

RUSKIN JOHN

THE TWO
PATHS

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The Two Paths:

Содержание

PREFACE	4
THE TWO PATHS	8
LECTURE I.	9
LECTURE II.	47
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	54

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PREFACE

The following addresses, though spoken at different times, are intentionally connected in subject; their aim being to set one or two main principles of art in simple light before the general student, and to indicate their practical bearing on modern design. The law which it has been my effort chiefly to illustrate is the dependence of all noble design, in any kind, on the sculpture or painting of Organic Form.

This is the vital law; lying at the root of all that I have ever tried to teach respecting architecture or any other art. It is also the law most generally disallowed.

I believe this must be so in every subject. We are all of us willing enough to accept dead truths or blunt ones; which can be fitted harmlessly into spare niches, or shrouded and coffined at once out of the way, we holding complacently the cemetery keys, and supposing we have learned something. But a sapling truth, with earth at its root and blossom on its branches; or a trenchant truth, that can cut its way through bars and sods; most men, it seems to me, dislike the sight or entertainment of, if by any means such guest or vision may be avoided. And, indeed, this

is no wonder; for one such truth, thoroughly accepted, connects itself strangely with others, and there is no saying what it may lead us to.

And thus the gist of what I have tried to teach about architecture has been throughout denied by my architect readers, even when they thought what I said suggestive in other particulars. "Anything but that. Study Italian Gothic?—perhaps it would be as well: build with pointed arches?—there is no objection: use solid stone and well-burnt brick?—by all means: but—learn to carve or paint organic form ourselves! How can such a thing be asked? We are above all that. The carvers and painters are our servants—quite subordinate people. They ought to be glad if we leave room for them."

Well: on that it all turns. For those who will not learn to carve or paint, and think themselves greater men because they cannot, it is wholly wasted time to read any words of mine; in the truest and sternest sense they can read no words of mine; for the most familiar I can use—"form," "proportion," "beauty," "curvature," "colour"—are used in a sense which by no effort I can communicate to such readers; and in no building that I praise, is the thing that I praise it for, visible to them.

And it is the more necessary for me to state this fully; because so-called Gothic or Romanesque buildings are now rising every day around us, which might be supposed by the public more or less to embody the principles of those styles, but which embody not one of them, nor any shadow or fragment of them; but merely

serve to caricature the noble buildings of past ages, and to bring their form into dishonour by leaving out their soul.

The following addresses are therefore arranged, as I have just stated, to put this great law, and one or two collateral ones, in less mistakeable light, securing even in this irregular form at least clearness of assertion. For the rest, the question at issue is not one to be decided by argument, but by experiment, which if the reader is disinclined to make, all demonstration must be useless to him.

The lectures are for the most part printed as they were read, mending only obscure sentences here and there. The parts which were trusted to extempore speaking are supplied, as well as I can remember (only with an addition here and there of things I forgot to say), in the words, or at least the kind of words, used at the time; and they contain, at all events, the substance of what I said more accurately than hurried journal reports. I must beg my readers not in general to trust to such, for even in fast speaking I try to use words carefully; and any alteration of expression will sometimes involve a great alteration in meaning. A little while ago I had to speak of an architectural design, and called it "elegant," meaning, founded on good and well "elected" models; the printed report gave "excellent" design (that is to say, design *excellingly* good), which I did not mean, and should, even in the most hurried speaking, never have said.

The illustrations of the lecture on iron were sketches made too roughly to be engraved, and yet of too elaborate subjects to

allow of my drawing them completely. Those now substituted will, however, answer the purpose nearly as well, and are more directly connected with the subjects of the preceding lectures; so that I hope throughout the volume the student will perceive an insistance upon one main truth, nor lose in any minor direction of inquiry the sense of the responsibility which the acceptance of that truth fastens upon him; responsibility for choice, decisive and conclusive, between two modes of study, which involve ultimately the development, or deadening, of every power he possesses. I have tried to hold that choice clearly out to him, and to unveil for him to its farthest the issue of his turning to the right hand or the left. Guides he may find many, and aids many; but all these will be in vain unless he has first recognised the hour and the point of life when the way divides itself, one way leading to the Olive mountains—one to the vale of the Salt Sea. There are few cross roads, that I know of, from one to the other. Let him pause at the parting of THE TWO PATHS.

THE TWO PATHS

BEING

**LECTURES ON ART, AND ITS
APPLICATION TO DECORATION AND
MANUFACTURE DELIVERED IN 1858-9**

LECTURE I. THE DETERIORATIVE POWER OF CONVENTIONAL ART OVER NATIONS

An Inaugural Lecture, Delivered at the Kensington Museum, January, 1858.

[Footnote: A few introductory words, in which, at the opening of this lecture, I thanked the Chairman (Mr. Cockerell), for his support on the occasion, and asked his pardon for any hasty expressions in my writings, which might have seemed discourteous towards him, or other architects whose general opinions were opposed to mine, may be found by those who care for preambles, not much misreported, in the *Building Chronicle*; with such comments as the genius of that journal was likely to suggest to it.]

As I passed, last summer, for the first time, through the north of Scotland, it seemed to me that there was a peculiar painfulness in its scenery, caused by the non-manifestation of the powers of human art. I had never travelled in, nor even heard or conceived of such a country before; nor, though I had passed much of my life amidst mountain scenery in the south, was I before aware how much of its charm depended on the little gracefulnesses and

tendernesses of human work, which are mingled with the beauty of the Alps, or spared by their desolation. It is true that the art which carves and colours the front of a Swiss cottage is not of any very exalted kind; yet it testifies to the completeness and the delicacy of the faculties of the mountaineer; it is true that the remnants of tower and battlement, which afford footing to the wild vine on the Alpine promontory, form but a small part of the great serration of its rocks; and yet it is just that fragment of their broken outline which gives them their pathetic power, and historical majesty. And this element among the wilds of our own country I found wholly wanting. The Highland cottage is literally a heap of gray stones, choked up, rather than roofed over, with black peat and withered heather; the only approach to an effort at decoration consists in the placing of the clods of protective peat obliquely on its roof, so as to give a diagonal arrangement of lines, looking somewhat as if the surface had been scored over by a gigantic claymore.

And, at least among the northern hills of Scotland, elements of more ancient architectural interest are equally absent. The solitary peel-house is hardly discernible by the windings of the stream; the roofless aisle of the priory is lost among the enclosures of the village; and the capital city of the Highlands, Inverness, placed where it might ennoble one of the sweetest landscapes, and by the shore of one of the loveliest estuaries in the world;—placed between the crests of the Grampians and the flowing of the Moray Firth, as if it were a jewel clasping

the folds of the mountains to the blue zone of the sea,—is only distinguishable from a distance by one architectural feature, and exalts all the surrounding landscape by no other associations than those which can be connected with its modern castellated gaol.

While these conditions of Scottish scenery affected me very painfully, it being the first time in my life that I had been in any country possessing no valuable monuments or examples of art, they also forced me into the consideration of one or two difficult questions respecting the effect of art on the human mind; and they forced these questions upon me eminently for this reason, that while I was wandering disconsolately among the moors of the Grampians, where there was no art to be found, news of peculiar interest was every day arriving from a country where there was a great deal of art, and art of a delicate kind, to be found. Among the models set before you in this institution, and in the others established throughout the kingdom for the teaching of design, there are, I suppose, none in their kind more admirable than the decorated works of India. They are, indeed, in all materials capable of colour, wool, marble, or metal, almost inimitable in their delicate application of divided hue, and fine arrangement of fantastic line. Nor is this power of theirs exerted by the people rarely, or without enjoyment; the love of subtle design seems universal in the race, and is developed in every implement that they shape, and every building that they raise; it attaches itself with the same intensity, and with the same success, to the service of superstition, of pleasure or of cruelty;

and enriches alike, with one profusion on enchanted iridescence, the dome of the pagoda, the fringe of the girdle and the edge of the sword.

So then you have, in these two great populations, Indian and Highland—in the races of the jungle and of the moor—two national capacities distinctly and accurately opposed. On the one side you have a race rejoicing in art, and eminently and universally endowed with the gift of it; on the other you have a people careless of art, and apparently incapable of it, their utmost effort hitherto reaching no farther than to the variation of the positions of the bars of colour in square chequers. And we are thus urged naturally to enquire what is the effect on the moral character, in each nation, of this vast difference in their pursuits and apparent capacities? and whether those rude chequers of the tartan, or the exquisitely fancied involutions of the Cashmere, fold habitually over the noblest hearts? We have had our answer. Since the race of man began its course of sin on this earth, nothing has ever been done by it so significative of all bestial, and lower than bestial degradation, as the acts the Indian race in the year that has just passed by. Cruelty as fierce may indeed have been wreaked, and brutality as abominable been practised before, but never under like circumstances; rage of prolonged war, and resentment of prolonged oppression, have made men as cruel before now; and gradual decline into barbarism, where no examples of decency or civilization existed around them, has sunk, before now, isolated populations to

the lowest level of possible humanity. But cruelty stretched to its fiercest against the gentle and unoffending, and corruption festered to its loathsomest in the midst of the witnessing presence of a disciplined civilization,—these we could not have known to be within the practicable compass of human guilt, but for the acts of the Indian mutineer. And, as thus, on the one hand, you have an extreme energy of baseness displayed by these lovers of art; on the other,—as if to put the question into the narrowest compass—you have had an extreme energy of virtue displayed by the despisers of art. Among all the soldiers to whom you owe your victories in the Crimea, and your avenging in the Indies, to none are you bound by closer bonds of gratitude than to the men who have been born and bred among those desolate Highland moors. And thus you have the differences in capacity and circumstance between the two nations, and the differences in result on the moral habits of two nations, put into the most significant—the most palpable—the most brief opposition. Out of the peat cottage come faith, courage, self-sacrifice, purity, and piety, and whatever else is fruitful in the work of Heaven; out of the ivory palace come treachery, cruelty, cowardice, idolatry, bestiality,—whatever else is fruitful in the work of Hell.

But the difficulty does not close here. From one instance, of however great apparent force, it would be wholly unfair to gather any general conclusion—wholly illogical to assert that because we had once found love of art connected with moral baseness, the love of art must be the general root of moral baseness; and

equally unfair to assert that, because we had once found neglect of art coincident with nobleness of disposition, neglect of art must be always the source or sign of that nobleness. But if we pass from the Indian peninsula into other countries of the globe; and from our own recent experience, to the records of history, we shall still find one great fact fronting us, in stern universality—namely, the apparent connection of great success in art with subsequent national degradation. You find, in the first place, that the nations which possessed a refined art were always subdued by those who possessed none: you find the Lydian subdued by the Mede; the Athenian by the Spartan; the Greek by the Roman; the Roman by the Goth; the Burgundian by the Switzer: but you find, beyond this—that even where no attack by any external power has accelerated the catastrophe of the state, the period in which any given people reach their highest power in art is precisely that in which they appear to sign the warrant of their own ruin; and that, from the moment in which a perfect statue appears in Florence, a perfect picture in Venice, or a perfect fresco in Rome, from that hour forward, probity, industry, and courage seem to be exiled from their walls, and they perish in a sculpturesque paralysis, or a many-coloured corruption.

But even this is not all. As art seems thus, in its delicate form, to be one of the chief promoters of indolence and sensuality,—so, I need hardly remind you, it hitherto has appeared only in energetic manifestation when it was in the service of superstition. The four greatest manifestations of human intellect

which founded the four principal kingdoms of art, Egyptian, Babylonian, Greek, and Italian, were developed by the strong excitement of active superstition in the worship of Osiris, Belus, Minerva, and the Queen of Heaven. Therefore, to speak briefly, it may appear very difficult to show that art has ever yet existed in a consistent and thoroughly energetic school, unless it was engaged in the propagation of falsehood, or the encouragement of vice.

And finally, while art has thus shown itself always active in the service of luxury and idolatry, it has also been strongly directed to the exaltation of cruelty. A nation which lives a pastoral and innocent life never decorates the shepherd's staff or the plough-handle, but races who live by depredation and slaughter nearly always bestow exquisite ornaments on the quiver, the helmet, and the spear.

Does it not seem to you, then, on all these three counts, more than questionable whether we are assembled here in Kensington Museum to any good purpose? Might we not justly be looked upon with suspicion and fear, rather than with sympathy, by the innocent and unartistical public? Are we even sure of ourselves? Do we know what we are about? Are we met here as honest people? or are we not rather so many Catilines assembled to devise the hasty degradation of our country, or, like a conclave of midnight witches, to summon and send forth, on new and unexpected missions, the demons of luxury, cruelty, and superstition?

I trust, upon the whole, that it is not so: I am sure that Mr. Redgrave and Mr. Cole do not at all include results of this kind in their conception of the ultimate objects of the institution which owes so much to their strenuous and well-directed exertions. And I have put this painful question before you, only that we may face it thoroughly, and, as I hope, out-face it. If you will give it a little sincere attention this evening, I trust we may find sufficiently good reasons for our work, and proceed to it hereafter, as all good workmen should do, with clear heads, and calm consciences.

To return, then, to the first point of difficulty, the relations between art and mental disposition in India and Scotland. It is quite true that the art of India is delicate and refined. But it has one curious character distinguishing it from all other art of equal merit in design—*it never represents a natural fact*. It either forms its compositions out of meaningless fragments of colour and flowings of line; or if it represents any living creature, it represents that creature under some distorted and monstrous form. To all the facts and forms of nature it wilfully and resolutely opposes itself; it will not draw a man, but an eight-armed monster; it will not draw a flower, but only a spiral or a zigzag.

It thus indicates that the people who practise it are cut off from all possible sources of healthy knowledge or natural delight; that they have wilfully sealed up and put aside the entire volume of the world, and have got nothing to read, nothing to dwell upon, but that imagination of the thoughts of their hearts, of which we

are told that "it is only evil continually." Over the whole spectacle of creation they have thrown a veil in which there is no rent. For them no star peeps through the blanket of the dark—for them neither their heaven shines nor their mountains rise—for them the flowers do not blossom—for them the creatures of field and forest do not live. They lie bound in the dungeon of their own corruption, encompassed only by doleful phantoms, or by spectral vacancy.

Need I remind you what an exact reverse of this condition of mind, as respects the observance of nature, is presented by the people whom we have just been led to contemplate in contrast with the Indian race? You will find upon reflection, that all the highest points of the Scottish character are connected with impressions derived straight from the natural scenery of their country. No nation has ever before shown, in the general tone of its language—in the general current of its literature—so constant a habit of hallowing its passions and confirming its principles by direct association with the charm, or power, of nature. The writings of Scott and Burns—and yet more, of the far greater poets than Burns who gave Scotland her traditional ballads,—furnish you in every stanza—almost in every line—with examples of this association of natural scenery with the passions; [Footnote: The great poets of Scotland, like the great poets of all other countries, never write dissolutely, either in matter or method; but with stern and measured meaning in every syllable. Here's a bit of first-rate work for example:

"Tweed said to Till,
'What gars ye rin sae still?'
Till said to Tweed,
'Though ye rin wi' speed,
And I rin slaw,
Whar ye droon ae man,
I droon twa.'"]

but an instance of its farther connection with moral principle struck me forcibly just at the time when I was most lamenting the absence of art among the people. In one of the loneliest districts of Scotland, where the peat cottages are darkest, just at the western foot of that great mass of the Grampians which encircles the sources of the Spey and the Dee, the main road which traverses the chain winds round the foot of a broken rock called Crag, or Craig Ellachie. There is nothing remarkable in either its height or form; it is darkened with a few scattered pines, and touched along its summit with a flush of heather; but it constitutes a kind of headland, or leading promontory, in the group of hills to which it belongs—a sort of initial letter of the mountains; and thus stands in the mind of the inhabitants of the district, the Clan Grant, for a type of their country, and of the influence of that country upon themselves. Their sense of this is beautifully indicated in the war-cry of the clan, "Stand fast, Craig Ellachie." You may think long over those few words without exhausting the deep wells of feeling and thought

contained in them—the love of the native land, the assurance of their faithfulness to it; the subdued and gentle assertion of indomitable courage—I *may* need to be told to stand, but, if I do, Craig Ellachie does. You could not but have felt, had you passed beneath it at the time when so many of England's dearest children were being defended by the strength of heart of men born at its foot, how often among the delicate Indian palaces, whose marble was pallid with horror, and whose vermilion was darkened with blood, the remembrance of its rough grey rocks and purple heaths must have risen before the sight of the Highland soldier; how often the hailing of the shot and the shriek of battle would pass away from his hearing, and leave only the whisper of the old pine branches—"Stand fast, Craig Ellachie!"

You have, in these two nations, seen in direct opposition the effects on moral sentiment of art without nature, and of nature without art. And you see enough to justify you in suspecting—while, if you choose to investigate the subject more deeply and with other examples, you will find enough to justify you in *concluding*—that art, followed as such, and for its own sake, irrespective of the interpretation of nature by it, is destructive of whatever is best and noblest in humanity; but that nature, however simply observed, or imperfectly known, is, in the degree of the affection felt for it, protective and helpful to all that is noblest in humanity.

You might then conclude farther, that art, so far as it was devoted to the record or the interpretation of nature, would be

helpful and ennobling also.

And you would conclude this with perfect truth. Let me repeat the assertion distinctly and solemnly, as the first that I am permitted to make in this building, devoted in a way so new and so admirable to the service of the art-students of England—Wherever art is practised for its own sake, and the delight of the workman is in what he *does* and *produces*, instead of what he *interprets* or *exhibits*,—there art has an influence of the most fatal kind on brain and heart, and it issues, if long so pursued, in the *destruction both of intellectual power and moral principal*; whereas art, devoted humbly and self-forgetfully to the clear statement and record of the facts of the universe, is always helpful and beneficent to mankind, full of comfort, strength, and salvation.

Now, when you were once well assured of this, you might logically infer another thing, namely, that when Art was occupied in the function in which she was serviceable, she would herself be strengthened by the service, and when she was doing what Providence without doubt intended her to do, she would gain in vitality and dignity just as she advanced in usefulness. On the other hand, you might gather, that when her agency was distorted to the deception or degradation of mankind, she would herself be equally misled and degraded—that she would be checked in advance, or precipitated in decline.

And this is the truth also; and holding this clue you will easily and justly interpret the phenomena of history. So long as Art is

steadily in the contemplation and exhibition of natural facts, so long she herself lives and grows; and in her own life and growth partly implies, partly secures, that of the nation in the midst of which she is practised. But a time has always hitherto come, in which, having thus reached a singular perfection, she begins to contemplate that perfection, and to imitate it, and deduce rules and forms from it; and thus to forget her duty and ministry as the interpreter and discoverer of Truth. And in the very instant when this diversion of her purpose and forgetfulness of her function take place—forgetfulness generally coincident with her apparent perfection—in that instant, I say, begins her actual catastrophe; and by her own fall—so far as she has influence—she accelerates the ruin of the nation by which she is practised.

The study, however, of the effect of art on the mind of nations is one rather for the historian than for us; at all events it is one for the discussion of which we have no more time this evening. But I will ask your patience with me while I try to illustrate, in some further particulars, the dependence of the healthy state and power of art itself upon the exercise of its appointed function in the interpretation of fact.

You observe that I always say *interpretation*, never *imitation*. My reason for so doing is, first, that good art rarely imitates; it usually only describes or explains. But my second and chief reason is that good art always consists of two things: First, the observation of fact; secondly, the manifesting of human design and authority in the way that fact is told. Great and good art must

unite the two; it cannot exist for a moment but in their unity; it consists of the two as essentially as water consists of oxygen and hydrogen, or marble of lime and carbonic acid.

Let us inquire a little into the nature of each of the elements. The first element, we say, is the love of Nature, leading to the effort to observe and report her truly. And this is the first and leading element. Review for yourselves the history of art, and you will find this to be a manifest certainty, that *no great school ever yet existed which had not for primal aim the representation of some natural fact as truly as possible*. There have only yet appeared in the world three schools of perfect art—schools, that is to say, that did their work as well as it seems possible to do it. These are the Athenian, [Footnote: See below, the farther notice of the real spirit of Greek work, in the address at Bradford.] Florentine, and Venetian. The Athenian proposed to itself the perfect representation of the form of the human body. It strove to do that as well as it could; it did that as well as it can be done; and all its greatness was founded upon and involved in that single and honest effort. The Florentine school proposed to itself the perfect expression of human emotion—the showing of the effects of passion in the human face and gesture. I call this the Florentine school, because, whether you take Raphael for the culminating master of expressional art in Italy, or Leonardo, or Michael Angelo, you will find that the whole energy of the national effort which produced those masters had its root in Florence; not at Urbino or Milan. I say, then, this Florentine or

leading Italian school proposed to itself human expression for its aim in natural truth; it strove to do that as well as it could—did it as well as it can be done—and all its greatness is rooted in that single and honest effort. Thirdly, the Venetian school propose the representation of the effect of colour and shade on all things, chiefly on the human form. It tried to do that as well as it could—did it as well as it can be done—and all its greatness is founded on that single and honest effort.

Pray, do not leave this room without a perfectly clear holding of these three ideas. You may try them, and toss them about afterwards, as much as you like, to see if they'll bear shaking; but do let me put them well and plainly into your possession. Attach them to three works of art which you all have either seen or continually heard of. There's the (so-called) "Theseus" of the Elgin marbles. That represents the whole end and aim of the Athenian school—the natural form of the human body. All their conventional architecture—their graceful shaping and painting of pottery—whatsoever other art they practised—was dependent for its greatness on this sheet-anchor of central aim: true shape of living man. Then take, for your type of the Italian school, Raphael's "Disputa del Sacramento;" that will be an accepted type by everybody, and will involve no possibly questionable points: the Germans will admit it; the English academicians will admit it; and the English purists and pre-Raphaelites will admit it. Well, there you have the truth of human expression proposed as an aim. That is the way people look when they feel this or

that—when they have this or that other mental character: are they devotional, thoughtful, affectionate, indignant, or inspired? are they prophets, saints, priests, or kings? then—whatsoever is truly thoughtful, affectionate, prophetic, priestly, kingly—that the Florentine school tried to discern, and show; *that* they have discerned and shown; and all their greatness is first fastened in their aim at this central truth—the open expression of the living human soul. Lastly, take Veronese's "Marriage in Cana" in the Louvre. There you have the most perfect representation possible of colour, and light, and shade, as they affect the external aspect of the human form, and its immediate accessories, architecture, furniture, and dress. This external aspect of noblest nature was the first aim of the Venetians, and all their greatness depended on their resolution to achieve, and their patience in achieving it.

Here, then, are the three greatest schools of the former world exemplified for you in three well-known works. The Phidian "Theseus" represents the Greek school pursuing truth of form; the "Disputa" of Raphael, the Florentine school pursuing truth of mental expression; the "Marriage in Cana," the Venetian school pursuing truth of colour and light. But do not suppose that the law which I am stating to you—the great law of art-life—can only be seen in these, the most powerful of all art schools. It is just as manifest in each and every school that ever has had life in it at all. Wheresoever the search after truth begins, there life begins; wheresoever that search ceases, there life ceases. As long as a school of art holds any chain of natural facts, trying

to discover more of them and express them better daily, it may play hither and thither as it likes on this side of the chain or that; it may design grotesques and conventionalisms, build the simplest buildings, serve the most practical utilities, yet all it does will be gloriously designed and gloriously done; but let it once quit hold of the chain of natural fact, cease to pursue that as the clue to its work; let it propose to itself any other end than preaching this living word, and think first of showing its own skill or its own fancy, and from that hour its fall is precipitate—its destruction sure; nothing that it does or designs will ever have life or loveliness in it more; its hour has come, and there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither it goeth.

Let us take for example that school of art over which many of you would perhaps think this law had but little power—the school of Gothic architecture. Many of us may have been in the habit of thinking of that school rather as of one of forms than of facts—a school of pinnacles, and buttresses, and conventional mouldings, and disguise of nature by monstrous imaginings—not a school of truth at all. I think I shall be able, even in the little time we have to-night, to show that this is not so; and that our great law holds just as good at Amiens and Salisbury, as it does at Athens and Florence.

I will go back then first to the very beginnings of Gothic art, and before you, the students of Kensington, as an impanelled jury, I will bring two examples of the barbarism out of which

Gothic art emerges, approximately contemporary in date and parallel in executive skill; but, the one, a barbarism that did not get on, and could not get on; the other, a barbarism that could get on, and did get on; and you, the impanelled jury, shall judge what is the essential difference between the two barbarisms, and decide for yourselves what is the seed of life in the one, and the sign of death in the other.

The first,—that which has in it the sign of death,—furnishes us at the same time with an illustration far too interesting to be passed by, of certain principles much depended on by our common modern designers. Taking up one of our architectural publications the other day, and opening it at random, I chanced upon this piece of information, put in rather curious English; but you shall have it as it stands—

"Aristotle asserts, that the greatest species of the beautiful are Order, Symmetry, and the Definite."

I should tell you, however, that this statement is not given as authoritative; it is one example of various Architectural teachings, given in a report in the *Building Chronicle* for May, 1857, of a lecture on Proportion; in which the only thing the lecturer appears to have proved was that,—

The system of dividing the diameter of the shaft of a column into parts for copying the ancient architectural remains of Greece and Rome, adopted by architects from Vitruvius (circa B.C. 25) to the present period, as a method for producing ancient architecture, *is entirely useless*, for the several parts of Grecian

architecture cannot be reduced or subdivided by this system; neither does it apply to the architecture of Rome.

Still, as far as I can make it out, the lecture appears to have been one of those of which you will just at present hear so many, the protests of architects who have no knowledge of sculpture—or of any other mode of expressing natural beauty—*against* natural beauty; and their endeavour to substitute mathematical proportions for the knowledge of life they do not possess, and the representation of life of which they are incapable.[Illustration] Now, this substitution of obedience to mathematical law for sympathy with observed life, is the first characteristic of the hopeless work of all ages; as such, you will find it eminently manifested in the specimen I have to give you of the hopeless Gothic barbarism; the barbarism from which nothing could emerge—for which no future was possible but extinction. The Aristotelian principles of the Beautiful are, you remember, Order, Symmetry, and the Definite. Here you have the three, in perfection, applied to the ideal of an angel, in a psalter of the eighth century, existing in the library of St. John's College, Cambridge.[Footnote: I copy this woodcut from Westwood's "Palaeographia Sacra."]

Now, you see the characteristics of this utterly dead school are, first the wilful closing of its eyes to natural facts;—for, however ignorant a person may be, he need only look at a human being to see that it has a mouth as well as eyes; and secondly, the endeavour to adorn or idealize natural fact according to its own

notions: it puts red spots in the middle of the hands, and sharpens the thumbs, thinking to improve them. Here you have the most pure type possible of the principles of idealism in all ages: whenever people don't look at Nature, they always think they can improve her. You will also admire, doubtless, the exquisite result of the application of our great modern architectural principle of beauty—symmetry, or equal balance of part by part; you see even the eyes are made symmetrical—entirely round, instead of irregular, oval; and the iris is set properly in the middle, instead of—as nature has absurdly put it—rather under the upper lid. You will also observe the "principle of the pyramid" in the general arrangement of the figure, and the value of "series" in the placing of dots.

From this dead barbarism we pass to living barbarism—to work done by hands quite as rude, if not ruder, and by minds as uninformed; and yet work which in every line of it is prophetic of power, and has in it the sure dawn of day. You have often heard it said that Giotto was the founder of art in Italy. He was not: neither he, nor Giunta Pisano, nor Niccolo Pisano. They all laid strong hands to the work, and brought it first into aspect above ground; but the foundation had been laid for them by the builders of the Lombardic churches in the valleys of the Adda and the Arno. It is in the sculpture of the round arched churches of North Italy, bearing disputable dates, ranging from the eighth to the twelfth century, that you will find the lowest struck roots of the art of Titian and Raphael. [Footnote: I have said elsewhere,

"the root of *all* art is struck in the thirteenth century." This is quite true: but of course some of the smallest fibres run lower, as in this instance.] I go, therefore, to the church which is certainly the earliest of these, St. Ambrogio, of Milan, said still to retain some portions of the actual structure from which St. Ambrose excluded Theodosius, and at all events furnishing the most archaic examples of Lombardic sculpture in North Italy. I do not venture to guess their date; they are barbarous enough for any date.

We find the pulpit of this church covered with interlacing patterns, closely resembling those of the manuscript at Cambridge, but among them is figure sculpture of a very different kind. It is wrought with mere incisions in the stone, of which the effect may be tolerably given by single lines in a drawing. Remember, therefore, for a moment—as characteristic of culminating Italian art—Michael Angelo's fresco of the "Temptation of Eve," in the Sistine chapel, and you will be more interested in seeing the birth of Italian art, illustrated by the same subject, from St. Ambrogio, of Milan, the "Serpent beguiling Eve." [Footnote: This cut is ruder than it should be: the incisions in the marble have a lighter effect than these rough black lines; but it is not worth while to do it better.]

Yet, in that sketch, rude and ludicrous as it is, you have the elements of life in their first form. The people who could do that were sure to get on. For, observe, the workman's whole aim is straight at the facts, as well as he can get them; and not merely at

the facts, but at the very heart of the facts. A common workman might have looked at nature for his serpent, but he would have thought only of its scales. But this fellow does not want scales, nor coils; he can do without them; he wants the serpent's heart—malice and insinuation;—and he has actually got them to some extent. So also a common workman, even in this barbarous stage of art, might have carved Eve's arms and body a good deal better; but this man does not care about arms and body, if he can only get at Eve's mind—show that she is pleased at being flattered, and yet in a state of uncomfortable hesitation. And some look of listening, of complacency, and of embarrassment he has verily got:— note the eyes slightly askance, the lips compressed, and the right hand nervously grasping the left arm: nothing can be declared impossible to the people who could begin thus—the world is open to them, and all that is in it; while, on the contrary, nothing is possible to the man who did the symmetrical angel—the world is keyless to him; he has built a cell for himself in which he must abide, barred up for ever— there is no more hope for him than for a sponge or a madrepore.

I shall not trace from this embryo the progress of Gothic art in Italy, because it is much complicated and involved with traditions of other schools, and because most of the students will be less familiar with its results than with their own northern buildings. So, these two designs indicating Death and Life in the beginnings of mediæval art, we will take an example of the *progress* of that art from our northern work. Now, many of you, doubtless, have

been interested by the mass, grandeur, and gloom of Norman architecture, as much as by Gothic traceries; and when you hear me say that the root of all good work lies in natural facts, you doubtless think instantly of your round arches, with their rude cushion capitals, and of the billet or zigzag work by which they are surrounded, and you cannot see what the knowledge of nature has to do with either the simple plan or the rude mouldings. But all those simple conditions of Norman art are merely the expiring of it towards the extreme north. Do not study Norman architecture in Northumberland, but in Normandy, and then you will find that it is just a peculiarly manly, and practically useful, form of the whole great French school of rounded architecture. And where has that French school its origin? Wholly in the rich conditions of sculpture, which, rising first out of imitations of the Roman bas-reliefs, covered all the façades of the French early churches with one continuous arabesque of floral or animal life. If you want to study round-arched buildings, do not go to Durham, but go to Poitiers, and there you will see how all the simple decorations which give you so much pleasure even in their isolated application were invented by persons practised in carving men, monsters, wild animals, birds, and flowers, in overwhelming redundance; and then trace this architecture forward in central France, and you will find it loses nothing of its richness—it only gains in truth, and therefore in grace, until just at the moment of transition into the pointed style, you have the consummate type of the sculpture of the school given you

in the west front of the Cathedral of Chartres. From that front I have chosen two fragments to illustrate it. [Footnote: This part of the lecture was illustrated by two drawings, made admirably by Mr. J. T. Laing, with the help of photographs from statues at Chartres. The drawings may be seen at present at the Kensington Museum: but any large photograph of the west front of Chartres will enable the reader to follow what is stated in the lecture, as far as is needful.]

These statues have been long, and justly, considered as representative of the highest skill of the twelfth or earliest part of the thirteenth century in France; and they indeed possess a dignity and delicate charm, which are for the most part wanting in later works. It is owing partly to real nobleness of feature, but chiefly to the grace, mingled with severity, of the falling lines of excessively *thin* drapery; as well as to a most studied finish in composition, every part of the ornamentation tenderly harmonizing with the rest. So far as their power over certain tones of religious mind is owing to a palpable degree of non-naturalism in them, I do not praise it—the exaggerated thinness of body and stiffness of attitude are faults; but they are noble faults, and give the statues a strange look of forming part of the very building itself, and sustaining it—not like the Greek caryatid, without effort—nor like the Renaissance caryatid, by painful or impossible effort—but as if all that was silent and stern, and withdrawn apart, and stiffened in chill of heart against the terror of earth, had passed into a shape of eternal marble;

and thus the Ghost had given, to bear up the pillars of the church on earth, all the patient and expectant nature that it needed no more in heaven. This is the transcendental view of the meaning of those sculptures. I do not dwell upon it. What I do lean upon is their purely naturalistic and vital power. They are all portraits—unknown, most of them, I believe, —but palpably and unmistakably portraits, if not taken from the actual person for whom the statue stands, at all events studied from some living person whose features might fairly represent those of the king or saint intended. Several of them I suppose to be authentic: there is one of a queen, who has evidently, while she lived, been notable for her bright black eyes. The sculptor has cut the iris deep into the stone, and her dark eyes are still suggested with her smile.

There is another thing I wish you to notice specially in these statues —the way in which the floral moulding is associated with the vertical lines of the figure. You have thus the utmost complexity and richness of curvature set side by side with the pure and delicate parallel lines, and both the characters gain in interest and beauty; but there is deeper significance in the thing than that of mere effect in composition; significance not intended on the part of the sculptor, but all the more valuable because unintentional. I mean the close association of the beauty of lower nature in animals and flowers, with the beauty of higher nature in human form. You never get this in Greek work. Greek statues are always isolated; blank fields of stone, or depths of shadow, relieving the form of the statue, as the world of lower nature

which they despised retired in darkness from their hearts. Here, the clothed figure seems the type of the Christian spirit—in many respects feebler and more contracted—but purer; clothed in its white robes and crown, and with the riches of all creation at its side.

The next step in the change will be set before you in a moment, merely by comparing this statue from the west front of Chartres with that of the Madonna, from the south transept door of Amiens. [Footnote: There are many photographs of this door and of its central statue. Its sculpture in the tympanum is farther described in the Fourth Lecture.]

This Madonna, with the sculpture round her, represents the culminating power of Gothic art in the thirteenth century. Sculpture has been gaining continually in the interval; gaining, simply because becoming every day more truthful, more tender, and more suggestive. By the way, the old Douglas motto, "Tender and true," may wisely be taken up again by all of us, for our own, in art no less than in other things. Depend upon it, the first universal characteristic of all great art is Tenderness, as the second is Truth. I find this more and more every day: an infinitude of tenderness is the chief gift and inheritance of all the truly great men. It is sure to involve a relative intensity of disdain towards base things, and an appearance of sternness and arrogance in the eyes of all hard, stupid, and vulgar people—quite terrific to such, if they are capable of terror, and hateful to them, if they are capable of nothing higher than hatred. Dante's

is the great type of this class of mind. I say the first inheritance is Tenderness—the second Truth, because the Tenderness is in the make of the creature, the Truth in his acquired habits and knowledge; besides, the love comes first in dignity as well as in time, and that is always pure and complete: the truth, at best, imperfect.

To come back to our statue. You will observe that the arrangement of this sculpture is exactly the same as at Chartres—severe falling drapery, set off by rich floral ornament at the side; but the statue is now completely animated: it is no longer fixed as an upright pillar, but bends aside out of its niche, and the floral ornament, instead of being a conventional wreath, is of exquisitely arranged hawthorn. The work, however, as a whole, though perfectly characteristic of the advance of the age in style and purpose, is in some subtler qualities inferior to that of Chartres. The individual sculptor, though trained in a more advanced school, has been himself a man of inferior order of mind compared to the one who worked at Chartres. But I have not time to point out to you the subtler characters by which I know this.

This statue, then, marks the culminating point of Gothic art, because, up to this time, the eyes of its designers had been steadily fixed on natural truth—they had been advancing from flower to flower, from form to form, from face to face,—gaining perpetually in knowledge and veracity—therefore, perpetually in power and in grace. But at this point a fatal change came over

their aim. From the statue they now began to turn the attention chiefly to the niche of the statue, and from the floral ornament to the mouldings that enclosed the floral ornament. The first result of this was, however, though not the grandest, yet the most finished of northern genius. You have, in the earlier Gothic, less wonderful construction, less careful masonry, far less expression of harmony of parts in the balance of the building. Earlier work always has more or less of the character of a good solid wall with irregular holes in it, well carved wherever there is room. But the last phase of good Gothic has no room to spare; it rises as high as it can on narrowest foundation, stands in perfect strength with the least possible substance in its bars; connects niche with niche, and line with line, in an exquisite harmony, from which no stone can be removed, and to which you can add not a pinnacle; and yet introduces in rich, though now more calculated profusion, the living element of its sculpture: sculpture in the quatrefoils—sculpture in the brackets— sculpture in the gargoyles—sculpture in the niches—sculpture in the ridges and hollows of its mouldings,—not a shadow without meaning, and not a light without life. [Footnote: The two *transepts* of Rouen Cathedral illustrate this style. There are plenty of photographs of them. I take this opportunity of repeating what I have several times before stated, for the sake of travellers, that St. Ouen, impressive as it is, is entirely inferior to the transepts of Rouen Cathedral.] But with this very perfection of his work came the unhappy pride of the builder in what he had done. As long

as he had been merely raising clumsy walls and carving them like a child, in waywardness of fancy, his delight was in the things he thought of as he carved; but when he had once reached this pitch of constructive science, he began to think only how cleverly he could put the stones together. The question was not now with him, What can I represent? but, How high can I build—how wonderfully can I hang this arch in air, or weave this tracery across the clouds? And the catastrophe was instant and irrevocable. Architecture became in France a mere web of waving lines,—in England a mere grating of perpendicular ones. Redundance was substituted for invention, and geometry for passion; tho Gothic art became a mere expression of wanton expenditure, and vulgar mathematics; and was swept away, as it then deserved to be swept away, by the severer pride, and purer learning, of the schools founded on classical traditions.

You cannot now fail to see, how, throughout the history of this wonderful art—from its earliest dawn in Lombardy to its last catastrophe in France and England—sculpture, founded on love of nature, was the talisman of its existence; wherever sculpture was practised, architecture arose—wherever that was neglected, architecture expired; and, believe me, all you students who love this mediaeval art, there is no hope of your ever doing any good with it, but on this everlasting principle. Your patriotic associations with it are of no use; your romantic associations with it—either of chivalry or religion—are of no use; they are worse than useless, they are false. Gothic is not an art for knights and

nobles; it is an art for the people: it is not an art for churches or sanctuaries; it is an art for houses and homes: it is not an art for England only, but an art for the world: above all, it is not an art of form or tradition only, but an art of vital practice and perpetual renewal. And whosoever pleads for it as an ancient or a formal thing, and tries to teach it you as an ecclesiastical tradition or a geometrical science, knows nothing of its essence, less than nothing of its power.

Leave, therefore, boldly, though not irreverently, mysticism and symbolism on the one side; cast away with utter scorn geometry and legalism on the other; seize hold of God's hand and look full in the face of His creation, and there is nothing He will not enable you to achieve.

Thus, then, you will find—and the more profound and accurate your knowledge of the history of art the more assuredly you will find—that the living power in all the real schools, be they great or small, is love of nature. But do not mistake me by supposing that I mean this law to be all that is necessary to form a school. There needs to be much superadded to it, though there never must be anything superseding it. The main thing which needs to be superadded is the gift of design.

It is always dangerous, and liable to diminish the clearness of impression, to go over much ground in the course of one lecture. But I dare not present you with a maimed view of this important subject: I dare not put off to another time, when the same persons would not be again assembled, the statement of the

great collateral necessity which, as well as the necessity of truth, governs all noble art.

That collateral necessity is _the visible operation of human intellect in the presentation of truth, _the evidence of what is properly called design or plan in the work, no less than of veracity. A looking-glass does not design—it receives and communicates indiscriminately all that passes before it; a painter designs when he chooses some things, refuses others, and arranges all.

This selection and arrangement must have influence over everything that the art is concerned with, great or small—over lines, over colours, and over ideas. Given a certain group of colours, by adding another colour at the side of them, you will either improve the group and render it more delightful, or injure it, and render it discordant and unintelligible. "Design" is the choosing and placing the colour so as to help and enhance all the other colours it is set beside. So of thoughts: in a good composition, every idea is presented in just that order, and with just that force, which will perfectly connect it with all the other thoughts in the work, and will illustrate the others as well as receive illustration from them; so that the entire chain of thoughts offered to the beholder's mind shall be received by him with as much delight and with as little effort as is possible. And thus you see design, properly so called, is human invention, consulting human capacity. Out of the infinite heap of things around us in the world, it chooses a certain number which it can thoroughly

grasp, and presents this group to the spectator in the form best calculated to enable him to grasp it also, and to grasp it with delight.

And accordingly, the capacities of both gatherer and receiver being limited, the object is to make *everything that you offer helpful* and precious. If you give one grain of weight too much, so as to increase fatigue without profit, or bulk without value—that added grain is hurtful; if you put one spot or one syllable out of its proper place, that spot or syllable will be destructive—how far destructive it is almost impossible to tell: a misplaced touch may sometimes annihilate the labour of hours. Nor are any of us prepared to understand the work of any great master, till we feel this, and feel it as distinctly as we do the value of arrangement in the notes of music. Take any noble musical air, and you find, on examining it, that not one even of the faintest or shortest notes can be removed without destruction to the whole passage in which it occurs; and that every note in the passage is twenty times more beautiful so introduced, than it would have been if played singly on the instrument. Precisely this degree of arrangement and relation must exist between every touch [Footnote: Literally. I know how exaggerated this statement sounds; but I mean it, —every syllable of it.—See Appendix IV.] and line in a great picture. You may consider the whole as a prolonged musical composition: its parts, as separate airs connected in the story; its little bits and fragments of colour and line, as separate passages or bars in melodies; and down to the minutest note of the whole

—down to the minutest *touch*,—if there is one that can be spared—that one is doing mischief.

Remember therefore always, you have two characters in which all greatness of art consists:—First, the earnest and intense seizing of natural facts; then the ordering those facts by strength of human intellect, so as to make them, for all who look upon them, to the utmost serviceable, memorable, and beautiful. And thus great art is nothing else than the type of strong and noble life; for, as the ignoble person, in his dealings with all that occurs in the world about him, first sees nothing clearly,—looks nothing fairly in the face, and then allows himself to be swept away by the trampling torrent, and unescapable force, of the things that he would not foresee, and could not understand: so the noble person, looking the facts of the world full in the face, and fathoming them with deep faculty, then deals with them in unalarmed intelligence and unhurried strength, and becomes, with his human intellect and will, no unconscious nor insignificant agent, in consummating their good, and restraining their evil.

Thus in human life you have the two fields of rightful toil for ever distinguished, yet for ever associated; Truth first—plan or design, founded thereon; so in art, you have the same two fields for ever distinguished, for ever associated; Truth first—plan, or design, founded thereon.

Now hitherto there is not the least difficulty in the subject; none of you can look for a moment at any great sculptor or

painter without seeing the full bearing of these principles. But a difficulty arises when you come to examine the art of a lower order, concerned with furniture and manufacture, for in that art the element of design enters without, apparently, the element of truth. You have often to obtain beauty and display invention without direct representation of nature. Yet, respecting all these things also, the principle is perfectly simple. If the designer of furniture, of cups and vases, of dress patterns, and the like, exercises himself continually in the imitation of natural form in some leading division of his work; then, holding by this stem of life, he may pass down into all kinds of merely geometrical or formal design with perfect safety, and with noble results. [Footnote: This principle, here cursorily stated, is one of the chief subjects of inquiry in the following Lectures.] Thus Giotto, being primarily a figure painter and sculptor, is, secondarily, the richest of all designers in mere mosaic of coloured bars and triangles; thus Benvenuto Cellini, being in all the higher branches of metal work a perfect imitator of nature, is in all its lower branches the best designer of curve for lips of cups and handles of vases; thus Holbein, exercised primarily in the noble art of truthful portraiture, becomes, secondarily, the most exquisite designer of embroideries of robe, and blazonries on wall; and thus Michael Angelo, exercised primarily in the drawing of body and limb, distributes in the mightiest masses the order of his pillars, and in the loftiest shadow the hollows of his dome. But once quit hold of this living stem, and set yourself to the

designing of ornamentation, either in the ignorant play of your own heartless fancy, as the Indian does, or according to received application of heartless laws, as the modern European does, and there is but one word for you—Death:—death of every healthy faculty, and of every noble intelligence, incapacity of understanding one great work that man has ever done, or of doing anything that it shall be helpful for him to behold. You have cut yourselves off voluntarily, presumptuously, insolently, from the whole teaching of your Maker in His Universe; you have cut yourselves off from it, not because you were forced to mechanical labour for your bread—not because your fate had appointed you to wear away your life in walled chambers, or dig your life out of dusty furrows; but, when your whole profession, your whole occupation— all the necessities and chances of your existence, led you straight to the feet of the great Teacher, and thrust you into the treasury of His works; where you have nothing to do but to live by gazing, and to grow by wondering;—wilfully you bind up your eyes from the splendour— wilfully bind up your life-blood from its beating—wilfully turn your backs upon all the majesties of Omnipotence—wilfully snatch your hands from all the aids of love, and what can remain for you, but helplessness and blindness,—except the worse fate than the being blind yourselves—that of becoming Leaders of the blind?

Do not think that I am speaking under excited feeling, or in any exaggerated terms. I have written the words I use, that I may know what I say, and that you, if you choose, may see what

I have said. For, indeed, I have set before you tonight, to the best of my power, the sum and substance of the system of art to the promulgation of which I have devoted my life hitherto, and intend to devote what of life may still be spared to me. I have had but one steady aim in all that I have ever tried to teach, namely—to declare that whatever was great in human art was the expression of man's delight in God's work.

And at this time I have endeavoured to prove to you—if you investigate the subject you may more entirely prove to yourselves—that no school ever advanced far which had not the love of natural fact as a primal energy. But it is still more important for you to be assured that the conditions of life and death in the art of nations are also the conditions of life and death in your own; and that you have it, each in his power at this very instant, to determine in which direction his steps are turning. It seems almost a terrible thing to tell you, that all here have all the power of knowing at once what hope there is for them as artists; you would, perhaps, like better that there was some unremovable doubt about the chances of the future—some possibility that you might be advancing, in unconscious ways, towards unexpected successes—some excuse or reason for going about, as students do so often, to this master or the other, asking him if they have genius, and whether they are doing right, and gathering, from his careless or formal replies, vague flashes of encouragement, or fitfulnesses of despair. There is no need for this—no excuse for it. All of you have the trial of yourselves in your own power;

each may undergo at this instant, before his own judgment seat, the ordeal by fire. Ask yourselves what is the leading motive which actuates you while you are at work. I do not ask you what your leading motive is for working—that is a different thing; you may have families to support—parents to help—brides to win, you may have all these, or other such sacred and pre-eminent motives, to press the morning's labour and prompt the twilight thought. But when you are fairly *at* the work, what is the motive then which tells upon every touch of it? If it is the love of that which your work represents—if, being a landscape painter, it is love of hills and trees that moves you—if, being a figure painter, it is love of human beauty and human soul that moves you—if, being a flower or animal painter, it is love, and wonder, and delight in petal and in limb that move you, then the Spirit is upon you, and the earth is yours, and the fulness thereof. But if, on the other hand, it is petty self-complacency in your own skill, trust in precepts and laws, hope for academical or popular approbation, or avarice of wealth,—it is quite possible that by steady industry, or even by fortunate chance, you may win the applause, the position, the fortune, that you desire;— but one touch of true art you will never lay on canvas or on stone as long as you live.

Make, then, your choice, boldly and consciously, for one way or other it *must* be made. On the dark and dangerous side are set, the pride which delights in self-contemplation—the indolence which rests in unquestioned forms—the ignorance that despises what is fairest among God's creatures, and the dulness that denies

what is marvellous in His working: there is a life of monotony for your own souls, and of misguiding for those of others. And, on the other side, is open to your choice the life of the crowned spirit, moving as a light in creation— discovering always— illuminating always, gaining every hour in strength, yet bowed down every hour into deeper humility; sure of being right in its aim, sure of being irresistible in its progress; happy in what it has securely done—happier in what, day by day, it may as securely hope; happiest at the close of life, when the right hand begins to forget its cunning, to remember, that there never was a touch of the chisel or the pencil it wielded, but has added to the knowledge and quickened the happiness of mankind.

LECTURE II.

THE UNITY OF ART

Part of an Address delivered at Manchester, 14th March,
1859.

[Footnote: I was prevented, by press of other engagements, from preparing this address with the care I wished; and forced to trust to such expression as I could give at the moment to the points of principal importance; reading, however, the close of the preceding lecture, which I thought contained some truths that would bear repetition. The whole was reported, better than it deserved, by Mr. Pitman, of the *Manchester Courier*, and published nearly verbatim. I have here extracted, from the published report, the facts which I wish especially to enforce; and have a little cleared their expression; its loose and colloquial character I cannot now help, unless by re-writing the whole, which it seems not worth while to do.]

It is sometimes my pleasant duty to visit other cities, in the hope of being able to encourage their art students; but here it is my pleasanter privilege to come for encouragement myself. I do not know when I have received so much as from the report read this evening by Mr. Hammersley, bearing upon a subject which has caused me great anxiety. For I have always felt in my own pursuit of art, and in my endeavors to urge the pursuit of art

on others, that while there are many advantages now that never existed before, there are certain grievous difficulties existing, just in the very cause that is giving the stimulus to art—in the immense spread of the manufactures of every country which is now attending vigorously to art. We find that manufacture and art are now going on always together; that where there is no manufacture there is no art. I know how much there is of pretended art where there is no manufacture: there is much in Italy, for instance; no country makes so bold pretence to the production of new art as Italy at this moment; yet no country produces so little. If you glance over the map of Europe, you will find that where the manufactures are strongest, there art also is strongest. And yet I always felt that there was an immense difficulty to be encountered by the students who were in these centres of modern movement. They had to avoid the notion that art and manufacture were in any respect one. Art may be healthily associated with manufacture, and probably in future will always be so; but the student must be strenuously warned against supposing that they can ever be one and the same thing, that art can ever be followed on the principles of manufacture. Each must be followed separately; the one must influence the other, but each must be kept distinctly separate from the other.

It would be well if all students would keep clearly in their mind the real distinction between those words which we use so often, "Manufacture," "Art," and "Fine Art." "MANUFACTURE" is, according to the etymology and right use of the word,

"the making of anything by hands,"—directly or indirectly, with or without the help of instruments or machines. Anything proceeding from the hand of man is manufacture; but it must have proceeded from his hand only, acting mechanically, and uninfluenced at the moment by direct intelligence.

Then, secondly, ART is the operation of the hand and the intelligence of man together; there is an art of making machinery; there is an art of building ships; an art of making carriages; and so on. All these, properly called Arts, but not Fine Arts, are pursuits in which the hand of man and his head go together, working at the same instant.

Then FINE ART is that in which the hand, the head, and the *heart* of man go together.

Recollect this triple group; it will help you to solve many difficult problems. And remember that though the hand must be at the bottom of everything, it must also go to the top of everything; for Fine Art must be produced by the hand of man in a much greater and clearer sense than manufacture is. Fine Art must always be produced by the subtlest of all machines, which is the human hand. No machine yet contrived, or hereafter contrivable, will ever equal the fine machinery of the human fingers. Thoroughly perfect art is that which proceeds from the heart, which involves all the noble emotions;—associates with these the head, yet as inferior to the heart; and the hand, yet as inferior to the heart and head; and thus brings out the whole man.

Hence it follows that since Manufacture is simply the

operation of the hand of man in producing that which is useful to him, it essentially separates itself from the emotions; when emotions interfere with machinery they spoil it: machinery must go evenly, without emotion. But the Fine Arts cannot go evenly; they always must have emotion ruling their mechanism, and until the pupil begins to feel, and until all he does associates itself with the current of his feeling, he is not an artist. But pupils in all the schools in this country are now exposed to all kinds of temptations which blunt their feelings. I constantly feel discouraged in addressing them because I know not how to tell them boldly what they ought to do, when I feel how practically difficult it is for them to do it. There are all sorts of demands made upon them in every direction, and money is to be made in every conceivable way but the right way. If you paint as you ought, and study as you ought, depend upon it the public will take no notice of you for a long while. If you study wrongly, and try to draw the attention of the public upon you,—supposing you to be clever students—you will get swift reward; but the reward does not come fast when it is sought wisely; it is always held aloof for a little while; the right roads of early life are very quiet ones, hedged in from nearly all help or praise. But the wrong roads are noisy,—vociferous everywhere with all kinds of demand upon you for art which is not properly art at all; and in the various meetings of modern interests, money is to be made in every way; but art is to be followed only in *one* way. That is what I want mainly to say to you, or if not to you yourselves (for,

from what I have heard from your excellent master to-night, I know you are going on all rightly), you must let me say it through you to others. Our Schools of Art are confused by the various teaching and various interests that are now abroad among us. Everybody is talking about art, and writing about it, and more or less interested in it; everybody wants art, and there is not art for everybody, and few who talk know what they are talking about; thus students are led in all variable ways, while there is only one way in which they can make steady progress, for true art is always and will be always one. Whatever changes may be made in the customs of society, whatever new machines we may invent, whatever new manufactures we may supply, Fine Art must remain what it was two thousand years ago, in the days of Phidias; two thousand years hence, it will be, in all its principles, and in all its great effects upon the mind of man, just the same. Observe this that I say, please, carefully, for I mean it to the very utmost. *There is but one right way of doing any given thing required of an artist;* there may be a hundred wrong, deficient, or mannered ways, but there is only one complete and right way. Whenever two artists are trying to do the same thing with the same materials, and do it in different ways, one of them is wrong; he may be charmingly wrong, or impressively wrong—various circumstances in his temper may make his wrong pleasanter than any person's right; it may for him, under his given limitations of knowledge or temper, be better perhaps that he should err in his own way than try for anybody else's—but for all that his way is

wrong, and it is essential for all masters of schools to know what the right way is, and what right art is, and to see how simple and how single all right art has been, since the beginning of it.

But farther, not only is there but one way of *doing* things rightly, but there is only one way of *seeing* them, and that is, seeing the whole of them, without any choice, or more intense perception of one point than another, owing to our special idiosyncrasies. Thus, when Titian or Tintoret look at a human being, they see at a glance the whole of its nature, outside and in; all that it has of form, of colour, of passion, or of thought; saintliness, and loveliness; fleshly body, and spiritual power; grace, or strength, or softness, or whatsoever other quality, those men will see to the full, and so paint, that, when narrower people come to look at what they have done, every one may, if he chooses, find his own special pleasure in the work. The sensualist will find sensuality in Titian; the thinker will find thought; the saint, sanctity; the colourist, colour; the anatomist, form; and yet the picture will never be a popular one in the full sense, for none of these narrower people will find their special taste so alone consulted, as that the qualities which would ensure their gratification shall be sifted or separated from others; they are checked by the presence of the other qualities which ensure the gratification of other men. Thus, Titian is not soft enough for the sensualist, Correggio suits him better; Titian is not defined enough for the formalist,—Leonardo suits him better; Titian is not pure enough for the religionist,—Raphael

suits him better; Titian is not polite enough for the man of the world,—Vandyke suits him better; Titian is not forcible enough for the lovers of the picturesque,— Rembrandt suits him better. So Correggio is popular with a certain set, and Vandyke with a certain set, and Rembrandt with a certain set. All are great men, but of inferior stamp, and therefore Vandyke is popular, and Rembrandt is popular, [Footnote: And Murillo, of all true painters the narrowest, feeblest, and most superficial, for those reasons the most popular.] but nobody cares much at heart about Titian; only there is a strange under-current of everlasting murmur about his name, which means the deep consent of all great men that he is greater than they— the consent of those who, having sat long enough at his feet, have found in that restrained harmony of his strength there are indeed depths of each balanced power more wonderful than all those separate manifestations in inferior painters: that there is a softness more exquisite than Correggio's, a purity loftier than Leonardo's, a force mightier than Rembrandt's, a sanctity more solemn even than Raffaele's.

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