

RUSKIN JOHN

ON THE OLD
ROAD VOL. 1
(OF 2)

John Ruskin
On the Old Road Vol. 1 (of 2)

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*On the Old Road Vol. 1 (of 2) / A Collection of Miscellaneous Essays and
Articles on Art and Literature:*

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(of 2) / A Collection of
Miscellaneous Essays and
Articles on Art and Literature
MY FIRST EDITOR. ¹

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL REMINISCENCE

(University Magazine, April 1878.)

1st February, 1878.

1. In seven days more I shall be fifty-nine;—which

¹ This paper was written as a preface to a series of "Reminiscences" from the pen of the late Mr. W. H. Harrison, commenced in the *University Magazine* of May 1878. It was separately printed in that magazine in the preceding month, but owing to Mr. Ruskin's illness at the time, he was unable to see it through the press. A letter from Mr. Ruskin to Mr. Harrison, printed in "Arrows of the Chace," may be found of interest in connection with the opening statements of this paper.—[Ed.]

(practically) is all the same as sixty; but, being asked by the wife of my dear old friend, W. H. Harrison, to say a few words of our old relations together, I find myself, in spite of all these years, a boy again,—partly in the mere thought of, and renewed sympathy with, the cheerful heart of my old literary master, and partly in instinctive terror lest, wherever he is in celestial circles, he should catch me writing bad grammar, or putting wrong stops, and should set the table turning, or the like. For he was inexorable in such matters, and many a sentence in "Modern Painters," which I had thought quite beautifully turned out after a forenoon's work on it, had to be turned outside-in, after all, and cut into the smallest pieces and sewn up again, because he had found out there wasn't a nominative in it, or a genitive, or a conjunction, or something else indispensable to a sentence's decent existence and position in life. Not a book of mine, for good thirty years, but went, every word of it, under his careful eyes twice over—often also the last revises left to his tender mercy altogether on condition he wouldn't bother me any more.

2. "For good thirty years": that is to say, from my first verse-writing in "Friendship's Offering" at fifteen, to my last orthodox and conservative compositions at forty-five.² But when I began to utter radical sentiments, and say things derogatory to the clergy, my old friend got quite restive—absolutely refused sometimes to

² "Friendship's Offering" of 1835 included two poems, signed "J. R.," and entitled "Saltzburg" and "Fragments from a Metrical Journal; Andernacht and St. Goar."—[Ed.]

pass even my most grammatical and punctuated paragraphs, if their contents savored of heresy or revolution; and at last I was obliged to print all my philanthropy and political economy on the sly.

3. The heaven of the literary world through which Mr. Harrison moved in a widely cometary fashion, circling now round one luminary and now submitting to the attraction of another, not without a serenely erubescient luster of his own, differed *toto cælo* from the celestial state of authorship by whose courses we have now the felicity of being dazzled and directed. Then, the publications of the months being very nearly concluded in the modest browns of *Blackwood* and *Fraser*, and the majesty of the quarterlies being above the range of the properly so-called "public" mind, the simple family circle looked forward with chief complacency to their New Year's gift of the Annual—a delicately printed, lustrously bound, and elaborately illustrated small octavo volume, representing, after its manner, the poetical and artistic inspiration of the age. It is not a little wonderful to me, looking back to those pleasant years and their bestowings, to measure the difficultly imaginable distance between the periodical literature of that day and ours. In a few words, it may be summed by saying that the ancient Annual was written by meekly-minded persons, who felt that they knew nothing about anything, and did not want to know more. Faith in the usually accepted principles of propriety, and confidence in the Funds, the Queen, the English Church, the British Army

and the perennial continuance of England, of her Annuals, and of the creation in general, were necessary then for the eligibility, and important elements in the success, of the winter-blowing author. Whereas I suppose that the popularity of our present candidates for praise, at the successive changes of the moon, may be considered as almost proportionate to their confidence in the abstract principles of dissolution, the immediate necessity of change, and the inconvenience, no less than the iniquity, of attributing any authority to the Church, the Queen, the Almighty, or anything else but the British Press. Such constitutional differences in the tone of the literary contents imply still greater contrasts in the lives of the editors of these several periodicals. It was enough for the editor of the "Friendship's Offering" if he could gather for his Christmas bouquet a little pastoral story, suppose, by Miss Mitford, a dramatic sketch by the Rev. George Croly, a few sonnets or impromptu stanzas to music by the gentlest lovers and maidens of his acquaintance, and a legend of the Apennines or romance of the Pyrenees by some adventurous traveler who had penetrated into the recesses of their mountains, and would modify the traditions of the country to introduce a plate by Clarkson Stanfield or J. D. Harding. Whereas nowadays the editor of a leading monthly is responsible to his readers for exhaustive views of the politics of Europe during the last fortnight; and would think himself distanced in the race with his lunarian rivals, if his numbers did not contain three distinct and entirely new theories of the system of the universe, and at least

one hitherto unobserved piece of evidence of the nonentity of God.

4. In one respect, however, the humilities of that departed time were loftier than the prides of to-day—that even the most retiring of its authors expected to be admired, not for what he had discovered, but for what he was. It did not matter in our dynasties of determined noblesse how many things an industrious blockhead knew, or how curious things a lucky booby had discovered. We claimed, and gave no honor but for real rank of human sense and wit; and although this manner of estimate led to many various collateral mischiefs—to much toleration of misconduct in persons who were amusing, and of uselessness in those of proved ability, there was yet the essential and constant good in it, that no one hoped to snap up for himself a reputation which his friend was on the point of achieving, and that even the meanest envy of merit was not embittered by a gambler's grudge at his neighbor's fortune.

5. Into this incorruptible court of literature I was early brought, whether by good or evil hap, I know not; certainly by no very deliberate wisdom in my friends or myself. A certain capacity for rhythmic cadence (visible enough in all my later writings) and the cheerfulness of a much protected, but not foolishly indulged childhood, made me early a rhymester; and a shelf of the little cabinet by which I am now writing is loaded with poetical effusions which were the delight of my father and mother, and I have not yet the heart to burn. A worthy Scottish

friend of my father's, Thomas Pringle, preceded Mr. Harrison in the editorship of "Friendship's Offering," and doubtfully, but with benignant sympathy, admitted the dazzling hope that one day rhymes of mine might be seen in real print, on those amiable and shining pages.

6. My introduction by Mr. Pringle to the poet Rogers, on the ground of my admiration of the recently published "Italy," proved, as far as I remember, slightly disappointing to the poet, because it appeared on Mr. Pringle's unadvised cross-examination of me in the presence that I knew more of the vignettes than the verses; and also slightly discouraging to me because, this contretemps necessitating an immediate change of subject, I thenceforward understood none of the conversation, and when we came away was rebuked by Mr. Pringle for not attending to it. Had his grave authority been maintained over me, my literary bloom would probably have been early nipped; but he passed away into the African deserts; and the Favonian breezes of Mr. Harrison's praise revived my drooping ambition.

7. I know not whether most in that ambition, or to please my father, I now began seriously to cultivate my skill in expression. I had always an instinct of possessing considerable word-power; and the series of essays written about this time for the *Architectural Magazine*, under the signature of Kata Phusin, contain sentences nearly as well put together as any I have done since. But without Mr. Harrison's ready praise, and severe punctuation, I should have either tired of my labor, or lost it;

as it was, though I shall always think those early years might have been better spent, they had their reward. As soon as I had anything really to say, I was able sufficiently to say it; and under Mr. Harrison's cheerful auspices, and balmy consolations of my father under adverse criticism, the first volume of "Modern Painters" established itself in public opinion, and determined the tenor of my future life.

8. Thus began a friendship, and in no unreal sense, even a family relationship, between Mr. Harrison, my father and mother, and me, in which there was no alloy whatsoever of distrust or displeasure on either side, but which remained faithful and loving, more and more conducive to every sort of happiness among us, to the day of my father's death.

But the joyfulest days of it for *us*, and chiefly for me, cheered with concurrent sympathy from other friends—of whom only one now is left—were in the triumphal Olympiad of years which followed the publication of the second volume of "Modern Painters," when Turner himself had given to me his thanks, to my father and mother his true friendship, and came always for *their* honor, to keep my birthday with them; the constant dinner party of the day remaining in its perfect chaplet from 1844 to 1850,—Turner, Mr. Thomas Richmond, Mr. George Richmond, Samuel Prout, and Mr. Harrison.

9. Mr. Harrison, as my literary godfather, who had held me at the Font of the Muses, and was answerable to the company for my moral principles and my syntax, always made "the speech";

my father used most often to answer for me in few words, but with wet eyes: (there was a general understanding that any good or sorrow that might come to me in literary life were infinitely more his) and the two Mr. Richmonds held themselves responsible to him for my at least moderately decent orthodoxy in art, taking in that matter a tenderly inquisitorial function, and warning my father solemnly of two dangerous heresies in the bud, and of things really passing the possibilities of the indulgence of the Church, said against Claude or Michael Angelo. The death of Turner and other things, far more sad than death, clouded those early days, but the memory of them returned again after I had well won my second victory with the "Stones of Venice"; and the two Mr. Richmonds, and Mr. Harrison, and my father, were again happy on my birthday, and so to the end.

10. In a far deeper sense than he himself knew, Mr. Harrison was all this time influencing my thoughts and opinions, by the entire consistency, contentment, and practical sense of his modest life. My father and he were both flawless types of the true London citizen of olden days: incorruptible, proud with sacred and simple pride, happy in their function and position; putting daily their total energy into the detail of their business duties, and finding daily a refined and perfect pleasure in the hearth-side poetry of domestic life. Both of them, in their hearts, as romantic as girls; both of them inflexible as soldier recruits in any matter of probity and honor, in business or out of it; both of them utterly hating radical newspapers, and devoted to the House

of Lords; my father only, it seemed to me, slightly failing in his loyalty to the Worshipful the Mayor and Corporation of London. This disrespect for civic dignity was connected in my father with some little gnawing of discomfort—deep down in his heart—in his own position as a merchant, and with timidly indulged hope that his son might one day move in higher spheres; whereas Mr. Harrison was entirely placid and resigned to the will of Providence which had appointed him his desk in the Crown Life Office, never in his most romantic visions projected a marriage for any of his daughters with a British baronet or a German count, and pinned his little vanities prettily and openly on his breast, like a nosegay, when he went out to dinner. Most especially he shone at the Literary Fund, where he was Registrar and had proper official relations, therefore, always with the Chairman, Lord Mahon, or Lord Houghton, or the Bishop of Winchester, or some other magnificent person of that sort, with whom it was Mr. Harrison's supremest felicity to exchange a not unfrequent little joke—like a pinch of snuff—and to indicate for them the shoals to be avoided and the channels to be followed with flowing sail in the speech of the year; after which, if perchance there were any malignant in the company who took objection, suppose, to the claims of the author last relieved, to the charity of the Society, or to any claim founded on the production of a tale for *Blackwood's Magazine*, and of two sonnets for "Friendship's Offering"; or if perchance there were any festering sharp thorn in Mr. Harrison's side in the shape of some distinguished radical,

Sir Charles Dilke, or Mr. Dickens, or anybody who had ever said anything against taxation, or the Post Office, or the Court of Chancery, or the Bench of Bishops,—then would Mr. Harrison, if he had full faith in his Chairman, cunningly arrange with him some delicate little extinctive operation to be performed on that malignant or that radical in the course of the evening, and would relate to us exultingly the next day all the incidents of the power of arms, and vindictively (for him) dwell on the barbed points and double edge of the beautiful episcopalian repartee with which it was terminated.

11. Very seriously, in all such public duties, Mr. Harrison was a person of rarest quality and worth; absolutely disinterested in his zeal, unwearied in exertion, always ready, never tiresome, never absurd; bringing practical sense, kindly discretion, and a most wholesome element of good-humored, but incorruptible honesty, into everything his hand found to do. Everybody respected, and the best men sincerely regarded him, and I think those who knew most of the world were always the first to acknowledge his fine faculty of doing exactly the right thing to exactly the right point—and so pleasantly. In private life, he was to me an object of quite special admiration, in the quantity of pleasure he could take in little things; and he very materially modified many of my gravest conclusions, as to the advantages or mischiefs of modern suburban life. To myself scarcely any dwelling-place and duty in this world would have appeared (until, perhaps, I had tried them) less eligible for a man of sensitive

and fanciful mind than the New Road, Camberwell Green, and the monotonous office work in Bridge Street. And to a certain extent, I am still of the same mind as to these matters, and do altogether, and without doubt or hesitation, repudiate the existence of New Road and Camberwell Green in general, no less than the condemnation of intelligent persons to a routine of clerk's work broken only by a three weeks' holiday in the decline of the year. On less lively, fanciful, and amiable persons than my old friend, the New Road and the daily desk do verily exercise a degrading and much to be regretted influence. But Mr. Harrison brought the freshness of pastoral simplicity into the most faded corners of the Green, lightened with his cheerful heart the most leaden hours of the office, and gathered during his three weeks' holiday in the neighborhood, suppose, of Guildford, Gravesend, Broadstairs, or Rustington, more vital recreation and speculative philosophy than another man would have got on the grand tour.

12. On the other hand, I, who had nothing to do all day but what I liked, and could wander at will among all the best beauties of the globe—nor that without sufficient power to see and to feel them, was habitually a discontented person, and frequently a weary one; and the reproachful thought which always rose in my mind when in that unconquerable listlessness of surfeit from excitement I found myself unable to win even a momentary pleasure from the fairest scene, was always: "If but Mr. Harrison were here instead of me!"

13. Many and many a time I planned very seriously the

beguiling of him over the water. But there was always something to be done in a hurry—something to be worked out—something to be seen, as I thought, only in my own quiet way. I believe if I had but had the sense to take my old friend with me, he would have shown me ever so much more than I found out by myself. But it was not to be; and year after year I went to grumble and mope at Venice, or Lago Maggiore; and Mr. Harrison to enjoy himself from morning to night at Broadstairs or Box Hill. Let me not speak with disdain of either. No blue languor of tideless wave is worth the spray and sparkle of a South-Eastern English beach, and no one will ever rightly enjoy the pines of the Wengern Alp who despises the boxes of Box Hill.

Nay, I remember me of a little rapture of George Richmond himself on those fair slopes of sunny sward, ending in a vision of Tobit and his dog—no less—led up there by the helpful angel. (I have always wondered, by the way, whether that blessed dog minded what the angel said to him.)

14. But Mr. Harrison was independent of these mere ethereal visions, and surrounded himself only with a halo of sublunary beatitude. Welcome always he, as on his side frankly coming to be well, with the farmer, the squire, the rector, the—I had like to have said, dissenting minister, but I think Mr. Harrison usually evaded villages for summer domicile which were in any wise open to suspicion of Dissent in the air,—but with hunting rector, and the High Church curate, and the rector's daughters, and the curate's mother—and the landlord of the Red Lion, and

the hostler of the Red Lion stables, and the tapster of the Pig and Whistle, and all the pigs in the backyard, and all the whistlers in the street—whether for want of thought or for gayety of it, and all the geese on the common, ducks in the horse-pond, and daws in the steeple, Mr. Harrison was known and beloved by every bird and body of them before half his holiday was over, and the rest of it was mere exuberance of festivity about him, and applauding coronation of his head and heart. Above all, he delighted in the ways of animals and children. He wrote a birthday ode—or at least a tumble-out-of-the-nest-day ode—to our pet rook, Grip, which encouraged that bird in taking such liberties with the cook, and in addressing so many impertinences to the other servants, that he became the mere plague, or as the French would express it, the "Black-beast," of the kitchen at Denmark Hill for the rest of his life. There was almost always a diary kept, usually, I think, in rhyme, of those summer hours of indolence; and when at last it was recognized, in due and reverent way, at the Crown Life Office, that indeed the time had drawn near when its constant and faithful servant should be allowed to rest, it was perhaps not the least of my friend's praiseworthy and gentle gifts to be truly capable of rest; withdrawing himself into the memories of his useful and benevolent life, and making it truly a holiday in its honored evening. The idea then occurred to him (and it was now my turn to press with hearty sympathy the sometimes intermitted task) of writing these Reminiscences: valuable—valuable to whom, and for what, I begin to wonder.

15. For indeed these memories are of people who are passed away like the snow in harvest; and now, with the sharp-sickle reapers of full shocks of the fattening wheat of metaphysics, and fair novelists Ruth-like in the fields of barley, or more mischievously coming through the rye,—what will the public, so vigorously sustained by these, care to hear of the lovely writers of old days, quaint creatures that they were?—Merry Miss Mitford, actually living in the country, actually walking in it, loving it, and finding history enough in the life of the butcher's boy, and romance enough in the story of the miller's daughter, to occupy all her mind with, innocent of troubles concerning the Turkish question; steady-going old Barham, confessing nobody but the Jackdaw of Rheims, and fearless alike of Ritualism, Darwinism, or disestablishment; iridescent clearness of Thomas Hood—the wildest, deepest infinity of marvelously jestful men; manly and rational Sydney, inevitable, infallible, inoffensively wise of wit;³—they are gone their way, and ours is far diverse; and they and all the less-known, yet pleasantly and brightly endowed

³ In the "Life and Times of Sydney Smith," by Stuart J. Reid (London, 1884, p. 374), appears a letter addressed to the author by Mr. Ruskin, to whom the book is dedicated:—"Oxford, *Nov. 15th, 1883.*" "My Dear Sir,—I wanted to tell you what deep respect I had for Sydney Smith; but my time has been cut to pieces ever since your note reached me. He was the first in the literary circles of London to assert the value of 'Modern Painters,' and he has always seemed to me equally keen-sighted and generous in his estimate of literary efforts. His 'Moral Philosophy' is the only book on the subject which I care that my pupils should read, and there is no man (whom I have not personally known) whose image is so vivid in my constant affection.—Ever your faithful servant," John Ruskin."—[Ed.]

spirits of that time, are suddenly as unintelligible to us as the Etruscans—not a feeling they had that we can share in; and these pictures of them will be to us valuable only as the sculpture under the niches far in the shade there of the old parish church, dimly vital images of inconceivable creatures whom we shall never see the like of more.

ART. I. "THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN ART." ⁴

BY LORD LINDSAY

16. There is, perhaps, no phenomenon connected with the history of the first half of the nineteenth century, which will become a subject of more curious investigation in after ages, than the coincident development of the Critical faculty, and extinction of the Arts of Design. Our mechanical energies, vast though they be, are not singular nor characteristic; such, and so great, have

⁴ This essay is a review of two books by Lord Lindsay, viz., "Progression by Antagonism," published in 1846, and the "Sketches of the History of Christian Art," which appeared in the following year. It is, with the paper on Sir C. Eastlake's "History of Oil Painting," one of the very few anonymous writings of its author. "I never felt at ease" (says Mr. Ruskin, in speaking of anonymous criticism) "in my graduate incognito, and although I consented, some nine years ago, to review Lord Lindsay's 'Christian Art,' and Sir Charles Eastlake's 'Essay on Oil Painting,' in the *Quarterly*, I have ever since steadily refused to write even for that once respectable periodical" ("Academy Notes," No. II., 1856). For Mr. Ruskin's estimate of Lord Lindsay's work, see the "Eagle's Nest," § 46, and "Val d'Arno," § 264, where he speaks of him as his "first master in Italian art."—[Ed.]

before been manifested—and it may perhaps be recorded of us with wonder rather than respect, that we pierced mountains and excavated valleys, only to emulate the activity of the gnat and the swiftness of the swallow. Our discoveries in science, however accelerated or comprehensive, are but the necessary development of the more wonderful reachings into vacancy of past centuries; and they who struck the piles of the bridge of Chaos will arrest the eyes of Futurity rather than we builders of its towers and gates—theirs the authority of Light, ours but the ordering of courses to the Sun and Moon.

17. But the Negative character of the age is distinctive. There has not before appeared a race like that of civilized Europe at this day, thoughtfully unproductive of all art—ambitious—industrious—investigative—reflective, and incapable. Disdained by the savage, or scattered by the soldier, dishonored by the voluptuary, or forbidden by the fanatic, the arts have not, till now, been extinguished by analysis and paralyzed by protection. Our lecturers, learned in history, exhibit the descents of excellence from school to school, and clear from doubt the pedigrees of powers which they cannot re-establish, and of virtues no more to be revived: the scholar is early acquainted with every department of the Impossible, and expresses in proper terms his sense of the deficiencies of Titian and the errors of Michael Angelo: the metaphysician weaves from field to field his analogies of gossamer, which shake and glitter fairly in the sun, but must be torn asunder by the first plow that passes: geometry

measures out, by line and rule, the light which is to illustrate heroism, and the shadow which should veil distress; and anatomy counts muscles, and systematizes motion, in the wrestling of Genius with its angel. Nor is ingenuity wanting—nor patience; apprehension was never more ready, nor execution more exact—yet nothing is of us, or in us, accomplished;—the treasures of our wealth and will are spent in vain—our cares are as clouds without water—our creations fruitless and perishable; the succeeding Age will trample "*sopra lor vanita che par persona,*" and point wonderingly back to the strange colorless tessera in the mosaic of human mind.

18. No previous example can be shown, in the career of nations not altogether nomad or barbarous, of so total an absence of invention,—of any material representation of the mind's inward yearning and desire, seen, as soon as shaped, to be, though imperfect, in its essence good, and worthy to be rested in with contentment, and consisting self-approval—the Sabbath of contemplation which confesses and confirms the majesty of a style. All but ourselves have had this in measure; the Imagination has stirred herself in proportion to the requirements, capacity, and energy of each race: reckless or pensive, soaring or frivolous, still she has had life and influence; sometimes aiming at Heaven with brick for stone and slime for mortar—anon bound down to painting of porcelain, and carving of ivory, but always with an inward consciousness of power which might indeed be palsied or imprisoned, but not in operation vain. Altars have been rent,

many—ashes poured out,—hands withered—but we alone have worshiped, and received no answer—the pieces left in order upon the wood, and our names writ in the water that runs roundabout the trench.

19. It is easier to conceive than to enumerate the many circumstances which are herein against us, necessarily, and exclusive of all that wisdom might avoid, or resolution vanquish. First, the weight of mere numbers, among whom ease of communication rather renders opposition of judgment fatal, than agreement probable; looking from England to Attica, or from Germany to Tuscany, we may remember to what good purpose it was said that the magnetism of iron was found not in bars, but in needles. Together with this adversity of number comes the likelihood of many among the more available intellects being held back and belated in the crowd, or else prematurely outwearied; for it now needs both curious fortune and vigorous effort to give to any, even the greatest, such early positions of eminence and audience as may feed their force with advantage; so that men spend their strength in opening circles, and crying for place, and only come to speech of us with broken voices and shortened time. Then follows the diminution of importance in peculiar places and public edifices, as they engage national affection or vanity; no single city can now take such queenly lead as that the pride of the whole body of the people shall be involved in adorning her; the buildings of London or Munich are not charged with the fullness of the national heart as were the domes

of Pisa and Florence:—their credit or shame is metropolitan, not acropolitan; central at the best, not dominant; and this is one of the chief modes in which the cessation of superstition, so far as it has taken place, has been of evil consequence to art, that the observance of local sanctities being abolished, meanness and mistake are anywhere allowed of, and the thoughts and wealth which were devoted and expended to good purpose in one place, are now distracted and scattered to utter unavailability.

20. In proportion to the increasing spirituality of religion, the conception of worthiness in material offering ceases, and with it the sense of beauty in the evidence of votive labor; machine-work is substituted for handwork, as if the value of ornament consisted in the mere multiplication of agreeable forms, instead of in the evidence of human care and thought and love about the separate stones; and—machine-work once tolerated—the eye itself soon loses its sense of this very evidence, and no more perceives the difference between the blind accuracy of the engine, and the bright, strange play of the living stroke—a difference as great as between the form of a stone pillar and a springing fountain. And on this blindness follow all errors and abuses—hollowness and slightness of framework, speciousness of surface ornament, concealed structure, imitated materials, and types of form borrowed from things noble for things base; and all these abuses must be resisted with the more caution, and less success, because in many ways they are signs or consequences of improvement, and are associated both with purer forms of

religious feeling and with more general diffusion of refinements and comforts; and especially because we are critically aware of all our deficiencies, too cognizant of all that is greatest to pass willingly and humbly through the stages that rise to it, and oppressed in every honest effort by the bitter sense of inferiority. In every previous development the power has been in advance of the consciousness, the resources more abundant than the knowledge—the energy irresistible, the discipline imperfect. The light that led was narrow and dim—streakings of dawn—but it fell with kindly gentleness on eyes newly awakened out of sleep. But we are now aroused suddenly in the light of an intolerable day—our limbs fail under the sunstroke—we are walled in by the great buildings of elder times, and their fierce reverberation falls upon us without pause, in our feverish and oppressive consciousness of captivity; we are laid bedridden at the Beautiful Gate, and all our hope must rest in acceptance of the "such as I have," of the passers by.

21. The frequent and firm, yet modest expression of this hope, gives peculiar value to Lord Lindsay's book on Christian Art; for it is seldom that a grasp of antiquity so comprehensive, and a regard for it so affectionate, have consisted with aught but gloomy foreboding with respect to our own times. As a contribution to the History of Art, his work is unquestionably the most valuable which has yet appeared in England. His research has been unwearied; he has availed himself of the best results of German investigation—his own acuteness of discernment

in cases of approximating or derivative style is considerable—and he has set before the English reader an outline of the relations of the primitive schools of Sacred art which we think so thoroughly verified in all its more important ramifications, that, with whatever richness of detail the labor of succeeding writers may illustrate them, the leading lines of Lord Lindsay's chart will always henceforth be followed. The feeling which pervades the whole book is chastened, serious, and full of reverence for the strength ordained out of the lips of infant Art—accepting on its own terms its simplest teaching, sympathizing with all kindness in its unreasoning faith; the writer evidently looking back with most joy and thankfulness to hours passed in gazing upon the faded and faint touches of feeble hands, and listening through the stillness of uninvaded cloisters for fall of voices now almost spent; yet he is never contracted into the bigot, nor inflamed into the enthusiast; he never loses his memory of the outside world, never quits nor compromises his severe and reflective Protestantism, never gives ground of offense by despite or forgetfulness of any order of merit or period of effort. And the tone of his address to our present schools is therefore neither scornful nor peremptory; his hope, consisting with full apprehension of all that we have lost, is based on a strict and stern estimate of our power, position, and resource, compelling the assent even of the least sanguine to his expectancy of the revelation of a new world of Spiritual Beauty, of which whosoever

"will dedicate his talents, as the bondsman of love, to his Redeemer's glory and the good of mankind, may become the priest and interpreter, by adopting in the first instance, and re-issuing with that outward investiture which the assiduous study of all that is beautiful, either in Grecian sculpture, or the later but less spiritual schools of painting, has enabled him to supply, such of its bright ideas as he finds imprisoned in the early and imperfect efforts of art—and secondly, by exploring further on his own account in the untrodden realms of feeling that lie before him, and calling into palpable existence visions as bright, as pure, and as immortal as those that have already, in the golden days of Raphael and Perugino, obeyed their creative mandate, Live!" (Vol. iii., p. 422).⁵

22. But while we thus defer to the discrimination, respect the feeling, and join in the hope of the author, we earnestly deprecate the frequent assertion, as we entirely deny the accuracy or propriety, of the metaphysical analogies, in accordance with which his work has unhappily been arranged. Though these had been as carefully, as they are crudely, considered, it had still been no light error of judgment to thrust them with dogmatism so abrupt into the forefront of a work whose purpose is assuredly as much to win to the truth as to demonstrate it. The writer has apparently forgotten that of the men to whom he must primarily look for the working out of his anticipations, the

⁵ With one exception (see [p. 25](#)) the quotations from Lord Lindsay are always from the "Christian Art."—Ed.

most part are of limited knowledge and inveterate habit, men dexterous in practice, idle in thought; many of them compelled by ill-ordered patronage into directions of exertion at variance with their own best impulses, and regarding their art only as a means of life; all of them conscious of practical difficulties which the critic is too apt to under-estimate, and probably remembering disappointments of early effort rude enough to chill the most earnest heart. The shallow amateurship of the circle of their patrons early disgusts them with theories; they shrink back to the hard teaching of their own industry, and would rather read the book which facilitated their methods than the one that rationalized their aims. Noble exceptions there are, and more than might be deemed; but the labor spent in contest with executive difficulties renders even these better men unapt receivers of a system which looks with little respect on such achievement, and shrewd discerners of the parts of such system which have been feebly rooted, or fancifully reared. Their attention should have been attracted both by clearness and kindness of promise; their impatience prevented by close reasoning and severe proof of every statement which might seem transcendental. Altogether void of such consideration or care, Lord Lindsay never even so much as states the meaning or purpose of his appeal, but, clasping his hands desperately over his head, disappears on the instant in an abyss of curious and unsupported assertions of the philosophy of human nature: reappearing only, like a breathless diver, in the third page,

to deprecate the surprise of the reader whom he has never addressed, at a conviction which he has never stated; and again vanishing ere we can well look him in the face, among the frankincensed clouds of Christian mythology: filling the greater part of his first volume with a *résumé* of its symbols and traditions, yet never vouchsafing the slightest hint of the objects for which they are assembled, or the amount of credence with which he would have them regarded; and so proceeds to the historical portion of the book, leaving the whole theory which is its key to be painfully gathered from scattered passages, and in great part from the mere form of enumeration adopted in the preliminary chart of the schools; and giving as yet account only of that period to which the mere artist looks with least interest—while the work, even when completed, will be nothing more than a single pinnacle of the historical edifice whose ground-plan is laid in the preceding essay, "Progression by Antagonism":—a plan, by the author's confession, "too extensive for his own, or any single hand to execute," yet without the understanding of whose main relations it is impossible to receive the intended teaching of the completed portion.

23. It is generally easier to plan what is beyond the reach of others than to execute what is within our own; and it had been well if the range of this introductory essay had been something less extensive, and its reasoning more careful. Its search after truth is honest and impetuous, and its results would have appeared as interesting as they are indeed valuable, had they

but been arranged with ordinary perspicuity, and represented in simple terms. But the writer's evil genius pursues him; the demand for exertion of thought is remorseless, and continuous throughout, and the statements of theoretical principle as short, scattered, and obscure, as they are bold. We question whether many readers may not be utterly appalled by the aspect of an "Analysis of Human Nature"—the first task proposed to them by our intellectual Eurystheus—to be accomplished in the space of six semi-pages, followed in the seventh by the "Development of the Individual Man," and applied in the eighth to a "General Classification of Individuals": and we infinitely marvel that our author should have thought it unnecessary to support or explain a division of the mental attributes on which the treatment of his entire subject afterwards depends, and whose terms are repeated in every following page to the very dazzling of eye and deadening of ear (a division, we regret to say, as illogical as it is purposeless), otherwise than by a laconic reference to the assumptions of Phrenology.

"The Individual Man, or Man considered by himself as an unit in creation, is compounded of three distinct primary elements.

1. Sense, or the animal frame, with its passions or affections;
2. Mind or Intellect;—of which the distinguishing faculties—rarely, if ever, equally balanced, and by their respective predominance determinative of his whole character, conduct, and views of life—are,

i. Imagination, the discerner of Beauty,—

ii. Reason, the discerner of Truth,—

the former animating and informing the world of Sense or Matter, the latter finding her proper home in the world of abstract or immaterial existences—the former receiving the impress of things Objectively, or *ab externo*, the latter impressing its own ideas on them Subjectively, or *ab interno*—the former a feminine or passive, the latter a masculine or active principle; and

iii. Spirit—the Moral or Immortal principle, ruling through the Will, and breathed into Man by the Breath of God."—"Progression by Antagonism," pp. 2, 3.

24. On what authority does the writer assume that the moral is alone the *Immortal* principle—or the only part of the human nature bestowed by the breath of God? Are imagination, then, and reason perishable? Is the Body itself? Are not all alike immortal; and when distinction is to be made among them, is not the first great division between their active and passive immortality, between the supported body and supporting spirit; that spirit itself afterwards rather conveniently to be considered as either exercising intellectual function, or receiving moral influence, and, both in power and passiveness, deriving its energy and sensibility alike from the sustaining breath of God—than actually divided into intellectual and moral parts? For if the distinction between us and the brute be the test of the nature of the living soul by that breath conferred, it is assuredly to be found as much in the imagination as in the moral principle.

There is but one of the moral sentiments enumerated by Lord Lindsay, the sign of which is absent in the animal creation:—the enumeration is a bald one, but let it serve the turn—"Self-esteem and love of Approbation," eminent in horse and dog; "Firmness," not wanting either to ant or elephant; "Veneration," distinct as far as the superiority of man can by brutal intellect be comprehended; "Hope," developed as far as its objects can be made visible; and "Benevolence," or Love, the highest of all, the most assured of all—together with all the modifications of opposite feeling, rage, jealousy, habitual malice, even love of mischief and comprehension of jest:—the one only moral sentiment wanting being that of responsibility to an Invisible being, or conscientiousness. But where, among brutes, shall we find the slightest trace of the Imaginative faculty, or of that discernment of beauty which our author most inaccurately confounds with it, or of the discipline of memory, grasping this or that circumstance at will, or of the still nobler foresight of, and respect towards, things future, except only instinctive and compelled?

25. The fact is, that it is not in intellect added to the bodily sense, nor in moral sentiment superadded to the intellect, that the essential difference between brute and man consists: but in the elevation of all three to that point at which each becomes capable of communion with the Deity, and worthy therefore of eternal life;—the body more universal as an instrument—more exquisite in its sense—this last character carried out in the eye

and ear to the perception of Beauty, in form, sound, and color—and herein distinctively raised above the brutal sense; intellect, as we have said, peculiarly separating and vast; the moral sentiments like in essence, but boundlessly expanded, as attached to an infinite object, and laboring in an infinite field: each part mortal in its shortcoming, immortal in the accomplishment of its perfection and purpose; the opposition which we at first broadly expressed as between body and spirit, being more strictly between the natural and spiritual condition of the entire creature—body natural, sown in death, body spiritual, raised in incorruption: Intellect natural, leading to skepticism; intellect spiritual, expanding into faith: Passion natural, suffered from things spiritual; passion spiritual, centered on things unseen: and the strife or antagonism which is throughout the subject of Lord Lindsay's proof, is not, as he has stated it, between the moral, intellectual, and sensual elements, but between the upward and downward tendencies of all three—between the spirit of Man which goeth upward, and the spirit of the Beast which goeth downward.

26. We should not have been thus strict in our examination of these preliminary statements, if the question had been one of terms merely, or if the inaccuracy of thought had been confined to the Essay on Antagonism. If upon receiving a writer's terms of argument in the sense—however unusual or mistaken—which he chooses they should bear, we may without further error follow his course of thought, it is as unkind as unprofitable to lose the use of

his result in quarrel with its algebraic expression; and if the reader will understand by Lord Lindsay's general term "Spirit" the susceptibility of right moral emotion, and the entire subjection of the Will to Reason; and receive his term "Sense" as not including the perception of Beauty either in sight or sound, but expressive of animal sensation only, he may follow without embarrassment to its close, his magnificently comprehensive statement of the forms of probation which the heart and faculties of man have undergone from the beginning of time. But it is far otherwise when the theory is to be applied, in all its pseudo-organization, to the separate departments of a particular art, and analogies the most subtle and speculative traced between the mental character and artistical choice or attainment of different races of men. Such analogies are always treacherous, for the amount of expression of individual mind which Art can convey is dependent on so many collateral circumstances, that it even militates against the truth of any particular system of interpretation that it should seem at first generally applicable, or its results consistent. The passages in which such interpretation has been attempted in the work before us, are too graceful to be regretted, nor is their brilliant suggestiveness otherwise than pleasing and profitable too, so long as it is received on its own grounds merely, and affects not with its uncertainty the very matter of its foundation. But all oscillation is communicable, and Lord Lindsay is much to be blamed for leaving it entirely to the reader to distinguish between the determination of his research and the activity of his fancy

—between the authority of his interpretation and the aptness of his metaphor. He who would assert the true meaning of a symbolical art, in an age of strict inquiry and tardy imagination, ought rather to surrender something of the fullness which his own faith perceives, than expose the fabric of his vision, too finely woven, to the hard handling of the materialist; and we sincerely regret that discredit is likely to accrue to portions of our author's well-grounded statement of real significances, once of all men understood, because these are rashly blended with his own accidental perceptions of disputable analogy. He perpetually associates the present imaginative influence of Art with its ancient hieroglyphical teaching, and mingles fancies fit only for the framework of a sonnet, with the deciphered evidence which is to establish a serious point of history; and this the more frequently and grossly, in the endeavor to force every branch of his subject into illustration of the false division of the mental attributes which we have pointed out.

27. His theory is first clearly stated in the following passage:—

"Man is, in the strictest sense of the word, a progressive being, and with many periods of inaction and retrogression, has still held, upon the whole, a steady course towards the great end of his existence, the re-union and re-harmonizing of the three elements of his being, dislocated by the Fall, in the service of his God. Each of these three elements, Sense, Intellect, and Spirit, has had its distinct development at three distant intervals, and in the personality of the three great branches of

the human family. The race of Ham, giants in prowess if not in stature, cleared the earth of primeval forests and monsters, built cities, established vast empires, invented the mechanical arts, and gave the fullest expansion to the animal energies. After them, the Greeks, the elder line of Japhet, developed the intellectual faculties, Imagination and Reason, more especially the former, always the earlier to bud and blossom; poetry and fiction, history, philosophy, and science, alike look back to Greece as their birthplace; on the one hand they put a soul into Sense, peopling the world with their gay mythology—on the other they bequeathed to us, in Plato and Aristotle, the mighty patriarchs of human wisdom, the Darius and the Alexander of the two grand armies of thinking men whose antagonism has ever since divided the battlefield of the human intellect:—While, lastly, the race of Shem, the Jews, and the nations of Christendom, their *locum tenentes* as the Spiritual Israel, have, by God's blessing, been elevated in Spirit to as near and intimate communion with Deity as is possible in this stage of being. Now the peculiar interest and dignity of Art consists in her exact correspondence in her three departments with these three periods of development, and in the illustration she thus affords—more closely and markedly even than literature—to the all-important truth that men stand or fall according as they look up to the Ideal or not. For example, the Architecture of Egypt, her pyramids and temples, cumbrous and inelegant, but imposing from their vastness and their gloom, express the ideal of Sense or Matter—elevated and purified

indeed, and nearly approaching the Intellectual, but Material still; we think of them as of natural scenery, in association with caves or mountains, or vast periods of time; their voice is as the voice of the sea, or as that of 'many peoples,' shouting in unison:—But the Sculpture of Greece is the voice of Intellect and Thought, communing with itself in solitude, feeding on beauty and yearning after truth:—While the Painting of Christendom —(and we must remember that the glories of Christianity, in the full extent of the term, are yet to come)—is that of an immortal Spirit, conversing with its God. And as if to mark more forcibly the fact of continuous progress towards perfection, it is observable that although each of the three arts peculiarly reflects and characterizes one of the three epochs, each art of later growth has been preceded in its rise, progress, and decline, by an antecedent correspondent development of its elder sister or sisters—Sculpture, in Greece, by that of Architecture—Painting, in Europe, by that of Architecture and Sculpture. If Sculpture and Painting stand by the side of Architecture in Egypt, if Painting by that of Architecture and Sculpture in Greece, it is as younger sisters, girlish and unformed. In Europe alone are the three found linked together, in equal stature and perfection."—Vol. i, pp. xii.—xiv.

28. The reader must, we think, at once perceive the bold fallacy of this forced analogy—the comparison of the architecture of one nation with the sculpture of another, and the painting of a third, and the assumption as a proof of difference

in moral character, of changes necessarily wrought, always in the same order, by the advance of mere mechanical experience. Architecture must precede sculpture, not because sense precedes intellect, but because men must build houses before they adorn chambers, and raise shrines before they inaugurate idols; and sculpture must precede painting, because men must learn forms in the solid before they can project them on a flat surface, and must learn to conceive designs in light and shade before they can conceive them in color, and must learn to treat subjects under positive color and in narrow groups, before they can treat them under atmospheric effect and in receding masses, and all these are mere necessities of practice, and have no more connection with any divisions of the human mind than the equally paramount necessities that men must gather stones before they build walls, or grind corn before they bake bread. And that each following nation should take up either the same art at an advanced stage, or an art altogether more difficult, is nothing but the necessary consequence of its subsequent elevation and civilization. Whatever nation had succeeded Egypt in power and knowledge, after having had communication with her, must necessarily have taken up art at the point where Egypt left it—in its turn delivering the gathered globe of heavenly snow to the youthful energy of the nation next at hand, with an exhausted "à vous le dé!" In order to arrive at any useful or true estimate of the respective rank of each people in the scale of mind, the architecture of each must be compared with the architecture

of the other—sculpture with sculpture—line with line; and to have done this broadly and with a surface glance, would have set our author's theory on firmer foundation, to outward aspect, than it now rests upon. Had he compared the accumulation of the pyramid with the proportion of the peristyle, and then with the aspiration of the spire; had he set the colossal horror of the Sphinx beside the Phidian Minerva, and this beside the Pietà of M. Angelo; had he led us from beneath the iridescent capitals of Denderah, by the contested line of Apelles, to the hues and the heaven of Perugino or Bellini, we might have been tempted to assoilzie from all staying of question or stroke of partisan the invulnerable aspect of his ghostly theory; but, if, with even partial regard to some of the circumstances which physically limited the attainments of each race, we follow their individual career, we shall find the points of superiority less salient and the connection between heart and hand more embarrassed.

29. Yet let us not be misunderstood:—the great gulf between Christian and Pagan art we cannot bridge—nor do we wish to weaken one single sentence wherein its breadth or depth is asserted by our author. The separation is not gradual, but instant and final—the difference not of degree, but of condition; it is the difference between the dead vapors rising from a stagnant pool, and the same vapors touched by a torch. But we would brace the weakness which Lord Lindsay has admitted in his own assertion of this great inflaming instant by confusing its fire with the mere phosphorescence of the marsh, and explaining as a successive

development of the several human faculties, what was indeed the bearing of them all at once, over a threshold strewn with the fragments of their idols, into the temple of the One God.

We shall therefore, as fully as our space admits, examine the application of our author's theory to Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting, successively, setting before the reader some of the more interesting passages which respect each art, while we at the same time mark with what degree of caution their conclusions are, in our judgment, to be received.

30. Accepting Lord Lindsay's first reference to Egypt, let us glance at a few of the physical accidents which influenced its types of architecture. The first of these is evidently the capability of carriage of large blocks of stone over perfectly level land. It was possible to roll to their destination along that uninterrupted plain, blocks which could neither by the Greek have been shipped in seaworthy vessels, nor carried over mountain-passes, nor raised except by extraordinary effort to the height of the rock-built fortress or seaward promontory. A small undulation of surface, or embarrassment of road, makes large difference in the portability of masses, and of consequence, in the breadth of the possible intercolumniation, the solidity of the column, and the whole scale of the building. Again, in a hill-country, architecture can be important only by position, in a level country only by bulk. Under the overwhelming mass of mountain-form it is vain to attempt the expression of majesty by size of edifice—the humblest architecture may become important by availing

itself of the power of nature, but the mightiest must be crushed in emulating it: the watch-towers of Amalfi are more majestic than the Superga of Piedmont; St. Peter's would look like a toy if built beneath the Alpine cliffs, which yet vouchsafe some communication of their own solemnity to the smallest chalet that glitters among their glades of pine. On the other hand, a small building is in a level country lost, and the impressiveness of bulk proportionably increased; hence the instinct of nations has always led them to the loftiest efforts where the masses of their labor might be seen looming at incalculable distance above the open line of the horizon—hence rose her four square mountains above the flat of Memphis, while the Greek pierced the recesses of Phigaleia with ranges of columns, or crowned the sea-cliffs of Sunium with a single pediment, bright, but not colossal.

31. The derivation of the Greek types of form from the forest-hut is too direct to escape observation; but sufficient attention has not been paid to the similar petrification, by other nations, of the rude forms and materials adopted in the haste of early settlement, or consecrated by the purity of rural life. The whole system of Swiss and German Gothic has thus been most characteristically affected by the structure of the intersecting timbers at the angles of the chalet. This was in some cases directly and without variation imitated in stone, as in the piers of the old bridge at Aarburg; and the practice obtained—partially in the German after-Gothic—universally, or nearly so, in Switzerland—of causing moldings which met at an angle

to appear to interpenetrate each other, both being truncated immediately beyond the point of intersection. The painfulness of this ill-judged adaptation was conquered by association—the eye became familiarized to uncouth forms of tracery—and a stiffness and meagerness, as of cast-iron, resulted in the moldings of much of the ecclesiastical, and all the domestic Gothic of central Europe; the moldings of casements intersecting so as to form a small hollow square at the angles, and the practice being further carried out into all modes of decoration—pinnacles interpenetrating crockets, as in a peculiarly bold design of archway at Besançon. The influence at Venice has been less immediate and more fortunate; it is with peculiar grace that the majestic form of the ducal palace reminds us of the years of fear and endurance when the exiles of the *Prima Venetia* settled like home-less birds on the sea-sand, and that its quadrangular range of marble wall and painted chamber, raised upon multiplied columns of confused arcade,⁶ presents but the exalted image of the first pile-supported hut that rose above the rippling of the lagoons.

32. In the chapter on the "Influence of Habit and Religion," of Mr. Hope's *Historical Essay*,⁷ the reader will find further instances of the same feeling, and, bearing immediately on our

⁶ The reader must remember that this arcade was originally quite open, the inner wall having been built after the fire, in 1574.

⁷ "An Historical Essay on Architecture" by the late Thomas Hope. (Murray, 1835) chap. iv., pp. 23-31.

present purpose, a clear account of the derivation of the Egyptian temple from the excavated cavern; but the point to which in all these cases we would direct especial attention, is, that the first perception of the great laws of architectural *proportion* is dependent for its acuteness less on the æsthetic instinct of each nation than on the mechanical conditions of stability and natural limitations of size in the primary type, whether hut, ch  let, or tent.

As by the constant reminiscence of the natural proportions of his first forest-dwelling, the Greek would be restrained from all inordinate exaggeration of size—the Egyptian was from the first left without hint of any system of proportion, whether constructive, or of visible parts. The cavern—its level roof supported by amorphous piers—might be extended indefinitely into the interior of the hills, and its outer fa  ade continued almost without term along their flanks—the solid mass of cliff above forming one gigantic entablature, poised upon props instead of columns. Hence the predisposition to attempt in the built temple the expression of infinite extent, and to heap the ponderous architrave above the proportionless pier.

33. The less direct influences of external nature in the two countries were still more opposed. The sense of beauty, which among the Greek peninsulas was fostered by beating of sea and rush of river, by waving of forest and passing of cloud, by undulation of hill and poise of precipice, lay dormant beneath the shadowless sky and on the objectless plain of the Egyptians; no

singing winds nor shaking leaves nor gliding shadows gave life to the line of their barren mountains—no Goddess of Beauty rose from the pacing of their silent and foamless Nile. One continual perception of stability, or changeless revolution, weighed upon their hearts—their life depended on no casual alternation of cold and heat—of drought and shower; their gift-Gods were the risen River and the eternal Sun, and the types of these were forever consecrated in the lotus decoration of the temple and the wedge of the enduring Pyramid. Add to these influences, purely physical, those dependent on the superstitions and political constitution; of the overflowing multitude of "populous No"; on their condition of prolonged peace—their simple habits of life—their respect for the dead—their separation by incommunicable privilege and inherited occupation—and it will be evident to the reader that Lord Lindsay's broad assertion of the expression of "the Ideal of Sense or Matter" by their universal style, must be received with severe modification, and is indeed thus far only true, that the mass of Life supported upon that fruitful plain could, when swayed by a despotic ruler in any given direction, accomplish by mere weight and number what to other nations had been impossible, and bestow a pre-eminence, owed to mere bulk and evidence of labor, upon public works which among the Greek republics could be rendered admirable only by the intelligence of their design.

34. Let us, for the present omitting consideration of the debasement of the Greek types which took place when their cycle

of achievement had been fulfilled, pass to the germination of Christian architecture, out of one of the least important elements of those fallen forms—one which, less than the least of all seeds, has risen into the fair branching stature under whose shadow we still dwell.

The principal characteristics of the new architecture, as exhibited in the Lombard cathedral, are well sketched by Lord Lindsay:—

"The three most prominent features, the eastern aspect of the sanctuary, the cruciform plan, and the soaring octagonal cupola, are borrowed from Byzantium—the latter in an improved form—the cross with a difference—the nave, or arm opposite the sanctuary, being lengthened so as to resemble the supposed shape of the actual instrument of suffering, and form what is now distinctively called the Latin Cross. The crypt and absis, or tribune, are retained from the Romish basilica, but the absis is generally pierced with windows, and the crypt is much loftier and more spacious, assuming almost the appearance of a subterranean church. The columns of the nave, no longer isolated, are clustered so as to form compound piers, massive and heavy—their capitals either a rude imitation of the Corinthian, or, especially in the earlier structures, sculptured with grotesque imagery. Triforia, or galleries for women, frequently line the nave and transepts. The roof is of stone, and vaulted. The narthex, or portico, for excluded penitents, common alike to the Greek and Roman churches, and in them continued along the whole façade

of entrance, is dispensed with altogether in the oldest Lombard ones, and when afterwards resumed, in the eleventh century, was restricted to what we should now call Porches, over each door, consisting generally of little more than a canopy open at the sides, and supported by slender pillars, resting on sculptured monsters. Three doors admit from the western front; these are generally covered with sculpture, which frequently extends in belts across the façade, and even along the sides of the building. Above the central door is usually seen, in the later Lombard churches, a S. Catherine's-wheel window. The roof slants at the sides, and ends in front sometimes in a single pediment, sometimes in three gables answering to three doors; while, in Lombardy at least, hundreds of slender pillars, of every form and device—those immediately adjacent to each other frequently interlaced in the true lover's knot, and all supporting round or trefoil arches—run along, in continuous galleries, under the eaves, as if for the purpose of supporting the roof—run up the pediment in front, are continued along the side-walls and round the eastern absis, and finally engirdle the cupola. Sometimes the western front is absolutely covered with these galleries, rising tier above tier. Though introduced merely for ornament, and therefore on a vicious principle, these fairy-like colonnades win very much on one's affections. I may add to these general features the occasional and rare one, seen to peculiar advantage in the cathedral of Cremona, of numerous slender towers, rising, like minarets, in every direction, in front and behind, and giving the

east end, specially, a marked resemblance to the mosques of the Mahometans.

"The Baptistery and the Campanile, or bell-tower, are in theory invariable adjuncts to the Lombard cathedral, although detached from it. The Lombards seem to have built them with peculiar zest, and to have had a keen eye for the picturesque in grouping them with the churches they belong to.

"I need scarcely add that the round arch is exclusively employed in pure Lombard architecture.

"To translate this new style into its symbolical language is a pleasurable task. The three doors and three gable ends signify the Trinity, the Catherine-wheel window (if I mistake not) the Unity, as concentrated in Christ, the Light of the Church, from whose Greek monogram its shape was probably adopted. The monsters that support the pillars of the porch stand there as talismans to frighten away evil spirits. The crypt (as in older buildings) signifies the moral death of man, the cross, the atonement, the cupola heaven; and these three, taken in conjunction with the lengthened nave, express, reconcile, and give their due and balanced prominence to the leading ideas of the Militant and Triumphant Church, respectively embodied in the architecture of Rome and Byzantium. Add to this, the symbolism of the Baptistery, and the Christian pilgrimage, from the Font to the Door of Heaven, is complete,"—Vol. ii., p. 8-11.

35. We have by-and-bye an equally comprehensive sketch of the essential characters of the Gothic cathedral; but this we need

not quote, as it probably contains little that would be new to the reader. It is succeeded by the following interpretation of the spirit of the two styles:—

"Comparing, apart from enthusiasm, the two styles of Lombard and Pointed Architecture, they will strike you, I think, as the expression, respectively, of that alternate repose and activity which characterize the Christian life, exhibited in perfect harmony in Christ alone, who, on earth, spent His night in prayer to God, His day in doing good to man—in heaven, as we know by His own testimony, 'worketh hitherto,' conjointly with the Father—forever, at the same time, reposing on the infinity of His wisdom and of His power. Each, then, of these styles has its peculiar significance, each is perfect in its way. The Lombard Architecture, with its horizontal lines, its circular arches and expanding cupola, soothes and calms one; the Gothic, with its pointed arches, aspiring vaults and intricate tracery, rouses and excites—and why? Because the one symbolizes an infinity of Rest, the other of Action, in the adoration and service of God. And this consideration will enable us to advance a step farther:—The aim of the one style is definite, of the other indefinite; we look up to the dome of heaven and calmly acquiesce in the abstract idea of infinity; but we only realize the impossibility of conceiving it by the flight of imagination from star to star, from firmament to firmament. Even so Lombard Architecture attained perfection, expressed its idea, accomplished its purpose—but Gothic never; the Ideal is unapproachable."—Vol. ii., p.

36. This idea occurs not only in this passage:—it is carried out through the following chapters;—at page 38, the pointed arch associated with the cupola is spoken of as a "fop interrupting the meditations of a philosopher"; at page 65, the "earlier contemplative style of the Lombards" is spoken of; at page 114, Giottesque art is "the expression of that Activity of the Imagination which produced Gothic Architecture"; and, throughout, the analogy is prettily expressed, and ably supported; yet it is one of those against which we must warn the reader: it is altogether superficial, and extends not to the minds of those whose works it accidentally, and we think disputably, characterizes. The transition from Romanesque (we prefer using the generic term) to Gothic is natural and straightforward, in many points traceable to mechanical and local necessities (of which one, the dangerous weight of snow on flat roofs, has been candidly acknowledged by our author), and directed by the tendency, common to humanity in all ages, to push every newly-discovered means of delight to its most fantastic extreme, to exhibit every newly-felt power in its most admirable achievement, and to load with intrinsic decoration forms whose essential varieties have been exhausted. The arch, carelessly struck out by the Etruscan, forced by mechanical expedencies on the unwilling, uninventive Roman, remained unfelt by either. The noble form of the apparent Vault of Heaven—the line which every star follows in its journeying, extricated by the Christian

architect from the fosse, the aqueduct, and the sudarium—grew into long succession of proportioned colonnade, and swelled into the white domes that glitter above the plain of Pisa, and fretted channels of Venice, like foam globes at rest.

37. But the spirit that was in these Aphrodites of the earth was not then, nor in them, to be restrained. Colonnade rose over colonnade; the pediment of the western front was lifted into a detached and scenic wall; story above story sprang the multiplied arches of the Campanile, and the eastern pyramidal fire-type, lifted from its foundation, was placed upon the summit. With the superimposed arcades of the principal front arose the necessity, instantly felt by their subtle architects, of a new proportion in the column; the lower wall inclosure, necessarily for the purposes of Christian worship continuous, and needing no peristyle, rendered the lower columns a mere facial decoration, whose proportions were evidently no more to be regulated by the laws hitherto observed in detached colonnades. The column expanded into the shaft, or into the huge pilaster rising unbanded from tier to tier; shaft and pilaster were associated in ordered groups, and the ideas of singleness and limited elevation once attached to them, swept away for ever; the stilted and variously centered arch existed already: the pure ogive followed—where first exhibited we stay not to inquire;—finally, and chief of all, the great mechanical discovery of the resistance of lateral pressure by the weight of the superimposed flanking pinnacle. Daring concentrations of pressure upon narrow piers were the

immediate consequence, and the recognition of the buttress as a feature in itself agreeable and susceptible of decoration. The glorious art of painting on glass added its temptations; the darkness of northern climes both rendering the typical character of Light more deeply felt than in Italy, and necessitating its admission in larger masses; the Italian, even at the period of his most exquisite art in glass, retaining the small Lombard window, whose expediency will hardly be doubted by anyone who has experienced the transition from the scorching reverberation of the white-hot marble front, to the cool depth of shade within, and whose beauty will not be soon forgotten by those who have seen the narrow lights of the Pisan duomo announce by their redder burning, not like transparent casements, but like characters of fire searing the western wall, the decline of day upon Capraja.

38. Here, then, arose one great distinction between Northern and Transalpine Gothic, based, be it still observed, on mere necessities of climate. While the architect of Santa Maria Novella admitted to the frescoes of Ghirlandajo scarcely more of purple lancet light than had been shed by the morning sun through the veined alabasters of San Miniato; and looked to the rich blue of the quinquipartite vault above, as to the mosaic of the older concha, for conspicuous aid in the color decoration of the whole; the northern builder burst through the walls of his apse, poured over the eastern altar one unbroken blaze, and lifting his shafts like pines, and his walls like precipices, ministered to their miraculous stability by an infinite phalanx

of sloped buttress and glittering pinnacle. The spire was the natural consummation. Internally, the sublimity of space in the cupola had been superseded by another kind of infinity in the prolongation of the nave; externally, the spherical surface had been proved, by the futility of Arabian efforts, incapable of decoration; its majesty depended on its simplicity, and its simplicity and leading forms were alike discordant with the rich rigidity of the body of the building. The campanile became, therefore, principal and central; its pyramidal termination was surrounded at the base by a group of pinnacles, and the spire itself, banded, or pierced into aërial tracery, crowned with its last enthusiastic effort the flamelike ascent of the perfect pile.

39. The process of change was thus consistent throughout, though at intervals accelerated by the sudden discovery of resource, or invention of design; nor, had the steps been less traceable, do we think the suggestiveness of *Repose*, in the earlier style, or of *Imaginative Activity* in the latter, definite or trustworthy. We much question whether the *Duomo* of Verona, with its advanced guard of haughty gryphons—the mailed peers of Charlemagne frowning from its vaulted gate,—that vault itself ribbed with variegated marbles, and peopled by a crowd of monsters—the Evangelical types not the least stern or strange; its stringcourses replaced by flat cut friezes, combats between gryphons and chain-clad paladins, stooping behind their triangular shields and fetching sweeping blows with two-handled swords; or that of *Lucca*—its fantastic columns

clasped by writhing snakes and winged dragons, their marble scales spotted with inlaid serpentine, every available space alive with troops of dwarfish riders, with spur on heel and hawk in hood, sounding huge trumpets of chase, like those of the Swiss Urus-horn, and cheering herds of gaping dogs upon harts and hares, boars and wolves, every stone signed with its grisly beast—be one whit more soothing to the contemplative, or less exciting to the imaginative faculties, than the successive arch? and visionary shaft, and dreamy vault, and crisped foliage, and colorless stone, of our own fair abbeys, checkered with sunshine through the depth of ancient branches, or seen far off, like clouds in the valley, risen out of the pause of its river.

40. And with respect to the more fitful and fantastic expression of the "Italian Gothic," our author is again to be blamed for his loose assumption, from the least reflecting of preceding writers, of this general term, as if the pointed buildings of Italy could in any wise be arranged in one class, or criticised in general terms. It is true that so far as the church interiors are concerned, the system is nearly universal, and always bad; its characteristic features being arches of enormous span, and banded foliage capitals divided into three fillets, rude in design, unsuggestive of any structural connection with the column, and looking consequently as if they might be slipped up or down, and had been only fastened in their places for the temporary purposes of a festa. But the exteriors of Italian pointed buildings display variations of principle and transitions of type quite as bold as

either the advance from the Romanesque to the earliest of their forms, or the recoil from their latest to the cinque-cento.

41. The first and grandest style resulted merely from the application of the pointed arch to the frequent Romanesque window, the large semicircular arch divided by three small ones. Pointing both the superior and inferior arches, and adding to the grace of the larger one by striking another arch above it with a more removed center, and placing the voussoirs at an acute angle to the curve, we have the truly noble form of domestic Gothic, which—more or less enriched by moldings and adorned by penetration, more or less open of the space between the including and inferior arches—was immediately adopted in almost all the proudest palaces of North Italy—in the Brolettos of Como, Bergamo, Modena, and Siena—in the palace of the Scaligers at Verona—of the Gambacorti at Pisa—of Paolo Guinigi at Lucca—besides inferior buildings innumerable:—nor is there any form of civil Gothic except the Venetian, which can be for a moment compared with it in simplicity or power. The latest is that most vicious and barbarous style of which the richest types are the lateral porches and upper pinnacles of the Cathedral of Como, and the whole of the Certosa of Pavia:—characterized by the imitative sculpture of large buildings on a small scale by way of pinnacles and niches; the substitution of candelabra for columns; and the covering of the surfaces with sculpture, often of classical subject, in high relief and daring perspective, and finished with delicacy which rather would demand preservation

in a cabinet, and exhibition under a lens, than admit of exposure to the weather and removal from the eye, and which, therefore, architecturally considered, is worse than valueless, telling merely as unseemly roughness and rustication. But between these two extremes are varieties nearly countless—some of them both strange and bold, owing to the brilliant color and firm texture of the accessible materials, and the desire of the builders to crowd the greatest expression of value into the smallest space.

42. Thus it is in the promontories of serpentine which meet with their polished and gloomy green the sweep of the Gulf of Genoa, that we find the first cause of the peculiar spirit of the Tuscan and Ligurian Gothic—carried out in the Florentine duomo to the highest pitch of colored finish—adorned in the upper story of the Campanile by a transformation, peculiarly rich and exquisite, of the narrowly-pierced heading of window already described, into a veil of tracery—and aided throughout by an accomplished precision of design in its moldings which we believe to be unique. In St. Petronio of Bologna, another and a barbarous type occurs; the hollow niche of Northern Gothic wrought out with diamond-shaped penetrations inclosed in squares; at Bergamo another, remarkable for the same square penetrations of its rich and daring foliation;—while at Monza and Carrara the square is adopted as the leading form of decoration on the west fronts, and a grotesque expression results—barbarous still;—which, however, in the latter duomo is associated with the arcade of slender niches—the translation of the Romanesque

arcade into pointed work, which forms the second perfect order of Italian Gothic, entirely ecclesiastical, and well developed in the churches of Santa Caterina and Santa Maria della Spina at Pisa. The Veronese Gothic, distinguished by the extreme purity and severity of its ruling lines, owing to the distance of the centers of circles from which its cusps are struck, forms another, and yet a more noble school—and passes through the richer decoration of Padua and Vicenza to the full magnificence of the Venetian—distinguished by the introduction of the ogee curve without pruriency or effeminacy, and by the breadth and decision of moldings as severely determined in all examples of the style as those of any one of the Greek orders.

43. All these groups are separated by distinctions clear and bold—and many of them by that broadest of all distinctions which lies between disorganization and consistency—accumulation and adaptation, experiment and design;—yet to all one or two principles are common, which again divide the whole series from that of the Transalpine Gothic—and whose importance Lord Lindsay too lightly passes over in the general description, couched in somewhat ungraceful terms, "the vertical principle snubbed, as it were, by the horizontal." We have already alluded to the great school of color which arose in the immediate neighborhood of the Genoa serpentine. The accessibility of marble throughout North Italy similarly modified the aim of all design, by the admission of undecorated surfaces. A blank space of freestone wall is always uninteresting, and sometimes

offensive; there is no suggestion of preciousness in its dull color, and the stains and rents of time upon it are dark, coarse, and gloomy. But a marble surface receives in its age hues of continually increasing glow and grandeur; its stains are never foul nor dim; its undecomposing surface preserves a soft, fruit-like polish forever, slowly flushed by the maturing suns of centuries. Hence, while in the Northern Gothic the effort of the architect was always so to diffuse his ornament as to prevent the eye from permanently resting on the blank material, the Italian fearlessly left fallow large fields of uncarved surface, and concentrated the labor of the chisel on detached portions, in which the eye, being rather directed to them by their isolation than attracted by their salience, required perfect finish and pure design rather than force of shade or breadth of parts; and further, the intensity of Italian sunshine articulated by perfect gradations, and defined by sharp shadows at the edge, such inner anatomy and minuteness of outline as would have been utterly vain and valueless under the gloom of a northern sky; while again the fineness of material both admitted of, and allured to, the precision of execution which the climate was calculated to exhibit.

44. All these influences working together, and with them that of classical example and tradition, induced a delicacy of expression, a slightness of salience, a carefulness of touch, and refinement of invention, in all, even the rudest, Italian decorations, utterly unrecognized in those of Northern Gothic: which, however picturesquely adapted to their place and purpose,

depend for most of their effect upon bold undercutting, accomplish little beyond graceful embarrassment of the eye, and cannot for an instant be separately regarded as works of accomplished art. Even the later and more imitative examples profess little more than picturesque vigor or ingenious intricacy. The oak leaves and acorns of the Beauvais moldings are superbly wreathed, but rigidly repeated in a constant pattern; the stems are without character, and the acorns huge, straight, blunt, and unsightly. Round the southern door of the Florentine duomo runs a border of fig-leaves, each leaf modulated as if dew had just dried from off it—yet each alike, so as to secure the ordered symmetry of classical enrichment. But the Gothic fullness of thought is not therefore left without expression; at the edge of each leaf is an animal, first a cicada, then a lizard, then a bird, moth, serpent, snail—all different, and each wrought to the very life—panting—plumy—writhing—glittering—full of breath and power. This harmony of classical restraint with exhaustless fancy, and of architectural propriety with imitative finish, is found throughout all the fine periods of the Italian Gothic, opposed to the wildness without invention, and exuberance without completion, of the North.

45. One other distinction we must notice, in the treatment of the Niche and its accessories. In Northern Gothic the niche frequently consists only of a bracket and canopy—the latter attached to the wall, independent of columnar support, pierced into openwork profusely rich, and often prolonged upwards into

a crocketed pinnacle of indefinite height. But in the niche of pure Italian Gothic the classic principle of columnar support is never lost sight of. Even when its canopy is actually supported by the wall behind, it is apparently supported by two columns in front, perfectly formed with bases and capitals:—(the support of the Northern niche—if it have any—commonly takes the form of a buttress):—when it appears as a detached pinnacle, it is supported on four columns, the canopy trefoliated with very obtuse cusps, richly charged with foliage in the foliating space, but undecorated at the cusp points, and terminating above in a smooth pyramid, void of all ornament, and never very acute. This form, modified only by various grouping, is that of the noble sepulchral monuments of Verona, Lucca, Pisa, and Bologna; on a small scale it is at Venice associated with the cupola, in St. Mark's, as well as in Santa Fosca, and other minor churches. At Pisa, in the Spina chapel it occurs in its most exquisite form, the columns there being chased with checker patterns of great elegance. The windows of the Florence cathedral are all placed under a flat canopy of the same form, the columns being elongated, twisted, and enriched with mosaic patterns. The reader must at once perceive how vast is the importance of the difference in system with respect to this member; the whole of the rich, cavernous chiaroscuro of Northern Gothic being dependent on the accumulation of its niches.

46. In passing to the examination of our Author's theory as tested by the progress of Sculpture, we are still struck by his

utter want of attention to physical advantages or difficulties. He seems to have forgotten from the first, that the mountains of Syene are not the rocks of Paros. Neither the social habits nor intellectual powers of the Greek had so much share in inducing his advance in Sculpture beyond the Egyptian, as the difference between marble and syenite, porphyry or alabaster. Marble not only gave the power, it actually introduced the *thought* of representation or realization of form, as opposed to the mere suggestive abstraction: its translucency, tenderness of surface, and equality of tint tempting by utmost reward to the finish which of all substances it alone admits—even ivory receiving not so delicately, as alabaster endures not so firmly, the lightest, latest touches of the completing chisel. The finer feeling of the hand cannot be put upon a hard rock like syenite—the blow must be firm and fearless—the traceless, tremulous difference between common and immortal sculpture cannot be set upon it—it cannot receive the enchanted strokes which, like Aaron's incense, separate the Living and the Dead. Were it otherwise, were finish possible, the variegated and lustrous surface would not exhibit it to the eye. The imagination itself is blunted by the resistance of the material, and by the necessity of absolute predetermination of all it would achieve. Retraction of all thought into determined and simple forms, such as might be fearlessly wrought, necessarily remained the characteristic of the school. The size of the edifice induced by other causes above stated, further limited the efforts of the sculptor. No

colossal figure can be minutely finished; nor can it easily be conceived except under an imperfect form. It is a representation of Impossibility, and every effort at completion adds to the monstrous sense of Impossibility. Space would altogether fail us were we even to name one-half of the circumstances which influence the treatment of light and shade to be seen at vast distances upon surfaces of variegated or dusky color; or of the necessities by which, in masses of huge proportion, the mere laws of gravity, and the difficulty of clearing the substance out of vast hollows neither to be reached nor entered, bind the realization of absolute form. Yet all these Lord Lindsay ought rigidly to have examined, before venturing to determine anything respecting the mental relations of the Greek and Egyptian. But the fact of his overlooking these inevitablenesses of material is intimately connected with the worst flaw of his theory—his idea of a Perfection resultant from a balance of elements; a perfection which all experience has shown to be neither desirable nor possible.

47. His account of Niccola Pisano, the founder of the first great school of middle age sculpture, is thus introduced:—

"Niccola's peculiar praise is this,—that, in practice at least, if not in theory, he first established the principle that the study of nature, corrected by the ideal of the antique, and animated by the spirit of Christianity, personal and social, can alone lead to excellence in art:—each of the three elements of human nature—Matter, Mind, and Spirit—being thus brought into union and

co-operation in the service of God, in due relative harmony and subordination. I cannot over-estimate the importance of this principle; it was on this that, consciously or unconsciously, Niccola himself worked—it has been by following it that Donatello and Ghiberti, Leonardo, Raphael, and Michael Angelo have risen to glory. The Sienese school and the Florentine, minds contemplative and dramatic, are alike beholden to it for whatever success has attended their efforts. Like a treble-stranded rope, it drags after it the triumphal car of Christian Art. But if either of the strands be broken, if either of the three elements be pursued disjointedly from the other two, the result is, in each respective case, grossness, pedantry, or weakness:—the exclusive imitation of Nature produces a Caravaggio, a Rubens, a Rembrandt—that of the Antique, a Pellegrino di Tibaldo and a David; and though there be a native chastity and taste in religion, which restrains those who worship it too abstractedly from Intellect and Sense, from running into such extremes, it cannot at least supply that mechanical apparatus which will enable them to soar:—such devotees must be content to gaze up into heaven, like angels crompt of their wings."—Vol. ii., p. 102-3.

48. This is mere Bolognese eclecticism in other terms, and those terms incorrect. We are amazed to find a writer usually thoughtful, if not accurate, thus indolently adopting the worn-out falsities of our weakest writers on Taste. Does he—can he for an instant suppose that the ruffian Caravaggio, distinguished only by his preference of candlelight and black shadows for

the illustration and re-enforcement of villainy, painted nature—mere nature—exclusive nature, more painfully or heartily than John Bellini or Raphael? Does he not see that whatever men imitate must be nature of some kind, material nature or spiritual, lovely or foul, brutal or human, but nature still? Does he himself see in mere, external, copyable nature, no more than Caravaggio saw, or in the Antique no more than has been comprehended by David? The fact is, that all artists are primarily divided into the two great groups of Imitators and Suggesters—their falling into one or other being dependent partly on disposition, and partly on the matter they have to subdue—(thus Perugino imitates line by line with penciled gold, the hair which Nino Pisano can only suggest by a gilded marble mass, both having the will of representation alike). And each of these classes is again divided into the faithful and unfaithful imitators and suggesters; and that is a broad question of blind eye and hard heart, or seeing eye and serious heart, always co-existent; and then the faithful imitators and suggesters—artists proper, are appointed, each with his peculiar gift and affection, over the several orders and classes of things natural, to be by them illumined and set forth.

49. And that is God's doing and distributing; and none is rashly to be thought inferior to another, as if by his own fault; nor any of them stimulated to emulation, and changing places with others, although their allotted tasks be of different dignities, and their granted instruments of different keenness; for in none of them can there be a perfection or balance of all human attributes;—

the great colorist becomes gradually insensible to the refinements of form which he at first intentionally omitted; the master of line is inevitably dead to many of the delights of color; the study of the true or ideal human form is inconsistent with the love of its most spiritual expressions. To one it is intrusted to record the historical realities of his age; in him the perception of character is subtle, and that of abstract beauty in measure diminished; to another, removed to the desert, or inclosed in the cloister, is given, not the noting of things transient, but the revealing of things eternal. Ghirlandajo and Titian painted men, but could not angels; Duccio and Angelico painted Saints, but could not senators. One is ordered to copy material form lovingly and slowly—his the fine finger and patient will: to another are sent visions and dreams upon the bed—his the hand fearful and swift, and impulse of passion irregular and wild. We may have occasion further to insist upon this great principle of the incommunicableness and singleness of all the highest powers; but we assert it here especially, in opposition to the idea, already so fatal to art, that either the aim of the antique may take place together with the purposes, or its traditions become elevatory of the power, of Christian art; or that the glories of Giotto and the Sienese are in any wise traceable through Niccola Pisano to the venerable relics of the Campo Santo.

50. Lord Lindsay's statement, as far as it regards Niccola himself, is true.

"His improvement in Sculpture is attributable, in the first

instance, to the study of an ancient sarcophagus, brought from Greece by the ships of Pisa in the eleventh century, and which, after having stood beside the door of the Duomo for many centuries as the tomb of the Countess Beatrice, mother of the celebrated Matilda, has been recently removed to the Campo Santo. The front is sculptured in bas-relief, in two compartments, the one representing Hippolytus rejecting the suit of Phædra, the other his departure for the chase:—such at least is the most plausible interpretation. The sculpture, if not super-excellent, is substantially good, and the benefit derived from it by Niccola is perceptible on the slightest examination of his works. Other remains of antiquity are preserved at Pisa, which he may have also studied, but this was the classic well from which he drew those waters which became wine when poured into the hallowing chalice of Christianity. I need scarcely add that the mere presence of such models would have availed little, had not nature endowed him with the quick eye and the intuitive apprehension of genius, together with a purity of taste which taught him how to select, how to modify and how to reinspire the germs of excellence thus presented to him."—Vol. ii., pp. 104, 105.

51. But whatever characters peculiarly classical were impressed upon Niccola by this study, died out gradually among his scholars; and in Orcagna the Byzantine manner finally triumphed, leading the way to the purely Christian sculpture of the school of Fiesole, in its turn swept away by the returning

wave of classicalism. The sculpture of Orcagna, Giotto, and Mino da Fiesole, would have been what it was, if Niccola had been buried in his sarcophagus; and this is sufficiently proved by Giotto's remaining entirely uninfluenced by the educated excellence of Andrea Pisano, while he gradually bent the Pisan down to his own uncompromising simplicity. If, as Lord Lindsay asserts, "Giotto had learned from the works of Niccola the grand principle of Christian art," the sculptures of the Campanile of Florence would not now have stood forth in contrasted awfulness of simplicity, beside those of the south door of the Baptistery.

52. "Andrea's merit was indeed very great; his works, compared with those of Giovanni and Niccola Pisano, exhibit a progress in design, grace, composition and mechanical execution, at first sight unaccountable—a chasm yawns between them, deep and broad, over which the younger artist seems to have leapt at a bound,—the stream that sank into the earth at Pisa emerges a river at Florence. The solution of the mystery lies in the peculiar plasticity of Andrea's genius, and the ascendancy acquired over it by Giotto, although a younger man, from the first moment they came into contact. Giotto had learnt from the works of Niccola the grand principle of Christian art, imperfectly apprehended by Giovanni and his other pupils, and by following up which he had in the natural course of things improved upon his prototype. He now repaid to Sculpture, in the person of Andrea, the sum of improvement in which he stood her debtor in that of Niccola:—so far, that is to say, as the treasury of

Andrea's mind was capable of taking it in, for it would be an error to suppose that Andrea profited by Giotto in the same independent manner or degree that Giotto profited by Niccola. Andrea's was not a mind of strong individuality; he became completely Giottesque in thought and style, and as Giotto and he continued intimate friends through life, the impression never wore off:—most fortunate, indeed, that it was so, for the welfare of Sculpture in general, and for that of the buildings in decorating which the friends worked in concert.

"Happily, Andrea's most important work, the bronze door of the Baptistery, still exists, and with every prospect of preservation. It is adorned with bas-reliefs from the history of S. John, with allegorical figures of virtues and heads of prophets, all most beautiful,—the historical compositions distinguished by simplicity and purity of feeling and design, the allegorical virtues perhaps still more expressive, and full of poetry in their symbols and attitudes; the whole series is executed with a delicacy of workmanship till then unknown in bronze, a precision yet softness of touch resembling that of a skillful performer on the pianoforte. Andrea was occupied upon it for nine years, from 1330 to 1339, and when finished, fixed in its place, and exposed to view, the public enthusiasm exceeded all bounds; the Signoria, with unexampled condescension, visited it in state, accompanied by the ambassadors of Naples and Sicily, and bestowed on the fortunate artist the honor and privilege of citizenship, seldom accorded to foreigners unless of lofty rank or exalted merit. The

door remained in its original position—facing the Cathedral—till superseded in that post of honor by the 'Gate of Paradise,' cast by Ghiberti. It was then transferred to the Southern entrance of the Baptistery, facing the Misericordia."—Vol. ii., pp. 125-128.

53. A few pages farther on, the question of *Giotto's* claim to the authorship of the designs for this door is discussed at length, and, to the annihilation of the honor here attributed to *Andrea*, determined affirmatively, partly on the testimony of Vasari, partly on internal evidence—these designs being asserted by our author to be "thoroughly Giottesque." But, not to dwell on Lord Lindsay's inconsistency, in the ultimate decision his discrimination seems to us utterly at fault. Giotto has, we conceive, suffered quite enough in the abduction of the work in the Campo Santo, which was worthy of him, without being made answerable for these designs of *Andrea*. That he gave a rough draft of many of them, is conceivable; but if even he did this, *Andrea* has added cadenzas of drapery, and other scholarly commonplace, as a bad singer puts ornament into an air. It was not of such teaching that came the "Jabal" of Giotto. Sitting at his tent door, he withdraws its rude drapery with one hand: three sheep only are feeding before him, the watchdog sitting beside them; but he looks forth like a Destiny, beholding the ruined cities of the earth become places, like the valley of Achor, for herds to lie down in.

54. We have not space to follow our author through his very interesting investigation of the comparatively unknown schools

of Teutonic sculpture. With one beautiful anecdote, breathing the whole spirit of the time—the mingling of deep piety with the modest, manly pride of art—our readers must be indulged:—

"The Florentine Ghiberti gives a most interesting account of a sculptor of Cologne in the employment of Charles of Anjou, King of Naples, whose skill he parallels with that of the statuary of ancient Greece; his heads, he says, and his design of the naked, were '*maravigliosamente bene*,' his style full of grace, his sole defect the somewhat curtailed stature of his figures. He was no less excellent in minuter works as a goldsmith, and in that capacity had worked for his patron a '*tavola d'oro*,' a tablet or screen (apparently) of gold, with his utmost care and skill; it was a work of exceeding beauty—but in some political exigency his patron wanted money, and it was broken up before his eyes. Seeing his labor vain and the pride of his heart rebuked, he threw himself on the ground, and uplifting his eyes and hands to heaven, prayed in contrition, 'Lord God Almighty, Governor and disposer of heaven and earth! Thou hast opened mine eyes that I follow from henceforth none other than Thee—Have mercy upon me!'—He forthwith gave all he had to the poor for the love of God, and went up into a mountain where there was a great hermitage, and dwelt there the rest of his days in penitence and sanctity, surviving down to the days of Pope Martin, who reigned from 1281 to 1284. 'Certain youths,' adds Ghiberti, 'who sought to be skilled in statuary, told me how he was versed both in painting and sculpture, and how he had painted in the

Romitorio where he lived; he was an excellent draughtsman and very courteous. When the youths who wished to improve visited him, he received them with much humility, giving them learned instructions, showing them various proportions, and drawing for them many examples, for he was most accomplished in his art. And thus,' he concludes, 'with great humility, he ended his days in that hermitage.'"—Vol. iii., pp. 257-259.

55. We could have wished that Lord Lindsay had further insisted on what will be found to be a characteristic of all the truly Christian or spiritual, as opposed to classical, schools of sculpture—the scenic or painter-like management of effect. The marble is not cut into the actual form of the thing imaged, but oftener into a perspective suggestion of it—the bas-reliefs sometimes almost entirely under cut, and sharp edged, so as to come clear off a dark ground of shadow; even heads the size of life being in this way rather shadowed out than carved out, as the Madonna of Benedetto de Majano in Santa Maria Novella, one of the cheeks being advanced half an inch out of its proper place—and often the most audacious violations of proportion admitted, as in the limbs of Michael Angelo's sitting Madonna in the Uffizii; all artifices, also, of deep and sharp cutting being allowed, to gain the shadowy and spectral expressions about the brow and lip which the mere actualities of form could not have conveyed;—the sculptor never following a material model, but feeling after the most momentary and subtle aspects of the countenance—striking these out sometimes suddenly, by

rude chiseling, and stopping the instant they are attained—never risking the loss of thought by the finishing of flesh surface. The heads of the Medici sacristy we believe to have been thus left unfinished, as having already the utmost expression which the marble could receive, and incapable of anything but loss from further touches. So with Mino da Fiesole and Jacopo della Quercia, the workmanship is often hard, sketchy, and angular, having its full effect only at a little distance; but at that distance the statue becomes ineffably alive, even to startling, bearing an aspect of change and uncertainty, as if it were about to vanish, and withal having a light, and sweetness, and incense of passion upon it that silences the looker-on, half in delight, half in expectation. This daring stroke—this transfiguring tenderness—may be shown to characterize all truly Christian sculpture, as compared with the antique, or the pseudo-classical of subsequent periods. We agree with Lord Lindsay in thinking the Psyche of Naples the nearest approach to the Christian ideal of all ancient efforts; but even in this the approximation is more accidental than real—a fair type of feature, further exalted by the mode in which the imagination supplies the lost upper folds of the hair. The fountain of life and emotion remains sealed; nor was the opening of that fountain due to any study of the far less pure examples accessible by the Pisan sculptors. The sound of its waters had been heard long before in the aisles of the Lombard; nor was it by Ghiberti, still less by Donatello, that the bed of that Jordan was dug deepest, but by Michael Angelo (the last heir of

the Byzantine traditions descending through Orcagna), opening thenceforward through thickets darker and more dark, and with waves ever more soundless and slow, into the Dead Sea wherein its waters have been stayed.

56. It is time for us to pass to the subject which occupies the largest portion of the work—the History

"of Painting, as developed contemporaneously with her sister, Sculpture, and (like her) under the shadow of the Gothic Architecture, by Giotto and his successors throughout Italy, by Mino, Duccio, and their scholars at Siena, by Orcagna and Fra Angelico da Fiesole at Florence, and by the obscure but interesting primitive school of Bologna, during the fourteenth and the early years of the fifteenth century. The period is one, comparatively speaking, of repose and tranquillity,—the storm sleeps and the winds are still, the currents set in one direction, and we may sail from isle to isle over a sunny sea, dallying with the time, secure of a cloudless sky and of the greetings of innocence and love wheresoever the breeze may waft us. There is in truth a holy purity, an innocent naïveté, a childlike grace and simplicity, a freshness, a fearlessness, an utter freedom from affectation, a yearning after all things truthful, lovely and of good report, in the productions of this early time, which invest them with a charm peculiar in its kind, and which few even of the most perfect works of the maturer era can boast of,—and hence the risk and danger of becoming too passionately attached to them, of losing the power of discrimination, of admiring and imitating

their defects as well as their beauties, of running into affectation in seeking after simplicity and into exaggeration in our efforts to be in earnest,—in a word, of forgetting that in art as in human nature, it is the balance, harmony, and co-equal development of Sense, Intellect, and Spirit, which constitute perfection."—Vol. ii., pp. 161-163.

57. To the thousand islands, or how many soever they may be, we shall allow ourselves to be wafted with all willingness, but not in Lord Lindsay's three-masted vessel, with its balancing topmasts of Sense, Intellect, and Spirit. We are utterly tired of the triplicity; and we are mistaken if its application here be not as inconsistent as it is arbitrary. Turning back to the introduction, which we have quoted, the reader will find that while Architecture is there taken for the exponent of Sense, Painting is chosen as the peculiar expression of Spirit. "The painting of Christendom is that of an immortal spirit conversing with its God." But in a note to the first chapter of the second volume, he will be surprised to find painting become a "twin of intellect," and architecture suddenly advanced from a type of sense to a type of spirit:—

"Sculpture and Painting, twins of Intellect, rejoice and breathe freest in the pure ether of Architecture, or Spirit, like Castor or Pollux under the breezy heaven of their father Jupiter."—Vol. ii., p. 14.

58. Prepared by this passage to consider painting either as spiritual or intellectual, his patience may pardonably give way

on finding in the sixth letter—(what he might, however, have conjectured from the heading of the third period in the chart of the schools)—that the peculiar prerogative of painting—color, is to be considered as a *sensual* element, and the exponent of sense, in accordance with a new analogy, here for the first time proposed, between spirit, intellect, and sense, and expression, form, and color. Lord Lindsay is peculiarly unfortunate in his adoptions from previous writers. He has taken this division of art from Fuseli and Reynolds, without perceiving that in those writers it is one of convenience merely, and, even so considered, is as injudicious as illogical. In what does expression consist but in form and color? It is one of the ends which these accomplish, and may be itself an attribute of both. Color may be expressive or inexpressive, like music; form expressive or inexpressive, like words; but expression by itself cannot exist; so that to divide painting into color, form, and expression, is precisely as rational as to divide music into notes, words, and expression. Color may be pensive, severe, exciting, appalling, gay, glowing, or sensual; in all these modes it is expressive: form may be tender or abrupt, mean or majestic, attractive or overwhelming, uncomfortable or delightful; in all these modes, and many more, it is expressive; and if Lord Lindsay's analogy be in anywise applicable to either form or color, we should have color sensual (Correggio), color intellectual (Tintoret), color spiritual (Angelico)—form sensual (French sculpture), form intellectual (Phidias), form spiritual (Michael Angelo). Above all, our author should have been careful

how he attached the epithet "sensual" to the element of color—not only on account of the glaring inconsistency with his own previous assertion of the spirituality of painting—(since it is certainly not merely by being flat instead of solid, representative instead of actual, that painting is—if it be—more spiritual than sculpture); but also, because this idea of sensuality in color has had much share in rendering abortive the efforts of the modern German religious painters, inducing their abandonment of its consecrating, kindling, purifying power.

59. Lord Lindsay says, in a passage which we shall presently quote, that the most sensual as well as the most religious painters have always loved the brightest colors. Not so; no painters ever were more sensual than the modern French, who are alike insensible to, and incapable of color—depending altogether on morbid gradation, waxy smoothness of surface, and lusciousness of line, the real elements of sensuality wherever it eminently exists. So far from good color being sensual, it saves, glorifies, and guards from all evil: it is with Titian, as with all great masters of flesh-painting, the redeeming and protecting element; and with the religious painters, it is a baptism with fire, an under-song of holy Litanies. Is it in sensuality that the fair flush opens upon the cheek of Francia's chanting angel,⁸ until we think it comes, and fades, and returns, as his voice and his harping are louder or lower—or that the silver light rises upon wave after wave of his lifted hair; or that the burning of the blood is seen

⁸ At the feet of his Madonna, in the Gallery of Bologna.

on the unclouded brows of the three angels of the Campo Santo, and of folded fire within their wings; or that the hollow blue of the highest heaven mantles the Madonna with its depth, and falls around her like raiment, as she sits beneath the throne of the Sistine Judgment? Is it in sensuality that the visible world about us is girded with an eternal iris?—is there pollution in the rose and the gentian more than in the rocks that are trusted to their robing?—is the sea-blue a stain upon its water, or the scarlet spring of day upon the mountains less holy than their snow? As well call the sun itself, or the firmament, sensual, as the color which flows from the one, and fills the other.

60. We deprecate this rash assumption, however, with more regard to the forthcoming portion of the history, in which we fear it may seriously diminish the value of the author's account of the school of Venice, than to the part at present executed. This is written in a spirit rather sympathetic than critical, and rightly illustrates the feeling of early art, even where it mistakes, or leaves unanalyzed, the technical modes of its expression. It will be better, perhaps, that we confine our attention to the accounts of the three men who may be considered as sufficient representatives not only of the art of their time, but of all subsequent; Giotto, the first of the great line of dramatists, terminating in Raffaele; Orcagna, the head of that branch of the contemplative school which leans towards sadness or terror, terminating in Michael Angelo; and Angelico, the head of the contemplatives concerned with the heavenly ideal, around whom

may be grouped first Duccio, and the Sienese, who preceded him, and afterwards Pinturiccio, Perugino, and Leonardo da Vinci.

61. The fourth letter opens in the fields of Vespignano. The circumstances of the finding of Giotto by Cimabue are well known. Vasari's anecdote of the fly painted upon the nose of one of Cimabue's figures might, we think, have been spared, or at least not instanced as proof of study from nature "nobly rewarded." Giotto certainly never either attempted or accomplished any small imitation of this kind; the story has all the look of one of the common inventions of the ignorant for the ignorant; nor, if true, would Cimabue's careless mistake of a black spot in the shape of a fly for one of the living annoyances of which there might probably be some dozen or more upon his panel at any moment, have been a matter of much credit to his young pupil. The first point of any real interest is Lord Lindsay's confirmation of Förster's attribution of the Campo Santo Life of Job, till lately esteemed Giotto's, to Francesco da Volterra. Förster's evidence appears incontrovertible; yet there is curious internal evidence, we think, in favor of the designs being Giotto's, if not the execution. The landscape is especially Giottesque, the trees being all boldly massed first with dark brown, within which the leaves are painted separately in light: this very archaic treatment had been much softened and modified by the Giotteschi before the date assigned to these frescoes by Förster. But, what is more singular, the figure of

Eliphaz, or the foremost of the three friends, occurs in a tempera picture of Giotto's in the Academy of Florence, the Ascension, among the apostles on the left; while the face of another of the three friends is again repeated in the "Christ disputing with the Doctors" of the small tempera series, also in the Academy, the figure of Satan shows much analogy to that of the Envy of the Arena chapel; and many other portions of the design are evidently either sketches of this very subject by Giotto himself, or dexterous compilations from his works by a loving pupil. Lord Lindsay has not done justice to the upper division—the Satan before God: it is one of the very finest thoughts ever realized by the Giotteschi. The serenity of power in the principal figure is very noble; no expression of wrath, or even of scorn, in the look which commands the evil spirit. The position of the latter, and countenance, are less grotesque and more demoniacal than is usual in paintings of the time; the triple wings expanded—the arms crossed over the breast, and holding each other above the elbow, the claws fixing in the flesh; a serpent buries its head in a cleft in the bosom, and the right hoof is lifted, as if to stamp.

62. We should have been glad if Lord Lindsay had given us some clearer idea of the internal evidence on which he founds his determination of the order or date of the works of Giotto. When no trustworthy records exist, we conceive this task to be of singular difficulty, owing to the differences of execution universally existing between the large and small works of the painter. The portrait of Dante in the chapel of the Podestà is

proved by Dante's exile, in 1302, to have been painted before Giotto was six and twenty; yet we remember no head in any of his works which can be compared with it for carefulness of finish and truth of drawing; the crudeness of the material vanquished by dexterous hatching; the color not only pure, but deep—a rare virtue with Giotto; the eye soft and thoughtful, the brow nobly modeled. In the fresco of the Death of the Baptist, in Santa Croce, which we agree with Lord Lindsay in attributing to the same early period, the face of the musician is drawn with great refinement, and considerable power of rounding surfaces—(though in the drapery may be remarked a very singular piece of archaic treatment: it is warm white, with yellow stripes; the dress itself falls in deep folds, but the striped pattern does not follow the foldings—it is drawn across, as if with a straight ruler).

63. But passing from these frescoes, which are nearly the size of life, to those of the Arena chapel at Padua, erected in 1303, decorated in 1306, which are much smaller, we find the execution proportionably less dexterous. Of this famous chapel Lord Lindsay says—

"nowhere (save in the Duomo of Orvieto) is the legendary history of the Virgin told with such minuteness.

"The heart must indeed be cold to the charms of youthful art that can enter this little sanctuary without a glow of delight. From the roof, with its sky of ultramarine, powdered with stars and interspersed with medallions containing the heads of our Saviour, the Virgin and the Apostles, to the mock paneling of the

nave, below the windows, the whole is completely covered with frescoes, in excellent preservation, and all more or less painted by Giotto's own hand, except six in the tribune, which however have apparently been executed from his cartoons....

"These frescoes form a most important document in the history of Giotto's mind, exhibiting all his peculiar merits, although in a state as yet of immature development. They are full of fancy and invention; the composition is almost always admirable, although sometimes too studiously symmetrical; the figures are few and characteristic, each speaking for itself, the impersonation of a distinct idea, and most dramatically grouped and contrasted; the attitudes are appropriate, easy, and natural; the action and gesticulation singularly vivid; the expression is excellent, except when impassioned grief induces caricature:—devoted to the study of Nature as he is, Giotto had not yet learnt that it is suppressed feeling which affects one most. The head of our Saviour is beautiful throughout—that of the Virgin not so good—she is modest, but not very graceful or celestial:—it was long before he succeeded in his Virgins—they are much too matronly: among the accessory figures, graceful female forms occasionally appear, foreshadowing those of his later works at Florence and Naples, yet they are always clumsy about the waist and bust, and most of them are under-jawed, which certainly detracts from the sweetness of the female countenance. His delineation of the naked is excellent, as compared with the works of his predecessors, but far unequal to what he attained in his

later years,—the drapery, on the contrary, is noble, majestic, and statuesque; the coloring is still pale and weak,—it was long ere he improved in this point; the landscape displays little or no amendment upon the Byzantine; the architecture, that of the fourteenth century, is to the figures that people it in the proportion of dolls' houses to the children that play with them,—an absurdity long unthinkingly acquiesced in, from its occurrence in the classic bas-reliefs from which it had been traditionally derived;—and, finally, the lineal perspective is very fair, and in three of the compositions an excellent effect is produced by the introduction of the same background with varied *dramatis personæ*, reminding one of Retszch's illustrations of Faust. The animals too are always excellent, full of spirit and character."—Vol. ii., pp. 183-199.

64. This last characteristic is especially to be noticed. It is a touching proof of the influence of early years. Giotto was only ten years old when he was taken from following the sheep. For the rest, as we have above stated, the manipulation of these frescoes is just as far inferior to that of the Podestà chapel as their dimensions are less; and we think it will be found generally that the smaller the work the more rude is Giotto's hand. In this respect he seems to differ from all other masters.

"It is not difficult, gazing on these silent but eloquent walls, to repeople them with the group once, as we know—five hundred years ago—assembled within them,—Giotto intent upon his work, his wife Ciuta admiring his progress, and Dante,

with abstracted eye, alternately conversing with his friend and watching the gambols of the children playing on the grass before the door. It is generally affirmed that Dante, during this visit, inspired Giotto with his taste for allegory, and that the Virtues and Vices of the Arena were the first fruits of their intercourse; it is possible, certainly, but I doubt it,—allegory was the universal language of the time, as we have seen in the history of the Pisan school."—Vol. ii., pp. 199, 200.

It ought to have been further mentioned, that the representation of the Virtues and Vices under these Giottesque figures continued long afterwards. We find them copied, for instance, on the capitals of the Ducal Palace at Venice, with an amusing variation on the "Stultitia," who has neither Indian dress nor club, as with Giotto, but is to the Venetians sufficiently distinguished by riding a horse.

65. The notice of the frescoes at Assisi consists of little more than an enumeration of the subjects, accompanied by agreeable translations of the traditions respecting St. Francis, embodied by St. Buonaventura. Nor have we space to follow the author through his examination of Giotto's works at Naples and Avignon. The following account of the erection of the Campanile of Florence is too interesting to be omitted:—

"Giotto was chosen to erect it, on the ground avowedly of the universality of his talents, with the appointment of Capomaestro, or chief architect of the Cathedral and its dependencies, a yearly salary of one hundred gold florins, and the privilege of

citizenship, and under the special understanding that he was not to quit Florence. His designs being approved of, the republic passed a decree in the spring of 1334, that 'the Campanile should be built so as to exceed in magnificence, height and excellence of workmanship whatever in that kind had been achieved of old by the Greeks and Romans in the time of their utmost power and greatness—"della loro più florida potenza.'" The first stone was laid accordingly, with great pomp, on the 18th of July following, and the work prosecuted with such vigor and with such costliness and utter disregard of expense, that a citizen of Verona, looking on, exclaimed that the republic was taxing her strength too far,—that the united resources of two great monarchs would be insufficient to complete it; *a criticism which the Signoria resented by confining him for two months in prison*, and afterwards conducting him through the public treasury, to teach him that the Florentines could build their whole city of marble, and not one poor steeple only, were they so inclined.

"Giotto made a model of his proposed structure, on which every stone was marked, and the successive courses painted red and white, according to his design, so as to match with the Cathedral and Baptistery; this model was of course adhered to strictly during the short remnant of his life, and the work was completed in strict conformity to it after his death, with the exception of the spire, which, the taste having changed, was never added. He had intended it to be one hundred *braccia*, or one hundred and fifty feet high."—Vol. ii., pp. 247-249.

The deficiency of the spire Lord Lindsay does not regret:—

"Let the reader stand before the Campanile, and ask himself whether, with Michael Scott at his elbow, or Aladdin's lamp in his hand, he would supply the deficiency? I think not."—p. 38.

We have more faith in Giotto than our author—and we will reply to his question by two others—whether, looking down upon Florence from the hill of San Miniato, his eye rested oftener and more affectionately on the Campanile of Giotto, or on the simple tower and spire of Santa Maria Novella?—and whether, in the backgrounds of Perugino, he would willingly substitute for the church spires invariably introduced, flat-topped campaniles like the unfinished tower of Florence?

66. Giotto sculptured with his own hand two of the bas-reliefs of this campanile, and probably might have executed them all. But the purposes of his life had been accomplished; he died at Florence on the 8th of January, 1337. The concluding notice of his character and achievement is highly valuable.

67. "Painting indeed stands indebted to Giotto beyond any of her children. His history is a most instructive one. Endowed with the liveliest fancy, and with that facility which so often betrays genius, and achieving in youth a reputation which the age of Methuselah could not have added to, he had yet the discernment to perceive how much still remained to be done, and the resolution to bind himself (as it were) to Nature's chariot wheel, confident that she would ere long emancipate and own him as her son. Calm and unimpassioned, he seems to have

commenced his career with a deliberate survey of the difficulties he had to encounter and of his resources for the conflict, and then to have worked upon a system steadily and perseveringly, prophetically sure of victory. His life was indeed one continued triumph,—and no conqueror ever mounted to the Capitol with a step more equal and sedate. We find him, at first, slowly and cautiously endeavoring to infuse new life into the traditional compositions, by substituting the heads, attitudes, and drapery of the actual world for the spectral forms and conventional types of the mosaics and the Byzantine painters,—idealizing them when the personages represented were of higher mark and dignity, but in none ever outstepping truth. Advancing in his career, we find year by year the fruits of continuous unwearied study in a consistent and equable contemporary improvement in all the various minuter though most important departments of his art, in his design, his drapery, his coloring, in the dignity and expression of his men and in the grace of his women—asperities softened down, little graces unexpectedly born and playing about his path, as if to make amends for the deformity of his actual offspring—touches, daily more numerous, of that nature which makes the world akin—and ever and always a keen yet cheerful sympathy with life, a playful humor mingling with his graver lessons, which affects us the more as coming from one who, knowing himself an object personally of disgust and ridicule, could yet satirize with a smile.

"Finally, throughout his works, we are conscious of an earnest,

a lofty, a religious aim and purpose, as of one who felt himself a pioneer of civilization in a newly-discovered world, the Adam of a new Eden freshly planted in the earth's wilderness, a mouthpiece of God and a preacher of righteousness to mankind.—And here we must establish a distinction very necessary to be recognized before we can duly appreciate the relative merits of the elder painters in this, the most important point in which we can view their character. Giotto's genius, however universal, was still (as I have repeatedly observed) Dramatic rather than Contemplative,—a tendency in which his scholars and successors almost to a man resembled him. Now, just as in actual life—where, with a few rare exceptions, all men rank under two great categories according as Imagination or Reason predominates in their intellectual character—two individuals may be equally impressed with the truths of Christianity and yet differ essentially in its outward manifestation, the one dwelling in action, the other in contemplation, the one in strife, the other in peace, the one (so to speak) in hate, the other in love, the one struggling with devils, the other communing with angels, yet each serving as a channel of God's mercies to man, each (we may believe) offering Him service equally acceptable in His sight—even so shall we find it in art and with artists; few in whom the Dramatic power predominates will be found to excel in the expression of religious emotions of the more abstract and enthusiastic cast, even although men of indisputably pure and holy character themselves; and *vice versâ*, few of the

more Contemplative but will feel bewildered and at fault, if they descend from their starry region of light into the grosser atmosphere that girdles in this world of action. The works of artists are their minds' mirror; they cannot express what they do not feel; each class dwells apart and seeks its ideal in a distinct sphere of emotion,—their object is different, and their success proportioned to the exclusiveness with which they pursue that object. A few indeed there have been in all ages, monarchs of the mind and types of our Saviour, who have lived a twofold existence of action and contemplation in art, in song, in politics, and in daily life; of these have been Abraham, Moses, David, and Cyrus in the elder world—Alfred, Charlemagne, Dante, and perhaps Shakespeare, in the new,—and in art, Niccola Pisano, Leonardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo. But Giotto, however great as the patriarch of his peculiar tribe, was not of these few, and we ought not therefore to misapprehend him, or be disappointed at finding his Madonnas (for instance) less exquisitely spiritual than the Sienese, or those of Fra Angelico and some later painters, who seem to have dipped their pencils in the rainbow that circles the throne of God,—they are pure and modest, but that is all; on the other hand, where his Contemplative rivals lack utterance, he speaks most feelingly to the heart in his own peculiar language of Dramatic composition—he glances over creation with the eye of love, all the charities of life follow in his steps, and his thoughts are as the breath of the morning. A man of the world, living in it and loving it, yet

with a heart that it could not spoil nor wean from its allegiance to God—'non meno buon Cristiano che eccellente pittore,' as Vasari emphatically describes him—his religion breathes of the free air of heaven rather than the cloister, neither enthusiastic nor superstitious, but practical, manly and healthy—and this, although the picturesque biographer of S. Francis!"—Vol. ii., pp. 260-264.

68. This is all as admirably felt as expressed, and to those acquainted with and accustomed to love the works of the painter, it leaves nothing to be asked for; but we must again remind Lord Lindsay, that he has throughout left the *artistical* orbit of Giotto undefined, and the offense of his manner unremoved, as far as regards the uninitiated spectator. We question whether from all that he has written, the untraveled reader could form any distinct idea of the painter's peculiar merits or methods, or that the estimate, if formed, might not afterwards expose him to severe disappointment. It ought especially to have been stated, that the Giottesque system of chiaroscuro is one of pure, quiet, pervading daylight. No *cast* shadows ever occur, and this remains a marked characteristic of all the works of the Giotteschi. Of course, all subtleties of reflected light or raised color are unthought of. Shade is only given as far as it is necessary to the articulation of simple forms, nor even then is it rightly adapted to the color of the light; the folds of the draperies are well drawn, but the entire rounding of them always missed—the general forms appearing flat, and terminated by equal and

severe outlines, while the masses of ungradated color often seem to divide the figure into fragments. Thus, the Madonna in the small tempera series of the Academy of Florence, is usually divided exactly in half by the dark mass of her blue robe, falling in a vertical line. In consequence of this defect, the grace of Giotto's composition can hardly be felt until it is put into outline. The colors themselves are of good quality, never glaring, always gladdening, the reds inclining to orange more than purple, yellow frequent, the prevalent tone of the color groups warm; the sky always blue, the whole effect somewhat resembling that of the Northern painted glass of the same century—and chastened in the same manner by noble neutral tints or greens; yet all somewhat unconsidered and unsystematic, painful discords not unfrequent. The material and ornaments of dress are never particularized, no imitations of texture or jewelry, yet shot stuffs of two colors frequent. The drawing often powerful, though of course uninformed; the mastery of mental expression by bodily motion, and of bodily motion, past and future, by a single gesture, altogether unrivaled even by Raffaele;—it is obtained chiefly by throwing the emphasis always on the right line, admitting straight lines of great severity, and never dividing the main drift of the drapery by inferior folds; neither are accidents allowed to interfere—the garments fall heavily and in marked angles—nor are they affected by the wind, except under circumstances of very rapid motion. The ideal of the face is often solemn—seldom beautiful; occasionally ludicrous failures occur: in the

smallest designs the face is very often a dead letter, or worse: and in all, Giotto's handling is generally to be distinguished from that of any of his followers by its bluntness. In the school work we find sweeter types of feature, greater finish, stricter care, more delicate outline, fewer errors, but on the whole less life.

69. Finally, and on this we would especially insist, Giotto's genius is not to be considered as struggling with difficulty and repressed by ignorance, but as appointed, for the good of men, to come into the world exactly at the time when its rapidity of invention was not likely to be hampered by demands for imitative dexterity or neatness of finish; and when, owing to the very ignorance which has been unwisely regretted, the simplicity of his thoughts might be uttered with a childlike and innocent sweetness, never to be recovered in times of prouder knowledge. The dramatic power of his works, rightly understood, could receive no addition from artificial arrangement of shade, or scientific exhibition of anatomy, and we have reason to be deeply grateful when afterwards "inland far" with Buonaroti and Titian, that we can look back to the Giotteschi—to see those children

"Sport upon the shore
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore."

We believe Giotto himself felt this—unquestionably he could have carried many of his works much farther in finish, had he so willed it; but he chose rather to multiply motives than to complete

details. Thus we recur to our great principle of Separate gift. The man who spends his life in toning colors must leave the treasures of his invention untold—let each have his perfect work; and while we thank Bellini and Leonardo for their deeply wrought dyes, and life-labored utterance of passionate thought; let us remember also what cause, but for the remorseless destruction of myriads of his works, we should have had to thank Giotto, in that, abandoning all proud effort, he chose rather to make the stones of Italy cry out with one voice of pauseless praise, and to fill with perpetual remembrance of the Saints he loved, and perpetual honor of the God he worshiped, palace chamber and convent cloister, lifted tower and lengthened wall, from the utmost blue of the plain of Padua to the Southern wildernesses of the hermit-haunted Apennine.

70. From the head of the Dramatic branch of Art, we turn to the first of the great Contemplative Triad, associated, as it most singularly happens in name as well as in heart; Orcagna—Arcagnuolo; Fra Giovanni—detto Angelico; and Michael Angelo:—the first two names being bestowed by contemporary admiration.

"Orcagna was born apparently about the middle of the (14th) century, and was christened Andrea, by which name, with the addition of that of his father, Cione, he always designated himself; that, however, of Orcagna, a corruption of Arcagnuolo, or 'The Archangel,' was given him by his contemporaries, and by this he has become known to posterity.

"The earliest works of Orcagna will be found in that sanctuary of Semi-Byzantine art, the Campo Santo of Pisa. He there painted three of the four 'Novissima,' Death, Judgment, Hell, and Paradise—the two former entirely himself, the third with the assistance of his brother Bernardo, who is said to have colored it after his designs. The first of the series, a most singular performance, had for centuries been popularly known as the 'Trionfo della Morte.' It is divided by an immense rock into two irregular portions. In that to the right, Death, personified as a female phantom, batwinged, claw-footed, her robe of linked mail [?] and her long hair streaming on the wind, swings back her scythe in order to cut down a company of the rich ones of the earth, Castruccio Castracani and his gay companions, seated under an orange-grove, and listening to the music of a troubadour and a female minstrel; little genii or Cupids, with reversed torches, float in the air above them; one young gallant caresses his hawk, a lady her lapdog,—Castruccio alone looks abstractedly away, as if his thoughts were elsewhere. But all are alike heedless and unconscious, though the sand is run out, the scythe falling and their doom sealed. Meanwhile the lame and the halt, the withered and the blind, to whom the heavens are brass and life a burthen, cry on Death with impassioned gestures, to release them from their misery,—but in vain; she sweeps past, and will not hear them. Between these two groups lie a heap of corpses, mown down already in her flight—kings, queens, bishops, cardinals, young men and maidens, secular and

ecclesiastical—ensigned by their crowns, coronets, necklaces, miters and helmets—huddled together in hideous confusion; some are dead, others dying,—angels and devils draw the souls out of their mouths; that of a nun (in whose hand a purse, firmly clenched, betokens her besetting sin) shrinks back aghast at the unlooked-for sight of the demon who receives it—an idea either inherited or adopted from Andrea Tafi. The whole upper half of the fresco, on this side, is filled with angels and devils carrying souls to heaven or to hell; sometimes a struggle takes place, and a soul is rescued from a demon who has unwarrantably appropriated it; the angels are very graceful, and their intercourse with their spiritual charge is full of tenderness and endearment; on the other hand, the wicked are hurried off by the devils and thrown headlong into the mouths of hell, represented as the crater of a volcano, belching out flames nearly in the center of the composition. These devils exhibit every variety of horror in form and feature."—Vol. iii., pp. 130-134.

71. We wish our author had been more specific in his account of this wonderful fresco. The portrait of Castruccio ought to have been signalized as a severe disappointment to the admirers of the heroic Lucchese: the face is flat, lifeless, and sensual, though fine in feature. The group of mendicants occupying the center are especially interesting, as being among the first existing examples of hard study from the model: all are evidently portraits—and the effect of deformity on the lines of the countenance rendered with appalling truth; the retractile muscles of the mouth

wrinkled and fixed—the jaws projecting—the eyes hungry and glaring—the eyebrows grisly and stiff, the painter having drawn each hair separately: the two stroppiati with stumps instead of arms are especially characteristic, as the observer may at once determine by comparing them with the descendants of the originals, of whom he will at any time find two, or more, waiting to accompany his return across the meadow in front of the Duomo: the old woman also, nearest of the group, with gray disheveled hair and gray coat, with a brown girdle and gourd flask, is magnificent, and the archetype of all modern conceptions of witch. But the crowning stroke of feeling is dependent on a circumstance seldom observed. As Castruccio and his companions are seated under the shade of an orange grove, so the mendicants are surrounded by a thicket of *teasels*, and a branch of ragged thorn is twisted like a crown about their sickly temples and weedy hair.

72. We do not altogether agree with our author in thinking that the devils exhibit every variety of horror; we rather fear that the spectator might at first be reminded by them of what is commonly known as the Dragon pattern of Wedgwood ware. There is invention in them however—and energy; the eyes are always terrible, though simply drawn—a black ball set forward, and two-thirds surrounded by a narrow crescent of white, under a shaggy brow; the mouths are frequently magnificent; that of a demon accompanying a thrust of a spear with a growl, on the right of the picture, is interesting as an example of the

development of the canine teeth noticed by Sir Charles Bell ("Essay on Expression," p. 138)—its capacity of laceration is unlimited: another, snarling like a tiger at an angel who has pulled a soul out of his claws, is equally well conceived; we know nothing like its ferocity except Rembrandt's sketches of wounded wild beasts. The angels we think generally disappointing; they are for the most part diminutive in size, and the crossing of the extremities of the two wings that cover the feet, gives them a coleopterous, cockchafer look, which is not a little undignified; the colors of their plumes are somewhat coarse and dark—one is covered with silky hair, instead of feathers. The souls they contend for are indeed of sweet expression; but exceedingly earthly in contour, the painter being unable to deal with the nude form. On the whole, he seems to have reserved his highest powers for the fresco which follows next in order, the scene of Resurrection and Judgment.

"It is, in the main, the traditional Byzantine composition, even more rigidly symmetrical than usual, singularly contrasting in this respect with the rush and movement of the preceding compartment. Our Saviour and the Virgin, seated side by side, each on a rainbow and within a vesica piscis, appear in the sky—Our Saviour uttering the words of malediction with uplifted arm, showing the wound in his side, and nearly in the attitude of Michael Angelo, but in wrath, not in fury—the Virgin timidly drawing back and gazing down in pity and sorrow. I never saw this co-equal juxtaposition in any other representation of the Last

Judgment."—Vol. iii., p. 136.

73. The positions of our Saviour and of the Virgin are not strictly co-equal; the glory in which the Madonna is seated is both lower and less; but the equality is more complete in the painting of the same subject in Santa M. Novella. We believe Lord Lindsay is correct in thinking Orcagna the only artist who has dared it. We question whether even wrath be intended in the countenance of the principal figure; on the contrary, we think it likely to disappoint at first, and appear lifeless in its exceeding tranquillity; the brow is indeed slightly knit, but the eyes have no local direction. They comprehend all things—are set upon all spirits alike, as in that *word-fresco* of our own, not unworthy to be set side by side with this, the Vision of the Trembling Man in the House of the Interpreter. The action is as majestic as the countenance—the right hand seems raised rather to show its wound (as the left points at the same instant to the wound in the side), than in condemnation, though its gesture has been adopted as one of threatening—first (and very nobly) by Benozzo Gozzoli, in the figure of the Angel departing, looking towards Sodom—and afterwards, with unfortunate exaggeration, by Michael Angelo. Orcagna's Madonna we think a failure, but his strength has been more happily displayed in the Apostolic circle. The head of St. John is peculiarly beautiful. The other Apostles look forward or down as in judgment—some in indignation, some in pity, some serene—but the eyes of St. John are fixed upon the Judge Himself

with the stability of love—intercession and sorrow struggling for utterance with awe—and through both is seen a tremor of submissive astonishment, that the lips which had once forbidden his to call down fire from heaven should now themselves burn with irrevocable condemnation.

74. "One feeling for the most part pervades this side of the composition,—there is far more variety in the other; agony is depicted with fearful intensity and in every degree and character; some clasp their hands, some hide their faces, some look up in despair, but none towards Christ; others seem to have grown idiots with horror:—a few gaze, as if fascinated, into the gulf of fire towards which the whole mass of misery are being urged by the ministers of doom—the flames bite them, the devils fish for and catch them with long grappling-hooks:—in sad contrast to the group on the opposite side, a queen, condemned herself but self-forgotten, vainly struggles to rescue her daughter from a demon who has caught her by the gown and is dragging her backwards into the abyss—her sister, wringing her hands, looks on in agony—it is a fearful scene.

"A vast rib or arch in the walls of pandemonium admits one into the contiguous gulf of Hell, forming the third fresco, or rather a continuation of the second—in which Satan sits in the midst, in gigantic terror, cased in armor and crunching sinners—of whom Judas, especially, is eaten and ejected, re-eaten and re-ejected again and again forever. The punishments of the wicked are portrayed in circles numberless around him.

But in everything save horror this compartment is inferior to the preceding, and it has been much injured and repainted."—Vol. iii., p. 138.

75. We might have been spared all notice of this last compartment. Throughout Italy, owing, it may be supposed, to the interested desire of the clergy to impress upon the populace as forcibly as possible the verity of purgatorial horrors, nearly every representation of the Inferno has been repainted, and vulgar butchery substituted for the expressions of punishment which were too chaste for monkish purposes. The infernos of Giotto at Padua, and of Orcagna at Florence, have thus been destroyed; but in neither case have they been replaced by anything so merely disgusting as these restorations by Solazzino in the Campo Santo. Not a line of Orcagna's remains, except in one row of figures halfway up the wall, where his firm black drawing is still distinguishable: throughout the rest of the fresco, hillocks of pink flesh have been substituted for his severe forms—and for his agonized features, puppets' heads with roaring mouths and staring eyes, the whole as coarse and sickening, and quite as weak, as any scrabble on the lowest booths of a London Fair.

76. Lord Lindsay's comparison of these frescoes of Orcagna with the great work in the Sistine, is, as a specimen of his writing, too good not to be quoted.

"While Michael Angelo's leading idea seems to be the self-concentration and utter absorption of all feeling into the one predominant thought, *Am I, individually, safe?* resolving

itself into two emotions only, doubt and despair—all diversities of character, all kindred sympathies annihilated under their pressure—those emotions uttering themselves, not through the face but the form, by bodily contortion, rendering the whole composition, with all its overwhelming merits, a mighty hubbub—Orcagna's on the contrary embraces the whole world of passions that make up the economy of man, and these not confused or crushed into each other, but expanded and enhanced in quality and intensity commensurably with the 'change' attendant upon the resurrection—variously expressed indeed, and in reference to the diversities of individual character, which will be nowise compromised by that change, yet from their very intensity suppressed and subdued, stilling the body and informing only the soul's index, the countenance. All therefore is calm; the saved have acquiesced in all things, they can mourn no more—the damned are to them as if they had never been;—among the lost, grief is too deep, too settled for caricature, and while every feeling of the spectator, every key of the soul's organ, is played upon by turns, tenderness and pity form the under-song throughout and ultimately prevail; the curse is uttered in sorrow rather than wrath, and from the pitying Virgin and the weeping archangel above, to the mother endeavoring to rescue her daughter below, and the young secular led to paradise under the approving smile of S. Michael, all resolves itself into sympathy and love.—Michael Angelo's conception may be more efficacious for teaching by terror—it was his object, I believe, as

the heir of Savonarola and the representative of the Protestant spirit within the bosom of Catholicism; but Orcagna's is in better taste, truer to human nature, sublimer in philosophy, and (if I mistake not) more scriptural."—Vol. iii., pp. 139-141.

77. We think it somewhat strange that the object of teaching by terror should be attributed to M. Angelo more than to Orcagna, seeing that the former, with his usual dignity, has refused all representation of infernal punishment—except in the figure dragged down with the hand over the face, the serpent biting the thigh, and in the fiends of the extreme angle; while Orcagna, whose intention may be conjectured even from Solazzino's restoration, exhausted himself in detailing Dante's distribution of torture, and brings into successive prominence every expedient of pain; the prong, the spit, the rack, the chain, venomous fang and rending beak, harrowing point and dividing edge, biting fiend and calcining fire. The objects of the two great painters were indeed opposed, but not in this respect. Orcagna's, like that of every great painter of his day, was to write upon the wall, as in a book, the greatest possible number of those religious facts or doctrines which the Church desired should be known to the people. This he did in the simplest and most straightforward way, regardless of artistical reputation, and desiring only to be read and understood. But Michael Angelo's object was from the beginning that of an artist. He addresses not the sympathies of his day, but the understanding of all time, and he treats the subject in the mode best adapted to bring every one of his own

powers into full play. As might have been expected, while the self-forgetfulness of Orcagna has given, on the one hand, an awfulness to his work, and verity, which are wanting in the studied composition of the Sistine, on the other it has admitted a puerility commensurate with the narrowness of the religion he had to teach.

78. Greater differences still result from the opposed powers and idiosyncrasies of the two men. Orcagna was unable to draw the nude—on this inability followed a coldness to the value of flowing lines, and to the power of unity in composition—neither could he indicate motion or buoyancy in flying or floating figures, nor express violence of action in the limbs—he cannot even show the difference between pulling and pushing in the muscles of the arm. In M. Angelo these conditions were directly reversed. Intense sensibility to the majesty of writhing, flowing, and connected lines, was in him associated with a power, unequaled except by Angelico, of suggesting aërial motion—motion deliberate or disturbed, inherent or impressed, impotent or inspired—gathering into glory, or gravitating to death. Orcagna was therefore compelled to range his figures symmetrically in ordered lines, while Michael Angelo bound them into chains, or hurled them into heaps, or scattered them before him as the wind does leaves. Orcagna trusted for all his expression to the countenance, or to rudely explained gesture aided by grand fall of draperies, though in all these points he was still immeasurably inferior to his colossal rival. As for his

"embracing the whole world of passions which make up the economy of man," he had no such power of delineation—nor, we believe, of conception. The expressions on the inferno side are all of them varieties of grief and fear, differing merely in degree, not in character or operation: there is something dramatic in the raised hand of a man wearing a green bonnet with a white plume—but the only really far-carried effort in the group is the head of a Dominican monk (just above the queen in green), who, in the midst of the close crowd, struggling, shuddering, and howling on every side, is fixed in quiet, total despair, insensible to all things, and seemingly poised in existence and sensation upon that one point in his past life when his steps first took hold on hell; this head, which is opposed to a face distorted by horror beside it, is, we repeat, the only highly wrought piece of expression in the group.

79. What Michael Angelo could do by expression of countenance alone, let the Pietà of Genoa tell, or the Lorenzo, or the parallel to this very head of Orcagna's, the face of the man borne down in the Last Judgment with the hand clenched over one of the eyes. Neither in that fresco is he wanting in dramatic episode; the adaptation of the Niobe on the spectator's left hand is far finer than Orcagna's condemned queen and princess; the groups rising below, side by side, supporting each other, are full of tenderness, and reciprocal devotion; the contest in the center for the body which a demon drags down by the hair is another kind of quarrel from that of Orcagna between a feathered

angel and bristly fiend for a diminutive soul—reminding us, as it forcibly did at first, of a vociferous difference in opinion between a cat and a cockatoo. But Buonaroti knew that it was useless to concentrate interest in the countenances, in a picture of enormous size, ill lighted; and he preferred giving full play to the powers of line-grouping, for which he could have found no nobler field. Let us not by unwise comparison mingle with our admiration of these two sublime works any sense of weakness in the naïveté of the one, or of coldness in the science of the other. Each painter has his own sufficient dominion, and he who complains of the want of knowledge in Orcagna, or of the display of it in Michael Angelo, has probably brought little to his judgment of either.

80. One passage more we must quote, well worthy of remark in these days of hollowness and haste, though we question the truth of the particular fact stated in the second volume respecting the shrine of Or San Michele. Cement is now visible enough in all the joints, but whether from recent repairs we cannot say:—

"There is indeed another, a technical merit, due to Orcagna, which I would have mentioned earlier, did it not partake so strongly of a moral virtue. Whatever he undertook to do, he did well—by which I mean, better than anybody else. His Loggia, in its general structure and its provisions against injury from wet and decay, is a model of strength no less than symmetry and elegance; the junction of the marbles in the tabernacle of Or San Michele, and the exquisite manual workmanship of the

bas-reliefs, have been the theme of praise for five centuries; his colors in the Campo Santo have maintained a freshness unrivaled by those of any of his successors there;—nay, even had his mosaics been preserved at Orvieto, I am confident the *commettitura* would be found more compact and polished than any previous to the sixteenth century. The secret of all this was that he made himself thoroughly an adept in the mechanism of the respective arts, and therefore his works have stood. Genius is too apt to think herself independent of form and matter—never was there such a mistake; she cannot slight either without hamstringing herself. But the rule is of universal application; without this thorough mastery of their respective tools, this determination honestly to make the best use of them, the divine, the soldier, the statesman, the philosopher, the poet—however genuine their enthusiasm, however lofty their genius—are mere empirics, pretenders to crowns they will not run for, children not men—sporters with Imagination, triflers with Reason, with the prospects of humanity, with Time, and with God."—Vol. iii., pp. 148, 149.

A noble passage this, and most true, provided we distinguish always between mastery of tool together with thorough strength of workmanship, and mere neatness of outside polish or fitting of measurement, of which ancient masters are daringly scornful.

81. None of Orcagna's pupils, except Francisco Traini, attained celebrity—

"nothing in fact is known of them except their names. Had

their works, however inferior, been preserved, we might have had less difficulty in establishing the links between himself and his successor in the supremacy of the Semi-Byzantine school at Florence, the Beato Fra Angelico da Fiesole.... He was born at Vicchio, near Florence, it is said in 1387, and was baptized by the name of Guido. Of a gentle nature, averse to the turmoil of the world, and pious to enthusiasm, though as free from fanaticism as his youth was innocent of vice, he determined, at the age of twenty, though well provided for in a worldly point of view, to retire to the cloister; he professed himself accordingly a brother of the monastery of S. Domenico at Fiesole in 1407, assuming his monastic name from the Apostle of love, S. John. He acquired from his residence there the distinguishing surname 'da Fiesole;' and a calmer retreat for one weary of earth and desirous of commerce with heaven would in vain be sought for;—the purity of the atmosphere, the freshness of the morning breeze, the starry clearness and delicious fragrance of the nights, the loveliness of the valley at one's feet, lengthening out, like a life of happiness, between the Apennine and the sea—with the intermingling sounds that ascend perpetually from below, softened by distance into music, and by an agreeable compromise at once giving a zest to solitude and cheating it of its loneliness—rendering Fiesole a spot which angels might alight upon by mistake in quest of paradise, a spot where it would be at once sweet to live and sweet to die."—Vol. iii., pp. 151-153.

82. Our readers must recollect that the convent where Fra

Giovanni first resided is not that whose belfry tower and cypress grove crown the "top of Fésóle." The Dominican convent is situated at the bottom of the slope of olives, distinguished only by its narrow and low spire; a cypress avenue recedes from it towards Florence—a stony path, leading to the ancient Badia of Fiesole, descends in front of the three-arched loggia which protects the entrance to the church. No extended prospect is open to it; though over the low wall, and through the sharp, thickset olive leaves, may be seen one silver gleam of the Arno, and, at evening, the peaks of the Carrara mountains, purple against the twilight, dark and calm, while the fire-flies glance beneath, silent and intermittent, like stars upon the rippling of mute, soft sea.

"It is by no means an easy task to adjust the chronology of Fra Angelico's works; he has affixed no dates to them, and consequently, when external evidence is wanting, we are thrown upon internal, which in his case is unusually fallacious. It is satisfactory therefore to possess a fixed date in 1433, the year in which he painted the great tabernacle for the Company of Flax-merchants, now removed to the gallery of the Uffizii. It represents the Virgin and child, with attendant Saints, on a gold ground—very dignified and noble, although the Madonna has not attained the exquisite spirituality of his later efforts. Round this tabernacle as a nucleus, may be classed a number of paintings, all of similar excellence—admirable that is to say, but not of his very best, and in which, if I mistake not, the type of the Virgin bears throughout a strong family resemblance."—Vol. iii., pp.

83. If the painter ever increased in power after this period (he was then forty-three), we have been unable to systematize the improvement. We much doubt whether, in his modes of execution, advance were possible. Men whose merit lies in record of natural facts, increase in knowledge; and men whose merit is in dexterity of hand increase in facility; but we much doubt whether the faculty of design, or force of feeling, increase after the age of twenty-five. By Fra Angelico, who drew always in fear and trembling, dexterous execution had been from the first repudiated; he neither needed nor sought technical knowledge of the form, and the inspiration, to which his power was owing, was not less glowing in youth than in age. The inferiority traceable (we grant) in this Madonna results not from its early date, but from Fra Angelico's incapability, always visible, of drawing the head of life size. He is, in this respect, the exact reverse of Giotto; he was essentially a miniature painter, and never attained the mastery of muscular play in the features necessary in a full-sized drawing. His habit, almost constant, of surrounding the iris of the eye by a sharp black line, is, in small figures, perfectly successful, giving a transparency and tenderness not otherwise expressible. But on a larger scale it gives a stony stare to the eyeball, which not all the tenderness of the brow and mouth can conquer or redeem.

84. Further, in this particular instance, the ear has by accident been set too far back—(Fra Angelico, drawing only from feeling, was liable to gross errors of this kind,—often, however, more

beautiful than other men's truths)—and the hair removed in consequence too far off the brow; in other respects the face is very noble—still more so that of the Christ. The child *stands* upon the Virgin's knees,⁹ one hand raised in the usual attitude of benediction, the other holding a globe. The face looks straightforward, quiet, Jupiter-like, and very sublime, owing to the smallness of the features in proportion to the head, the eyes being placed at about three-sevenths of the whole height, leaving four-sevenths for the brow, and themselves only in length about one-sixth of the breadth of the face, half closed, giving a peculiar appearance of repose. The hair is short, golden, symmetrically curled, statuesque in its contour; the mouth tender and full of life: the red cross of the glory about the head of an intense ruby enamel, almost fire color; the dress brown, with golden girdle. In all the treatment Fra Angelico maintains his assertion of the authority of abstract imagination, which, depriving his subject of all material or actual being, contemplates it as retaining qualities eternal only—adorned by incorporeal splendor. The eyes of the beholder are supernaturally unsealed: and to this miraculous vision whatever is of the earth vanishes, and all things are seen endowed with an harmonious glory—the garments falling with strange, visionary grace, glowing with indefinite gold—the walls of the chamber dazzling as of a heavenly city—the mortal forms themselves impressed with divine changelessness

⁹ In many pictures of Angelico, the Infant Christ appears self-supported—the Virgin not touching the child.

—no domesticity—no jest—no anxiety—no expectation—no variety of action or of thought. Love, all fulfilling, and various modes of power, are alone expressed; the Virgin never shows the complacency or petty watchfulness of maternity; she sits serene, supporting the child whom she ever looks upon, as a stranger among strangers; "Behold the handmaid of the Lord" forever written upon her brow.

85. An approach to an exception in treatment is found in the Annunciation of the upper corridor of St. Mark's, most unkindly treated by our author:—

"Probably the earliest of the series—full of faults, but imbued with the sweetest feeling; there is a look of naïve curiosity, mingling with the modest and meek humility of the Virgin, which almost provokes a smile."—iii., 176.

Many a Sabbath evening of bright summer have we passed in that lonely corridor—but not to the finding of faults, nor the provoking of smiles. The angel is perhaps something less majestic than is usual with the painter; but the Virgin is only the more to be worshiped, because here, for once, set before us in the verity of life. No gorgeous robe is upon her; no lifted throne set for her; the golden border gleams faintly on the dark blue dress; the seat is drawn into the shadow of a lowly loggia. The face is of no strange, far-sought loveliness; the features might even be thought hard, and they are worn with watching, and severe, though innocent. She stoops forward with her arms folded on her bosom: no casting down of eye nor shrinking of the frame in

fear; she is too earnest, too self-forgotten for either: wonder and inquiry are there, but chastened and free from doubt; meekness, yet mingled with a patient majesty; peace, yet sorrowfully sealed, as if the promise of the Angel were already underwritten by the prophecy of Simeon. They who pass and repass in the twilight of that solemn corridor, need not the adjuration inscribed beneath:

—

"Virginis intactae cum veneris ante figuram
Praetereundo cave ne sileatur Ave."¹⁰

We in general allow the inferiority of Angelico's fresco to his tempera works; yet even that which of all these latter we think the most radiant, the Annunciation on the reliquary of Santa Maria Novella, would, we believe, if repeatedly compared with this of St. Mark's, in the end have the disadvantage. The eminent value of the tempera paintings results partly from their delicacy of line, and partly from the purity of color and force of decoration of which the material is capable.

86. The passage, to which we have before alluded, respecting Fra Angelico's color in general, is one of the most curious and fanciful in the work:—

"His coloring, on the other hand, is far more beautiful, although of questionable brilliancy. This will be found invariably

¹⁰ The upper inscription Lord Lindsay has misquoted—it runs thus:—"Salve Mater Pietatis Et Totius Trinitatis Nobile Triclinium."

the case in minds constituted like his. Spirit and Sense act on each other with livelier reciprocity the closer their approximation, the less intervention there is of Intellect. Hence the most religious and the most sensual painters have always loved the brightest colors—Spiritual Expression and a clearly defined (however inaccurate) outline forming the distinction of the former class; Animal Expression and a confused and uncertain outline (reflecting that lax morality which confounds the limits of light and darkness, right and wrong) of the latter. On the other hand, the more that Intellect, or the spirit of Form, intervenes in its severe precision, the less pure, the paler grow the colors, the nearer they tend to the hue of marble, of the bas-relief. We thus find the purest and brightest colors only in Fra Angelico's pictures, with a general predominance of blue, which we have observed to prevail more or less in so many of the Semi-Byzantine painters, and which, fanciful as it may appear, I cannot but attribute, independently of mere tradition, to an inherent, instinctive sympathy between their mental constitution and the color in question; as that of red, or of blood, may be observed to prevail among painters in whom Sense or Nature predominates over Spirit—for in this, as in all things else, the moral and the material world respond to each other as closely as shadow and substance. But, in Painting as in Morals, perfection implies the due intervention of Intellect between Spirit and Sense—of Form between Expression and Coloring—as a power at once controlling and controlled—and therefore, although

acknowledging its fascination, I cannot unreservedly praise the Coloring of Fra Angelico."—Vol. iii., pp. 193, 194.

87. There is much ingenuity, and some truth, here, but the reader, as in other of Lord Lindsay's speculations, must receive his conclusions with qualification. It is the natural character of strong effects of color, as of high light, to confuse outlines; and it is a necessity in all fine harmonies of color that many tints should merge imperceptibly into their following or succeeding ones:—we believe Lord Lindsay himself would hardly wish to mark the hues of the rainbow into divided zones, or to show its edge, as of an iron arch, against the sky, in order that it might no longer reflect (a reflection of which we profess ourselves up to this moment altogether unconscious) "that lax morality which confounds the limits of right and wrong." Again, there is a character of energy in all warm colors, as of repose in cold, which necessarily causes the former to be preferred by painters of savage subject—that is to say, commonly by the coarsest and most degraded;—but when sensuality is free from ferocity, it leans to blue more than to red (as especially in the flesh tints of Guido), and when intellect prevails over this sensuality, its first step is invariably to put more red into every color, and so "*rubor est virtutis color*." We hardly think Lord Lindsay would willingly include Luca Giordano among his spiritual painters, though that artist's servant was materially enriched by washing the ultramarine from the brushes with which he painted the Ricardi palace; nor would he, we believe, degrade Ghirlandajo

to fellowship with the herd of the sensual, though in the fresco of the vision of Zacharias there are seventeen different reds in large masses, and not a shade of blue. The fact is, there is no color of the spectrum, as there is no note of music, whose key and prevalence may not be made pure in expression, and elevating in influence, by a great and good painter, or degraded to unhallowed purpose by a base one.

88. We are sorry that our author "cannot unreservedly praise the coloring of Angelico;" but he is again curbed by his unhappy system of balanced perfectibility, and must quarrel with the gentle monk because he finds not in him the flames of Giorgione, nor the tempering of Titian, nor the melody of Cagliari. This curb of perfection we took between our teeth from the first, and we will give up our hearts to Angelico without drawback or reservation. His color is, in its sphere and to its purpose, as perfect as human work may be: wrought to radiance beyond that of the ruby and opal, its inartificialness prevents it from arresting the attention it is intended only to direct; were it composed with more science it would become vulgar from the loss of its unconsciousness; if richer, it must have parted with its purity, if deeper, with its joyfulness, if more subdued, with its sincerity. Passages are, indeed, sometimes unsuccessful; but it is to be judged in its rapture, and forgiven in its fall: he who works by law and system may be blamed when he sinks below the line above which he proposes no elevation, but to him whose eyes are on a mark far off, and whose efforts are impulsive, and to the

utmost of his strength, we may not unkindly count the slips of his sometime descent into the valley of humiliation.

89. The concluding notice of Angelico is true and interesting, though rendered obscure by useless recurrence to the favorite theory.

"Such are the surviving works of a painter, who has recently been as unduly extolled as he had for three centuries past been unduly depreciated,—depreciated, through the amalgamation during those centuries of the principle of which he was the representative with baser, or at least less precious matter—extolled, through the recurrence to that principle, in its pure, unsophisticated essence, in the present—in a word, to the simple Imaginative Christianity of the middle ages, as opposed to the complex Reasoning Christianity of recent times. Creeds therefore are at issue, and no exclusive partisan, neither Catholic nor Protestant in the absolute sense of the terms, can fairly appreciate Fra Angelico. Nevertheless, to those who regard society as progressive through the gradual development of the component elements of human nature, and who believe that Providence has accommodated the mind of man, individually, to the perception of half-truths only, in order to create that antagonism from which Truth is generated in the abstract, and by which the progression is effected, his rank and position in art are clear and definite. All that Spirit could achieve by herself, anterior to that struggle with Intellect and Sense which she must in all cases pass through in order to work out her

destiny, was accomplished by him. Last and most gifted of a long and imaginative race—the heir of their experience, with collateral advantages which they possessed not—and flourishing at the moment when the transition was actually taking place from the youth to the early manhood of Europe; he gave full, unreserved, and enthusiastic expression to that Love and Hope which had winged the Faith of Christendom in her flight towards heaven for fourteen centuries,—to those yearnings of the Heart and the Imagination which ever precede, in Universal as well as Individual development, the severer and more chastened intelligence of Reason."—Vol. iii., pp. 188-190.

90. We must again repeat that if our author wishes to be truly serviceable to the schools of England, he must express himself in terms requiring less laborious translation. Clearing the above statement of its mysticism and metaphor, it amounts only to this,—that Fra Angelico was a man of (humanly speaking) *perfect* piety—humility, charity, and faith—that he never employed his art but as a means of expressing his love to God and man, and with the view, single, simple, and straightforward, of glory to the Creator, and good to the Creature. Every quality or subject of art by which these ends were not to be attained, or to be attained secondarily only, he rejected; from all study of art, as such, he withdrew; whatever might merely please the eye, or interest the intellect, he despised, and refused; he used his colors and lines, as David his harp, after a kingly fashion, for purposes of praise and not of science. To this grace and gift of holiness were added,

those of a fervent imagination, vivid invention, keen sense of loveliness in lines and colors, unwearied energy, and to all these gifts the crowning one of quietness of life and mind, while yet his convent-cell was at first within view, and afterwards in the center, of a city which had lead of all the world in Intellect, and in whose streets he might see daily and hourly the noblest setting of manly features. It would perhaps be well to wait until we find another man thus actuated, thus endowed, and thus circumstanced, before we speak of "unduly extolling" the works of Fra Angelico.

91. His artistical attainments, as might be conjectured, are nothing more than the development, through practice, of his natural powers in accordance with his sacred instincts. His power of expression by bodily gesture is greater even than Giotto's, wherever he could feel or comprehend the passion to be expressed; but so inherent in him was his holy tranquillity of mind, that he could not by any exertion, even for a moment, conceive either agitation, doubt, or fear—and all the actions proceeding from such passions, or, *à fortiori*, from any yet more criminal, are absurdly and powerlessly portrayed by him; while contrariwise, every gesture, consistent with emotion pure and saintly, is rendered with an intensity of truth to which there is no existing parallel; the expression being carried out into every bend of the hand, every undulation of the arm, shoulder, and neck, every fold of the dress and every wave of the hair. His drawing of movement is subject to the same influence; vulgar or vicious

motion he cannot represent; his running, falling, or struggling figures are drawn with childish incapability; but give him for his scene the pavement of heaven, or pastures of Paradise, and for his subject the "inoffensive pace" of glorified souls, or the spiritual speed of Angels, and Michael Angelo alone can contend with him in majesty,—in grace and musical continuousness of motion, no one. The inspiration was in some degree caught by his pupil Benozzo, but thenceforward forever lost. The angels of Perugino appear to be let down by cords and moved by wires; that of Titian, in the sacrifice of Isaac, kicks like an awkward swimmer; Raphael's Moses and Elias of the Transfiguration are cramped at the knees; and the flight of Domenichino's angels is a sprawl paralyzed. The authority of Tintoret over movement is, on the other hand, too unlimited; the descent of his angels is the swoop of a whirlwind or the fall of a thunderbolt; his mortal impulses are oftener impetuous than pathetic, and majestic more than melodious.

92. But it is difficult by words to convey to the reader unacquainted with Angelico's works, any idea of the thoughtful variety of his rendering of movement—Earnest haste of girded faith in the Flight into Egypt, the haste of obedience, not of fear; and unweariedness, but through spiritual support, and not in human strength—Swift obedience of passive earth to the call of its Creator, in the Resurrection of Lazarus—March of meditative gladness in the following of the Apostles down the Mount of Olives—Rush of adoration breaking through the chains and

shadows of death, in the Spirits in Prison. Pacing of mighty angels above the Firmament, poised on their upright wings, half opened, broad, bright, quiet, like eastern clouds before the sun is up;—or going forth, with timbrels and with dances, of souls more than conquerors, beside the shore of the last great Red Sea, the sea of glass mingled with fire, hand knit with hand, and voice with voice, the joyful winds of heaven following the measure of their motion, and the flowers of the new earth looking on, like stars pausing in their courses.

93. And yet all this is but the lowest part and narrowest reach of Angelico's conceptions. Joy and gentleness, patience and power, he could indicate by gesture—but Devotion could be told by the countenance only. There seems to have been always a stern limit by which the thoughts of other men were stayed; the religion that was painted even by Perugino, Francia, and Bellini, was finite in its spirit—the religion of earthly beings, checked, not indeed by the corruption, but by the veil and the sorrow of clay. But with Fra Angelico the glory of the countenance reaches to actual transfiguration; eyes that see no more darkly, incapable of all tears, foreheads flaming, like Belshazzar's marble wall, with the writing of the Father's name upon them, lips tremulous with love, and crimson with the light of the coals of the altar—and all this loveliness, thus enthusiastic and ineffable, yet sealed with the stability which the coming and going of ages as countless as sea-sand cannot dim nor weary, and bathed by an ever flowing river of holy thought, with God for its source, God for its shore,

and God for its ocean.

94. We speak in no inconsiderate enthusiasm. We feel assured that to any person of just feeling who devotes sufficient time to the examination of these works, all terms of description must seem derogatory. Where such ends as these have been reached, it ill becomes us to speak of minor deficiencies as either to be blamed or regretted: it cannot be determined how far even what we deprecate may be accessory to our delight, nor by what intricate involution what we deplore may be connected with what we love. Every good that nature herself bestows, or accomplishes, is given with a counterpoise, or gained at a sacrifice; nor is it to be expected of Man that he should win the hardest battles and tread the narrowest paths, without the betrayal of a weakness, or the acknowledgment of an error.

95. With this final warning against our author's hesitating approbation of what is greatest and best, we must close our specific examination of the mode in which his design has been worked out. We have done enough to set the reader upon his guard against whatever appears slight or inconsiderate in his theory or statements, and with the more severity, because this was alone wanting to render the book one of the most valuable gifts which Art has ever received. Of the translations from the lives of the saints we have hardly spoken; they are gracefully rendered, and all of them highly interesting—but we could wish to see these, and the enumerations of fresco subjects¹¹ with which

¹¹ We have been much surprised by the author's frequent reference to Lasinio's

the other volumes are in great part occupied, published separately for the convenience of travelers in Italy. They are something out of place in a work like that before us. For the rest, we might have more interested the reader, and gratified ourselves, by setting before him some of the many passages of tender feeling and earnest eloquence with which the volumes are replete—but we felt it necessary rather to anticipate the hesitation with which they were liable to be received, and set limits to the halo of fancy by which their light is obscured—though enlarged. One or two paragraphs, however, of the closing chapter must be given before we part:—

96. "What a scene of beauty, what a flower-garden of art—how bright and how varied—must Italy have presented at the commencement of the sixteenth century, at the death of Raphael! The sacrileges we lament took place for the most part after that period; hundreds of frescoes, not merely of Giotto and those other elders of Christian Art, but of Gentile da Fabriano, Pietro della Francesca, Perugino and their compeers, were still existing, charming the eye, elevating the mind, and warming the heart. Now alas! few comparatively and fading are the relics of

engravings of various frescoes, unaccompanied by any warning of their inaccuracy. No work of Lasinio's can be trusted for *anything* except the number and relative position of the figures. All masters are by him translated into one monotony of commonplace:—he dilutes eloquence, educates naïveté, prompts ignorance, stultifies intelligence, and paralyzes power; takes the chill off horror, the edge off wit, and the bloom off beauty. In all artistical points he is utterly valueless, neither drawing nor expression being ever preserved by him. Giotto, Benozzo, or Ghirlandajo are all alike to him; and we hardly know whether he injures most when he robs or when he redresses.

those great and good men. While Dante's voice rings as clear as ever, communing with us as friend with friend, theirs is dying gradually away, fainter and fainter, like the farewell of a spirit. Flaking off the walls, uncared for and neglected save in a few rare instances, scarce one of their frescoes will survive the century, and the labors of the next may not improbably be directed to the recovery and restoration of such as may still slumber beneath the whitewash and the daubs with which the Bronzinos and Zuccheros 'et id genus omne' have unconsciously sealed them up for posterity—their best title to our gratitude.—But why not begin at once? at all events in the instances numberless, where merely whitewash interposes between us and them.

"It is easy to reply—what need of this? They—the artists—have Moses and the prophets, the frescoes of Raphael and Michael Angelo—let them study them. Doubtless,—but we still reply, and with no impiety—they will not repent, they will not forsake their idols and their evil ways—they will not abandon Sense for Spirit, oils for fresco—unless these great ones of the past, these Sleepers of Ephesus, arise from the dead.... It is not by studying art in its perfection—by worshiping Raphael and Michael Angelo exclusively of all other excellence—that we can expect to rival them, but by re-ascending to the fountain-head—by planting ourselves as acorns in the ground those oaks are rooted in, and growing up to their level—in a word, by studying Duccio and Giotto that we may paint like Taddeo di Bartolo and Masaccio, Taddeo di Bartolo and Masaccio that we may paint

like Perugino and Luca Signorelli, Perugino and Luca Signorelli that we may paint like Raphael and Michael Angelo. And why despair of this, or even of shaming the Vatican? For with genius and God's blessing nothing is impossible.

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