple were discovered in the same locality, and it was supposed that these belonged to the figure and thus its *motif* was proclaimed; that it represented the goddess holding the apple given her by the boy-shepherd Paris; but the workmanship of the hand was crude and its size did not correspond to the rest of the figure, and it was also recognized that the arms when perfect must have had a common action.

The fragment of the hand holding an apple (the apple painted green) led also to a theory started by a French critic and set forth after him by a writer in the *Atlantic Monthly* of October, 1879, that the statue

was an Aphrodite Pandemos, or Venus of the Sunrise—of the morn—of the Spring-time whose tint, or emblematic color, was the apple-green of the early vernal verdure, and that this Venus Pandemos was adopted by the island of Melos (which word also means 'apple,') as its protecting diety—an ingenious but far-fetched theory and which is done away by the fact that the hand and arm which held the apple never could have belonged to the statue at all.

Then it was conjectured that, from analogy, the goddess had been portrayed in a group, with her left arm resting on the shoulder of Ares, and that the other arm followed naturally the same direction of the action.

Another theory, which is the one adopted by Friedrichs, as given in his '*Bausteine*,' is, that the goddess is holding, or did so originally, the shield of Ares in both hands, though not using the shield as a mirror which the position of the hand would disprove, but as an act of the playful triumph of beauty over warlike strength. This would explain the bending back of the body a little to the right, which would be in harmony with the act of sustaining the weight of the shield; and that under the left foot, according to similar statues, there was once a helm, which must have lain flat on its side; but this opinion though put forward by such eminent authority, and most probably partially true as it is, has not sufficient analogy to recommend it, and it is not quite comprehensible either. The reflection on the shield, if the goddess had been represented as looking complacently into it, though a playful motive is one that can be understood; but that she should hold the shield with exertion sideways without any definite object, and without even looking into it, seems to have no point.

Finally, the thought of a 'Venus' at all, has been given up by many, and the theory that the figure is a 'Wingless Victory,' holding and writing upon a shield, has been broached. But while there are other 'Victories' writing upon shields, they are placed, like the bronze Victory of Brescia, in profile as looking on the shield.

The difficulty is also increased by an examination of the pedestal; for together with the statue there was discovered the corner fragment of a base with an inscription, which, as the authentic report is, was of another sort of marble, but agreeing so exactly with the fracture of the real base, that its relation to the statue could hardly be doubted, and the choice of a different kind of marble was explained by the fact that a piece of the original base had been anciently lost, and in restoring it another quality of marble was employed. This fragment of the pedestal which was also deposited in the Louvre cannot now be found; it has utterly disappeared. Upon it was an inscription to this effect—'Andros, son of Menides, of Antiocheia, on the Meander, wrought this statue,'—and the work, judging by this, is brought down to some period past the time of Alexander, since Antioch was not founded until after his death; although the character of the sculpture would seem to indicate an earlier period—the grandly lofty yet at the same time life-full form and the sharply cut drapery, reminding one of the style of the heroic and square Parthenon sculptures.

When the statue was first set up on the Louvre it was pronounced to be the work of Praxiteles—perhaps the Venus of Cnidos—and although DeClarac immediately published the inscription found on the base ascribing it to Andros, or Alexandros, of Antioch, writers and people insisted that it was a Praxiteles;



and the piece of pedestal containing the inscription may have been purposely destroyed to keep up this fiction, since its assignment to an unknown sculptor of later period diminished its value. The painter David, who, at this time, was an exile at Brussels, wrote to the painter Baron Gros to have a drawing of the sculpture made for him and a copy also of the inscription ; and this was done by a young artist and his father who did not either of them know a word of Greek and the words could not have been forged by them ; and this was the drawing from which DeClarac obtained the inscription that he published at the time.

Yet the inscription itself has not prevented others from thinking of Praxiteles or even Pheidias in connection with the Aphrodite of Melos. It is so pre-eminently great a work that it must have sprung from a great source ; but internal evidence cannot, it is argued, cut itself loose from the conditions of historic testimony, and it is itself liable to the variations of temperament, and is therefore one of degree only in respect of certainty.

A thorough critic, like J. Overbeck, is more careful how and to what extent he pronounces his judgment. He indeed favors the idea (*Geschich. d. griech. Plastik*) that the statue is an original Greek work, not a copy, and that it is also a Venus. He agrees with Quatremère de Quincy that its head resembles that of the Cnidian Aphrodite, at all events that it is of the Aphrodite type. Thus far his testimony is clear and consistent ; but he does not go to such an extreme as to raise the Venus of Milo at once to the perfect period of Greek sculpture. I will speak further more fully of Overbeck's view.

Lübke affirms that this is the only Greek statue of Venus which represents the divinity and not merely

a beautiful woman, and he would assign it to the early period belonging to the Pheidian cycle, and to Alkamenes, or, at least, he regards it as the best conception we have of Alkamenes' "Venus of the Gardens" which is lost. This dictum of Lübke presents, as it seems to me, the weak point of the argument. For granting it (though this is by no means to be granted that the invariable type of the Venus of antiquity was the woman rather than the goddess) then the charm of her real womanhood constituted her divinity. Here was her power. Her weakness was her strength. Athene, Hera and Artemis, it is said, were gifted with strong and supernatural powers, Aphrodite had alone—beauty. But it is conceded that the Venus of Melos is too strong and lofty for the usual conception of Aphrodite; indeed, it has been thought that this figure has such a mingling of force and loveliness, that it belongs to the androgynous type invented to represent the supernatural ideal of both sexes. But this is much too ingenious though there is, assuredly, in this sculpture what has been called "the temperate beauty, something of the male and serious character of the best Greek female statuary"; so that if the power of Aphrodite were in womanly beauty alone, then this theory that the statue is the powerful goddess and not the woman is destroyed by the fact of its masculinity by which its beauty is diminished.

All sorts of theories, in fact, have been started. One Swedish critic has written a book to prove that the statue formed one of a group of three figures in the "Choice of Herakles," the central figure being Herakles, and the statue in the Louvre representing Pleasure. This is the lowest and weakest of the theories. Other opinions advanced are, that the sculpture represents Venus with the apple of discord;

also that it formed a group with Ares ; and yet again that it is Aphrodite, but Aphrodite representing a Victory, and originally holding a shield on her knee. This opinion of Victor Rydberg, a Swede, comes near to J. W. Stillman's theory in the *Century* magazine, who supposed it however to be, not a Venus, but simply a Victory ; and, more than that, the renowned "Victory without wings," which stood in the shrine of the little temple of Nike Apteros on the Athenian acropolis. In like manner other "Victories" are represented as holding shields resting against the left knee which is slightly raised as if to support something. Overbeck and other critics have discussed the theory of a "Victory," while, on the whole, they have rejected it. One difficulty with Mr. Stillman's brilliant theory is a difficulty which he himself suggests, that the eyes look straight on instead of being cast downward to the shield, or tablet, upon which the "Victory" was inscribing the names of the heroes of Marathon. This is an insuperable objection which he attempts to do away with by saying that she has raised her eyes for a moment above the shield to look contemplatively toward Marathon in the distance where the heroes fell ; but this is subtle rather than forcible ; it is too abstract a motive for the Greek artistic mind to have conceived ; neither does sculpture allow of a transient action which endures but for a moment.

The bronze 'Victory of Brescia' gives the position of the arms holding the shield, having a posture similar to that of the Venus of Melos whose arms as far as the direction is given to their fragments, are exactly in the attitude of one holding a tablet—but the eyes of the 'Victory of Brescia' are directed to the shield on which she is recording the names of heroes,

while her left foot, not unlike the left foot of the Melian Venus, which, as we may suppose, originally rested on a helm.

But the Venus of Melos is too beautiful by far for a mere 'Victory' and it has the unmistakable Aphrodite type—the small head and the smile of the Homeric Aphrodite.

The statue, therefore, in my view, is not a simple 'Victory,' neither is it a simple Aphrodite, but the two combined—a Venus Victrix. It has evidently the motive of action within itself, of a self-sustained 'Victory'—but at the same time it is not an abstraction like the idea of victory, but is a person, above all the perfection of lofty and winning womanhood,

"A spirit yet a woman too."

Its pose, now that its first attitude is restored, shows that it held a shield as a Venus Victrix. The left hand, formed for gentle grace, supports the ponderous and idle mass of Ares' shield. It is beauty victorious. It is beauty playing the rôle of victory. It is beauty giving its approval, its rewarding smile, its gracious and dazzling honor, to heroic deeds. This is as far as I would theorize, for while singularly perfect in itself, the motive is left undetermined through the injury its arms have sustained, totally destroying the meaning of their action.

There are four principal types of Aphrodite (Müller makes but three) in Greek sculpture, clearly distinguishable from each other though they have in common the main traits of the goddess, viz: the small head, the well-developed though not over-full form, the somewhat narrow sloping shoulders, the soft expression of the eyes not widely open but the lids drooping, the smile, and the whole impression one of



grace and sweetness ; accompanied usually by some symbol of the water from whose foam she sprang ; and the hair, if not circled by a diadem gathered in a knot behind having a look of inartificial elegance. The first of these classes, belonging to the oldest art, is the Venus Genetrix, goddess of maternal nature, and entirely draped, or clad in a chiton which conceals the shape excepting the left breast. This is the temple-divinity, not alluring but commanding and worshipful—the idealized power of productive nature represented in the large-limbed and full-robed statues of the Parthenon and the Venus Genetrix of the Capitol, holding an apple. The second type was the Venus Urania, which was a loftier ideal figure, the daughter of Zeus and Harmonia, having a crown and with calm aspect which might stand for the conception of Heavenly Love, or the heavenly beauty, of Edmund Spenser's hymn. Pheidias' statue of Venus Urania is lost, but we have descriptions leading us to suppose that it was of a sublime seriousness as if its spirit were more of the skies than earth, and we ought not to forget that in Aphrodite the Greeks expressed their ideal of beauty, the highest as well as lowest, which was the foundation principle of Greek art. The third was the Aphrodite Anadyomene, the Sea-born Venus, undulating in lines as a wave of the sea, with no pretense to the goddess or heroine, and belonging to the period of later Attic art, for the unrobed form is not commonly found before the time of Praxiteles. The loveliness of feminine beauty is hardly idealized at all. Such is the beautiful statue of the Capitoline Venus. With a water-urn over which the robe was thrown, symbolizing the water, or bathing ; such was the Cnidian Venus of Praxiteles, now lost, though there are existent statues that recall the medal of Cnidos repre-

senting its effigies with a water-urn at its feet ; but the best known example is the Venus de' Medici with the symbol of the dolphin, with which statue Winckelmann was quite carried away and he says that "it resembles a rose which after the dawn unfolds its leaves to the rising sun—passing from an age harsh and angular to another more perfect and conscious of its beauty." It is indeed "the statue that enchants the world," but in which the old Greek ideal of the beautiful is imperceptibly lowered. It catches no ray from above. It is human not divine. It charms not elevates. There is a large space in the world of the beautiful between the Venus of Melos and the Venus de' Medici ; yet in its fragmentary and stained condition, this last statue challenges admiration. Her broken arms and lost hands, as M. Viardot said, "might a thousand times better have been left mutilated, like the Venus of Melos, leaving the spectator to supply what was wanting"; but after all that has been said depreciatingly as to the confessedly lower type of the Aphrodite in this sculpture that the world has gazed at with a pleased wonder at its grace, it must be indeed a coarse prosaic imagination that, in these days, can find anything unworthy or base in a work like this. The fourth class is that of the Venus Victrix, which exhibits the robust, full-developed character, of the oldest type, but with more of hard pride of expression ; the form though feminine yet has strong lines and countenance of heroic cast. This figure is usually but half draped, and in the lower portion, and with the left foot slightly raised and firmly planted. This is the Venus Victrix whether it stands in group with Ares, or holding his shield and helm, or a palm, or an apple, as sign of victory. The Venus Victrix of Capua in group with Eros, is an

illustration of this but more tame and conventional in expression than others. The Venus Victrix of the Louvre holds a sword in the left hand and is accompanied by an Eros putting on the helm of Ares, and has a haughtier and more imperious expression. The lovely Venus of Arles, though gentler, must also be classed with these, because she holds the apple that signifies her triumph in the contest with Hera and Athene. Can there be any doubt as to which of the types the Venus of Melos belongs—proud, noble, hard, somewhat defiant in expression and triumphant in attitude, whether with or without a shield, or a sword, or an apple of victory—but still sweet and charming, the eyes “upon whose lids the graces dwell,” the smile, and the attributes of Aphrodite—but of Venus Victrix?

The view taken by Overbeck of this sculpture is, assuredly, the greatest critical authority, but in my opinion, is rather negative than positive. He does not tell us what the statue is but what it is not. He is opposed to the theory of its being grouped with Ares, in which Aphrodite's hand is laid upon his shoulder; since the group of Mars and Venus in Florence shows a different turn of head and expression of countenance, and has a mythical and idyllic character, which this statue has not but is real and life-like. The supposition of the shield also does not meet Overbeck's favor. If a shield were held, he says, according to the direction of the arms it must have been one-half the size of the body, which would thus have concealed the form that was meant to be seen; and, also, he does not think that the left foot rested on a helm like that of the Venus of Capua or the Victory of Brescia, because there is not room for a helm under the foot. To be sure, he says, if you

wish to make it out a statue of Venus Urania there is room perhaps for a tortoise under the foot, but it does not otherwise have the marks of an Urania. The whole conception, he affirms, is at an opposite pole to that of the Venus de' Medici. The one represents a lofty purpose and excellence, the other a soft and gentle sentiment. So also the Capitoline Venus is winning rather than majestic or commanding. The beauty of the Venus of Milo's face is masculine, the nose being too large for regular grace, and yet the ground-type is Aphroditean. In the form there is the same contrast. The delicate charm is replaced by a form of robust strength, exceedingly beautiful but without a touch of tenderness. It has, in fact, utter unconsciousness. The conception is not that of the goddess of love but of the divinity who desires not so much to be loved as respected. It is not passive yielding of power to rule by the very weakness of beauty, but proud assumption of power through acknowledged sway of beauty as a ruling force of the universe. The fact that such a remarkable work should not have been known and repeated in antiquity, and should have been found hid in the obscure isle of Melos instead of having been found and crowned in imperial Rome, is, Overbeck thinks, a proof in favor of its originality. It was not copied, therefore it is an original. The drapery also, he says, is simply for effect, artistically; and it is not necessitated by the motive of the action. It is not (like the Venus of Cnidos) a dress which is laid off, or to be laid off, before entering the water. It is the artistic way of displaying by contrast the perfection of the figure that is left uncovered. It is, as it were, an unclad form; and the costume is not designed to clothe it but to heighten its beauty. This striving for effect is an



argument in favor of an epoch later and more artificial than the grand period. I would remark here that all the examples of Venus Victrix in Greek art have the drapery arranged just in this manner, covering the lower portion of the body and leaving exposed the beauty of the upper portion.

There are also technical faults which Overbeck points out in the composition of this statue, that the neck is too long, the two sides of the face and of the upper body are unequal, the lower limbs somewhat rigid and elongated, and there are still other signs of haste in the work, that show it was not made carefully after a model, but thrown off impetuously as an ideal creation to express a conception of the artist's own mind and feeling. The fact too that the workmanship, mechanically regarded, was not highly finished or polished to a mirror-like smoothness, though lending it a more warm and flesh-like tone, gives evidence of its lack of artistic perfection.

Overbeck admits the noble character of the statue, that its conception is pure, lofty and grand; but to say that it is the best of all Greek statues of Aphrodite, is, he thinks, rash, since we do not possess the original of Praxiteles' Venus, to see which travelers went all the way from Rome to Cnidos; or the Aphrodite of Scopas, which among the numerous statues of Rome was held to be the most beautiful; and he looks forward with hope to the discovery at some time of these great sculptures to show the superiority of recognized masterpieces of Greek art to the anciently unknown Venus of Melos.

Now as to the authorship of this statue, which, whatever may be the opinions of critics, or of such eminent authority as Overbeck himself, has been accepted by poets, and by the modern mind, as perhaps

the most noble work of sculpture. Heine's last walk in the Boulevard of Paris may be recalled. In May 1848, a day of revolution, when the masses of people rolled along through the streets, it is related of Heine, that dragging himself on his stick he tried to extricate himself from the throng and uproar. He sought refuge in the Louvre and in the room of the Venus of Milo, and he wrote of it: "Only with pain could I drag myself to the Louvre, and I was nearly exhausted when I entered the lofty hall where the blessed goddess of beauty, our dear lady of Milo, stands on her pedestal. At her feet I lay a long time, and I wept so passionately that a stone must have had compassion on me. Therefore the goddess looked down pityingly upon me, yet at the same time inconsolably, as though she would say 'See you not that I have no arms, and that therefore I can give you no help.'"

Did Praxiteles, as the Parisians thought, make the statue? One would certainly like to place it in the category with the Hermes of Praxiteles, were it not for its lofty type almost taking us back to the heroic period, or at least to that between Pheidias and Praxiteles. But the feeling, the subjectivity of expression, which characterizes it, forbids its being classed with the earlier epoch, while the atmosphere of crystalline chasteness that breathes about it takes it out of the more effeminate art-circle of the school of Praxiteles. The same reason would seem to preclude the theory of its production in the sensual and luxurious Græco-Roman epoch, though the inscription on the base assigns it to the authorship of Andros of Antioch in the revival of Greek sculpture in Roman days. The grand originality of the statue could not but by a miracle belong to a decadent period such as this was. The inscription, upon a different piece of marble, may have

been an after-work or entirely false ; and if he were the sculptor, Alexandros may have belonged to a greater school of sculpture.

This brings me to a theory of authorship that I would desire to advocate, which, if not original, is original with me, and was a result of long study of the statue at the Louvre, and comparison with other sculptures. The lovely Aphroditean type of face, notwithstanding the vast heroic mould of the limbs, first impressed me. It is the goddess of beauty however the action. The form is evidently bending with, or bearing up against, a weight of something, probably a large shield. But it is not perfect, for the lower limbs are almost unnaturally long and the head disproportionately small. The hair is parted in the middle and arranged in clusters and curls around the sides of the face, and much worked up not in the manner of the simpler Pheidian statues. The neck too is long though this gives greater expression. The left foot remains unrestored. The side-light on the face, as it now stands, brings out in a remarkable way, the sweet expression ; but the face, viewed from the side, is hard and masculine, and without a trace of a desire to be admired for its beauty, or loved. The form in its perfect roundness and fulness as pressed by the right arm, is as if from nature, but the drapery seems somewhat metallic, and is cut under where the corner of the robe falls. The right shoulder is much eaten into and worn, and the left arm at the back is wholly gone so that the shoulder looks square. The waist is large as if nature formed her for the mother of a heroic race, and yet the graceful bend of the Aphrodite is seen at the back as well as at the front and sides. But mere grace is scornfully absent, and while there is womanly sweetness and capability of

utmost tenderness, there is no touch of beauty whose power is in its weakness. To whom can such a strong and beautiful type point? I believe to Scopas, or to the school of Scopas. To the sculptor of the Niobe group. And let us look at this.

An interesting question could be raised as to the causes which brought about, in so comparatively short a period, the immense change in sculpture from the time of Pheidias to that of Praxiteles and Scopas; and it is not enough to say, true if it be, that the Peloponnesian war—the most terrible war Greece ever had—shook the land from centre to circumference and in its effects changed the condition of things, the character of thought, opening a new era for the energies it developed while at the same time planting the seeds of weakness in the intellectual and spiritual life of Greece. To speak definitely these were two chief causes which contributed to that change in the character of Greece that was reflected so strongly in its art; and first, the political revolution in which Greece lost its autonomy and was split up into factions; “the sentiment,” says Ernst Curtius, “that Greece was a united Hellas lay at the bottom of those artistic achievements which have given Greece a substantively preëminent place in the world’s history. The artist stood in the midst of public life; and it was this which preserved his vigor, and which prevented the occurrence of an estrangement disadvantageous both to civic life and the arts; every one felt he was a Greek, working for the glory of the common Hellas.” But in the strife in which Greek unity was broken the selfish principle in politics was introduced, and a common discontent reigned in states and among men. Individuality came to be for universality. There was even a decided gain, in one respect, to art—it grew more human if less



héroic. Driven from the outward to the inward it won in richness, variety and emotional depth. Man, in his full measure, became subject of artistic treatment, *i. e.* man as he really is. While the soul's powers were stimulated, the individual man stood out with his thoughts, passions, forces and weaknesses. Less abstractly perfect, style was more poetic. There was a daring which sought to delineate the true life of humanity. It was like the modern English school of Matthew Arnold, Rossetti, Swinburne and Browning, which has gained in subjective what it has lost in objective power. There was no more the repose of Pheidian sculpture but the tumult of mind was boldly expressed—its love, hate, wonder, fear, aspiration, despair, joy. There was vehemence and physical ardor even, as in the Phigaleian relief-sculptures of the Amazon frieze of the temple of Bassæ; and, later on, a greater accumulation of motives as in the Laocoön, and a positive tendency toward that sphere of ideas where opportunity was given for delineating the movements of the human soul. The second cause of the change was more in the sphere of the religious or purely spiritual, arising from the new spirit of scepticism that marked the era of Aristotle and Euripides. With the older masters the religious spirit was uppermost, but with the new the human. Pheidias carved the idea of divinity presented to his mind by a higher inspiration, Praxiteles and Scopas carved men and women, fit, as they thought, to be worshipped. The awful and glorious figures of the gods, to a certain extent conventional and uniform in type, became with these later artists less typical and devotional, but more beautiful. They were represented according to qualities arising from the critical and free observation of the artist himself. But of the two,



Scopas departed less from the heroic divine to that of the softly human. The strong Pheidian type, lifted above the sensuous, was lowered less in his hands than in those of Praxiteles, while still more of art and of the artificial than in the earlier style, was apparent. Scopas, born on the 94th Olympiad and at his prime about 387 B. C., was not so very far removed from the time of Pheidias, and though he wrought in other parts of Greece, was himself among the Attic sculptors, inheritor of their style and method. Far different, for example and comparison, is the 'Winged Nike' of Paionios, found at Olympia, which, with its undoubted power and bold movement, lacks conspicuously the exquisite simplicity of Attic style and the real beauty of life. Pliny mentions a statue of Aphrodite in the temple of Brutus Gallæus made by Scopas and says "it surpassed the Cnidian Aphrodite of Praxiteles and would have made any other place (but Rome) illustrious." The phrase "*Praxitelem antecedens*" is, indeed, capable of another meaning; but some have gone so far as to draw from these words theories that have discovered Scopas' statue variously in the Venus of Capua in the Louvre, the Venus Chigi at Rome, and the Capitoline Venus; and, I ask, why could not the same reasoning, or conjecture, be applied equally well to the Venus of Melos? At all events Scopas was the known sculptor of a transcendently beautiful statue of Aphrodite, which shows that he might have carved this statue. This deep-minded artist who wrought the animated bas-reliefs on the mausoleum of Halicarnassus, some of them now extant; who probably designed the poetic Achilles group in Bithynia in which the movement and grandeur of ocean are portrayed; who may have conceived the powerful figure

of Ares subdued by love now in the Ludovisi villa ; who made the Apollo Citharædus with its majestic expression and sweeping robes ; who also sculptured the passion-tossed Mænad ; who may have carved the original of the Capitoline Venus of such purity as well as beauty of form ; who, above all, by the imaginative power and depth of expression which characterized his genius, could alone have been the author of the Niobe group—does not evidence seem to point to him as sculptor of the Venus of Milo? Winckelmann assigns the Niobe unhesitatingly to Scopas ; and the same characteristics of the Niobe are found in the Venus of Melos. There is the same lofty type. There is the same grand largeness of mould as of the “mother of all things, who beneath the moving stars gives increase to the sea that beareth ships, gives increase to the earth that bringeth forth harvests, and favors the conception of every living creature and their birth into the light of day.” There is the same invincible pride, the hard scorn indescribably mingled with winning loveliness that makes her “the desired of gods and men.” There is the same majestic fall of the many-folded drapery, although in the Niobe it is cruder in carving as if for effect, or as if the figure with back hidden, occupied the centre of the tympanum of a temple. There is the same youthful efflorescence of full-curved lines as in the forms of the younger figures of the Niobe group. There is too the same evidence of art, or artifice for effect, showing that the heroic has grown human, though it still remains pure as the marble out of which it is carved. Can this belong to the Næo-Greek any more than to the Pheidian epoch? Can it come either from the chisel of the partially archaic Alkemenes or of the softly sensuous Praxiteles?

If we regard the statue from its own evidence alone, artistically considered, everything, it is my conviction, points to Scopas, or to a great disciple of his school, as its author, and to Venus Victrix—beauty victor over all things—as its subject. But to whatever author or whatever period it may be assigned, it rests finally on its own merits. It belongs to the small class of those transcendental works, which, in some sense, have no age, or country, or merely contingent beauty, and which the clash of archæologic theories and the war of critical opinions hardly affect at all. It stands in a serene atmosphere complete in itself and in its realized form of perfect beauty, if not technically yet æsthetically perfect and where what is individual is eliminated, and shines as a product of the absolute idea of the beautiful the same in all time and under all conditions.



## THE MASTERPIECE OF SCOPAS.

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Classic literature from Homer to Cicero and Ovid seized upon the Niobe-myth for its profound illustration of human life; the Greek dramatists made use of it; Plato drew from it an argument for the nature of the gods and Aristotle an important question of ethics. It has no less impressed the imagination of moderns, who, from Dante to Heine, have been greatly taken by its tragic pathos. Dante places Niobe in Purgatory along with Nimrod and King Saul, in the class of those who are disciplined for 'Superbia' (Pride), and adds some feeling words of his own as if the human still predominated over the divine in this ancient myth.

In antique statues, reliefs, vases, paintings, terra cottas, sarcophagi—Greek, Etruscan, Roman, Lycian, Phrygian—the story is delineated in manifold ways, showing the depth, richness and reach of this legend, and its varied expressions in ancient art, which itself sprang from myth that had its roots in religious symbolization.

To whom shall be assigned the authorship of the sculpture-group of the Niobe, now in the Uffizi gallery at Florence? This is a question which was also asked in pagan antiquity. Pliny writes "similar doubt as exists in regard to the Janus statue, arises about the Niobe, with her slaughtered children, which is in the temple of Apollo Sosianus, viz: whether it be a work of Scopas or Praxiteles?" Although some epigrams ascribe the work directly to Praxiteles, yet this matter was by no means settled

in the early days, and evidently excited lively controversy.

The group is no less wonderful in æsthetic value even if the question of authorship be undecided ; but it increases the interest of a work to know its author, for then there is an element added which throws a stronger individual light upon it, and we take, as it were, the "personal equation" of the problem. If we could get rid totally of the identity of Homer, and look upon the Iliad and Odyssey as a patchwork of lays recited by rhapsodists, how much of the charm would be lost to the strains of the wrath of Achilles and labors of Odysseus as we imagine them to have been really sung to some princely descendant of a hero of the Trojan war, upon the great 'phorminx' of the blind bard by the sea-shore.

Winckelmann, the highest authority of the older critical school, gives his opinion in favor of Scopas, of the island of Paros, who lived, or was in his prime, about 387 B. C., as sculptor of the Niobe-group. Winckelmann's view is drawn chiefly from internal evidence of style, and is sustained by the weighty authority of Meyer, Kugler, Feuerbach, Overbeck, Gerhard ; while, on the contrary, the critics Visconti, Lanzi, Heyne, are in favor of Praxiteles. Welcker—a great name—says the question is fairly open for discussion ; and Friedrichs, while warmly favoring Praxiteles, thinks the whole matter of authorship still unsettled. Winckelmann's estimate of the work is given in these words : "The truth of this remark is apparent in two of the most beautiful works of antiquity. One of them is a representation of a fear of death ; the other, of extreme suffering and pain. The daughters of Niobe at whom Diana has aimed her fatal shafts, are represented in that state of indescrib-

able anguish, their senses horror-struck and benumbed, in which all the mental powers are completely overwhelmed by the near approach of inevitable death. The transformation of Niobe into a rock, in the fable, is an image of this state of death-like anguish ; and for this reason Æschylus introduced her as a silent personage in his tragedy on this subject. A state such as this, in which sensation and reflection cease, and which resembles apathy, does not disturb a limb or feature, and thus enables the great artist to represent in this instance the highest beauty just as he has represented it ; for Niobe and her daughters are beautiful, according to the highest conception of beauty." While the praise conveyed in this quotation is not too exalted, I would venture to differ from the opinion that the look on the faces of Niobe and her daughters is that of expressionless apathy, or that it can be designated by any such term, even if to describe it would be a delicate task of psychological analysis.

Overbeck thinks that in moral elevation the Niobe group stands next to the Parthenon sculptures—its interest, meantime, we would say, is more the subject of human thought and sympathy than even these great works.

The temple of Apollo Sosianus at Rome, mentioned by Pliny as that which in his time contained the Niobe, was founded by Sosius who held office under Marcus Antonius in Syria, and he probably brought the sculpture-pieces of the Niobe from somewhere in Asia Minor to decorate his temple at Rome dedicated to Apollo, and they may have originally belonged to a temple of Apollo in Seleucia in Syria ; and it may be remembered that Scopas ended his career in Asia Minor ; and how gloriously, if the Niobe sculpture were his work !

The group now in Florence was long thought to be the original pieces, but the marked difference in the workmanship of the various figures, and the repetition of some of these that have been more recently discovered, have led to the conclusion that they (the Florentine sculptures) are copies of some lost original, and, technically, not its equal.

The Florentine group numbers besides the mother and the youngest daughter, six sons and three daughters, with the pedagogue—twelve figures.

To the number of these twelve, both in ancient and modern times more figures have been added—in earlier days, for example, the well-known statues of the Discobolos, the Wrestlers, the Praying Boy now at Berlin, two statues of female figures known as the Psyche and Terpsichore, and even a horse belonging to one of the sons arrested in his athletic sports—but these are mostly disallowed. A statue at Florence which was formerly called 'Narcissus,' has also been adjudged of the original group, in which opinion there is a general agreement.

Some too have thought that the beautiful torso of the figure of the Kneeling Youth, or 'Ilioneus,' the gem of the Glyptothek at Munich, with an action as if to shield himself from danger coming from above, was of the number of the 'Niobids,' but this is doubtful, and its being nude is against it.

More recently still, a fifth daughter is supposed to have been found in a statue at the Berlin Museum of which a *replica* exists at Naples; but both Friedrichs and Overbeck concur in thinking this to be an error.

Among the Florentine figures the individual groups of the brother sustaining the sister, and the pedagogue with the youngest son have been repeated—the first is in the Vatican, the other, found at Soissons,



stands now in the Louvre. They are copies of what doubtless composed the original composition, so that the figures which with almost a certainty belonged to the original group, are the mother with the youngest daughter, and besides them three daughters and six sons with the pedagogue, in all thirteen figures; and these it is conceded must have formed part of the work as it came from the hand of its author.

Almost all the writers of antiquity, however, who mention the number of Niobe's children, affirm that she had seven sons and seven daughters, whose destruction, of a greater number, would thus enhance the glory of Apollo. While we now possess the full number (seven) of the sons, three of the daughters are lacking.

We have, therefore, naturally still to search for the daughters who are absent; for, according to the law of symmetry which rules in Greek works, for the son who lies prostrate there should be to balance it another figure of a daughter likewise stricken to the ground. For the figures also of the pedagogue and son, there should be a corresponding group of a nurse and daughter, since this parallelism can hardly be realized in the mother and daughter. This would bring up the number to sixteen persons, of which there are fourteen children, and in all probability the group consisted of as many as sixteen—a whole system of sculptures.

How this magnificent and elaborate cluster of carved figures was first arranged to show its unity; how it stood and where it stood; these are also difficult questions, more so, indeed, than the question of its authorship, for we take it for granted, that there was no master besides Scopas who in imaginative power, passionate and moral depth, and comprehensive

breadth of genius, could have carved this wonderful group. Separated as the statues now are, they can, indeed, hardly be called an art-group, but a scattered company each claiming its attention, yet one in a profounder controlling motive.

Did all these figures originally occupy the gable-end, or pediment of a temple, or did they stand on the ground though related to each other—but more freely and independently in the vestibule or side-hall of a temple, or outside and before the temple upon an undulating rocky base with a not too distant background, so as to produce the effect of high relief? According to this last view Niobe would occupy the highest point, and the children from all sides would be fleeing towards her; and in any arrangement, as a matter of course, the queenly mother would occupy the centre, and her place is indicated by the fact that she alone is represented in face. Notwithstanding the objections to arranging them in a pedimental group within the triangular gable of a temple, Overbeck and Welcker hold to this, both from precedent and the fact that otherwise—if it were not designed to stand immediately under the apex or highest point of the gable—the figure of Niobe would be too colossal. In the original group, however, different heights of base may have accommodated them better to their different positions so as to be seen from below. The actual bases of the Florentine statues with the exception of one, are irregular in height as if representing a rocky piece of ground, or the acropolis of Thebes, where the poet Sophokles places the scene of the tragedy; and Friedrichs thinks the statues were immediately inspired by Sophokles.

Niobe, daughter of Tantalos, wife of Amphion, King of Thebes, was the mother of a large and beau-

tiful family of sons and daughters. The joy of the mother over her children rose to an immoderate pitch, and she vied herself with Leto who had but two children while Niobe had fourteen. In her pride she promised the Thebans to make a sacrificial offering of Leto and her children, hoping for divine worship to be rendered to herself.

For this insane boast the children of Leto—Apollo and Artemis—visited upon her a fearful punishment by slaying her children with their arrows in one day. This destruction of her hopes drove Niobe mad and she was changed into stone ever weeping, on Mt. Sipylos in Asia Minor four or five miles north of Ephesus. Pausanias mentions this legend and says: "I saw the Niobe when I was in Mt. Sipylos. Near at hand it looks like a rough stone, and affords no semblance of a woman either mourning or otherwise; but on moving away to a greater distance one really seems to see a weeping cast-down woman." A recent photograph of the rock on the northern side near Magnesia, would require a vivid imagination to make it out a woman or any other form. There is undoubtedly some rude archaic carving on the rock perhaps of the 'Meter Sipylene,' a local divinity, or more likely a monument of an Egyptian conqueror. If indeed it be the monument of Niobe alluded to in the Iliad—it is the oldest Greek sculpture.

According to the sun-myth theory by which Max Müller explains Greek nature-religion, there are two theories, the one that the Niobe represents the annual destruction of the bloom of earth by the shafts of the sun-god; and the other that Leto, the mother of Apollo and Artemis, may have meant in symbolization with Zeus as father—heaven and earth, Apollo the far-darting and overcoming sun's beams, and Ar-

temis the moon's paler but fatal ray, perhaps altogether signifying the deadly forces of nature combined to destroy human life and hopes, and it might possibly be that the sculpture was the monument of some calamity arising from an atmospheric plague that swept away a whole royal family.

The sculptor has caught the decisive moment of the act. The punitive divinities, not themselves represented, shoot their unerring shafts on both sides of the height where Niobe and some of her children are, and where the rest hasten swiftly in their distress, driven like a herd of deer by the clanging of the silver bow.\* This motive gives unity, and draws notice to the point where the mother shields her terrified youngest daughter half covering her with her form and sheltering robe—"toto corpore mater toto veste tegens."

Alone amid the arrowy storm, gazing at the clouds from which the bolts descend, like a rock she stands calmly unterrified though pierced with anguish, while her children are struck one after the other and are falling around her.

The whole is a terrific tragedy, and who hears of it without seeing it must suppose that it would be a fearful scene; but how different the interest with which we see the statues! Fear and pity are awaked, but, as in Greek tragedy, fear and pity are blent with an exalted feeling of admiration for the skill with which the work is done, and for the living genius pervading it. Though moving the feelings it can be

\* According to the scholarly author of the "Gods in Greece," Apollo and Artemis are the divinities appointed to bring sudden death to mortals; but Apollo, as the highest poetic ideal of the Greeks, chivalrously slays the sons of Niobe only, while—with a subtle touch of satire—it is left to Artemis to destroy her hapless human sisters.



tranquilly enjoyed. The nobleness of the pure beauty of the mother's face attracts and holds us. Physical griefs and their convulsive anguish, as in Laocoön, do not appear in Niobe and her children. The children are suddenly changed from the bloom of life to death—therefore their beauty is not taken away, and death is softened of its terror. Then too this is a heroic race—the divine arrows are received without a cry. "Still as a flower plucked from its stem," says Feuerbach, "sinks the dying sister at her brother's feet; who, even in his own extremity seeks to shield his sister," lending heroic pathos to the scene. Even the pedagogue sacrifices himself to protect the youngest son, and only a sigh escapes from the sister struck in the neck by an arrow. All this patient and courageous conduct of the children only makes the foundation or support for the loftier bearing of the mother, who occupies both the actual and spiritual middle-point of the group, and to whom the eye ever comes back, as often as it is taken off by the surrounding forms.

Feuerbach named the Niobe 'mater dolorosa' of pagan art; but the Niobe is not only an anguished mother but a proud queen, who forgets not her worth and greatness in the storm of grief. "The lifting up of the robe in the left hand to cover her child is a womanly action, and the right hand pressing the child into the protection of her sheltering form shows forethought and mother-love exerted to the last moment, while the head raised in calm dignity and tearless eyes directed upward to the slaying divinities indicate the strength of a queenly soul, which though pierced with deathless pain is uncomplaining, and mates itself in its maternal pride with the mother of gods." The drapery, a difficult thing in art, though

somewhat crude and metallic, is marked by its majestic flow, as if greatness were painted in all the lines of the grand figure. This mingling of invincible greatness of soul with immeasurable sorrow, as shown in the upward gaze, and in the protecting stoop or cowering of the form over the youngest child, has a mingling of strength and tenderness which forms the unique character of the Niobe. It must have been a great soul truly in the perfection of the power of Greek sculpture, that could have conceived such a figure. She does not pray for pity because it is useless; she does not give way to fear for it is weak; she is not terrified by the anger of the gods because her own humanity shares their nature and is divine; but in the compressed bosom, the brows drawn together, and the stoop of the body and knees under the burden of her sorrow, the mother's heart filled with unending grief expresses itself; and while the heroine, like the strong German women and queens of the Nibelungen Lied, speaks out in every line and feature, yet human grief grips the steadfast soul, and she loses her consciousness in blank delirium, and turns into stone, an everlasting monument of sorrow.

The art of Pheidias, simple, emotionless, sublime, was too early for this; for the expression of a human soul and the Madonna-like beauty of the face, are of the age of Scopas and Praxiteles; and yet the ideal, the expression of divine depth of love, the delineation of the concentrated tragedy of human sorrow, the ample but still simple grandeur of the forms, belong, in my opinion, more to the stormily emotional, and profound genius of Scopas, than to the beautiful one of Praxiteles, and have a deeper meaning than he would have attempted, upon his pleasing and lovable theory of the beautiful.

The group as it stands in the Uffizi was found in the year 1583 at Rome, near the Church of St. John Lateran; and Cardinal Ferdinand di Medici, who bought it, placed it in his villa on the Pincio. In the year 1775 the sculptures were transferred to Florence, and in 1794 they were placed in the gallery.

The statue of Niobe has undergone some few restorations. The nose, the point of the upper-lip, the greater part of the under-lip and a piece of the chin, the left under-arm with its drapery, and the right hand with half of the under-arm which originally lay a little lower so that the head of the daughter was more visible, and the left foot—are modern. These restorations are more in number than in importance; and they do not touch the spirit of the statue, which is substantially the same that came from the hand of the master. "The proud great form of the mother," says Friedrichs, "stands out in striking contrast to the clinging, shrinking form of the child-like maid clad with a linen garment so thin as if it had no drapery at all, which has for its foundation or back-ground the mass and amplitude of the mother's figure and drapery. The one serves to bring out by contrast the beauties of the other."

The Niobe is ever the middle figure of the group however they may have stood, not only larger and more perfect, but by the expression of the countenance, the carriage of the head and body, the monumental sweep of the drapery, the concentrated power of the tragedy, and the whole moral motive of the action—the point of all sympathy and thought.

So the artist has made her; and never was there such emphasis given to a statue, never such a preparation for its consummate effect, never such a concentration upon one form in art.

On both sides the fleeing children tend to her. The first daughter is on her right hand. Rushing forward she is about to draw her drapery over her head for defence when smitten on the neck. Her left hand (a restoration but clearly indicated by what remains) is bent back to the wound. The whole figure though arrested by a deadly wound is full of grace, especially the head, which has long been studied and copied by Italian artists and painters, especially by Guido Reni. There is in it something softly feminine and simple, as of a maiden having attained her womanly perfection but sinking murmurless at the stroke of fate, with all rich hopes cut down as a full-blown rose nipped by the night-frost.

The second daughter, like one of a flock of frightened swans, fleeing also to her mother, is an exceptional figure, especially in the level character of the base or ground upon which the statue stands, while the base of the other figures is uneven, representing rocky ground, as if they were fleeing up a mountain for safety. This daughter is still unwounded. The left hand is opened in a gesture of astonishment while the right is drawing her garment over her head.

Next to this is the group of the brother and sister—the eldest son supporting the sinking form of his dying sister, and trying to shield her without a thought of himself, a manly and touching picture of self-abnegation, which with other features like this, heightens the moral tone of the composition and makes it thoroughly noble. One hand of the young man wrapped in his robe is raised to cover his sister wounded in her left breast, and his other hand supports her sinking form. This is a lovely form from which the drapery in the hurry of the dreadful scene is falling away.



The next son stands with one raised foot on a rock as if he were climbing a steep. He looks in one direction toward the danger but tries to shield himself with his robe in the contrary direction, showing that the arrows flew from all points and were not intended by the sculptor to be represented as coming regularly on both sides, thus the terror and confusion are heightened. Death strikes from every quarter. No one knows where to look for safety.

The next figure, as now arranged, terminating the right hand number of figures, is the son who falls on his knees who seems to be trying to draw the arrow from his back with his left hand, while he stretches up his right hand as if with a vain appeal to heaven—bringing to mind the lines of the Persian poet Omar Khayyam :

“Lift not your hands to it for help, for it  
As impotently rolls as you or I.”

This admirable statue was called formerly “Narcissus,” but Thorwaldsen, undoubtedly with justice, placed it among the Niobids. There are two examples of this at Florence in one of which the head is bowed lower still. There is a question whether the back of this figure which is wrought more carefully than the front is not intended to have been turned to the spectator, thus breaking up the uniformity, and giving ground to the opinion that the figures were grouped around a common centre.

Some have supposed that the real termination of the group was originally a son or more likely a daughter prostrated in death in order to correspond with the other end by the pedimental theory. I think this is doubtful as we really do not know how the figures were collocated, and if indeed they were placed in a pediment under the gable of a temple.

On the left side of the Niobe as they stand at present, come the statues of the pedagogue and the youngest son; and here too the moral is elevated. Not only throughout all the composition do the children rush to save one another, not thinking of themselves first, but here one who is not a child, but only a slave, or an attendant, shows the same self-sacrifice, and rushes to his own destruction in trying to save his youthful charge. The original action of these two figures is best seen in the Soissons exemplar found in 1836, where the pedagogue lays his right hand on the right shoulder of the boy to protect him, while he raises his left hand toward the heavens deprecatingly, or more likely in utter amazement as he did not know the cause of this terrible visitation. The head of the pedagogue is a restoration—it must have once presented more of the slave-type; for the dress of the devoted slave with the long sleeves and his boots is barbarian, showing foreign origin.

Then there is the figure of another daughter cowering and evidently sinking; and in a moment more she will fall prostrate in death. Her drapery is the Greek chiton and chlamys thrown into agitation by the sudden movement. There is artistic power in this figure, unity of terror pervading body and countenance which seems to crush it to earth, and which makes it a statue of most pathetic beauty. While found with the Florentine group it was for a long time supposed to be a Psyche, but a later verdict has rightly placed it among the Niobids. There follows a son who while sinking upon his knee mortally wounded, seems to be made if not of nobler yet sterner stuff than the rest, since he gazes unflinchingly into the heavens, and seems to defy the gods. The strong and unsubdued virile nature is there. Psychologi-

cally this adds power to the whole, showing that in this epoch the deeper being, the variety of character, the individuality of spirit and motive, were boldly expressed.

There is last the extended and prostrate figure of the dead or dying son in the bloom of youthful beauty. He is stretched on his back with his left hand on the wound and his right arm over his face as an instinctive movement of self-protection against the dazzling shafts, while his eyes are closing in death "like flowers at set of sun."

This ends the tragedy, manifold in features and comprehensive in interests, than which the *Iphigenia in Aulis* of Euripides, the *Agamemnon* of Æschylos, and the *Hamlet* and the *King Lear* of Shakspeare, are hardly more deeply moving—a world of emotions brought into a moment of time—in fact a triumph of sculpture over poetry; and yet its art is such that the terrible is beautiful; and in this again I believe we see the genius of Scopas, who wrought in the human heart. The great idea of the work is human sorrow sent by the gods to punish proud thoughts and human sin. And, perhaps, it draws inspiration from that tremendous idea of the Greeks which runs through Greek poetry and drama, that the golden balance is kept even, that extraordinary calamity follows extraordinary prosperity, that the light of happiness of any kind must be tracked by its corresponding shadow. The *Niobe*-destruction represents that affliction which overtakes men in this world as from the skies, sudden, irretrievable, overwhelming, giving no reason. The dearest hopes are crushed in a moment, the noblest activities are laid low as by viewless arrows, and life is petrified. Love, the purest thing of earth, could not avert it. It could but suffer and be still. The

ancients observed this. They too were the children of sorrow. The immeasurable and impenetrable mystery of this life affected them as it does us, more so because they knew less of the true philosophy of sorrow. They expressed this in their art. To illustrate it they seized upon some legend, some popular tradition or event, and sought by loftiness of style and sentiment to interest and awe the spectator.

The Niobe sculpture belongs to the age of Euripides, who has been called "the poet of the world's grief," and it was probably contemporaneous with the *Alkestis*, the *Orestes*, the *Iphigenia in Aulis*, of Euripides. The scholar who studies Greek literature without studying Greek art loses the richest source of illustration and shuts out a strong side-light pouring in on these studies. Shakspeare has done more to make the art of modern music what it is, even to its latest romantic Wagnerian developments, than any other mind; exemplifying the truth that the arts are one, and that their harmony is an electric chain. The group of the Niobe exemplifies, as nothing else does or can do, a peculiar trait in the tragedies and poetry of Euripides. I quote the words of another: "The ancients long since noticed the prominence of courage, or fearlessness (*Εὐψυχία*), in the principal heroines of Euripides—their voluntary choice of death, or undaunted submission to it when suddenly announced. But ancient critics were not likely to lay stress on the point of greater interest to modern readers, for which ancient criticism had not even a name—I mean the *unselfishness* which prompts or accompanies these instances of heroism, and that is peculiarly the virtue of women who show it oftener than men. We have in the extant play of Euripides four characters of this kind, all of whom face death with firm resolve."



But, let me ask, where will this unselfish heroism of woman in the face of death, be found in ancient or modern art in a manner comparable in nobility and spiritual power to the Niobe? Where do we see the silent passion of a grand soul more boldly given? The Laocoön expresses masculine grief of the father and patriot, but it is upon a lower plane, and of a less comprehensive moment, than the sorrow of the Niobe who dies uncomplainingly with her beautiful children, shielding them to the last with her whole self; and at all events the Niobe was the highest effort of the later school of sculpture where the "great drama of death is met with greatness of soul, and there is the calm of beauty amid the highest tragedy of sorrow."

It does not, however, seem to me that the Niobe sculptures have as yet been studied in the right way, with the correct perspective, or with an effort to put oneself in the artist's own point of view so as truthfully to reproduce his conception.

The statues have been studied, each individually, with all the refinements of critical analysis, and they have been grouped according to the theories of learned men by scientific tests and mathematic measures; but the underlying creative thought is of more importance. When a painting of a battle-scene is made by a great painter, while there is apparent confusion and inexplicable manifoldness, there is a unity of conception in the artistic mind, or there would be confusion worse confounded in the composition. Thus in the scattered Niobe group there exists somewhere a uniform organic thought, from which the whole springs, an idea which moulds all, and which, did we know it, would be a key to the inner harmony of all; and then its separate groups would fall into their place, its strong artistic contrasts would come out,

each several figure would have a meaning as related to the whole, and we would not be studying whether this or that figure belonged to the group, and stood here or there, but the formative thought would include or exclude it as by necessity. Its wider meaning would order all. We must, indeed, place ourselves in the mind of Scopas to do this; but is not this the law of right interpretation in literature as in art? Do we not in this way interpret Dante? Do we not thus even interpret so deep an author as Isaiah or St. John? What this creative thought, or artistic unifying conception, was, it may be difficult to discover—it is not waste time to strive after it if we do not succeed in finding it—and I have asked myself what does this great sculpture-group mean? Why was it selected and made at all, and in the time it was made? Such a work challenges such inquiry.

It was a time in the history of Greece of unparalleled political as well as spiritual unrest. The State-life that the Greeks loved and lived was destroyed by the civil war and leveled to its foundations. No common ground of life was left. Minds were afloat. Old faiths were held in partial abeyance. The ancient order was overturned and submerged. Great sorrows, strifes, calamities had fallen like thunderbolts on the land—on every state, household, and man. The shafts of trouble flew thick and fast from all directions.

The deeply musing soul of the sculptor—the true poet or prophet of the times—searching for the interpretation of things, human and divine, for the key of the mystery, seized upon the well-known tragedy of Niobe to express the state of Greek mind in this its profound unrest, with its hereditary but not now operative belief in the gods as sources of change,

phenomena and trouble, and its sole remaining support and refuge that it could be sure of, in the free-will of man.

There it rested, going no further. Men must die but they could die freely. Free-will, the central idea of Greek philosophy, amid all, would arise from its native soil and reign absolute in them :

“ that which we are, we are ;  
One equal temper of heroic hearts,  
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will  
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.”

Attic art—the art of Scopas—was rooted in the popular political life, drawing its life from the feeling of the community as planted in the common humanity, and its deepest philosophy was that “ man was the measure of all things.” This art entered into the roots of life, the inner conflicts of the spirit, to explain them. It tried also to support and relieve them ; and when the State-life was lost men strove to live in Art, and to regain what they had lost in the endless beauty of an art which lifted them into the infinite. That was the natural bent of Greek thought in trouble. The Niobe-group spoke eminently to the Greek heart. It revealed to them themselves—their very souls.

It took up all ages, all conditions and both sexes as in a drama, or a tragedy, enveloping them in a common inevitable destruction, and showing them at the same time how trouble was to be met and even to be made beautiful. It was the triumph of mind, of the soul over matter and the elements, of free-will over fate. There came about, according to the philosophy of Aristotle which pervaded Greek cultured mind, a purification of human sorrow wrought through the instrumentality of poetry and art.

“The sublime,” says Goethe, “is in every mind, but it is destroyed by reason unless the Beautiful unites itself with it.”

Thus the Beautiful, thus Art, in the pagan but deeply thoughtful Greek mind, and especially in the sublime work of the Niobe, did the mission of religion to a certain poor, and, we would be apt now to say, false extent; but it cannot be denied that it lifted the mind above the miseries, pains and sad deformities of this life into a spiritual region where the free-will of man, purified by sorrow and emancipated from all fear, reigned as if it were itself endued with another and immortal life.



## HELLAS.

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To trace briefly some of the natural causes which, taken together, tended to make Hellas the source and the holy land of Art, and to draw a few conclusions of an educational kind from the theme, is the aim of this essay.

Sun and soil, atmosphere, history, geography, racial derivations and distinctions, political changes and environments, must tell something of the influences subtle if they be, imperceptible as the arrows of light if they be, that create and color a nation's art, while still there ever remains the unknown factor of genius.

Greece, as a land, is wonderfully central. It belongs to Europe and yet is intimately connected by outlying islands (the Ægean is a Greek lake and its islands are Greece broken in fragments) with Asia and Africa. Greece, in fact, is made up of strips and portions of three continents, and it received the best influences of the oldest countries bordering the Mediterranean—the focus of civilization—while, at the same time, it could isolate, defend and develop itself.

Mr. Grote describes the extent of this little land in these words: "Its greatest length from Mt. Olympus to Cape Tænarus, was two hundred and fifty English miles; its greatest breadth, from the western coast of Akarnania to Marathon in Attica, one hundred and eighty miles; and the distance eastward from Ambrosia across Pindus to the Magnesian mountain Homolê and the mouth of the Peneius, is about one hundred and twenty miles. Altogether, its area is somewhat less than that of Portugal. Modern Greece,

not so large as Ancient Greece, is about two-thirds the size of Scotland. In regard, however, to attempts at determining the limits of Greece, we may remark, first, that these limits seem not to have been precisely defined among the Greeks themselves; and next, that so large a proportion of the Hellenes were distributed among the Ægean islands, and so much of their influence upon the world in general was produced through their colonies (for Hellas was wherever a higher civilization was) as to render the extent of their original domicile a matter of comparatively little moment to verify.\* This diminutive territory, forming the southernmost point of Europe and stretching down by its islands almost into an African zone and clime, is one of the most mountainous of European states—"an insular Switzerland"—so that, to quote again from Grote: "not only few continuous plains, but even few continuous valleys, exist throughout Greece. The largest spaces of level ground are seen in Thessaly, Ætolia, the western portion of Peloponnesus and Bœotia; but irregular mountains, valleys frequent but isolated, land-locked basins and declivities, which often occur but seldom last long, form the character of the country."† Homer's "hollow Lacedæmon cleft with glens" would describe other portions of Greece. The country, cross-barred by mountain ranges, offers few means of inter-communication. A number of small states, autonomies, was the result. No autocracy could prevail permanently over such a region. The jealous spirit of freedom was generated and kept alive. The small spaces drove the people into cities, and to the building of

\* Grote's Hist. Greece, v. ii, p. 211.

† Grote's Hist. Greece, p. 215.

cities ; so that the individual character of each city's architecture and sculpture came to be expressed (Argos was as different as might be from Athens) although the common identity of the national Greek genius was marked in all. But nature seemed disposed to keep the people politically disunited, nourishing their vigorous individuality; while, at the same time, the extraordinary amount of coast-line owing to the frequent indentation of the land by the water, gave the country accessibility from within and without. No part of Greece is more than forty miles from the sea. The sea penetrates into the heart of the land ; and there is but one province; that of Arcadia, which is not strictly maritime, or possessed of harbors. While the grand mode of inter-communication was thus by the sea, yet vessels were at first small, the trireme not making its appearance until the 8th century B. C., so that only individual voyagers not multitudes, or tribes, were transported. In this way, as one has said : "the mixture of ideas was more rapid than the mixture of men and races. These remained separate, while among mariners there went on an interchange of thought, myth and history. The poems of the Homeric cycle took the place of a central administration, and the sayings and poems of great men, transmitted to and fro, formed a real unit which was intellectual rather than political. It was Greece, not because all was submitted to one government, or pertained to the same nationality, but because the people spoke the language of the Iliad and Odyssey. Politically separated but spiritually fused, up to the Lydian and Persian conquest, or about 560 B. C., Hellas presented the aspect of some twenty states, each confined within a small space, having its own government, gods and customs, and jealously

guarding these, but at the same time all were indescribably one in spirit, thought and language—in fact one family, with the originality that belongs to such independent yet morally united masses.\* This was a condition favorable, in an unparalleled degree, to the development of national genius, and to the determination of every form of mental activity, and to that fluency, adaptability and progressiveness that distinguished the Hellenic people.

In the ancient days, the sea was not only a means of inter-communication but was the medium of transmitting ideas to and from outside nations lying around the Mediterranean basin, and of maintaining intercourse among the more widely extended Hellenic populations. The sea was a mighty factor in Hellenic, as in English, civilization. The sea was newspaper, book, railroad, electric telegraph. It stimulated the intense desire of knowing what was to be known, characteristic of the Greeks, of whom Odysseus was type. Grote remarks upon this: "Their position made them at once mountaineers and mariners, supplying them with a variety of objects, sensations and adventures; each petty community, nestled among its own rocks, was sufficiently severed from the rest to possess individual life and attributes of its own, yet not so far as to subtract it from the sympathies of the remainder; so that an observant Greek, commercing with a great variety of half countrymen, whose language he understood, and whose idiosyncracies he could appreciate, had access to a larger mass of social and political experience than any other man in so unadvanced an age could personally obtain. The Phœnician, superior to the Greek on shipboard,

\* Boutmy's "Architecture en Grèce," p. 12.



traversed wider distances, and saw a greater number of strangers, but had not the same means of intimate communion with a multiplicity of fellows in blood and language. His relations confined to purchase and sale, did not comprise that mutuality of action and reaction which pervaded the crowd at a Grecian festival. The scene which here presented itself, was a mixture of uniformity and variety highly stimulating to the observant faculties of a man of genius—who, at the same time, if he sought to communicate his impressions, or to act upon this mingled and diverse audience, was forced to shake off what was peculiar to his town and community, and to put forth matters in harmony with the feelings of all. It is thus that we may explain, in part, that penetrating apprehension of life and character, and that power of touching sympathies common to all ages and nations.”\* In a word, the *human* element came into Greek character, drama and art, and which was the most important feature of Greek art, and the secret of its expression, variety, force, progressive life.

The climate of Greece—another important factor—was, and is, a diversified one, (for climate depends on altitude as well as latitude) ranging through many degrees of heat and cold according to the locality, and this, together with the ruggedness of the soil which, somewhat light and thin did not produce with tropical luxuriance, though with good results under careful cultivation, stimulated the energies of its inhabitants and rewarded them too; for the productions of Greece, when the land is well tilled, are abundant and numerous, like the fruits of its mental soil. Taine presents us with a pleasing picture of

\* Grote, v. 2, p. 225.

the climate and soil of Greece: "To the north of the Ægean Sea the climate is still severe, like that of the centre of Germany; southern fruits are unknown in Roumelia and its coasts produce no myrtles. Descending towards the south, and on entering Greece the contrast becomes striking: Forests always green begin in Thessaly at the 40th degree; at the 39th in Phthiotis (realm of Achilles), in that mild atmosphere of the sea and the coast, rice, cotton and the olive grow. In Eubœa and Attica the palm-tree appears, and the almond in the Cyclades; on the eastern coast of Argolis we find thick groves of the orange and the lemon; the African date lives in one corner of Crete. At Athens the finest fruits of the south grow without cultivation. Frost is scarcely seen more than once in twenty years; the extreme heats of the summer are modified by the sea-breeze, and, save a few gales from Thrace and blasts of the sirocco, the temperature is delightful. Nowadays the people are accustomed to sleep in the open air from the middle of May to the end of September. In such a country everybody lives out of doors. The ancients regarded their climate as a gift of the gods. 'Mild and clement' said Euripides, 'is our atmosphere; the cold of winter is for us without rigor and the arrows of Phœbus do not wound us.' A people formed by such a climate develops rapidly; man is neither enervated by excessive heat nor dulled by severe cold. He is neither condemned to dreamy inactivity nor perpetual labor; he does not lag behind in mystic contemplation, nor in brutal barbarism. The moderation of physical nature endows the soul with vivacity, and so balances it as to lead the mind thus disposed and alert, to thought and action."\*

\* Art in Greece, p. 12

The result of this nature was a fine race, more symmetric and sinewy than massive, and which was perfected by the national custom of athletic exercises; for bodily symmetry was a passion, and, in one city, a temple was dedicated "to the most beautiful;" indeed, we might say that beauty was worshiped in Hellas, for the body was regarded as the image and manifestation of the divine; and, even at the present, the Greeks are, physically, a handsome race with elegant and active forms, though they might be accounted somewhat too slim, but the guide I had in Greece would have served as a magnificent model of Heracles—one cuff of his mighty hand sent a Corinthian horse-dealer staggering across the hall to measure his length on the floor—and a traveler says of the women of modern Greece: "The Greek women have all the quickness of their race with mobile features and superb eyes, but they lose their gracefulness of form early. There are, however, now many different types of Greek beauty, from the mixed race of Albania to the semi-Latin women of Scio, and the semi-Asiatic of Asia Minor." It should not be forgotten what the Greek woman, under all her disabilities of social position and education, once was and was capable of—the courage of the Spartan woman, the beauty and genius of Sappho and Corinna of Tanagra, the last of whom won the prize over Pindar! At this day, one might study artistically the physique of the Greeks, mixed though they be with other races, even as Ernst Curtius criticises the form of the eye in Greek statues. Beauty, some one has said, is a result of race. It is also aided by locality, climate, mode of living, physical training and freedom of thought and action; the peculiar fineness of American features arises from similar causes,

and the incessant moulding power of an active keen intelligence.

The purity and wonderful cloudless transparency of the atmosphere, especially of Attica, is remarked by all who visit Greece, as well as the bold picturesqueness of mountain scenery. Denuded of their forests, the mountains present clear-cut sculptural forms, with exquisite adaptations to light and shadow, and the most delicate tintings of color. When I saw the mountains of Ætolia that come down so abruptly to the Gulf of Corinth, they were covered with a brownish red heather, that, combined with the intense blue of the water of the gulf, gave a most beautiful coloring to the scenery. Twin-peaked Parnassus, 8,068 feet high, which is hard and hot climbing, as I can testify, was partially covered with snow at the summit; but charming sylvan scenery, with great grey rocks, splendid oaks and broad plane trees, grass, flowers and rushing brooks, was at its foot, and goat-footed Pan, playing on the syrinx, might have been seen in the shadow anywhere; while further up the scenery grows savage and bare, the ghastly white withered trees cropped by avalanches, and toward the top the sharp limestone crags and stones cut the feet badly. The view from the conical summit of *Lykeri*, or from the lower shoulder of the saddle-back, commands almost the entire country of Greece down to Mt. Taygetus, in the Peloponnesus, showing a ruggedly corrugated land, Helicon and Cithæron, frowning with gloomy pines, near at hand, and from Olympus on the north to the mountains of Achaia; also to the islands of Eubœa and Ithaca, so that one sees, in imagination, the lone galley of Odysseus upon the blue sea steering homeward.

Coming up by the ancient road from the Crissean



plain, fruitful still with olive trees, and approaching Delphi, one could hardly find anywhere more romantic and gloomily grand scenery. There is darkness and light, mystery and brightness. The sanctuary of the sun-god, the central worship of Greece, stood on a narrow amphitheatric shelf walled around by mountains, while directly above tower the tremendous rocks of "Phædriades"—"Resplendent," "Daughters of Brightness,"—below which runs the Castalian spring through a most profound gorge into the river Pleistus. A little blue rift of sky only is seen between the cliffs. Two eagles, like those sent by Jove to meet at this spot, were slowly sailing about the peaks of the "Phædriades" which were bathed in sunshine, as if waiting to prey on the impious cast from the rocks. The sparkingly clear water issues from an earth-throat full of mystery. I clambered up into it as far as possible, for the sides were like polished marble, and there are niches hollowed in the rocks as if for shrines and small temples. Delphi is a field of exploration which is full of promise. The French have dug here before, but somewhat superficially, though the boundary-wall of the Temple of Apollo, constructed of great polygonal blocks, was laid bare, and some columns of the Athenian portico mentioned by Pausanias, were found. But much more is to be found. While wandering within the radius of half a mile, I came across many valuable fragments of sculpture partially buried, especially of tomb-sculpture with female figures of the best period of art. Castri, the village occupying the site of the theatre described by Pausanias, has been visited by two earthquakes of late, so that not too quickly can these explorations be made. The temple, of which a fragment of the terraced wall remains, was, for the

most part, a Doric building, though it was rich in sculpture-decoration, especially of bronze, which was the oldest form of Greek sculpture of importance; and many of the marble statues that now exist are but the copies of older bronzes, as, for example, the Apollo Belvedere, that might have stood at Delphi, holding the aegis to repel the attack of the Gauls—Apollo and Artemis being the guardian deities of the spot. Some sculptures mentioned as celebrated in ancient times and now entirely lost trace of, were known to have stood at Delphi. Nero and Constantine, both vandals in their way, stripped it of hundreds of statues, so that it is not impossible that something still of exceeding value in art may be discovered by deep digging, as the site has really never been thoroughly explored. The “omphalos” itself, or conical stone that marked the centre of the earth, of which there is a representation on a Greek vase, with Apollo sitting upon it, may be dug up; but if it should be, it would be an archæological rather than artistic discovery, for archæology, related as it is so closely to art, and which has grown within the last quarter of a century into so richly suggestive and important a science, is not art.

Delphi is a mountain sanctuary, the centre of the Parnassian mountain-system. Mountains, with their strange sights and sounds, their sublimity and terror, were shrines of the religion of nature, her altars, where the forms of Greek art arose; and the mountains about Delphi formed the home of the divinities—of the Pythian Apollo, and of Dionysos, whose wild rites of mœnads and bacchantes were celebrated in the neighborhood of the Corycian Cave, and of Lycorian Zeus who had a shrine among the clouds on the summit of Parnassus, and of other gods—as well as

the home of clouds and tempests. The storms and calms of these peaks that penetrated the serene blue of heaven, were in sympathy with, and in a deeper sense embodied, the passions and aspirations of the soul. But the Greek gods were the visible interpretation of the phenomena of nature-forces; since nature in Greece (I felt every moment) beyond that of almost any other country, with its rapid electric changes and vivid life-currents, its boldly varied succession of mountain, valley and sea, its concentrated strength and beauty, and its ready response to man's labor as well as its domination of his mental faculties and imagination, is marvelously fitted to develop spiritual force, even as nature and spirit lie close together in Greek art. Greek art was nature transfused by spirit. It was, as Ruskin says of another school of art, "imitation touched with delight." The Greek surrendered himself joyfully to nature, and thus through nature expressed the deepest that was in himself. The Greek myth sprang from this source. A "myth," as the word is wrongly used, does not mean nothing—as when we say such a thing, or such a person, is a myth—nor does it mean something which is a mere creation of fancy, an illusion and deception; the basis of a Greek myth, on the contrary, was an actuality, or some fact of universal moment. Mythology was the "word-of-mouth" (as the term signifies) explanation of the phenomena of nature, the popular expression of belief in superior occult powers, manifesting themselves in nature's veritable forces and phenomena. Thus an order of higher beings, or persons, were created, or evolved by the bright Greek genius however suggested, to rule the unseen world of causes, each reigning over his own sphere; and the myth sprang up after the

truth was observed. It was the human search for the divine person, and was no child's fable, or illusion, nor should it be so treated in the history of religion and of art. The intellectuality and sense of perfection, as well as the moral sense of the Greeks themselves, tinged Greek mythology with a beauty that the mythology of no other nation possessed; and they seemed to draw from the soul of nature its profoundest and most poetic thoughts; and in this way their art was the first that was brought to perfection in the principles of beauty.

Greek mountains are interesting also in another artistic point of view, of a more practical nature, as producing "a compact grey limestone" which hardens often into the purest white marble like the marbles of Parnassus and Helicon, and, above all, of Pentelicus. This marble, found so near by, made Athens and Athenian art what they were; for with brick, or soft stone, or granite, such marvels never could have been wrought as with this marble, cleaving with a fine fracture, tenacious and firm, of crystalline purity and taking on warm tints from exposure to weather, altogether constituting an incomparable medium of art.

If liberty has two voices, one of the sea and one of the mountains, Greece had both.

But, after all that has been said of the scenery, the climate, the soil and the situation of Greece, this is not sufficient to account for the aesthetic sense, for the artistic power, which, while it penetrated to the heart of nature, yet was so clear, true and symmetric in its manifestations; and still subtler social influences must also be taken into the account. What was there in the race itself, that made it so supe-



rior, intellectually and spiritually, to contemporary nations?

There is, what the French call, "*le milieu psychologique*" which is more important to the origin and growth of art, than all other considerations. Though it drew from all, the Greek stock, morally, did not owe very much to any other nation. Greek thought was not an evolution from Egypt or the East, any more than from the North or the South, but was, essentially, a spontaneous product. "This race while maintaining a precarious foothold on the shores of the Mediterranean by its courage and genius, contributed a new element to civilization which has been the mainspring of subsequent progress, but which, as it expanded into wider circles and encountered an increasing resistance from without, unavoidably lost some of the elasticity that characterized its earliest and most concentrated reaction; but it was the boast of the Greek, that to Asiatic refinement and Thracian courage he joined a disinterested thirst for knowledge, philosophy and art, unshared by these."

This was a people of unique gifts and manifesting a unique nationality, which was of so gritty a character that it has not yet quite disappeared, nor has the race become entirely Slavonic, like neighboring peoples of Southeastern Europe. The Greek is still a lover of knowledge and education, full of ambition, fond of dramatic entertainments and joyous feasts and dances, worshiper of heroes and the past; and if no longer strong, he is eager to excel, so that Greece may become a nation once more not dependant on others.

"The central fact," says Prof. Jebb, "of Greek history, from the earliest age down to the present day, is the unbroken life of Greek nationality; and

here, after all, is the contrast between the destiny of Italy and Greece. The principles of Roman law have survived the Roman type of character and mind ; but Greece, the first seat of European politics, has left us no direct political inheritance, yet it has perpetuated the stamp of Hellenic society in a national character of marked distinction."\*

Who, and what was this Greek race—this "Prometheus of nations" from which others have caught fire? Eschylus says: "gain is bred from gain, slaughter from slaughter, woe from woe;" the oldest tragedies, sufferings, poems, traditions of the Greeks that we know of, were founded on still earlier events, sufferings and actions.

The Greek was an old race, some suppose, as they claimed to be, original, so difficult is it to discover its sources. Prof. Jebb again says: "The national unity of the ancient Hellenes rested not merely on common language and common institutions but also on common blood ; for all Hellenes regarded themselves as scions of one stock."† Notwithstanding this, there were two or more races that had possession of the land in times before the Hellenes, which was the true name, for "Greeks" is a Roman name. While comparative philology shows the Greek language to be closely affiliated to the Indo-Aryan, denoting an eastern origin, this does not account for the origin of the race ; and the oldest Greek monuments show the work of an apparently indigenous, laborious, wall-rearing and tomb-building people, whoever they were and come from wherever they did, who at one time occupied the peninsulas of Greece,

\* Jebb's *Modern Greece*, p. 1.

† *Modern Greece*, p. 2.

Italy and Southern Europe. This Græco-Italic race, sometimes called Turanian, for want of a better name, when regarded as inhabitants of Greece proper, are rightly enough termed Pelasgians (*Πελασγοί*)—inclusive of many tribes such as the Leleges, Kunetes, Kaukones and Thracians. These formed a pre-historic people, so treated by Homer, Herodotus and Thucydides. The philologic argument in favor of the Asiatic origin of the Aryan race, seems to have broken down; at least the contrary theory of a purely European origin is making headway—that a people of vast antiquity, originally occupying the centre of Europe, spread south and north, becoming the ancestors of Greeks, Latins, Germans and Slaves, and branching off also east into Asia, let them be called Aryan, Turanian, Pelasgic, according to their localities. The Pelasgians (though this has been controverted in favor of the Iberians), were the inhabitants of Greece before the possession of the Hellenes, reaching the height of their civilization about 1200 B. C., and disappearing entirely after the eighth century, when there are no more properly Pelasgic towns or villages. This term "Pelasgic" is used in two senses, first as denoting a Greek nation which inhabited Thessaly during the heroic age; and, secondly, as pre-historic. Pelasgian, may again have been a word of general meaning which was applied to tribes of different origin and race, being, etymologically, a compound of *περαν* and *ειμι*, and signifying the "further-goers;"\* which ante-Hellenic tribes, had their home in Greece principally in Thessaly, Epirus, Bœotia, or Ætolia at the North, and Arcadia at the South, in the last of which localities the Pelasgic

\* Schliemann's Troy, p. 126.

language survived in the Greek, or was assimilated with it.

This aboriginal Greek people, if they might be so called, dispossessed by the true Greeks or becoming themselves Hellenes, brought into the united race some distinct artistic elements which go to make up the common stock, for they were not unskilled barbarians, but extraordinary builders, builders of solid walls though of a rude sort. Thirlwall says: "The huge structures, remains of which are visible in many parts of Greece, in Epirus, Italy, and the western coasts of Asia Minor, and which are commonly described by the epithet Cyclopean, because according to the Greek legend the Cyclops built the walls of Tiryns and Mykenae, might more properly be called Pelasgian, from their real authors."\* This race, when not assimilated, were driven out by the Dorians, and those who were expelled quitted the peninsula and passed by the isles into Asia Minor, where the emigrants (called Achaians before Homer's time) after they had made settlements in Asia Minor felt the influence of their Asiatic neighbors in customs and arts; they became a changed people yet of the old stock that once inhabited Greece. In course of time coming in conflict and then in harmony again with the dispossessing race, in the land of Greece, they were distinguished as Æolo-Ionians—Greeks but not Greeks. They made their influence felt retroactively upon the Greeks, and here in fact commences that marvelous fertilization of the Greek intellect by this pollen blown from the East. Ionian immigration from Phrygia into Greece, on the northeastern side of the peninsula, and the lands bordering the Ægean,

\* Thirlwall's Hist. of Greece, v. i, p. 52.



awaked into activity the Dorian intellect, for we do not see the same process going on in Akarnania and Ætolia, on the western side of the Peloponnesus.

The "foreland" of Attica on the Ægean, was, as a French writer says, for three centuries after the Dorian invasion, the spot, (*l'enceinte*) where the active work of the Greek civilization was accomplished. Here was the intellectual hearth (*foyer*) of Greece. Here the emigrant Pelasgians, the Orientalized Achaians, the Ionians, reëmbarked on the shores of their ancient home and became the ancestors of the Mynians of Orchomenos, the Abantes of Eubœa, and the future Ionians of Attica. Here the two blended race-influences of the Dorians and Ionians began, whose interplay developed Greek civilization and art as seen afterwards in Athens, where Ionic genius, reinforced from Asiatic sources, served to enrich, remodel, and complete the masculine Dorian."\*

Mingled with these Pelasgic-Achaians were also other nations of foreign stock, hardly distinguishable from them, that came in after the Dorian invasion, but in times beyond authentic history, in groups, families, companies, like those of the Phœnician Kadmos, Egyptian Kekrops, Danaus, Peleus, Pelops (whence Peloponnesos) or, perhaps, as traders and merchant-princes, to Eastern Peloponnesus and Attica, to found the great families of which Homer sang, to plant colonies, to build cities, and to introduce the arts of Oriental nations. These foreigners were from Asia-Minor, Phrygia, Phœnicia in especial, Persia and Egypt, through the Ægean islands, accounting for the fact that mythic Greek art flourished contemporaneously with Dorian art, as Schliemann's discov-

\* Boutmy's *Philosophie de l'Architecture en Grèce*.

eries at Mykenæ—the considerable amount of gold and silver work with Oriental metallic spiral ornamentation—seem to prove ; and we see in this, and in the bronze decoration of walls, evidences of Phœnician agency ; the Phœnicians, in their frail biremes, were the earliest maritime nation and explorers of the metallic mines of remote Spain, Britain, even Norway, and themselves the most skilled among the ancients in metallurgy. The Phœnicians influenced Greece indirectly through contact with the Ionians of Asia Minor, and in Cyprus and the Ægean islands, in Rhodes, Thera and Crete, introducing Eastern arts and the rudiments of Greek art as well as letters, the Greeks accepting them as teachers to a certain extent. These Phœnicians, a pushing practical people, were of Semitic origin sprung from the mid-East, or the northern shores of the Persian Gulf, and stood in close contact, by their commercial affinities, with Egypt, having a settlement at Memphis and a brisk trade with all Egyptian ports, carrying the germs of Egyptian as well as Assyrian art, wherever they went, and to Greece, above all. They had a great deal in common with the Greek enterprising spirit, but like other Semitic nations, they were not, beyond a certain industrial sense, artistic, and were not so greatly influential in implanting their own barbaric and ponderous art, as they were in sowing the seeds of Asiatic and Egyptian art, in Greece, by their trading settlements conveying the products of Oriental civilization ; and continuing this down to 600 B. C., long after the tradition of the taking of Troy, which event, blended as it became with poetic fable, had doubtless some historic base, and wrought immense influence on Greek civilization by its mixing of Asiatic and Hellenic elements, and its consolida-

tion of the different races of Greece into the Hellenic people, not only having one national spirit, impress and language, but laying the foundation of what is distinctively known as Greek art. The Dorians, Æolians, Achaians, and even Ionians, were branches of the same Hellenic tree and each giving of its richness to the common stock.

Thus various elements entered into the essential body of the Greek nation among which it is impossible to draw distinct lines—influences from the East and West, from Europe on the North and Egypt on the South, met in forming a richer and rarer nationality. At all events, before authentic history began, a self-reliant and spirited people, original or mixed, sprang up, in the air of freedom, on the little favored peninsula cut off from the rest of Europe by the mountains of Thessaly and Epirus, and by the sea from Africa and Asia; and whatever were its beginnings, Europe had remoulded the race into an independent and homogeneous people, not without great faults such as dissimulation and the love of pleasure, but with marked individual force, especially in the direction of art, which began early to be developed in original characteristic lines. A basis of Dorian solid matter-of-fact character, was mingled with the progressive qualities of the more spiritual, flexible and delicate Ionian, so that a splendid result was produced.

There was presented, as a German writer remarks, "the picture of personal development within the sphere of national life. While the Oriental peoples in their limited civilizations are of altogether secondary interest, the Greeks reached an absolute height of culture, affording a model worthy of admiration, and an exhaustless fountain-head for higher achieve-

ment. Though thoroughly national, their mental life was so filled with universal significance, that it furnishes a basis for the development of future ages; and in the struggle of the beautiful and true with their antagonistic principles, Greece, like an Athene Promachos, has preceded every champion of these qualities."

It is, indeed, this capacity of progress, of free unlimited development from a living source within, which belonged originally to the Greek race and never left it in all its history, and is seen also in its art, which quality does not permit itself to be petrified into rigid forms like the conventional forms of Egyptian and Assyrian art—this makes the history of Greek art to differ from that of any other ancient, or, we might say, modern art, and gives it that universal character which is a vital and fundamental quality; and it is this fact that makes the study of Greek art essential to the right knowledge of art. Here we come at the deepest life-principle. The spirit of Greek art is well expressed in a line of Keats' Hyperion:

"for 'tis the eternal law  
That first in beauty should be first in might."

Beauty, was the powerful thing, ruling gods and men; but beauty, with the Greeks, was another name for perfection; and if the idea of beauty were not always successfully carried out, or if there were failure in coming at perfection, there was, at least, ever a real striving after the perfect; this was the aspiration, the aim; it was nothing below this; Greece created the standard, not only of art, but of all intellectual achievement, and also of conduct as far as this was to be attained by nature. Aristotle's ethics have not



been surpassed by Christian, excepting in this, that Christianity brought into morals the element of love, which, indeed, transformed the whole; but in the natural foundations of ethical science, where the mind, without a divine rule, seeks for the true in the constitution of being, the Greek instinct struggled for the attainment of that completeness which is stamped on the mind itself. "The justice, of Aristotle, was taken, not in its narrow meaning of equity, but its broader sense of truth. Justice which embraces the whole conduct of man, is essentially an art as maintained by Aristotle, who asserts that, even more than other art, it requires practised skill to be brought to perfection." The character of Amphiarus described by Æschylus in the "Seven against Thebes" has a wholeness which is from within outward:

"On his rounded shield no blazon men could find,  
Best to be, not seem, he makes his life's pursuit,  
Garnering from the deep-spread plough-lands of his mind,  
Harvests rich in wholesome wisdom's ripened fruit.  
Send, I charge, against him, rowers, bold and skilled,  
Feared of men is he whom fear of God hath filled."

In the study of Greek art, it is necessary to be in sympathy with the Greek spirit; for the student who has come into the spirit of Greek mind will have come into possession of the working principles of true culture, which seeks the perfect, the complete, in all intellectual expressions; which seeks to give to the man a free and harmonious development of his powers, not only of his reasoning faculties, but of his tastes, sentiments and imagination. He thus seeks the best. He has the highest ideals. Here Greece furnishes the measures to which we should aspire in education, and by which all our intellectual works

shall become works of art, having the principle of truth, the principle of symmetry and perfection. This is what education means, and this is what a thorough and intimate, not artificial, acquaintance with the Greek mind, is fitted to produce. If we catch the spirit in which the Greek worked, we catch the spirit of true culture. And we do something towards this when the Greek language (which is almost as beautiful as Greek art although the monks of the Middle Ages called it an invention of the devil) is studied so as to lead into sympathy with the inward working of the Greek intellect; and the reason why the Greek language has sometimes been called "a College-fetich" is, perhaps, because it has not always been studied in this living way in its relations to the Greek spirit, intellect, history, religion, and æsthetic nature and art; and nothing is more helpful to the study of the Greek language than the study of Greek art, in which the Hellenic genius seeking perfect form, was supremely manifested; for as the law-loving Roman expressed his genius in government, the æsthetic Greek expressed his, in art; and how incredible then the error of studying the Greek language without the assistance of Greek art, in which the ideas, the principles, which form both the language and the art, are best expressed!

I quote some words of Maurice de Guérin, written when he had just finished his University course, which indicate the want, as well as yearning, of a man gifted with an æsthetic as well as strictly intellectual nature, and which has often been felt, if not expressed in such unmistakable terms:—"I have spent ten years in Colleges, and I have come out, bringing, together with some scraps of Latin and Greek, an enormous mass of weariness. That is about the result of all

college education in France. They put into the hands of young men the ancient authors ; that is well. But do they teach them to know, to appreciate antiquity? Have they ever developed for them the relations of those magnificent literatures with the nature, with the religious dogmas, the systems of philosophy, the art, the civilization, of the ancient nations? Has their intelligence ever been led by those beautiful links which bind all parts of the civilization of a people and make of it a whole, all whose details touch, reflect, and mutually explain each other? What teacher, reading Homer or Virgil to his pupils, has developed the poetry of the Iliad and the Æneid, by the poetry of nature under the sky of Greece or Italy? Who has dreamed of annotating reciprocally the poets by the philosophers, the philosophers by the poets, the latter by the artists, Plato by Homer, Homer by Pheidias? They isolate these great geniuses, they disjoint a literature, and they fling you its scattered limbs, without taking the trouble to tell you what place they occupy, what relations they mutually sustain in the great organizations whence they have been detached. In Germany on the contrary, a broad philosophy presides over literary studies and sheds over the earliest labors of youth that grace which so sweetly cherishes and develops the lover of letters." Thus lamented in his spirit a discontented scholar who was a man of genius, a rare poet and writer, the friend and associate of Lamennais.

Matthew Arnold also said: "The human spirit has a vital need for conduct and religion; but it has a need also for expansion, for knowledge, for beauty." If a university course can succeed in cultivating the literary and æsthetic sense as well as imparting scientific knowledge and moral conduct, then there will be

beauty joined to learning ; there will be enthusiasm added to duty, and Hellenism will complement and amplify Hebraism, as well as expel Philistinism ; knowledge will be transfused with life ; philosophy will have its dry bones clothed with flesh ; science will not kill life by its analyses but will build up a living whole ; writing will acquire a style penetrated with clear light, and will become more or less a work of art, without losing its natural vigor, like a Greek statue, and with the same harmony, combination and force ; the students of Homer, Thucydides and Plato will come to study works of pure Greek art likewise, that teach more, in some respects, than all the commentaries, because in these works the Greeks put their best, their whole force, more than in their literature and philosophy, and, at all events, the same imagination, hands, taste, heart, genius and plastic law of the spirit which created them, made also the histories, the poems, the philosophies ; and then Plato's speculations upon ideas will have found their key and interpretation.

Macaulay said that a Greek scholar should be able "to read Plato with his feet on the fender"—that is without recourse to grammar or lexicon. This may not indeed be realized ; but he doubtless meant by this that a classical scholar (though of how few of us even this could be said) should get beyond the dead grind of his studies and see something of the glories of these almost perfect literary works. He should have delight in them as in beautiful works of art ; and sculpture would help him in this, for Greek thought, history, ethics, religion, poetry, are to be found in Greek sculptures ; and, truly, nothing in art itself speaks more directly to the pure intellect than sculpture ; it teaches form and proportion ; it sharpens



the reason; it instructs in the knowledge of man, advancing from stages of mental bondage to those of freedom of thought; so that if the scholar had the Elgin marbles ever before him, and could sit down for hours and days with pencil in hand to copy them faithfully, to get at their character, spirit and life, to enter into the feeling of the artist and age that produced them, to compare them with the sculpture that came before and after them, to compare them with contemporary literatures, to discover their faults as well as beauties, their failure to reach the perfect as well as success, and to let them speak with their full tone as expressions of mind—he would come in touch with the literary creations of that same mind; and it would be seen what an influence these works would have upon his whole intellectual nature and culture.

Goethe, like the Greek artist, aimed at truth in art. "He was driven to be original, and being thus driven, he became the avowed foe of the conventional in style—'the mortal enemy' as he loved to say, of all artificial verbiage. It is not enough for him that a poem is eloquent, or that it is popular; for according to him, poetry, and every artistic production, must be true, or wrought from the original contemplation of nature, and a serious work. He is, himself, always so near to reality, and examines it with such a penetrating eye, that it is a problem how he can remain a poet, and yet he remains a poet to the last." While Faust is poetry, and is compact with imaginative power, it is based on hard facts, on the realness of human life, so that Goethe comes nearest the Greeks of any modern mind.

A recent writer says: "The Greeks were far behind us in the mechanical aids to human progress; they understood not the use of electricity, or of steam, or

of gunpowder, or of printing; but, in spite of this, the Greek public was better educated than we are—nay to some extent, because of this it was better educated. For Greek life afforded proper leisure for thorough intellectual training, and this includes first of all such political training as is strange to almost the whole of Europe; secondly, moral training of so high a kind as to rival at times the light of revelation; thirdly, social training to something higher than music and feasting by way of recreation; and fourthly, artistic training, which, while it did not condescend to bad imitations of great artists, taught the public to understand and to love true ideals.’\*’

Is it not then well for the student to come in contact with the Greek mind in its art, as well as in its literature, to make him alert, able to use all his faculties, ready to do as well as think, ready to lay hold of every kind of work, to turn knowledge into action, and to enjoy the breadth and beauty of life? I take it that Pheidias was called upon as readily to give his advice in a matter of widening a street, or draining a marsh, or building a wall and fortifying it, or voting for a measure of State policy, or devising a military movement, as he would have been to erect a statue in a public place. He was a master, through his education, of all his resources, and could employ them with effect. This was the element of art infused into life and the soul’s training.

We have the confirmation of this in the words of Viollet le Duc, who says: “The study of Greek antiquity (and art) is, and ever will be, for youth, the surest initiation to and the most substantial base for the cultivation of taste, and consequently of com-

\* J. P. Mahaffy.

mon sense, for these two cannot be separated. It teaches us to distinguish reason from sophistry; it enlarges the mind, without confusing it. However poetic the imagination of the Greeks may have been, it never led them astray from the limits of truth; they aimed above all things to be clear, intelligible, human, for they lived in the midst of men, and were men."

The Greeks regarded education as vital, or as an integral part of the well-being of society; and Plato's idea of it in the "Republic" was expressed comprehensively in the word "nurture." The author of the "Hellenic Essays" thus remarks: "It was the nurture of the soul as a living organism, which was contained in a body that needed liberal nourishment and proper regulation, that Plato develops in his 'Republic.' The lower passions or appetites, were to be tamed not starved; and even in them the higher element, the 'spirit,' was to be cultivated; and this cultivation of the spirit was peculiarly fostered in the gymnasium. This was that hard element of human nature, which, if rightly nurtured, becomes bravery, but if exclusively encouraged, degenerates into brutality. Then came the training of the imagination and taste; and then the highest of all, the rational soul, which needs philosophy, and which comprehended the love of knowledge, or wisdom. The three great divisions of Greek education were 'gymnastic,' 'music,' and 'philosophy;' and the first of these, or 'gymnastic,' was by no means considered to be the least. It was bodily training, which, however, was not to end in the body but in the soul; discipline of the spirit at the same time with the body, and making it enduring and brave, like the soldier's character. And lest the body should swallow up the

mind and the man become nothing but a fighter, 'music,' which had an extended meaning, came in to temper, modify and harmonize. Music was the literary, poetic, and specifically artistic education, beginning perhaps before 'gymnastics.' Poetry and noble words, harmonies and rhythm were the constituent elements of 'music.' Goodness and badness of form followed goodness and badness of rhythm. The ideas of beauty, fitness, proportion, order, were inculcated by the recitation of poetry, especially of Homer and the lyric poets, by rhythmical dances, by measured musical sounds, by practical instruction in drawing, painting, and moulding for sculpture. This was combined with ethical ideas of reverence of the gods, honor to parents, love of fellow citizens, courage, truthfulness, self-control, harmonizing the nature and softening somewhat the hard heroic element gained in the gymnasium. The common result was virtue, especially as expressed in public life, or the duties of citizenship, and was comprehended in the term *ἀνδρεία* 'manliness.'

Both art and gymnastics were thus employed in the Greek idea of education. The best artists who could draw out from nature the perfect form, were encouraged, for the young citizens must not be allowed to grow up amid images of evil and deformity, lest their souls by daily contact gradually and unconsciously assimilated the ugliness of their surroundings. Proportion, in one form or another, is the comprehensive source to which Plato refers artistic excellence. This is the condition of beauty in art; and thus art, he thought, had a definite function in education and the development of character, taking hold of the soul, and making it proportional in beauty and conduct. He would have the young citizens who are at some day



to govern and protect the State, nerved and inspirited, soothed and softened, by warlike and peaceful songs; disciplined to order by the precision of time and tune, of movement and voice; hardened and made brave by athletic sports; reminded of duty by sculptures of heroes; and he would make grace and dignity as natural to them as the air they breathed. And in this way we see the truth of his remark, bearing as it did on the soul, 'one of the greatest tests of a man's character is the way in which he bears himself in the gymnasium.' "

The best condition of life, individual and social, was represented by Plato as resulting from the harmonious development and operation of certain psychical and physical forces. Greek education aimed at awakening and disciplining the soul. It had a profound reach. It must be admitted that we have lost this spiritual element, in modern education. We get knowledge but we are not educated. As the author from whom I have quoted says: "Life now moves without grace or rhythm, because we neglect the Greek rule to combine art with knowledge, to blend gymnastic and music with science, and to apply them proportionately to the soul."

The power of Greek sculpture, is something peculiar even in art; in fact the best Greek statues are raised above the world of art like a constellation of stars, higher than all and shedding down their clear light on other works, and, certainly, on all other works since their day. It is because of the perfection of Greek statues, that the *ideal*, of which we hear so much, and which term is so ignorantly used, came into art, since the Greek sculptor, though going permanently to nature, worked from a conception of his own mind, touched by the poetic power of the im-

agination which rectified the very imperfection of nature by the deeper study of its perfection,) and which breathes about these statues a breath of immortal youth.

Greek sculpture has been also a fruitful source of art; it has given life to new periods and new schools of art in distant ages and countries, so that even in Mediaeval architecture, no absolutely new column is developed; and without speaking of Italian Renaissance art, in our own day Canova and Thorwaldsen drank at the spring of Greek art; and if the antique masterpieces which still exist should perish, Greek sculpture would survive in its spirit and in its influence upon the works, the taste and the thought of humanity, which is a much more important thing. Greek sculpture has still another claim to immortality in the fact that it has kept itself purer than the other arts, arising not only from the truth that it is more intellectual, or lives in ideas, but also from the fact that it conveys its language and bases its power on form, rather than color. There are few statues of antiquity which breathe aught but a pure spirit, and of Greek sculpture almost without an exception, until Roman civilization sets in, and there was introduced an unideal, unpoetic, and material conception of art; and this can be shown especially in following the historic changes in the typical forms of Greek divinities, since the conception of a god in Greek sculpture was that of a perfect human form; no earthly passion marred the beauty of its Olympian calm, so that these statues live in an atmosphere of purity, as manifestations of the divine in human form.

Of course, art, like good seed has to fall on good soil in order to bring forth the best fruit. It falls on minds crude or cultivated, and so, accordingly, the

fruit is poor or rich, good or bad ; and art, let us discourse about it as we will, let us strain our thought to define it in the most scientific terms, let us erect our æsthetic philosophies on foundations of the most abstruse metaphysics, art is, at main, nothing more nor less than poetry, which, in art takes another form than words, for its expression.

Genius has been described as intellectual power moving in alliance with the strongest tendencies of nature; but if this be true, however strongly and genially the nature runs in the currents of art, the intellectual power cannot be absent, and must be strenuously put forth if any true measure of success is to be attained. The study of art is serious work, demanding all the energies. Such artists as Giotto, Ghiberti, Albrecht Dürer, were life-long students, ever learning, ever striving to come at nature's grand laws, and making new discoveries in her interpretation ; and they gave themselves up with a whole-hearted aim to their art.

“ Those men revered their art, and fraudulent art  
Esteemed as fraudulent coin.”\*

They were recognized by the people, as were Dante and Luther, to be God-impelled, with a work to do and a message to deliver, and who had fresh revelations of truth and beauty to impart to men. When one can exhaust nature, then and not before, he can exhaust art ; and the artist is bound to see a thousandfold deeper into nature than ordinary men, and his life consists in training himself to perceive what others do not, and to read the real sense, the hidden meaning, the divine idea, in nature. In this way he becomes the interpreter and the poet. Neither Wordsworth or Turner was a simple copyist of facts, but

\* Aubrey de Vere, slightly modified.

expressed the thoughts awaked by the presence of natural objects. Thought is the basis of art, even as feeling is its inspiration. And not only thought, but artistic skill, the deft manipulation of the tools of art, the mastery of its material so that this becomes a second nature, is demanded. The most brilliant thought is of no avail without the power of expression in art-forms. The artist is a priest of nature, who waits constantly on her slightest will, on her true words, and who has an unselfish and unending love for his art, and joy in its work. Followed thus, art may, perchance, grow great again, and be, with other great things, an agency for hastening the golden time of righteousness, and light, and love.











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