

WILDE OSCAR

MISCELLANIES

Oscar Wilde

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Содержание

DEDICATION: TO WALTER LEDGER	4
INTRODUCTION	5
THE TOMB OF KEATS	11
THE GROSVENOR GALLERY, 1877	15
THE GROSVENOR GALLERY 1879	35
L'ENVOI	41
MRS. LANGTRY AS HESTER GRAZEBROOK	53
WOMAN'S DRESS	58
MORE RADICAL IDEAS UPON DRESS	63
REFORM	
MR. WHISTLER'S TEN O'CLOCK	75
THE RELATION OF DRESS TO ART: A NOTE IN BLACK AND WHITE ON MR. WHISTLER'S LECTURE	80
KEATS'S SONNET ON BLUE	85
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	90

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DEDICATION: TO WALTER LEDGER

Since these volumes are sure of a place in your marvellous library I trust that with your unrivalled knowledge of the various editions of Wilde you may not detect any grievous error whether of taste or type, of omission or commission. But should you do so you must blame the editor, and not those who so patiently assisted him, the proof readers, the printers, or the publishers. Some day, however, I look forward to your bibliography of the author, in which you will be at liberty to criticise my capacity for anything except regard and friendship for yourself. —Sincerely yours,

ROBERT ROSS

May 25, 1908.

INTRODUCTION

The concluding volume of any collected edition is unavoidably fragmentary and desultory. And if this particular volume is no exception to a general tendency, it presents points of view in the author's literary career which may have escaped his greatest admirers and detractors. The wide range of his knowledge and interests is more apparent than in some of his finished work.

What I believed to be only the fragment of an essay on *Historical Criticism* was already in the press, when accidentally I came across the remaining portions, in Wilde's own handwriting; it is now complete though unhappily divided in this edition.¹ Any doubt as to its authenticity, quite apart from the calligraphy, would vanish on reading such a characteristic passage as the following: – ‘.. For, it was in vain that the middle ages strove to guard the buried spirit of progress. When the dawn of the Greek spirit arose, the sepulchre was empty, the grave clothes laid aside. Humanity had risen from the dead.’ It was only Wilde who could contrive a literary conceit of that description; but readers will observe with different feelings, according to their temperament, that he never followed up the particular trend of thought developed in the essay. It is indeed more the work of the Berkeley Gold Medallist at Dublin, or the brilliant

¹ See *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime and other Prose Pieces* in this edition, page 223.

young Magdalen Demy than of the dramatist who was to write *Salomé*. The composition belongs to his Oxford days when he was the unsuccessful competitor for the Chancellor's English Essay Prize. Perhaps Magdalen, which has never forgiven herself for nurturing the author of *Ravenna*, may be felicitated on having escaped the further intolerable honour that she might have suffered by seeing crowned again with paltry academic parsley the most highly gifted of all her children in the last century. Compared with the crude criticism on *The Grosvenor Gallery* (one of the earliest of Wilde's published prose writings), *Historical Criticism* is singularly advanced and mature. Apart from his mere scholarship Wilde developed his literary and dramatic talent slowly. He told me that he was never regarded as a particularly precocious or clever youth. Indeed many old family friends and contemporary journalists maintain sturdily that the talent of his elder brother William was much more remarkable. In this opinion they are fortified, appropriately enough, by the late Clement Scott. I record this interesting view because it symbolises the familiar phenomenon that those nearest the mountain cannot appreciate its height.

The exiguous fragment of *La Sainte Courtisane* is the next unpublished work of importance. At the time of Wilde's trial the nearly completed drama was entrusted to Mrs. Levenson, who in 1897 went to Paris on purpose to restore it to the author. Wilde immediately left the manuscript in a cab. A few days later he laughingly informed me of the loss, and added that a cab was

a very proper place for it. I have explained elsewhere that he looked on his plays with disdain in his last years, though he was always full of schemes for writing others. All my attempts to recover the lost work failed. The passages here reprinted are from some odd leaves of a first draft. The play is of course not unlike *Salome*, though it was written in English. It expanded Wilde's favourite theory that when you convert some one to an idea, you lose your faith in it; the same motive runs through *Mr. W. H.* Honorius the hermit, so far as I recollect the story, falls in love with the courtesan who has come to tempt him, and he reveals to her the secret of the Love of God. She immediately becomes a Christian, and is murdered by robbers; Honorius the hermit goes back to Alexandria to pursue a life of pleasure. Two other similar plays Wilde invented in prison, *Ahab and Isabel* and *Pharaoh*; he would never write them down, though often importuned to do so. *Pharaoh* was intensely dramatic and perhaps more original than any of the group. None of these works must be confused with the manuscripts stolen from 16 Tite Street in 1895 – namely the enlarged version of *Mr. W. H.*, the completed form of *A Florentine Tragedy*, and *The Duchess of Padua* (which existing in a prompt copy was of less importance than the others); nor with *The Cardinal of Arragon*, the manuscript of which I never saw. I scarcely think it ever existed, though Wilde used to recite proposed passages for it.

In regard to printing the lectures I have felt some diffidence: the majority of them were delivered from notes, and the

same lectures were repeated in different towns in England and America. The reports of them in the papers are never trustworthy; they are often grotesque travesties, like the reports of after-dinner speeches in the London press of today. I have included only those lectures of which I possess or could obtain manuscript.

The aim of this edition has been completeness; and it is complete so far as human effort can make it; but besides the lost manuscripts there must be buried in the contemporary press many anonymous reviews which I have failed to identify. The remaining contents of this book do not call for further comment, other than a reminder that Wilde would hardly have consented to their republication. But owing to the number of anonymous works wrongly attributed to him, chiefly in America, and spurious works published in his name, I found it necessary to violate the laws of friendship by rejecting nothing I knew to be authentic. It will be seen on reference to the letters on *The Ethics of Journalism* that Wilde's name appearing at the end of poems and articles was not always a proof of authenticity even in his lifetime.

Of the few letters Wilde wrote to the press, those addressed to Whistler I have included with greater misgiving than anything else in this volume. They do not seem to me more amusing than those to which they were the intended rejoinders. But the dates are significant. Wilde was at one time always accused of plagiarising his ideas and his epigrams from Whistler, especially

those with which he decorated his lectures, the accusation being brought by Whistler himself and his various disciples. It should be noted that all the works by which Wilde is known throughout Europe were written *after* the two friends quarrelled. That Wilde derived a great deal from the older man goes without saying, just as he derived much in a greater degree from Pater, Ruskin, Arnold and Burne-Jones. Yet the tedious attempt to recognise in every jest of his some original by Whistler induces the criticism that it seems a pity the great painter did not get them off on the public before he was forestalled. Reluctance from an appeal to publicity was never a weakness in either of the men. Some of Wilde's more frequently quoted sayings were made at the Old Bailey (though their provenance is often forgotten) or on his death-bed.

As a matter of fact, the genius of the two men was entirely different. Wilde was a humourist and a humanist before everything; and his wittiest jests have neither the relentlessness nor the keenness characterising those of the clever American artist. Again, Whistler could no more have obtained the Berkeley Gold Medal for Greek, nor have written *The Importance of Being Earnest*, nor *The Soul of Man*, than Wilde, even if equipped as a painter, could ever have evinced that superb restraint distinguishing the portraits of 'Miss Alexander,' 'Carlyle,' and other masterpieces. Wilde, though it is not generally known, was something of a draughtsman in his youth. I possess several of his drawings.

A complete bibliography including all the foreign translations and American piracies would make a book of itself much larger than the present one. In order that Wilde collectors (and there are many, I believe) may know the authorised editions and authentic writings from the spurious, Mr. Stuart Mason, whose work on this edition I have already acknowledged, has supplied a list which contains every *genuine* and *authorised* English edition. This of course does not preclude the chance that some of the American editions are authorised, and that some of Wilde's genuine works even are included in the pirated editions.

I am indebted to the Editors and Proprietors of the *Queen* for leave to reproduce the article on 'English Poetesses'; to the Editor and Proprietors of the *Sunday Times* for the article entitled 'Art at Willis's Rooms'; and to Mr. William Waldorf Astor for those from the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

ROBERT ROSS

THE TOMB OF KEATS

(Irish Monthly, July 1877.)

As one enters Rome from the Via Ostiensis by the Porta San Paolo, the first object that meets the eye is a marble pyramid which stands close at hand on the left.

There are many Egyptian obelisks in Rome – tall, snakelike spires of red sandstone, mottled with strange writings, which remind us of the pillars of flame which led the children of Israel through the desert away from the land of the Pharaohs; but more wonderful than these to look upon is this gaunt, wedge-shaped pyramid standing here in this Italian city, unshattered amid the ruins and wrecks of time, looking older than the Eternal City itself, like terrible impassiveness turned to stone. And so in the Middle Ages men supposed this to be the sepulchre of Remus, who was slain by his own brother at the founding of the city, so ancient and mysterious it appears; but we have now, perhaps unfortunately, more accurate information about it, and know that it is the tomb of one Caius Cestius, a Roman gentleman of small note, who died about 30 B.C.

Yet though we cannot care much for the dead man who lies in lonely state beneath it, and who is only known to the world through his sepulchre, still this pyramid will be ever dear to the eyes of all English-speaking people, because at evening its shadows fall on the tomb of one who walks with Spenser,

and Shakespeare, and Byron, and Shelley, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning in the great procession of the sweet singers of England.

For at its foot there is a green, sunny slope, known as the Old Protestant Cemetery, and on this a common-looking grave, which bears the following inscription:

This grave contains all that was mortal of a young English poet, who on his deathbed, in the bitterness of his heart, desired these words to be engraven on his tombstone:
HERE LIES ONE WHOSE NAME WAS WRIT IN
WATER. February 24, 1821.

And the name of the young English poet is John Keats.

Lord Houghton calls this cemetery 'one of the most beautiful spots on which the eye and heart of man can rest,' and Shelley speaks of it as making one 'in love with death, to think that one should be buried in so sweet a place'; and indeed when I saw the violets and the daisies and the poppies that overgrow the tomb, I remembered how the dead poet had once told his friend that he thought the 'intensest pleasure he had received in life was in watching the growth of flowers,' and how another time, after lying a while quite still, he murmured in some strange prescience of early death, 'I feel the flowers growing over me.'

But this time-worn stone and these wildflowers are but poor memorials² of one so great as Keats; most of all, too, in this city

² Reverently some well-meaning persons have placed a marble slab on the wall of the cemetery with a medallion-profile of Keats on it and some mediocre lines of poetry. The face is ugly, and rather hatchet-shaped, with thick sensual lips, and is utterly unlike

of Rome, which pays such honour to her dead; where popes, and emperors, and saints, and cardinals lie hidden in 'porphyry wombs,' or couched in baths of jasper and chalcedony and malachite, ablaze with precious stones and metals, and tended with continual service. For very noble is the site, and worthy of a noble monument; behind looms the grey pyramid, symbol of the world's age, and filled with memories of the sphinx, and the lotus leaf, and the glories of old Nile; in front is the Monte Testaccio, built, it is said, with the broken fragments of the vessels in which all the nations of the East and the West brought their tribute to Rome; and a little distance off, along the slope of the hill under the Aurelian wall, some tall gaunt cypresses rise, like burnt-out funeral torches, to mark the spot where Shelley's heart (that 'heart of hearts'!) lies in the earth; and, above all, the soil on which we tread is very Rome!

As I stood beside the mean grave of this divine boy, I thought of him as of a Priest of Beauty slain before his time; and the vision of Guido's St. Sebastian came before my eyes as I saw him at Genoa, a lovely brown boy, with crisp, clustering hair and red lips, bound by his evil enemies to a tree, and though pierced by

the poet himself, who was very beautiful to look upon. 'His countenance,' says a lady who saw him at one of Hazlitt's lectures, 'lives in my mind as one of singular beauty and brightness; it had the expression as if he had been looking on some glorious sight.' And this is the idea which Severn's picture of him gives. Even Haydon's rough pen-and-ink sketch of him is better than this 'marble libel,' which I hope will soon be taken down. I think the best representation of the poet would be a coloured bust, like that of the young Rajah of Koolapoor at Florence, which is a lovely and lifelike work of art.

arrows, raising his eyes with divine, impassioned gaze towards the Eternal Beauty of the opening heavens. And thus my thoughts shaped themselves to rhyme:

HEU MISERANDE PUER

Rid of the world's injustice and its pain,
He rests at last beneath God's veil of blue;
Taken from life while life and love were new
The youngest of the martyrs here is lain,
Fair as Sebastian and as foully slain.
No cypress shades his grave, nor funeral yew,
But red-lipped daisies, violets drenched with dew,
And sleepy poppies, catch the evening rain.

O proudest heart that broke for misery!
O saddest poet that the world hath seen!
O sweetest singer of the English land!
Thy name was writ in water on the sand,
But our tears shall keep thy memory green,
And make it flourish like a Basil-tree.

Borne, 1877.

Note. – A later version of this sonnet, under the title of 'The Grave of Keats,' is given in the *Poems*, page 157.

THE GROSVENOR GALLERY, 1877

(*Dublin University Magazine*, July 1877.)

That 'Art is long and life is short' is a truth which every one feels, or ought to feel; yet surely those who were in London last May, and had in one week the opportunities of hearing Rubenstein play the Sonata Impassionata, of seeing Wagner conduct the Spinning-Wheel Chorus from the *Flying Dutchman*, and of studying art at the Grosvenor Gallery, have very little to complain of as regards human existence and art-pleasures.

Descriptions of music are generally, perhaps, more or less failures, for music is a matter of individual feeling, and the beauties and lessons that one draws from hearing lovely sounds are mainly personal, and depend to a large extent on one's own state of mind and culture. So leaving Rubenstein and Wagner to be celebrated by Franz Hüffer, or Mr. Haweis, or any other of our picturesque writers on music, I will describe some of the pictures now being shown in the Grosvenor Gallery.

The origin of this Gallery is as follows: About a year ago the idea occurred to Sir Coutts Lindsay of building a public gallery, in which, untrammelled by the difficulties or meannesses of 'Hanging Committees,' he could exhibit to the lovers of art the works of certain great living artists side by side: a gallery in which the student would not have to struggle through an endless monotony of mediocre works in order to reach what was worth

looking at; one in which the people of England could have the opportunity of judging of the merits of at least one great master of painting, whose pictures had been kept from public exhibition by the jealousy and ignorance of rival artists. Accordingly, last May, in New Bond Street, the Grosvenor Gallery was opened to the public.

As far as the Gallery itself is concerned, there are only three rooms, so there is no fear of our getting that terrible weariness of mind and eye which comes on after the 'Forced Marches' through ordinary picture galleries. The walls are hung with scarlet damask above a dado of dull green and gold; there are luxurious velvet couches, beautiful flowers and plants, tables of gilded and inlaid marbles, covered with Japanese china and the latest 'Minton,' globes of 'rainbow glass' like large soap-bubbles, and, in fine, everything in decoration that is lovely to look on, and in harmony with the surrounding works of art.

Burne-Jones and Holman Hunt are probably the greatest masters of colour that we have ever had in England, with the single exception of Turner, but their styles differ widely. To draw a rough distinction, Holman Hunt studies and reproduces the colours of natural objects, and deals with historical subjects, or scenes of real life, mostly from the East, touched occasionally with a certain fancifulness, as in the *Shadow of the Cross*. Burne-Jones, on the contrary, is a dreamer in the land of mythology, a seer of fairy visions, a symbolical painter. He is an imaginative colourist too, knowing that all colour is no mere delightful quality

of natural things, but a 'spirit upon them by which they become expressive to the spirit,' as Mr. Pater says. Watts's power, on the other hand, lies in his great originative and imaginative genius, and he reminds us of Æschylus or Michael Angelo in the startling vividness of his conceptions. Although these three painters differ much in aim and in result, they yet are one in their faith, and love, and reverence, the three golden keys to the gate of the House Beautiful.

On entering the West Gallery the first picture that meets the eye is Mr. Watts's *Love and Death*, a large painting, representing a marble doorway, all overgrown with white-starred jasmine and sweet brier-rose. Death, a giant form, veiled in grey draperies, is passing in with inevitable and mysterious power, breaking through all the flowers. One foot is already on the threshold, and one relentless hand is extended, while Love, a beautiful boy with lithe brown limbs and rainbow-coloured wings, all shrinking like a crumpled leaf, is trying, with vain hands, to bar the entrance. A little dove, undisturbed by the agony of the terrible conflict, waits patiently at the foot of the steps for her playmate; but will wait in vain, for though the face of Death is hidden from us, yet we can see from the terror in the boy's eyes and quivering lips, that, Medusa-like, this grey phantom turns all it looks upon to stone; and the wings of Love are rent and crushed. Except on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome, there are perhaps few paintings to compare with this in intensity of strength and in marvel of conception. It is worthy to rank with Michael Angelo's

God Dividing the Light from the Darkness.

Next to it are hung five pictures by Millais. Three of them are portraits of the three daughters of the Duke of Westminster, all in white dresses, with white hats and feathers; the delicacy of the colour being rather injured by the red damask background. These pictures do not possess any particular merit beyond that of being extremely good likenesses, especially the one of the Marchioness of Ormonde. Over them is hung a picture of a seamstress, pale and vacant-looking, with eyes red from tears and long watchings in the night, hemming a shirt. It is meant to illustrate Hood's familiar poem. As we look on it, a terrible contrast strikes us between this miserable pauper-seamstress and the three beautiful daughters of the richest duke in the world, which breaks through any artistic reveries by its awful vividness.

The fifth picture is a profile head of a young man with delicate aquiline nose, thoughtful oval face, and artistic, abstracted air, which will be easily recognised as a portrait of Lord Ronald Gower, who is himself known as an artist and sculptor. But no one would discern in these five pictures the genius that painted the *Home at Bethlehem* and the portrait of John Ruskin which is at Oxford.

Then come eight pictures by Alma Tadema, good examples of that accurate drawing of inanimate objects which makes his pictures so real from an antiquarian point of view, and of the sweet subtlety of colouring which gives to them a magic all their own. One represents some Roman girls bathing in a marble tank,

and the colour of the limbs in the water is very perfect indeed; a dainty attendant is tripping down a flight of steps with a bundle of towels, and in the centre a great green sphinx in bronze throws forth a shower of sparkling water for a very pretty laughing girl, who stoops gleefully beneath it. There is a delightful sense of coolness about the picture, and one can almost imagine that one hears the splash of water, and the girls' chatter. It is wonderful what a world of atmosphere and reality may be condensed into a very small space, for this picture is only about eleven by two and a half inches.

The most ambitious of these pictures is one of *Phidias Showing the Frieze of the Parthenon to his Friends*. We are supposed to be on a high scaffolding level with the frieze, and the effect of great height produced by glimpses of light between the planking of the floor is very cleverly managed. But there is a want of individuality among the connoisseurs clustered round Phidias, and the frieze itself is very inaccurately coloured. The Greek boys who are riding and leading the horses are painted Egyptian red, and the whole design is done in this red, dark blue, and black. This sombre colouring is un-Greek; the figures of these boys were undoubtedly tinted with flesh colour, like the ordinary Greek statues, and the whole tone of the colouring of the original frieze was brilliant and light; while one of its chief beauties, the reins and accoutrements of burnished metal, is quite omitted. This painter is more at home in the Greco-Roman art of the Empire and later Republic than he is in the art of the

Periclean age.

The most remarkable of Mr. Richmond's pictures exhibited here is his *Electra at the Tomb of Agamemnon*— a very magnificent subject, to which, however, justice is not done. Electra and her handmaidens are grouped gracefully around the tomb of the murdered King; but there is a want of humanity in the scene: there is no trace of that passionate Asiatic mourning for the dead to which the Greek women were so prone, and which Æschylus describes with such intensity; nor would Greek women have come to pour libations to the dead in such bright-coloured dresses as Mr. Richmond has given them; clearly this artist has not studied Æschylus' play of the *Choëphori*, in which there is an elaborate and pathetic account of this scene. The tall, twisted tree-stems, however, that form the background are fine and original in effect, and Mr. Richmond has caught exactly that peculiar opal-blue of the sky which is so remarkable in Greece; the purple orchids too, and daffodil and narcissi that are in the foreground are all flowers which I have myself seen at Argos.

Sir Coutts Lindsay sends a life-size portrait of his wife, holding a violin, which has some good points of colour and position, and four other pictures, including an exquisitely simple and quaint little picture of the *Dower House at Balcarres*, and a *Daphne* with rather questionable flesh-painting, and in whom we miss the breathlessness of flight.

I saw the blush come o'er her like a rose;

The half-reluctant crimson comes and goes;
Her glowing limbs make pause, and she is stayed
Wondering the issue of the words she prayed.

It is a great pity that Holman Hunt is not represented by any of his really great works, such as the *Finding of Christ in the Temple*, or *Isabella Mourning over the Pot of Basil*, both of which are fair samples of his powers. Four pictures of his are shown here: a little Italian child, painted with great love and sweetness, two street scenes in Cairo full of rich Oriental colouring, and a wonderful work called the *Afterglow in Egypt*. It represents a tall swarthy Egyptian woman, in a robe of dark and light blue, carrying a green jar on her shoulder, and a sheaf of grain on her head; around her comes fluttering a flock of beautiful doves of all colours, eager to be fed. Behind is a wide flat river, and across the river a stretch of ripe corn, through which a gaunt camel is being driven; the sun has set, and from the west comes a great wave of red light like wine poured out on the land, yet not crimson, as we see the Afterglow in Northern Europe, but a rich pink like that of a rose. As a study of colour it is superb, but it is difficult to feel a human interest in this Egyptian peasant.

Mr. Albert Moore sends some of his usual pictures of women, which as studies of drapery and colour effects are very charming. One of them, a tall maiden, in a robe of light blue clasped at the neck with a glowing sapphire, and with an orange headdress, is a very good example of the highest decorative art, and a perfect

delight in colour.

Mr. Spencer Stanhope's picture of *Eve Tempted* is one of the remarkable pictures of the Gallery. Eve, a fair woman, of surpassing loveliness, is leaning against a bank of violets, underneath the apple tree; naked, except for the rich thick folds of gilded hair which sweep down from her head like the bright rain in which Zeus came to Danae. The head is drooped a little forward as a flower droops when the dew has fallen heavily, and her eyes are dimmed with the haze that comes in moments of doubtful thought. One arm falls idly by her side; the other is raised high over her head among the branches, her delicate fingers just meeting round one of the burnished apples that glow amidst the leaves like 'golden lamps in a green night.' An amethyst-coloured serpent, with a devilish human head, is twisting round the trunk of the tree and breathes into the woman's ear a blue flame of evil counsel. At the feet of Eve bright flowers are growing, tulips, narcissi, lilies, and anemones, all painted with a loving patience that reminds us of the older Florentine masters; after whose example, too, Mr. Stanhope has used gilding for Eve's hair and for the bright fruits.

Next to it is another picture by the same artist, entitled *Love and the Maiden*. A girl has fallen asleep in a wood of olive trees, through whose branches and grey leaves we can see the glimmer of sky and sea, with a little seaport town of white houses shining in the sunlight. The olive wood is ever sacred to the Virgin Pallas, the Goddess of Wisdom; and who would have

dreamed of finding Eros hidden there? But the girl wakes up, as one wakes from sleep one knows not why, to see the face of the boy Love, who, with outstretched hands, is leaning towards her from the midst of a rhododendron's crimson blossoms. A rose-garland presses the boy's brown curls, and he is clad in a tunic of oriental colours, and delicately sensuous are his face and his bared limbs. His boyish beauty is of that peculiar type unknown in Northern Europe, but common in the Greek islands, where boys can still be found as beautiful as the Charmides of Plato. Guido's *St. Sebastian* in the Palazzo Rosso at Genoa is one of those boys, and Perugino once drew a Greek Ganymede for his native town, but the painter who most shows the influence of this type is Correggio, whose lily-bearer in the Cathedral at Parma, and whose wild-eyed, open-mouthed St. Johns in the 'Incoronata Madonna' of St. Giovanni Evangelista, are the best examples in art of the bloom and vitality and radiance of this adolescent beauty. And so there is extreme loveliness in this figure of Love by Mr. Stanhope, and the whole picture is full of grace, though there is, perhaps, too great a luxuriance of colour, and it would have been a relief had the girl been dressed in pure white.

Mr. Frederick Burton, of whom all Irishmen are so justly proud, is represented by a fine water-colour portrait of Mrs. George Smith; one would almost believe it to be in oils, so great is the lustre on this lady's raven-black hair, and so rich and broad and vigorous is the painting of a Japanese scarf she is wearing. Then as we turn to the east wall of the gallery we see the three

great pictures of Burne-Jones, the *Beguiling of Merlin*, the *Days of Creation*, and the *Mirror of Venus*. The version of the legend of Merlin's Beguiling that Mr. Burne-Jones has followed differs from Mr. Tennyson's and from the account in the *Morte d'Arthur*. It is taken from the *Romance of Merlin*, which tells the story in this wise:

It fell on a day that they went through the forest of Brece-liande, and found a bush that was fair and high, of white hawthorn, full of flowers, and there they sat in the shadow. And Merlin fell on sleep; and when she felt that he was on sleep she arose softly, and began her enchantments, such as Merlin had taught her, and made the ring nine times, and nine times the enchantments.

...

And then he looked about him, and him seemed he was in the fairest tower of the world, and the most strong; neither of iron was it fashioned, nor steel, nor timber, nor of stone, but of the air, without any other thing; and in sooth so strong it is that it may never be undone while the world endureth.

So runs the chronicle; and thus Mr. Burne-Jones, the 'Archimage of the esoteric unreal,' treats the subject. Stretched upon a low branch of the tree, and encircled with the glory of the white hawthorn-blossoms, half sits, half lies, the great enchanter. He is not drawn as Mr. Tennyson has described him, with the 'vast and shaggy mantle of a beard,' which youth gone out had left in ashes; smooth and clear-cut and very pale is his face; time has not seared him with wrinkles or the signs of age; one would

hardly know him to be old were it not that he seems very weary of seeking into the mysteries of the world, and that the great sadness that is born of wisdom has cast a shadow on him. But now what availeth him his wisdom or his arts? His eyes, that saw once so clear, are dim and glazed with coming death, and his white and delicate hands that wrought of old such works of marvel, hang listlessly. Vivien, a tall, lithe woman, beautiful and subtle to look on, like a snake, stands in front of him, reading the fatal spell from the enchanted book; mocking the utter helplessness of him whom once her lying tongue had called

Her lord and liege,
Her seer, her bard, her silver star of eve,
Her god, her Merlin, the one passionate love
Of her whole life.

In her brown crisp hair is the gleam of a golden snake, and she is clad in a silken robe of dark violet that clings tightly to her limbs, more expressing than hiding them; the colour of this dress is like the colour of a purple sea-shell, broken here and there with slight gleams of silver and pink and azure; it has a strange metallic lustre like the iris-neck of the dove. Were this Mr. Burne-Jones's only work it would be enough of itself to make him rank as a great painter. The picture is full of magic; and the colour is truly a spirit dwelling on things and making them expressive to the spirit, for the delicate tones of grey, and green, and violet seem to convey to us the idea of languid sleep, and even the hawthorn-

blossoms have lost their wonted brightness, and are more like the pale moonlight to which Shelley compared them, than the sheet of summer snow we see now in our English fields.

The next picture is divided into six compartments, each representing a day in the Creation of the World, under the symbol of an angel holding a crystal globe, within which is shown the work of a day. In the first compartment stands the lonely angel of the First Day, and within the crystal ball Light is being separated from Darkness. In the fourth compartment are four angels, and the crystal glows like a heated opal, for within it the creation of the Sun, Moon, and Stars is passing; the number of the angels increases, and the colours grow more vivid till we reach the sixth compartment, which shines afar off like a rainbow. Within it are the six angels of the Creation, each holding its crystal ball; and within the crystal of the sixth angel one can see Adam's strong brown limbs and hero form, and the pale, beautiful body of Eve. At the feet also of these six winged messengers of the Creator is sitting the angel of the Seventh Day, who on a harp of gold is singing the glories of that coming day which we have not yet seen. The faces of the angels are pale and oval-shaped, in their eyes is the light of Wisdom and Love, and their lips seem as if they would speak to us; and strength and beauty are in their wings. They stand with naked feet, some on shell-strewn sands whereon tide has never washed nor storm broken, others it seems on pools of water, others on strange flowers; and their hair is like the bright glory round a saint's head.

The scene of the third picture is laid on a long green valley by the sea; eight girls, handmaidens of the Goddess of Love, are collected by the margin of a long pool of clear water, whose surface no wandering wind or flapping bird has ruffled; but the large flat leaves of the water-lily float on it undisturbed, and clustering forget-me-nots rise here and there like heaps of scattered turquoise.

In this *Mirror of Venus* each girl is reflected as in a mirror of polished steel. Some of them bend over the pool in laughing wonder at their own beauty, others, weary of shadows, are leaning back, and one girl is standing straight up; and nothing of her is reflected in the pool but a glimmer of white feet. This picture, however, has not the intense pathos and tragedy of the *Beguiling of Merlin*, nor the mystical and lovely symbolism of the *Days of the Creation*. Above these three pictures are hung five allegorical studies of figures by the same artist, all worthy of his fame.

Mr. Walter Crane, who has illustrated so many fairy tales for children, sends an ambitious work called the *Renaissance of Venus*, which in the dull colour of its 'sunless dawn,' and in its general want of all the glow and beauty and passion that one associates with this scene reminds one of Botticelli's picture of the same subject. After Mr. Swinburne's superb description of the sea-birth of the goddess in his *Hymn to Proserpine*, it is very strange to find a cultured artist of feeling producing such a vapid Venus as this. The best thing in it is the painting of an apple tree:

the time of year is spring, and the leaves have not yet come, but the tree is laden with pink and white blossoms, which stand out in beautiful relief against the pale blue of the sky, and are very true to nature.

M. Alphonse Legros sends nine pictures, and there is a natural curiosity to see the work of a gentleman who holds at Cambridge the same professorship as Mr. Ruskin does at Oxford. Four of these are studies of men's heads, done in two hours each for his pupils at the Slade Schools. There is a good deal of vigorous, rough execution about them, and they are marvels of rapid work. His portrait of Mr. Carlyle is unsatisfactory; and even in No. 79, a picture of two scarlet-robed bishops, surrounded by Spanish monks, his colour is very thin and meagre. A good bit of painting is of some metal pots in a picture called *Le Chaudronnier*.

Mr. Leslie, unfortunately, is represented only by one small work, called *Palm-blossom*. It is a picture of a perfectly lovely child that reminds one of Sir Joshua's cherubs in the National Gallery, with a mouth like two petals of a rose; the under-lip, as Rossetti says quaintly somewhere, 'sucked in, as if it strove to kiss itself.'

Then we come to the most abused pictures in the whole Exhibition – the 'colour symphonies' of the 'Great Dark Master,' Mr. Whistler, who deserves the name of 'Ὁ σκοτεινός' as much as Heraclitus ever did. Their titles do not convey much information. No. 4 is called *Nocturne in Black and Gold*, No. 6A *Nocturne in Blue and Silver*, and so on. The first of these

represents a rocket of golden rain, with green and red fires bursting in a perfectly black sky, two large black smudges on the picture standing, I believe, for a tower which is in 'Cremorne Gardens' and for a crowd of lookers-on. The other is rather prettier; a rocket is breaking in a pale blue sky over a large dark blue bridge and a blue and silver river. These pictures are certainly worth looking at for about as long as one looks at a real rocket, that is, for somewhat less than a quarter of a minute.

No. 7 is called *Arrangement in Black No. 3*, apparently some pseudonym for our greatest living actor, for out of black smudgy clouds comes looming the gaunt figure of Mr. Henry Irving, with the yellow hair and pointed beard, the ruff, short cloak, and tight hose in which he appeared as Philip II. in Tennyson's play *Queen Mary*. One hand is thrust into his breast, and his legs are stuck wide apart in a queer stiff position that Mr. Irving often adopts preparatory to one of his long, wolflike strides across the stage. The figure is life-size, and, though apparently one-armed, is so ridiculously like the original that one cannot help almost laughing when one sees it. And we may imagine that any one who had the misfortune to be shut up at night in the Grosvenor Gallery would hear this *Arrangement in Black No. 3* murmuring in the well-known Lyceum accents:

By St. James, I do protest,
Upon the faith and honour of a Spaniard,
I am vastly grieved to leave your Majesty.
Simon, is supper ready?

Nos. 8 and 9 are life-size portraits of two young ladies, evidently caught in a black London fog; they look like sisters, but are not related probably, as one is a *Harmony in Amber and Black*, the other only an *Arrangement in Brown*.

Mr. Whistler, however, sends one really good picture to this exhibition, a portrait of Mr. Carlyle, which is hung in the entrance hall; the expression on the old man's face, the texture and colour of his grey hair, and the general sympathetic treatment, show Mr. Whistler³ to be an artist of very great power when he likes.

There is not so much in the East Gallery that calls for notice. Mr. Leighton is unfortunately represented only by two little heads, one of an Italian girl, the other called *A Study*. There is some delicate flesh painting of red and brown in these works that reminds one of a russet apple, but of course they are no samples of this artist's great strength. There are two good portraits – one of Mrs. Burne-Jones, by Mr. Poynter. This lady has a very delicate, artistic face, reminding us, perhaps, a little of one of the angels her husband has painted. She is represented in a white dress, with a perfectly gigantic old-fashioned watch hung to her waist, drinking tea from an old blue china cup.

³ It is perhaps not generally known that there is another and older peacock ceiling in the world besides the one Mr. Whistler has done at Kensington. I was surprised lately at Ravenna to come across a mosaic ceiling done in the keynote of a peacock's tail – blue, green, purple, and gold – and with four peacocks in the four spandrels. Mr. Whistler was unaware of the existence of this ceiling at the time he did his own.

The other is a head of the Duchess of Westminster by Mr. Forbes-Robertson, who both as an actor and an artist has shown great cleverness. He has succeeded very well in reproducing the calm, beautiful profile and lustrous golden hair, but the shoulders are ungraceful, and very unlike the original. The figure of a girl leaning against a wonderful screen, looking terribly 'misunderstood,' and surrounded by any amount of artistic china and furniture, by Mrs. Louise Jopling, is worth looking at too. It is called *It Might Have Been*, and the girl is quite fit to be the heroine of any sentimental novel.

The two largest contributors to this gallery are Mr. Ferdinand Heilbuth and Mr. James Tissot. The first of these two artists sends some delightful pictures from Rome, two of which are particularly pleasing. One is of an old Cardinal in the Imperial scarlet of the Cæsars meeting a body of young Italian boys in purple soutanes, students evidently in some religious college, near the Church of St. John Lateran. One of the boys is being presented to the Cardinal, and looks very nervous under the operation; the rest gaze in wonder at the old man in his beautiful dress. The other picture is a view in the gardens of the Villa Borghese; a Cardinal has sat down on a marble seat in the shade of the trees, and is suspending his meditation for a moment to smile at a pretty child to whom a French *bonne* is pointing out the gorgeously dressed old gentleman; a flunkey in attendance on the Cardinal looks superciliously on.

Nearly all of Mr. Tissot's pictures are deficient in feeling

and depth; his young ladies are too fashionably over-dressed to interest the artistic eye, and he has a hard unscrupulousness in painting uninteresting objects in an uninteresting way. There is some good colour and drawing, however, in his painting of a withered chestnut tree, with the autumn sun glowing through the yellow leaves, in a picnic scene, No. 23; the remainder of the picture being something in the photographic style of Frith.

What a gap in art there is between such a picture as the *Banquet of the Civic Guard* in Holland, with its beautiful grouping of noble-looking men, its exquisite Venetian glass aglow with light and wine, and Mr. Tissot's over-dressed, common-looking people, and ugly, painfully accurate representation of modern soda-water bottles!

Mr. Tissot's *Widower*, however, shines in qualities which his other pictures lack; it is full of depth and suggestiveness; the grasses and wild, luxuriant growth of the foreground are a revel of natural life.

We must notice besides in this gallery Mr. Watts's two powerful portraits of Mr. Burne-Jones and Lady Lindsay.

To get to the Water-Colour Room we pass through a small sculpture gallery, which contains some busts of interest, and a pretty terra-cotta figure of a young sailor, by Count Gleichen, entitled *Cheeky*, but it is not remarkable in any way, and contrasts very unfavourably with the Exhibition of Sculpture at the Royal Academy, in which are three really fine works of art – Mr. Leighton's *Man Struggling with a Snake*, which may be thought

worthy of being looked on side by side with the Laocoon of the Vatican, and Lord Ronald Gower's two statues, one of a dying French Guardsman at the Battle of Waterloo, the other of Marie Antoinette being led to execution with bound hands, Queenlike and noble to the last.

The collection of water-colours is mediocre; there is a good effect of Mr. Poynter's, the east wind seen from a high cliff sweeping down on the sea like the black wings of some god; and some charming pictures of Fairy Land by Mr. Richard Doyle, which would make good illustrations for one of Mr. Allingham's Fairy-Poems, but the *tout-ensemble* is poor.

Taking a general view of the works exhibited here, we see that this dull land of England, with its short summer, its dreary rains and fogs, its mining districts and factories, and vile deification of machinery, has yet produced very great masters of art, men with a subtle sense and love of what is beautiful, original, and noble in imagination.

Nor are the art-treasures of this country at all exhausted by this Exhibition; there are very many great pictures by living artists hidden away in different places, which those of us who are yet boys have never seen, and which our elders must wish to see again.

Holman Hunt has done better work than the *Afterglow in Egypt*; neither Millais, Leighton, nor Poynter has sent any of the pictures on which his fame rests; neither Burne-Jones nor Watts shows us here all the glories of his art; and the name of that

strange genius who wrote the *Vision of Love revealed in Sleep*, and the names of Dante Rossetti and of the Marchioness of Waterford, cannot be found in the catalogue. And so it is to be hoped that this is not the only exhibition of paintings that we shall see in the Grosvenor Gallery; and Sir Coutts Lindsay, in showing us great works of art, will be most materially aiding that revival of culture and love of beauty which in great part owes its birth to Mr. Ruskin, and which Mr. Swinburne, and Mr. Pater, and Mr. Symonds, and Mr. Morris, and many others, are fostering and keeping alive, each in his own peculiar fashion.

THE GROSVENOR GALLERY 1879

(*Saunders' Irish Daily News*, May 5, 1879.)

While the yearly exhibition of the Royal Academy may be said to present us with the general characteristics of ordinary English art at its most commonplace level, it is at the Grosvenor Gallery that we are enabled to see the highest development of the modern artistic spirit as well as what one might call its specially accentuated tendencies.

Foremost among the great works now exhibited at this gallery are Mr. Burne-Jones's *Annunciation* and his four pictures illustrating the Greek legend of Pygmalion – works of the very highest importance in our æsthetic development as illustrative of some of the more exquisite qualities of modern culture. In the first the Virgin Mary, a passionless, pale woman, with that mysterious sorrow whose meaning she was so soon to learn mirrored in her wan face, is standing, in grey drapery, by a marble fountain, in what seems the open courtyard of an empty and silent house, while through the branches of a tall olive tree, unseen by the Virgin's tear-dimmed eyes, is descending the angel Gabriel with his joyful and terrible message, not painted as Angelico loved to do, in the varied splendour of peacock-like wings and garments of gold and crimson, but somewhat sombre in colour, set with all the fine grace of nobly-fashioned drapery and exquisitely ordered design. In presence of what may be called

the mediæval spirit may be discerned both the idea and the technique of the work, and even still more so in the four pictures of the story of Pygmalion, where the sculptor is represented in dress and in looks rather as a Christian *St. Francis*, than as a pure Greek artist in the first morning tide of art, creating his own ideal, and worshipping it. For delicacy and melody of colour these pictures are beyond praise, nor can anything exceed the idyllic loveliness of Aphrodite waking the statue into sensuous life: the world above her head like a brittle globe of glass, her feet resting on a drift of the blue sky, and a choir of doves fluttering around her like a fall of white snow. Following in the same school of ideal and imaginative painting is Miss Evelyn Pickering, whose picture of *St. Catherine*, in the Dudley of some years ago, attracted such great attention. To the present gallery she has contributed a large picture of *Night and Sleep*, twin brothers floating over the world in indissoluble embrace, the one spreading the cloak of darkness, while from the other's listless hands the Leathean poppies fall in a scarlet shower. Mr. Strudwich sends a picture of *Isabella*, which realises in some measure the pathos of Keats's poem, and another of the lover in the lily garden from the Song of Solomon, both works full of delicacy of design and refinement of detail, yet essentially weak in colour, and in comparison with the splendid Giorgione-like work of Mr. Fairfax Murray, are more like the coloured drawings of the modern German school than what we properly call a painting. The last-named artist, while essentially weak in

draughtsmanship, yet possesses the higher quality of noble colour in the fullest degree.

The draped figures of men and women in his *Garland Makers*, and *Pastoral*, some wrought in that single note of colour which the earlier Florentines loved, others with all the varied richness and glow of the Venetian school, show what great results may be brought about by a youth spent in Italian cities. And finally I must notice the works contributed to this Gallery by that most powerful of all our English artists, Mr. G. F. Watts, the extraordinary width and reach of whose genius were never more illustrated than by the various pictures bearing his name which are here exhibited. His *Paolo and Francesca*, and his *Orpheus and Eurydice*, are creative visions of the very highest order of imaginative painting; marked as it is with all the splendid vigour of nobly ordered design, the last-named picture possesses qualities of colour no less great. The white body of the dying girl, drooping like a pale lily, and the clinging arms of her lover, whose strong brown limbs seem filled with all the sensuous splendour of passionate life, form a melancholy and wonderful note of colour to which the eye continually returns as indicating the motive of the conception. Yet here I would dwell rather on two pictures which show the splendid simplicity and directness of his strength, the one a portrait of himself, the other that of a little child called *Dorothy*, who has all that sweet gravity and look of candour which we like to associate with that old-fashioned name: a child with bright rippling hair, tangled like floss silk,

open brown eyes and flower-like mouth; dressed in faded claret, with little lace about the neck and throat, toned down to a delicate grey – the hands simply clasped before her. This is the picture; as truthful and lovely as any of those Brignoli children which Vandyke has painted in Genoa. Nor is his own picture of himself – styled in the catalogue merely *A Portrait*– less wonderful, especially the luminous treatment of the various shades of black as shown in the hat and cloak. It would be quite impossible, however, to give any adequate account or criticism of the work now exhibited in the Grosvenor Gallery within the limits of a single notice. Richmond's noble picture of *Sleep and Death Bearing the Slain Body of Sarpedon*, and his bronze statue of the Greek athlete, are works of the very highest order of artistic excellence, but I will reserve for another occasion the qualities of his power. Mr. Whistler, whose wonderful and eccentric genius is better appreciated in France than in England, sends a very wonderful picture entitled *The Golden Girl*, a life-size study in amber, yellow and browns, of a child dancing with a skipping-rope, full of birdlike grace and exquisite motion; as well as some delightful specimens of etching (an art of which he is the consummate master), one of which, called *The Little Forge*, entirely done with the dry point, possesses extraordinary merit; nor have the philippics of the *Fors Clavigera* deterred him from exhibiting some more of his 'arrangements in colour,' one of which, called a *Harmony in Green and Gold*, I would especially mention as an extremely good example of what ships lying at

anchor on a summer evening are from the 'Impressionist point of view.'

Mr. Eugene Benson, one of the most cultured of those many Americans who seem to have found their Mecca in modern Rome, has sent a picture of *Narcissus*, a work full of the true Theocritean sympathy for the natural picturesqueness of shepherd life, and entirely delightful to all who love the peculiar qualities of Italian scenery. The shadows of the trees drifting across the grass, the crowding together of the sheep, and the sense of summer air and light which fills the picture, are full of the highest truth and beauty; and Mr. Forbes-Robertson, whose picture of Phelps as Cardinal Wolsey has just been bought by the Garrick Club, and who is himself so well known as a young actor of the very highest promise, is represented by a portrait of Mr. Hermann Vezin which is extremely clever and certainly very lifelike. Nor amongst the minor works must I omit to notice Miss Stuart-Wortley's view on the river Cherwell, taken from the walks of Magdalen College, Oxford, – a little picture marked by great sympathy for the shade and coolness of green places and for the stillness of summer waters; or Mrs. Valentine Bromley's *Misty Day*, remarkable for the excellent drawing of a breaking wave, as well as for a great delicacy of tone. Besides the Marchioness of Waterford, whose brilliant treatment of colour is so well known, and Mr. Richard Doyle, whose water-colour drawings of children and of fairy scenes are always so fresh and bright, the qualities of the Irish genius in the field of art find

an entirely adequate exponent in Mr. Wills, who as a dramatist and a painter has won himself such an honourable name. Three pictures of his are exhibited here: the *Spirit of the Shell*, which is perhaps too fanciful and vague in design; the *Nymph and Satyr*, where the little goat-footed child has all the sweet mystery and romance of the woodlands about him; and the *Parting of Ophelia and Laertes*, a work not only full of very strong drawing, especially in the modelling of the male figure, but a very splendid example of the power of subdued and reserved colour, the perfect harmony of tone being made still more subtle by the fitful play of reflected light on the polished armour.

I shall reserve for another notice the wonderful landscapes of Mr. Cecil Lawson, who has caught so much of Turner's imagination and mode of treatment, as well as a consideration of the works of Herkomer, Tissot and Legros, and others of the modern realistic school.

Note. — The other notice mentioned above did not appear.

L'ENVOI

An Introduction to *Rose Leaf and Apple Leaf* by Rennell Rodd, published by J. M. Stoddart and Co., Philadelphia, 1882.

Amongst the many young men in England who are seeking along with me to continue and to perfect the English Renaissance — *jeunes guerriers du drapeau romantique*, as Gautier would have called us — there is none whose love of art is more flawless and fervent, whose artistic sense of beauty is more subtle and more delicate — none, indeed, who is dearer to myself — than the young poet whose verses I have brought with me to America; verses full of sweet sadness, and yet full of joy; for the most joyous poet is not he who sows the desolate highways of this world with the barren seed of laughter, but he who makes his sorrow most musical, this indeed being the meaning of joy in art — that incommunicable element of artistic delight which, in poetry, for instance, comes from what Keats called the ‘sensuous life of verse,’ the element of song in the singing, made so pleasurable to us by that wonder of motion which often has its origin in mere musical impulse, and in painting is to be sought for, from the subject never, but from the pictorial charm only — the scheme and symphony of the colour, the satisfying beauty of the design: so that the ultimate expression of our artistic movement in painting has been, not in the spiritual visions of the Pre-Raphaelites, for all their marvel of Greek legend and their mystery of Italian song,

but in the work of such men as Whistler and Albert Moore, who have raised design and colour to the ideal level of poetry and music. For the quality of their exquisite painting comes from the mere inventive and creative handling of line and colour, from a certain form and choice of beautiful workmanship, which, rejecting all literary reminiscence and all metaphysical idea, is in itself entirely satisfying to the æsthetic sense – is, as the Greeks would say, an end in itself; the effect of their work being like the effect given to us by music; for music is the art in which form and matter are always one – the art whose subject cannot be separated from the method of its expression; the art which most completely realises for us the artistic ideal, and is the condition to which all the other arts are constantly aspiring.

Now, this increased sense of the absolutely satisfying value of beautiful workmanship, this recognition of the primary importance of the sensuous element in art, this love of art for art's sake, is the point in which we of the younger school have made a departure from the teaching of Mr. Ruskin, – a departure definite and different and decisive.

Master indeed of the knowledge of all noble living and of the wisdom of all spiritual things will he be to us ever, seeing that it was he who by the magic of his presence and the music of his lips taught us at Oxford that enthusiasm for beauty which is the secret of Hellenism, and that desire for creation which is the secret of life, and filled some of us, at least, with the lofty and passionate ambition to go forth into far and fair lands with

some message for the nations and some mission for the world, and yet in his art criticism, his estimate of the joyous element of art, his whole method of approaching art, we are no longer with him; for the keystone to his æsthetic system is ethical always. He would judge of a picture by the amount of noble moral ideas it expresses; but to us the channels by which all noble work in painting can touch, and does touch, the soul are not those of truths of life or metaphysical truths. To him perfection of workmanship seems but the symbol of pride, and incompleteness of technical resource the image of an imagination too limitless to find within the limits of form its complete expression, or of a love too simple not to stammer in its tale. But to us the rule of art is not the rule of morals. In an ethical system, indeed, of any gentle mercy good intentions will, one is fain to fancy, have their recognition; but of those that would enter the serene House of Beauty the question that we ask is not what they had ever meant to do, but what they have done. Their pathetic intentions are of no value to us, but their realised creations only. *Pour moi je préfère les poètes qui font des vers, les médecins qui savent guérir, les peintres qui savent peindre.*

Nor, in looking at a work of art, should we be dreaming of what it symbolises, but rather loving it for what it is. Indeed, the transcendental spirit is alien to the spirit of art. The metaphysical mind of Asia may create for itself the monstrous and many-breasted idol, but to the Greek, pure artist, that work is most instinct with spiritual life which conforms most closely to the

perfect facts of physical life also. Nor, in its primary aspect, has a painting, for instance, any more spiritual message or meaning for us than a blue tile from the wall of Damascus, or a Hitzen vase. It is a beautifully coloured surface, nothing more, and affects us by no suggestion stolen from philosophy, no pathos pilfered from literature, no feeling filched from a poet, but by its own incommunicable artistic essence – by that selection of truth which we call style, and that relation of values which is the draughtsmanship of painting, by the whole quality of the workmanship, the arabesque of the design, the splendour of the colour, for these things are enough to stir the most divine and remote of the chords which make music in our soul, and colour, indeed, is of itself a mystical presence on things, and tone a kind of sentiment.

This, then – the new departure of our younger school – is the chief characteristic of Mr. Rennell Rodd's poetry; for, while there is much in his work that may interest the intellect, much that will excite the emotions, and many-cadenced chords of sweet and simple sentiment – for to those who love Art for its own sake all other things are added – yet, the effect which they pre-eminently seek to produce is purely an artistic one. Such a poem as *The Sea-King's Grave*, with all its majesty of melody as sonorous and as strong as the sea by whose pine-fringed shores it was thus nobly conceived and nobly fashioned; or the little poem that follows it, whose cunning workmanship, wrought with such an artistic sense of limitation, one might liken to the

rare chasing of the mirror that is its motive; or *In a Church*, pale flower of one of those exquisite moments when all things except the moment itself seem so curiously real, and when the old memories of forgotten days are touched and made tender, and the familiar place grows fervent and solemn suddenly with a vision of the undying beauty of the gods that died; or the scene in *Chartres Cathedral*, sombre silence brooding on vault and arch, silent people kneeling on the dust of the desolate pavement as the young priest lifts Lord Christ's body in a crystal star, and then the sudden beams of scarlet light that break through the blazoned window and smite on the carven screen, and sudden organ peals of mighty music rolling and echoing from choir to canopy, and from spire to shaft, and over all the clear glad voice of a singing boy, affecting one as a thing over-sweet, and striking just the right artistic keynote for one's emotions; or *At Lanuvium*, through the music of whose lines one seems to hear again the murmur of the Mantuan bees straying down from their own green valleys and inland streams to find what honeyed amber the sea-flowers might be hiding; or the poem written *In the Coliseum*, which gives one the same artistic joy that one gets watching a handicraftsman at his work, a goldsmith hammering out his gold into those thin plates as delicate as the petals of a yellow rose, or drawing it out into the long wires like tangled sunbeams, so perfect and precious is the mere handling of it; or the little lyric interludes that break in here and there like the singing of a thrush, and are as swift and as sure as the beating of a bird's wing, as light

and bright as the apple-blossoms that flutter fitfully down to the orchard grass after a spring shower, and look the lovelier for the rain's tears lying on their dainty veinings of pink and pearl; or the sonnets – for Mr. Rodd is one of those *qui sonnent le sonnet*, as the Ronsardists used to say – that one called *On the Border Hills*, with its fiery wonder of imagination and the strange beauty of its eighth line; or the one which tells of the sorrow of the great king for the little dead child – well, all these poems aim, as I said, at producing a purely artistic effect, and have the rare and exquisite quality that belongs to work of that kind; and I feel that the entire subordination in our æsthetic movement of all merely emotional and intellectual motives to the vital informing poetic principle is the surest sign of our strength.

But it is not enough that a work of art should conform to the æsthetic demands of the age: there should be also about it, if it is to give us any permanent delight, the impress of a distinct individuality. Whatever work we have in the nineteenth century must rest on the two poles of personality and perfection. And so in this little volume, by separating the earlier and more simple work from the work that is later and stronger and possesses increased technical power and more artistic vision, one might weave these disconnected poems, these stray and scattered threads, into one fiery-coloured strand of life, noting first a boy's mere gladness of being young, with all its simple joy in field and flower, in sunlight and in song, and then the bitterness of sudden sorrow at the ending by Death of one of

the brief and beautiful friendships of one's youth, with all those unanswered longings and questionings unsatisfied by which we vex, so uselessly, the marble face of death; the artistic contrast between the discontented incompleteness of the spirit and the complete perfection of the style that expresses it forming the chief element of the æsthetic charm of these particular poems; – and then the birth of Love, and all the wonder and the fear and the perilous delight of one on whose boyish brows the little wings of love have beaten for the first time; and the love-songs, so dainty and delicate, little swallow-flights of music, and full of such fragrance and freedom that they might all be sung in the open air and across moving water; and then autumn, coming with its choirless woods and odorous decay and ruined loveliness, Love lying dead; and the sense of the mere pity of it.

One might stop there, for from a young poet one should ask for no deeper chords of life than those that love and friendship make eternal for us; and the best poems in the volume belong clearly to a later time, a time when these real experiences become absorbed and gathered up into a form which seems from such real experiences to be the most alien and the most remote; when the simple expression of joy or sorrow suffices no longer, and lives rather in the stateliness of the cadenced metre, in the music and colour of the linked words, than in any direct utterance; lives, one might say, in the perfection of the form more than in the pathos of the feeling. And yet, after the broken music of love and the burial of love in the autumn woods, we can trace that

wandering among strange people, and in lands unknown to us, by which we try so pathetically to heal the hurts of the life we know, and that pure and passionate devotion to Art which one gets when the harsh reality of life has too suddenly wounded one, and is with discontent or sorrow marring one's youth, just as often, I think, as one gets it from any natural joy of living; and that curious intensity of vision by which, in moments of overmastering sadness and despair ungovernable, artistic things will live in one's memory with a vivid realism caught from the life which they help one to forget – an old grey tomb in Flanders with a strange legend on it, making one think how, perhaps, passion does live on after death; a necklace of blue and amber beads and a broken mirror found in a girl's grave at Rome, a marble image of a boy habited like Erôs, and with the pathetic tradition of a great king's sorrow lingering about it like a purple shadow, – over all these the tired spirit broods with that calm and certain joy that one gets when one has found something that the ages never dull and the world cannot harm; and with it comes that desire of Greek things which is often an artistic method of expressing one's desire for perfection; and that longing for the old dead days which is so modern, so incomplete, so touching, being, in a way, the inverted torch of Hope, which burns the hand it should guide; and for many things a little sadness, and for all things a great love; and lastly, in the pinewood by the sea, once more the quick and vital pulse of joyous youth leaping and laughing in every line, the frank and fearless freedom of wave

and wind waking into fire life's burnt-out ashes and into song the silent lips of pain, – how clearly one seems to see it all, the long colonnade of pines with sea and sky peeping in here and there like a flitting of silver; the open place in the green, deep heart of the wood with the little moss-grown altar to the old Italian god in it; and the flowers all about, cyclamen in the shadowy places, and the stars of the white narcissus lying like snow-flakes over the grass, where the quick, bright-eyed lizard starts by the stone, and the snake lies coiled lazily in the sun on the hot sand, and overhead the gossamer floats from the branches like thin, tremulous threads of gold, – the scene is so perfect for its motive, for surely here, if anywhere, the real gladness of life might be revealed to one's youth – the gladness that comes, not from the rejection, but from the absorption, of all passion, and is like that serene calm that dwells in the faces of the Greek statues, and which despair and sorrow cannot touch, but intensify only.

In some such way as this we could gather up these strewn and scattered petals of song into one perfect rose of life, and yet, perhaps, in so doing, we might be missing the true quality of the poems; one's real life is so often the life that one does not lead; and beautiful poems, like threads of beautiful silks, may be woven into many patterns and to suit many designs, all wonderful and all different: and romantic poetry, too, is essentially the poetry of impressions, being like that latest school of painting, the school of Whistler and Albert Moore, in its choice of situation as opposed to subject; in its dealing with the

exceptions rather than with the types of life; in its brief intensity; in what one might call its fiery-coloured momentariness, it being indeed the momentary situations of life, the momentary aspects of nature, which poetry and painting now seek to render for us. Sincerity and constancy will the artist, indeed, have always, but sincerity in art is merely that plastic perfection of execution without which a poem or a painting, however noble its sentiment or human its origin, is but wasted and unreal work, and the constancy of the artist cannot be to any definite rule or system of living, but to that principle of beauty only through which the inconstant shadows of his life are in their most fleeting moment arrested and made permanent. He will not, for instance, in intellectual matters acquiesce in that facile orthodoxy of our day which is so reasonable and so artistically uninteresting, nor yet will he desire that fiery faith of the antique time which, while it intensified, yet limited the vision; still less will he allow the calm of his culture to be marred by the discordant despair of doubt or the sadness of a sterile scepticism; for the Valley Perilous, where ignorant armies clash by night, is no resting-place meet for her to whom the gods have assigned the clear upland, the serene height, and the sunlit air, – rather will he be always curiously testing new forms of belief, tinging his nature with the sentiment that still lingers about some beautiful creeds, and searching for experience itself, and not for the fruits of experience; when he has got its secret, he will leave without regret much that was once very precious to him. ‘I am always

insincere,' says Emerson somewhere, 'as knowing that there are other moods': '*Les émotions,*' wrote Théophile Gautier once in a review of Arsène Houssaye, '*Les émotions ne se ressemblent pas, mais être ému—voilà l'important.*'

Now, this is the secret of the art of the modern romantic school, and gives one the right keynote for its apprehension; but the real quality of all work which, like Mr. Rodd's, aims, as I said, at a purely artistic effect, cannot be described in terms of intellectual criticism; it is too intangible for that. One can perhaps convey it best in terms of the other arts, and by reference to them; and, indeed, some of these poems are as iridescent and as exquisite as a lovely fragment of Venetian glass; others as delicate in perfect workmanship and as single in natural motive as an etching by Whistler is, or one of those beautiful little Greek figures which in the olive woods round Tanagra men can still find, with the faint gilding and the fading crimson not yet fled from hair and lips and raiment; and many of them seem like one of Corot's twilights just passing into music; for not merely in visible colour, but in sentiment also – which is the colour of poetry – may there be a kind of tone.

But I think that the best likeness to the quality of this young poet's work I ever saw was in the landscape by the Loire. We were staying once, he and I, at Amboise, that little village with its grey slate roofs and steep streets and gaunt, grim gateway, where the quiet cottages nestle like white pigeons into the sombre clefts of the great bastioned rock, and the stately Renaissance houses

stand silent and apart – very desolate now, but with some memory of the old days still lingering about the delicately-twisted pillars, and the carved doorways, with their grotesque animals, and laughing masks, and quaint heraldic devices, all reminding one of a people who could not think life real till they had made it fantastic. And above the village, and beyond the bend of the river, we used to go in the afternoon, and sketch from one of the big barges that bring the wine in autumn and the wood in winter down to the sea, or lie in the long grass and make plans *pour la gloire, et pour ennuyer les philistins*, or wander along the low, sedgy banks, ‘matching our reeds in sportive rivalry,’ as comrades used in the old Sicilian days; and the land was an ordinary land enough, and bare, too, when one thought of Italy, and how the oleanders were robing the hillsides by Genoa in scarlet, and the cyclamen filling with its purple every valley from Florence to Rome; for there was not much real beauty, perhaps, in it, only long, white dusty roads and straight rows of formal poplars; but, now and then, some little breaking gleam of broken light would lend to the grey field and the silent barn a secret and a mystery that were hardly their own, would transfigure for one exquisite moment the peasants passing down through the vineyard, or the shepherd watching on the hill, would tip the willows with silver and touch the river into gold; and the wonder of the effect, with the strange simplicity of the material, always seemed to me to be a little like the quality of these the verses of my friend.

MRS. LANGTRY AS HESTER GRAZEBROOK

(New York World, November 7, 1882.)

It is only in the best Greek gems, on the silver coins of Syracuse, or among the marble figures of the Parthenon frieze, that one can find the ideal representation of the marvellous beauty of that face which laughed through the leaves last night as Hester Grazebrook.

Pure Greek it is, with the grave low forehead, the exquisitely arched brow; the noble chiselling of the mouth, shaped as if it were the mouthpiece of an instrument of music; the supreme and splendid curve of the cheek; the augustly pillared throat which bears it all: it is Greek, because the lines which compose it are so definite and so strong, and yet so exquisitely harmonised that the effect is one of simple loveliness purely: Greek, because its essence and its quality, as is the quality of music and of architecture, is that of beauty based on absolutely mathematical laws.

But while art remains dumb and immobile in its passionless serenity, with the beauty of this face it is different: the grey eyes lighten into blue or deepen into violet as fancy succeeds fancy; the lips become flower-like in laughter or, tremulous as a bird's wing, mould themselves at last into the strong and bitter moulds

of pain or scorn. And then motion comes, and the statue wakes into life. But the life is not the ordinary life of common days; it is life with a new value given to it, the value of art: and the charm to me of Hester Grazebrook's acting in the first scene of the play⁴ last night was that mingling of classic grace with absolute reality which is the secret of all beautiful art, of the plastic work of the Greeks and of the pictures of Jean François Millet equally.

I do not think that the sovereignty and empire of women's beauty has at all passed away, though we may no longer go to war for them as the Greeks did for the daughter of Leda. The greatest empire still remains for them – the empire of art. And, indeed, this wonderful face, seen last night for the first time in America, has filled and permeated with the pervading image of its type the whole of our modern art in England. Last century it was the romantic type which dominated in art, the type loved by Reynolds and Gainsborough, of wonderful contrasts of colour, of exquisite and varying charm of expression, but without that definite plastic feeling which divides classic from romantic work. This type degenerated into mere facile prettiness in the hands of lesser masters, and, in protest against it, was created by the hands of the Pre-Raphaelites a new type, with its rare combination of Greek form with Florentine mysticism. But this mysticism becomes over-strained and a burden, rather than an aid to expression, and a desire for the pure Hellenic joy

⁴ *An Unequal Match*, by Tom Taylor, at Wallack's Theatre, New York, November 6, 1882.

and serenity came in its place; and in all our modern work, in the paintings of such men as Albert Moore and Leighton and Whistler, we can trace the influence of this single face giving fresh life and inspiration in the form of a new artistic ideal.

As regards Hester Grazebrook's dresses, the first was a dress whose grace depended entirely on the grace of the person who wore it. It was merely the simple dress of a village girl in England. The second was a lovely combination of blue and creamy lace. But the masterpiece was undoubtedly the last, a symphony in silver-grey and pink, a pure melody of colour which I feel sure Whistler would call a *Scherzo*, and take as its visible motive the moonlight wandering in silver mist through a rose-garden; unless indeed he saw this dress, in which case he would paint it and nothing else, for it is a dress such as Velasquez only could paint, and Whistler very wisely always paints those things which are within reach of Velasquez only.

The scenery was, of course, prepared in a hurry. Still, much of it was very good indeed: the first scene especially, with its graceful trees and open forge and cottage porch, though the roses were dreadfully out of tone and, besides their crudity of colour, were curiously badly grouped. The last scene was exceedingly clever and true to nature as well, being that combination of lovely scenery and execrable architecture which is so specially characteristic of a German spa. As for the drawing-room scene, I cannot regard it as in any way a success. The heavy ebony doors are entirely out of keeping with the satin panels; the silk

hangings and festoons of black and yellow are quite meaningless in their position and consequently quite ugly; the carpet is out of all colour relation with the rest of the room, and the table-cover is mauve. Still, to have decorated ever so bad a room in six days must, I suppose, be a subject of respectful wonder, though I should have fancied that Mr. Wallack had many very much better sets in his own stock.

But I am beginning to quarrel generally with most modern scene-painting. A scene is primarily a decorative background for the actors, and should always be kept subordinate, first to the players, their dress, gesture, and action; and secondly, to the fundamental principle of decorative art, which is not to imitate but to suggest nature. If the landscape is given its full realistic value, the value of the figures to which it serves as a background is impaired and often lost, and so the painted hangings of the Elizabethan age were a far more artistic, and so a far more rational form of scenery than most modern scene-painting is. From the same master-hand which designed the curtain of Madison Square Theatre I should like very much to see a good decorative landscape in scene-painting; for I have seen no open-air scene in any theatre which did not really mar the value of the actors. One must either, like Titian, make the landscape subordinate to the figures, or, like Claude, the figures subordinate to the landscape; for if we desire realistic acting we cannot have realistic scene-painting.

I need not describe, however, how the beauty of Hester

Grazebrook survived the crude roses and the mauve tablecloth triumphantly. That it is a beauty that will be appreciated to the full in America I do not doubt for a moment, for it is only countries which possess great beauty that can appreciate beauty at all. It may also influence the art of America as it has influenced the art of England, for of the rare Greek type it is the most absolutely perfect example.

The Philistine may, of course, object that to be absolutely perfect is impossible. Well, that is so: but then it is only the impossible things that are worth doing nowadays!

WOMAN'S DRESS

(*Pall Mall Gazette*, October 14, 1884.)

Mr. Oscar Wilde, who asks us to permit him 'that most charming of all pleasures, the pleasure of answering one's critics,' sends us the following remarks: —

The 'Girl Graduate' must of course have precedence, not merely for her sex but for her sanity: her letter is extremely sensible. She makes two points: that high heels are a necessity for any lady who wishes to keep her dress clean from the Stygian mud of our streets, and that without a tight corset 'the ordinary number of petticoats and etceteras' cannot be properly or conveniently held up. Now, it is quite true that as long as the lower garments are suspended from the hips a corset is an absolute necessity; the mistake lies in not suspending all apparel from the shoulders. In the latter case a corset becomes useless, the body is left free and unconfined for respiration and motion, there is more health, and consequently more beauty. Indeed all the most ungainly and uncomfortable articles of dress that fashion has ever in her folly prescribed, not the tight corset merely, but the farthingale, the vertugadin, the hoop, the crinoline, and that modern monstrosity the so-called 'dress improver' also, all of them have owed their origin to the same error, the error of not seeing that it is from the shoulders, and from the shoulders only, that all garments should be hung.

And as regards high heels, I quite admit that some additional height to the shoe or boot is necessary if long gowns are to be worn in the street; but what I object to is that the height should be given to the heel only, and not to the sole of the foot also. The modern high-heeled boot is, in fact, merely the clog of the time of Henry VI., with the front prop left out, and its inevitable effect is to throw the body forward, to shorten the steps, and consequently to produce that want of grace which always follows want of freedom.

Why should clogs be despised? Much art has been expended on clogs. They have been made of lovely woods, and delicately inlaid with ivory, and with mother-of-pearl. A clog might be a dream of beauty, and, if not too high or too heavy, most comfortable also. But if there be any who do not like clogs, let them try some adaptation of the trouser of the Turkish lady, which is loose round the limb and tight at the ankle.

The 'Girl Graduate,' with a pathos to which I am not insensible, entreats me not to apotheosise 'that awful, befringed, beflounced, and bekilted divided skirt.' Well, I will acknowledge that the fringes, the flounces, and the kilting do certainly defeat the whole object of the dress, which is that of ease and liberty; but I regard these things as mere wicked superfluities, tragic proofs that the divided skirt is ashamed of its own division. The principle of the dress is good, and, though it is not by any means perfection, it is a step towards it.

Here I leave the 'Girl Graduate,' with much regret, for Mr.

Wentworth Huyshe. Mr. Huyshe makes the old criticism that Greek dress is unsuited to our climate, and, to me the somewhat new assertion, that the men's dress of a hundred years ago was preferable to that of the second part of the seventeenth century, which I consider to have been the exquisite period of English costume.

Now, as regards the first of these two statements, I will say, to begin with, that the warmth of apparel does not depend really on the number of garments worn, but on the material of which they are made. One of the chief faults of modern dress is that it is composed of far too many articles of clothing, most of which are of the wrong substance; but over a substratum of pure wool, such as is supplied by Dr. Jaeger under the modern German system, some modification of Greek costume is perfectly applicable to our climate, our country and our century. This important fact has already been pointed out by Mr. E. W. Godwin in his excellent, though too brief, handbook on Dress, contributed to the Health Exhibition. I call it an important fact because it makes almost any form of lovely costume perfectly practicable in our cold climate. Mr. Godwin, it is true, points out that the English ladies of the thirteenth century abandoned after some time the flowing garments of the early Renaissance in favour of a tighter mode, such as Northern Europe seems to demand. This I quite admit, and its significance; but what I contend, and what I am sure Mr. Godwin would agree with me in, is that the principles, the laws of Greek dress may be perfectly realised, even in a moderately tight

gown with sleeves: I mean the principle of suspending all apparel from the shoulders, and of relying for beauty of effect not on the stiff ready-made ornaments of the modern milliner – the bows where there should be no bows, and the flounces where there should be no flounces – but on the exquisite play of light and line that one gets from rich and rippling folds. I am not proposing any antiquarian revival of an ancient costume, but trying merely to point out the right laws of dress, laws which are dictated by art and not by archæology, by science and not by fashion; and just as the best work of art in our days is that which combines classic grace with absolute reality, so from a continuation of the Greek principles of beauty with the German principles of health will come, I feel certain, the costume of the future.

And now to the question of men's dress, or rather to Mr. Huyshe's claim of the superiority, in point of costume, of the last quarter of the eighteenth century over the second quarter of the seventeenth. The broad-brimmed hat of 1640 kept the rain of winter and the glare of summer from the face; the same cannot be said of the hat of one hundred years ago, which, with its comparatively narrow brim and high crown, was the precursor of the modern 'chimney-pot': a wide turned-down collar is a healthier thing than a strangling stock, and a short cloak much more comfortable than a sleeved overcoat, even though the latter may have had 'three capes'; a cloak is easier to put on and off, lies lightly on the shoulder in summer, and wrapped round one in winter keeps one perfectly warm. A doublet, again, is simpler

than a coat and waistcoat; instead of two garments one has one; by not being open also it protects the chest better.

Short loose trousers are in every way to be preferred to the tight knee-breeches which often impede the proper circulation of the blood; and finally, the soft leather boots which could be worn above or below the knee, are more supple, and give consequently more freedom, than the stiff Hessian which Mr. Huyshe so praises. I say nothing about the question of grace and picturesqueness, for I suppose that no one, not even Mr. Huyshe, would prefer a macaroni to a cavalier, a Lawrence to a Vandyke, or the third George to the first Charles; but for ease, warmth and comfort this seventeenth-century dress is infinitely superior to anything that came after it, and I do not think it is excelled by any preceding form of costume. I sincerely trust that we may soon see in England some national revival of it.

MORE RADICAL IDEAS UPON DRESS REFORM

(Pall Mall Gazette, November 11, 1884.)

I have been much interested at reading the large amount of correspondence that has been called forth by my recent lecture on Dress. It shows me that the subject of dress reform is one that is occupying many wise and charming people, who have at heart the principles of health, freedom, and beauty in costume, and I hope that 'H. B. T.' and 'Materfamilias' will have all the real influence which their letters – excellent letters both of them – certainly deserve.

I turn first to Mr. Huyshe's second letter, and the drawing that accompanies it; but before entering into any examination of the theory contained in each, I think I should state at once that I have absolutely no idea whether this gentleman wears his hair longer short, or his cuffs back or forward, or indeed what he is like at all. I hope he consults his own comfort and wishes in everything which has to do with his dress, and is allowed to enjoy that individualism in apparel which he so eloquently claims for himself, and so foolishly tries to deny to others; but I really could not take Mr. Wentworth Huyshe's personal appearance as any intellectual basis for an investigation of the principles which should guide the costume of a nation. I am not

denying the force, or even the popularity, of the "Eave arf a brick" school of criticism, but I acknowledge it does not interest me. The gamin in the gutter may be a necessity, but the gamin in discussion is a nuisance. So I will proceed at once to the real point at issue, the value of the late eighteenth-century costume over that worn in the second quarter of the seventeenth: the relative merits, that is, of the principles contained in each. Now, as regards the eighteenth-century costume, Mr. Wentworth Huyshe acknowledges that he has had no practical experience of it at all; in fact, he makes a pathetic appeal to his friends to corroborate him in his assertion, which I do not question for a moment, that he has never been 'guilty of the eccentricity' of wearing himself the dress which he proposes for general adoption by others. There is something so naïve and so amusing about this last passage in Mr. Huyshe's letter that I am really in doubt whether I am not doing him a wrong in regarding him as having any serious, or sincere, views on the question of a possible reform in dress; still, as irrespective of any attitude of Mr. Huyshe's in the matter, the subject is in itself an interesting one, I think it is worth continuing, particularly as I have myself worn this late eighteenth-century dress many times, both in public and in private, and so may claim to have a very positive right to speak on its comfort and suitability. The particular form of the dress I wore was very similar to that given in Mr. Godwin's handbook, from a print of Northcote's, and had a certain elegance and grace about it which was very charming; still, I gave it up for these

reasons: – After a further consideration of the laws of dress I saw that a doublet is a far simpler and easier garment than a coat and waistcoat, and, if buttoned from the shoulder, far warmer also, and that tails have no place in costume, except on some Darwinian theory of heredity; from absolute experience in the matter I found that the excessive tightness of knee-breeches is not really comfortable if one wears them constantly; and, in fact, I satisfied myself that the dress is not one founded on any real principles. The broad-brimmed hat and loose cloak, which, as my object was not, of course, historical accuracy but modern ease, I had always worn with the costume in question, I have still retained, and find them most comfortable.

Well, although Mr. Huyshe has no real experience of the dress he proposes, he gives us a drawing of it, which he labels, somewhat prematurely, ‘An ideal dress.’ An ideal dress of course it is not; ‘passably picturesque,’ he says I may possibly think it; well, passably picturesque it may be, but not beautiful, certainly, simply because it is not founded on right principles, or, indeed, on any principles at all. Picturesqueness one may get in a variety of ways; ugly things that are strange, or unfamiliar to us, for instance, may be picturesque, such as a late sixteenth-century costume, or a Georgian house. Ruins, again, may be picturesque, but beautiful they never can be, because their lines are meaningless. Beauty, in fact, is to be got only from the perfection of principles; and in ‘the ideal dress’ of Mr. Huyshe there are no ideas or principles at all, much less the perfection of

either. Let us examine it, and see its faults; they are obvious to any one who desires more than a 'Fancy-dress ball' basis for costume. To begin with, the hat and boots are all wrong. Whatever one wears on the extremities, such as the feet and head, should, for the sake of comfort, be made of a soft material, and for the sake of freedom should take its shape from the way one chooses to wear it, and not from any stiff, stereotyped design of hat or boot maker. In a hat made on right principles one should be able to turn the brim up or down according as the day is dark or fair, dry or wet; but the hat brim of Mr. Huyshe's drawing is perfectly stiff, and does not give much protection to the face, or the possibility of any at all to the back of the head or the ears, in case of a cold east wind; whereas the bycocket, a hat made in accordance with the right laws, can be turned down behind and at the sides, and so give the same warmth as a hood. The crown, again, of Mr. Huyshe's hat is far too high; a high crown diminishes the stature of a small person, and in the case of any one who is tall is a great inconvenience when one is getting in and out of hansoms and railway carriages, or passing under a street awning: in no case is it of any value whatsoever, and being useless it is of course against the principles of dress.

As regards the boots, they are not quite so ugly or so uncomfortable as the hat; still they are evidently made of stiff leather, as otherwise they would fall down to the ankle, whereas the boot should be made of soft leather always, and if worn high at all must be either laced up the front or carried well over the

knee: in the latter case one combines perfect freedom for walking together with perfect protection against rain, neither of which advantages a short stiff boot will ever give one, and when one is resting in the house the long soft boot can be turned down as the boot of 1640 was. Then there is the overcoat: now, what are the right principles of an overcoat? To begin with, it should be capable of being easily put on or off, and worn over any kind of dress; consequently it should never have narrow sleeves, such as are shown in Mr. Huyshe's drawing. If an opening or slit for the arm is required it should be made quite wide, and may be protected by a flap, as in that excellent overall the modern Inverness cape; secondly, it should not be too tight, as otherwise all freedom of walking is impeded. If the young gentleman in the drawing buttons his overcoat he may succeed in being statuesque, though that I doubt very strongly, but he will never succeed in being swift; his *super-totus* is made for him on no principle whatsoever; a *super-totus*, or overall, should be capable of being worn long or short, quite loose or moderately tight, just as the wearer wishes; he should be able to have one arm free and one arm covered, or both arms free or both arms covered, just as he chooses for his convenience in riding, walking, or driving; an overall again should never be heavy, and should always be warm: lastly, it should be capable of being easily carried if one wants to take it off; in fact, its principles are those of freedom and comfort, and a cloak realises them all, just as much as an overcoat of the pattern suggested by Mr. Huyshe violates them.

The knee-breeches are of course far too tight; any one who has worn them for any length of time – any one, in fact, whose views on the subject are not purely theoretical – will agree with me there; like everything else in the dress, they are a great mistake. The substitution of the jacket for the coat and waistcoat of the period is a step in the right direction, which I am glad to see; it is, however, far too tight over the hips for any possible comfort. Whenever a jacket or doublet comes below the waist it should be slit at each side. In the seventeenth century the skirt of the jacket was sometimes laced on by points and tags, so that it could be removed at will, sometimes it was merely left open at the sides: in each case it exemplified what are always the true principles of dress, I mean freedom and adaptability to circumstances.

Finally, as regards drawings of this kind, I would point out that there is absolutely no limit at all to the amount of ‘passably picturesque’ costumes which can be either revived or invented for us; but that unless a costume is founded on principles and exemplified laws, it never can be of any real value to us in the reform of dress. This particular drawing of Mr. Huyshe’s, for instance, proves absolutely nothing, except that our grandfathers did not understand the proper laws of dress. There is not a single rule of right costume which is not violated in it, for it gives us stiffness, tightness and discomfort instead of comfort, freedom and ease.

Now here, on the other hand, is a dress which, being founded on principles, can serve us as an excellent guide and model;

it has been drawn for me, most kindly, by Mr. Godwin from the Duke of Newcastle's delightful book on horsemanship, a book which is one of our best authorities on our best era of costume. I do not of course propose it necessarily for absolute imitation; that is not the way in which one should regard it; it is not, I mean, a revival of a dead costume, but a realisation of living laws. I give it as an example of a particular application of principles which are universally right. This rationally dressed young man can turn his hat brim down if it rains, and his loose trousers and boots down if he is tired – that is, he can adapt his costume to circumstances; then he enjoys perfect freedom, the arms and legs are not made awkward or uncomfortable by the excessive tightness of narrow sleeves and knee-breeches, and the hips are left quite untrammelled, always an important point; and as regards comfort, his jacket is not too loose for warmth, nor too close for respiration; his neck is well protected without being strangled, and even his ostrich feathers, if any Philistine should object to them, are not merely dandyism, but fan him very pleasantly, I am sure, in summer, and when the weather is bad they are no doubt left at home, and his cloak taken out. *The value of the dress is simply that every separate article of it expresses a law.* My young man is consequently apparelled with ideas, while Mr. Huyshe's young man is stiffened with facts; the latter teaches one nothing; from the former one learns everything. I need hardly say that this dress is good, not because it is seventeenth century, but because it is constructed on the true principles of costume,

just as a square lintel or a pointed arch is good, not because one may be Greek and the other Gothic, but because each of them is the best method of spanning a certain-sized opening, or resisting a certain weight. The fact, however, that this dress was generally worn in England two centuries and a half ago shows at least this, that the right laws of dress have been understood and realised in our country, and so in our country may be realised and understood again. As regards the absolute beauty of this dress and its meaning, I should like to say a few words more. Mr. Wentworth Huyshe solemnly announces that 'he and those who think with him' cannot permit this question of beauty to be imported into the question of dress; that he and those who think with him take 'practical views on the subject,' and so on. Well, I will not enter here into a discussion as to how far any one who does not take beauty and the value of beauty into account can claim to be practical at all. The word practical is nearly always the last refuge of the uncivilised. Of all misused words it is the most evilly treated. But what I want to point out is that beauty is essentially organic; that is, it comes, not from without, but from within, not from any added prettiness, but from the perfection of its own being; and that consequently, as the body is beautiful, so all apparel that rightly clothes it must be beautiful also in its construction and in its lines.

I have no more desire to define ugliness than I have daring to define beauty; but still I would like to remind those who mock at beauty as being an unpractical thing of this fact, that an ugly thing

is merely a thing that is badly made, or a thing that does not serve its purpose; that ugliness is want of fitness; that ugliness is failure; that ugliness is uselessness, such as ornament in the wrong place, while beauty, as some one finely said, is the purgation of all superfluities. There is a divine economy about beauty; it gives us just what is needful and no more, whereas ugliness is always extravagant; ugliness is a spendthrift and wastes its material; in fine, ugliness – and I would commend this remark to Mr. Wentworth Huyshe – ugliness, as much in costume as in anything else, is always the sign that somebody has been unpractical. So the costume of the future in England, if it is founded on the true laws of freedom, comfort, and adaptability to circumstances, cannot fail to be most beautiful also, because beauty is the sign always of the rightness of principles, the mystical seal that is set upon what is perfect, and upon what is perfect only.

As for your other correspondent, the first principle of dress that all garments should be hung from the shoulders and not from the waist seems to me to be generally approved of, although an ‘Old Sailor’ declares that no sailors or athletes ever suspend their clothes from the shoulders, but always from the hips. My own recollection of the river and running ground at Oxford – those two homes of Hellenism in our little Gothic town – is that the best runners and rowers (and my own college turned out many) wore always a tight jersey, with short drawers attached to it, the whole costume being woven in one piece. As for sailors it is true, I admit, and the bad custom seems to involve that constant

'hitching up' of the lower garments which, however popular in transpontine dramas, cannot, I think, but be considered an extremely awkward habit; and as all awkwardness comes from discomfort of some kind, I trust that this point in our sailor's dress will be looked to in the coming reform of our navy, for, in spite of all protests, I hope we are about to reform everything, from torpedoes to top-hats, and from crinolettes to cruises.

Then as regards clogs, my suggestion of them seems to have aroused a great deal of terror. Fashion in her high-heeled boots has screamed, and the dreadful word 'anachronism' has been used. Now, whatever is useful cannot be an anachronism. Such a word is applicable only to the revival of some folly; and, besides, in the England of our own day clogs are still worn in many of our manufacturing towns, such as Oldham. I fear that in Oldham they may not be dreams of beauty; in Oldham the art of inlaying them with ivory and with pearl may possibly be unknown; yet in Oldham they serve their purpose. Nor is it so long since they were worn by the upper classes of this country generally. Only a few days ago I had the pleasure of talking to a lady who remembered with affectionate regret the clogs of her girlhood; they were, according to her, not too high nor too heavy, and were provided, besides, with some kind of spring in the sole so as to make them the more supple for the foot in walking. Personally, I object to all additional height being given to a boot or shoe; it is really against the proper principles of dress, although, if any such height is to be given it should be by means of two props,

not one; but what I should prefer to see is some adaptation of the divided skirt or long and moderately loose knickerbockers. If, however, the divided skirt is to be of any positive value, it must give up all idea of 'being identical in appearance with an ordinary skirt'; it must diminish the moderate width of each of its divisions, and sacrifice its foolish frills and flounces; the moment it imitates a dress it is lost; but let it visibly announce itself as what it actually is, and it will go far towards solving a real difficulty. I feel sure that there will be found many graceful and charming girls ready to adopt a costume founded on these principles, in spite of Mr. Wentworth Huyshe's terrible threat that he will not propose to them as long as they wear it, for all charges of a want of womanly character in these forms of dress are really meaningless; every right article of apparel belongs equally to both sexes, and there is absolutely no such thing as a definitely feminine garment. One word of warning I should like to be allowed to give: The over-tunic should be made full and moderately loose; it may, if desired, be shaped more or less to the figure, but in no case should it be confined at the waist by any straight band or belt; on the contrary, it should fall from the shoulder to the knee, or below it, in fine curves and vertical lines, giving more freedom and consequently more grace. Few garments are so absolutely unbecoming as a belted tunic that reaches to the knees, a fact which I wish some of our Rosalinds would consider when they don doublet and hose; indeed, to the disregard of this artistic principle is due the ugliness, the want of

proportion, in the Bloomer costume, a costume which in other respects is sensible.

MR. WHISTLER'S TEN O'CLOCK

(*Pall Mall Gazette*, February 21, 1885.)

Last night, at Prince's Hall, Mr. Whistler made his first public appearance as a lecturer on art, and spoke for more than an hour with really marvellous eloquence on the absolute uselessness of all lectures of the kind. Mr. Whistler began his lecture with a very pretty *aria* on prehistoric history, describing how in earlier times hunter and warrior would go forth to chase and foray, while the artist sat at home making cup and bowl for their service. Rude imitations of nature they were first, like the gourd bottle, till the sense of beauty and form developed and, in all its exquisite proportions, the first vase was fashioned. Then came a higher civilisation of architecture and armchairs, and with exquisite design, and dainty diaper, the useful things of life were made lovely; and the hunter and the warrior lay on the couch when they were tired, and, when they were thirsty, drank from the bowl, and never cared to lose the exquisite proportion of the one, or the delightful ornament of the other; and this attitude of the primitive anthropophagous Philistine formed the text of the lecture and was the attitude which Mr. Whistler entreated his audience to adopt towards art. Remembering, no doubt, many charming invitations to wonderful private views, this fashionable assemblage seemed somewhat aghast, and not a little amused, at being told that the slightest appearance among a civilised

people of any joy in beautiful things is a grave impertinence to all painters; but Mr. Whistler was relentless, and, with charming ease and much grace of manner, explained to the public that the only thing they should cultivate was ugliness, and that on their permanent stupidity rested all the hopes of art in the future.

The scene was in every way delightful; he stood there, a miniature Mephistopheles, mocking the majority! He was like a brilliant surgeon lecturing to a class composed of subjects destined ultimately for dissection, and solemnly assuring them how valuable to science their maladies were, and how absolutely uninteresting the slightest symptoms of health on their part would be. In fairness to the audience, however, I must say that they seemed extremely gratified at being rid of the dreadful responsibility of admiring anything, and nothing could have exceeded their enthusiasm when they were told by Mr. Whistler that no matter how vulgar their dresses were, or how hideous their surroundings at home, still it was possible that a great painter, if there was such a thing, could, by contemplating them in the twilight and half closing his eyes, see them under really picturesque conditions, and produce a picture which they were not to attempt to understand, much less dare to enjoy. Then there were some arrows, barbed and brilliant, shot off, with all the speed and splendour of fireworks, and the archæologists, who spend their lives in verifying the birthplaces of nobodies, and estimate the value of a work of art by its date or its decay; at the art critics who always treat a picture as if it were a novel, and

try and find out the plot; at dilettanti in general and amateurs in particular; and (*O mea culpa!*) at dress reformers most of all. 'Did not Velasquez paint crinolines? What more do you want?'

Having thus made a holocaust of humanity, Mr. Whistler turned to nature, and in a few moments convicted her of the Crystal Palace, Bank holidays, and a general overcrowding of detail, both in omnibuses and in landscapes, and then, in a passage of singular beauty, not unlike one that occurs in Corot's letters, spoke of the artistic value of dim dawns and dusks, when the mean facts of life are lost in exquisite and evanescent effects, when common things are touched with mystery and transfigured with beauty, when the warehouses become as palaces and the tall chimneys of the factory seem like campaniles in the silver air.

Finally, after making a strong protest against anybody but a painter judging of painting, and a pathetic appeal to the audience not to be lured by the æsthetic movement into having beautiful things about them, Mr. Whistler concluded his lecture with a pretty passage about Fusiyama on a fan, and made his bow to an audience which he had succeeded in completely fascinating by his wit, his brilliant paradoxes, and, at times, his real eloquence. Of course, with regard to the value of beautiful surroundings I differ entirely from Mr. Whistler. An artist is not an isolated fact; he is the resultant of a certain *milieu* and a certain *entourage*, and can no more be born of a nation that is devoid of any sense of beauty than a fig can grow from a thorn or a rose blossom from a thistle. That an artist will find beauty in ugliness, *le beau*

dans l'horrible, is now a commonplace of the schools, the *argot* of the atelier, but I strongly deny that charming people should be condemned to live with magenta ottomans and Albert-blue curtains in their rooms in order that some painter may observe the side-lights on the one and the values of the other. Nor do I accept the dictum that only a painter is a judge of painting. I say that only an artist is a judge of art; there is a wide difference. As long as a painter is a painter merely, he should not be allowed to talk of anything but mediums and megilp, and on those subjects should be compelled to hold his tongue; it is only when he becomes an artist that the secret laws of artistic creation are revealed to him. For there are not many arts, but one art merely – poem, picture and Parthenon, sonnet and statue – all are in their essence the same, and he who knows one knows all. But the poet is the supreme artist, for he is the master of colour and of form, and the real musician besides, and is lord over all life and all arts; and so to the poet beyond all others are these mysteries known; to Edgar Allan Poe and to Baudelaire, not to Benjamin West and Paul Delaroche. However, I should not enjoy anybody else's lectures unless in a few points I disagreed with them, and Mr. Whistler's lecture last night was, like everything that he does, a masterpiece. Not merely for its clever satire and amusing jests will it be remembered, but for the pure and perfect beauty of many of its passages – passages delivered with an earnestness which seemed to amaze those who had looked on Mr. Whistler as a master of persiflage merely, and had not known him as we

do, as a master of painting also. For that he is indeed one of the very greatest masters of painting is my opinion. And I may add that in this opinion Mr. Whistler himself entirely concurs.

THE RELATION OF DRESS TO ART: A NOTE IN BLACK AND WHITE ON MR. WHISTLER'S LECTURE

(*Pall Mall Gazette*, February 28, 1885.)

'How can you possibly paint these ugly three-cornered hats?' asked a reckless art critic once of Sir Joshua Reynolds. 'I see light and shade in them,' answered the artist. '*Les grands coloristes*,' says Baudelaire, in a charming article on the artistic value of frock coats, '*les grands coloristes savent faire de la couleur avec un habit noir, une cravate blanche, et un fond gris.*'

'Art seeks and finds the beautiful in all times, as did her high priest Rembrandt, when he saw the picturesque grandeur of the Jews' quarter of Amsterdam, and lamented not that its inhabitants were not Greeks,' were the fine and simple words used by Mr. Whistler in one of the most valuable passages of his lecture. The most valuable, that is, to the painter: for there is nothing of which the ordinary English painter needs more to be reminded than that the true artist does not wait for life to be made picturesque for him, but sees life under picturesque conditions always – under conditions, that is to say, which are at once new and delightful. But between the attitude of the painter

towards the public and the attitude of a people towards art, there is a wide difference. That, under certain conditions of light and shade, what is ugly in fact may in its effect become beautiful, is true; and this, indeed, is the real *modernité* of art: but these conditions are exactly what we cannot be always sure of, as we stroll down Piccadilly in the glaring vulgarity of the noonday, or lounge in the park with a foolish sunset as a background. Were we able to carry our *chiaroscuro* about with us, as we do our umbrellas, all would be well; but this being impossible, I hardly think that pretty and delightful people will continue to wear a style of dress as ugly as it is useless and as meaningless as it is monstrous, even on the chance of such a master as Mr. Whistler spiritualising them into a symphony or refining them into a mist. For the arts are made for life, and not life for the arts.

Nor do I feel quite sure that Mr. Whistler has been himself always true to the dogma he seems to lay down, that a painter should paint only the dress of his age and of his actual surroundings: far be it from me to burden a butterfly with the heavy responsibility of its past: I have always been of opinion that consistency is the last refuge of the unimaginative: but have we not all seen, and most of us admired, a picture from his hand of exquisite English girls strolling by an opal sea in the fantastic dresses of Japan? Has not Tite Street been thrilled with the tidings that the models of Chelsea were posing to the master, in peplums, for pastels?

Whatever comes from Mr Whistler's brush is far too perfect

in its loveliness to stand or fall by any intellectual dogmas on art, even by his own: for Beauty is justified of all her children, and cares nothing for explanations: but it is impossible to look through any collection of modern pictures in London, from Burlington House to the Grosvenor Gallery, without feeling that the professional model is ruining painting and reducing it to a condition of mere pose and *pastiche*.

Are we not all weary of him, that venerable impostor fresh from the steps of the Piazza di Spagna, who, in the leisure moments that he can spare from his customary organ, makes the round of the studios and is waited for in Holland Park? Do we not all recognise him, when, with the gay *insouciance* of his nation, he reappears on the walls of our summer exhibitions as everything that he is not, and as nothing that he is, glaring at us here as a patriarch of Canaan, here beaming as a brigand from the Abruzzi? Popular is he, this poor peripatetic professor of posing, with those whose joy it is to paint the posthumous portrait of the last philanthropist who in his lifetime had neglected to be photographed, – yet he is the sign of the decadence, the symbol of decay.

For all costumes are caricatures. The basis of Art is not the Fancy Ball. Where there is loveliness of dress, there is no dressing up. And so, were our national attire delightful in colour, and in construction simple and sincere; were dress the expression of the loveliness that it shields and of the swiftness and motion that it does not impede; did its lines break from the shoulder instead

of bulging from the waist; did the inverted wineglass cease to be the ideal of form; were these things brought about, as brought about they will be, then would painting be no longer an artificial reaction against the ugliness of life, but become, as it should be, the natural expression of life's beauty. Nor would painting merely, but all the other arts also, be the gainers by a change such as that which I propose; the gainers, I mean, through the increased atmosphere of Beauty by which the artists would be surrounded and in which they would grow up. For Art is not to be taught in Academies. It is what one looks at, not what one listens to, that makes the artist. The real schools should be the streets. There is not, for instance, a single delicate line, or delightful proportion, in the dress of the Greeks, which is not echoed exquisitely in their architecture. A nation arrayed in stove-pipe hats and dress-improvers might have built the Pantehnichon possibly, but the Parthenon never. And finally, there is this to be said: Art, it is true, can never have any other claim but her own perfection, and it may be that the artist, desiring merely to contemplate and to create, is wise in not busying himself about change in others: yet wisdom is not always the best; there are times when she sinks to the level of common-sense; and from the passionate folly of those – and there are many – who desire that Beauty shall be confined no longer to the *bric-à-brac* of the collector and the dust of the museum, but shall be, as it should be, the natural and national inheritance of all, – from this noble unwisdom, I say, who knows what new loveliness shall be given

to life, and, under these more exquisite conditions, what perfect artist born? *Le milieu se renouvelant, l'art se renouvelle.*

Speaking, however, from his own passionless pedestal, Mr. Whistler, in pointing out that the power of the painter is to be found in his power of vision, not in his cleverness of hand, has expressed a truth which needed expression, and which, coming from the lord of form and colour, cannot fail to have its influence. His lecture, the Apocrypha though it be for the people, yet remains from this time as the Bible for the painter, the masterpiece of masterpieces, the song of songs. It is true he has pronounced the panegyric of the Philistine, but I fancy Ariel praising Caliban for a jest: and, in that he has read the Commination Service over the critics, let all men thank him, the critics themselves, indeed, most of all, for he has now relieved them from the necessity of a tedious existence. Considered, again, merely as an orator, Mr. Whistler seems to me to stand almost alone. Indeed, among all our public speakers I know but few who can combine so felicitously as he does the mirth and malice of Puck with the style of the minor prophets.

KEATS'S SONNET ON BLUE

(*Century Guild Hobby Horse*, July 1886.)

During my tour in America I happened one evening to find myself in Louisville, Kentucky. The subject I had selected to speak on was the Mission of Art in the Nineteenth Century, and in the course of my lecture I had occasion to quote Keats's Sonnet on Blue as an example of the poet's delicate sense of colour-harmonies. When my lecture was concluded there came round to see me a lady of middle age, with a sweet gentle manner and a most musical voice. She introduced herself to me as Mrs. Speed, the daughter of George Keats, and invited me to come and examine the Keats manuscripts in her possession. I spent most of the next day with her, reading the letters of Keats to her father, some of which were at that time unpublished, poring over torn yellow leaves and faded scraps of paper, and wondering at the little Dante in which Keats had written those marvellous notes on Milton. Some months afterwards, when I was in California, I received a letter from Mrs. Speed asking my acceptance of the original manuscript of the sonnet which I had quoted in my lecture. This manuscript I have had reproduced here, as it seems to me to possess much psychological interest. It shows us the conditions that preceded the perfected form, the gradual growth, not of the conception but of the expression, and the workings of that spirit of selection which is the secret of style. In the case

of poetry, as in the case of the other arts, what may appear to be simply technicalities of method are in their essence spiritual, not mechanical, and although, in all lovely work, what concerns us is the ultimate form, not the conditions that necessitate that form, yet the preference that precedes perfection, the evolution of the beauty, and the mere making of the music, have, if not their artistic value, at least their value to the artist.

It will be remembered that this sonnet was first published in 1848 by Lord Houghton in his *Life, Letters, and Literary Remains of John Keats*. Lord Houghton does not definitely state where he found it, but it was probably among the Keats manuscripts belonging to Mr. Charles Brown. It is evidently taken from a version later than that in my possession, as it accepts all the corrections, and makes three variations. As in my manuscript the first line is torn away, I give the sonnet here as it appears in Lord Houghton's edition.

ANSWER TO A SONNET ENDING THUS:

Dark eyes are dearer far
Than those that make the hyacinthine bell.⁵

⁵ 'Make' is of course a mere printer's error for 'mock,' and was subsequently corrected by Lord Houghton. The sonnet as given in *The Garden of Florence* reads 'orbs' for 'those.'

By J. H. REYNOLDS

Blue! 'Tis the life of heaven, – the domain
Of Cynthia, – the wide palace of the sun, —
The tent of Hesperus and all his train, —
The bosomer of clouds, gold, grey and dun.
Blue! 'Tis the life of waters – ocean
And all its vassal streams: pools numberless
May rage, and foam, and fret, but never can
Subside if not to dark-blue nativeness.
Blue! gentle cousin of the forest green,
Married to green in all the sweetest flowers,
Forget-me-not, – the blue-bell, – and, that queen
Of secrecy, the violet: what strange powers
Hast thou, as a mere shadow! But how great,
When in an Eye thou art alive with fate!

Feb. 1818.

In the *Athenæum* of the 3rd of June 1876, appeared a letter from Mr. A. J. Horwood, stating that he had in his possession a copy of *The Garden of Florence* in which this sonnet was transcribed. Mr. Horwood, who was unaware that the sonnet had been already published by Lord Houghton, gives the transcript at length. His version reads *hue* for *life* in the first line, and *bright* for *wide* in the second, and gives the sixth line thus:

With all his tributary streams, pools numberless,

a foot too long: it also reads *to* for *of* in the ninth line. Mr. Buxton Forman is of opinion that these variations are decidedly genuine, but indicative of an earlier state of the poem than that adopted in Lord Houghton's edition. However, now that we have before us Keats's first draft of his sonnet, it is difficult to believe that the sixth line in Mr. Horwood's version is really a genuine variation. Keats may have written,

Ocean

His tributary streams, pools numberless,

and the transcript may have been carelessly made, but having got his line right in his first draft, Keats probably did not spoil it in his second. The *Athenæum* version inserts a comma after *art* in the last line, which seems to me a decided improvement, and eminently characteristic of Keats's method. I am glad to see that Mr. Buxton Forman has adopted it.

As for the corrections that Lord Houghton's version shows Keats to have made in the eighth and ninth lines of this sonnet, it is evident that they sprang from Keats's reluctance to repeat the same word in consecutive lines, except in cases where a word's music or meaning was to be emphasised. The substitution of 'its' for 'his' in the sixth line is more difficult of explanation. It was due probably to a desire on Keats's part not to mar by any echo the fine personification of Hesperus.

It may be noticed that Keats's own eyes were brown, and not blue, as stated by Mrs. Proctor to Lord Houghton. Mrs. Speed showed me a note to that effect written by Mrs. George Keats on the margin of the page in Lord Houghton's *Life* (p. 100, vol. i.), where Mrs. Proctor's description is given. Cowden Clarke made a similar correction in his *Recollections*

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