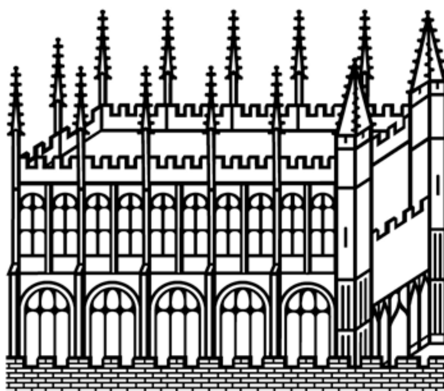


This book is part of the collection held by the Bodleian Libraries and scanned by Google, Inc. for the Google Books Library Project.

For more information see:

http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/dbooks

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.0 UK: England & Wales (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0) licence.

ART, & THE FORMATION OF TASTE

LUCY CRANE

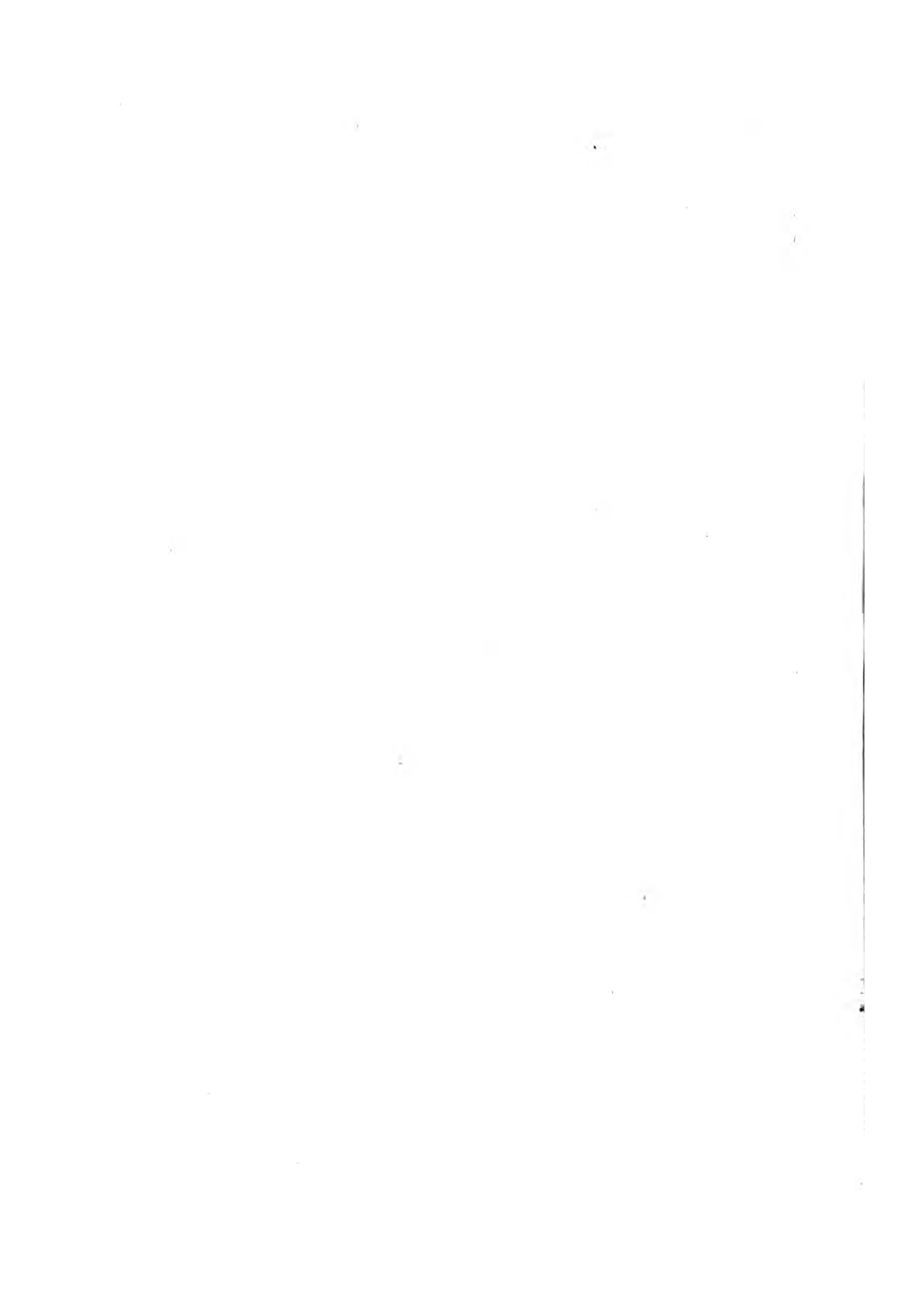
Nov. 1899

Johnsone, 3.00

"Art."

ART,

AND THE FORMATION OF TASTE



ART,

AND THE FORMATION OF TASTE;

SIX LECTURES

BY

LUCY CRANE:

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS DRAWN BY

THOMAS & WALTER CRANE.

LONDON
MACMILLAN & CO
1882.

JOHN
Bibl
Bodl.
JOHNSON

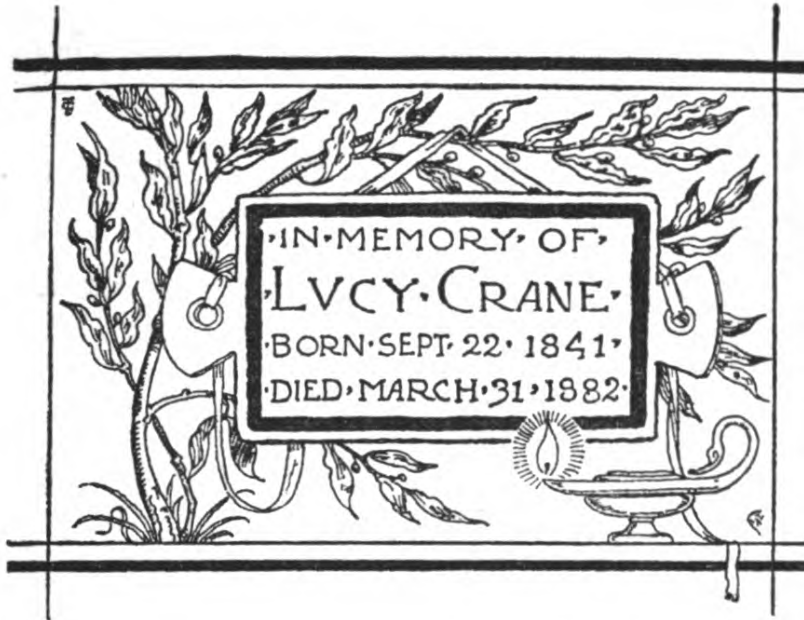
CONTENTS.

		PAGE
	MEMOIR	ix
I.	INTRODUCTORY	1
II.	DECORATIVE ART—FORM	50
III.	DECORATIVE ART—COLOUR, DRESS, AND NEEDLEWORK	97
IV.	FINE ARTS	152
V.	FINE ART—SCULPTURE AND ARCHITECTURE	197
VI.	FINE ART—PAINTING	242

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

PAGE		DRAWN BY
	FRONTISPIECE—PORTRAIT . .	*Walter Crane.*
vii	MEMORIAL CARD . .	,,
1.	PREHISTORIC BONE DRAWING .	,,
16.	PART OF PARTHENON FRIEZE .	,,
49.	STONE HAMMER AND CYPRUS VASE	*Thomas Crane.*
50.	OBJECTS OF METAL, GLASS, AND POTTERY	,,
76.	A FIREPLACE IN SUMMER . .	,,
96.	A CHINA PLATE . . .	,,
97.	PATTERN FOR CHAIR-BACK . .	,,
142.	ORIENTAL EMBROIDERY . .	,,
151.	PATTERN FOR CHAIR-BACK . .	,,
152.	GROUP FROM RAPHAEL'S DISPUTE OF THE SACRAMENT . .	*Walter Crane.*

PAGE		DRAWN BY
188.	VENUS OF MILOS . . .	*Walter Crane.*
196.	TITIAN'S FLORA	„
197.	TEMPLE OF POSEIDON . . .	„
230.	ST. MARK'S, VENICE . . .	„
241.	AMIENS CATHEDRAL . . .	„
242.	LEONARDO'S LAST SUPPER . .	„
264.	MICHAEL ANGELO'S CREATION .	„
292.	BURNE JONES—HOPE . . .	„



LUCY CRANE, the eldest daughter of the late Thomas and Marie (Kearsley) Crane of Chester, was born in Liverpool, September 22, 1842. Her father was an artist of some repute in his day, more especially for the grace and charm of his portraits and miniatures. He was a student and a medallist at the Royal Academy, and afterwards exhibited there, and some time secretary and treasurer of the Liverpool Academy. Owing to his ill-health the family went in 1845 to live at Torquay, where Lucy Crane passed

her early years, and from here went to school in London.

In 1857 the family left Torquay and took up their abode in the western suburbs of London, where in 1859 Thomas Crane, the father, died.

From an early age Lucy Crane showed considerable taste and skill in drawing and colouring. Circumstances, however, turned her attention to general educational work, the field of her labours being confined to a few private families, where her high qualities were known and appreciated. Perhaps the best tribute to her success is the fact that some of her most attached and valued friends in after life had been her early pupils.

Music had always been especially studied and practised by her, and she was remarkable as an executant for her delicacy of touch, as well as for the classical refinement of her taste and her knowledge of the earlier Italian and English masters.

She cultivated herself, too, in literature, and practised, both in prose and verse; but

her fastidious taste and devotion to her professional work prevented her from completing very much in this direction. Among her early work, however, may be mentioned an essay, and a poem with the burden from Chaucer—

"Si douce est la Marguerite,"

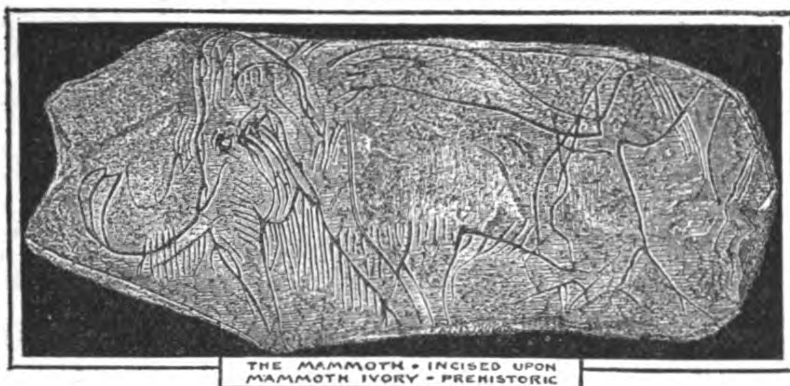
contributed to "The Argosy" some years ago. She also wrote the original verses, and rhymed versions of well-known nursery legends for her brother's (Walter Crane's) coloured toy-books. Among the original verses may be named "How Jessie was Lost," "The Adventures of Puffy," "Annie and Jack in London," which severally appeared in the series. The selection and arrangement of the accompaniments to the nursery songs in "The Baby's Opera" and the "Baby's Bouquêt" are also due to her; and a new translation by her of the Hausmärchen of the Brothers Grimm, illustrated by her brother Walter Crane, is published by Messrs. Macmillan.

Of late years Lucy Crane had been

engaged in preparing and delivering the Lectures on "Art, and the Formation of Taste" which are given in this book. These Lectures had their origin in some discourses given by her in the classrooms of her friend Miss Janion. The interest aroused in these induced her to elaborate her scheme, and to appeal to larger audiences. The Lectures in their present form were delivered with much success in London, at Eastbourne, and at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Craik, Shortlands, Beckenham; and their author had only just completed the delivery of the course in the North of England—at Leeds, Harrogate, Halifax, Southport, Wakefield, and Bolton,—where she met with many friends and much sympathy, when the illness, culminating in an attack of heart-disease, came on, which ended so suddenly and fatally, on the 31st of March 1882, at the house of a friend at Bolton le Moors. She had written earlier in the month in the best of health and spirits, and was looking forward to a tour in Italy, but it is to be

feared she had overtasked her strength ; and though the interest and excitement of the work carried her on, and sustained her until it was completed, she had not sufficient reserve to support the reaction and fatigue which followed. Her health was never very strong, and her courage and energy were always greater than her powers of endurance.

It is thought that this volume may serve as a memorial of her to her personal friends, and to those who heard the Lectures, independently of the value and service the book may bear for that now large public interested in its special subject, on which it must be left to speak for itself. The illustrations, for the most part, have been drawn from photographs and objects used to illustrate the Lectures. The mammoth carving has been added as an illustration of the art of the cavemen referred to in the text, so that the book opens with a specimen of prehistoric design, and ends with one from the work of a contemporary artist.


THE MAMMOTH • INCISED UPON MAMMOTH IVORY • PREHISTORIC

LECTURES ON ART,

AND THE

FORMATION OF TASTE.

I.—INTRODUCTORY.

I AM sensible that the title of my Lectures will have been likely to produce a variety of expectations in the minds of my intending hearers, and perhaps will lead in the end to a corresponding number of disappointments; for the lavish use of the word Art in these days has given rise to such a number of false impressions, that the word seems to need de-

fining afresh—its functions and proper application to need marking out all over again—that we may know to what we are committing ourselves when we talk of "Art-decoration," "Art-colours," "Art-fabrics," "Art-needlework," and so on; and, moreover, what is exactly meant, when people say—as I most earnestly wish they would not—that they "go in for High Art." The word seems really to have lost the power of expressing what those who care for it in its right meaning would have it express. Let us try to get at that right meaning, and learn to use it properly. "Art-decoration," "Art-embroidery," and the like, are tautological expressions. If such things exist at all, they must of necessity be *Art*, and belong to it, just as geography and chemistry must of necessity be *Science*, and belong to it. The distinction which has somehow arisen between "Colour" and "Art-colour" is a quite unreasonable one, and based on false ideas. If a colour is of such a nature as to be inadmissible in Art, it is no colour at all, properly

speaking; it is a stain, a dye, a pigment. It is easy to trace these expressions back to their origin. They were invented by shop-keepers, to characterise a kind of goods got up in a certain style to please that part of the public that cares for fashion and novelty alone; and has no higher aims or desires, and wishes to have none. So let us leave such expressions to their inventors, who, by bad imitations of the good work of our time, seek to catch our fancy, careless or idle, as we most of us are, or else too busy to pay any regard to such matters. There is, however, no sort of lasting satisfaction in merely following blindly the fashion of the day, whether it be in house decoration, or in colouring, or in dress, or in pictures; for it seems there is a fashion even in these. Ideas hastily caught up, and adopted without reason and consideration, must be shallow and worthless ones. The love of novelty is opposed to the production of good art which is in its nature and constitution lasting, living, and in a sense immortal:

in the race for novelty, the last new thing runs down the one before it, only to perish in its turn, because it deserves no better fate. But for those of us who care for something more in our lives than fashion and novelty, it is worth while to examine into the real nature and true meaning of Art, so as to possess ourselves of all the various knowledge and pleasure it is capable of giving.

So, to guard against any misconception from the beginning, let me attempt to define what Art is. The word in its original sense meant force or strength, and it was applied to mechanical work; and is so still. We speak of the art of weaving, the art of printing, the florist's art, the art of cooking, and so on; and in these we mean to express the result of man's putting forth his hand and operating on Nature; and Art in its widest sense has come to be "Human labour regulated by human design." But within this wide sense are other senses in which the word may be, and often is, taken, such as

Art as opposed to Science—that is, the *doing* of a thing as opposed to the *knowing* of it, practice as distinguished from theory—and then Art as opposed to Nature; and with this we shall have something to do. But it is in none of these senses we want to consider it to-day. We have to consider Art as a world of itself, created out of Nature by the hand of the artist-workman. Art has been called the "flowering of man's moral nature,"—it is a natural growth out of, and beyond mere material necessities; to it we owe everything in the whole range of human productions which appeals to the sense of beauty, and the thoughts awakened in us by beauty. The Artistic sense by which we appreciate these things may be counted as a sixth sense; it may be possessed in a greater or less degree by the individual, but it exists in every one, and may be developed by training and cultivation like the other senses. To cultivate and exercise judiciously the Artistic sense, is to be a person of Taste. To possess it and to

cultivate it in an extraordinary degree, is to be an Artist.

I said that to understand the real nature of Art is to possess ourselves of the various pleasures it is capable of giving. For I must premise that the end and aim of Art, and, therefore, of the cultivation of the Artistic sense, is to give pleasure in the common things of life by giving to them beauty of form, pattern, colour; and next, pleasure of a still higher order by translating and transforming the things of Nature into the beauty of picture, statue, or building. Nor let us be offended at having to recognise that in studying Art, we are *merely*, as we should say, seeking after pleasure. It is the sort of pleasure that is in all elevated things, and appeals to the purest and most intellectual side of our nature; there can be no degradation, no intemperance in the cultivation, the indulgence of the Artistic sense. The pleasure it subserves lies at the root, and is the inspiration of music and poetry, as well as of painting, and sculpture, and

architecture. It is Beauty that is sought for in all these; Beauty is the source of the pleasure we find in them, and, without Beauty, any manifestation of these great arts is nothing worth. We ask of a musical composition, not only that it shall be in strict accordance with all technical rules, but also that it shall enchant us with the beauty of its melody or the sublimity of its form; we ask not only that a poem shall be written in faultless language and rhythm, but that it shall appeal with a higher beauty to the mind and the heart: so it would not be enough for a picture to be designed according to the strictest laws of composition and perspective, or for a statue to obey every rule of anatomy, or for a building to have every proportional and geometric perfection—there must be a soul of beauty and sublimity in the picture, the statue, the building, as well as in the musical composition and the poem; and then by them we shall be made to feel the highest pleasure of which our nature is capable—a pleasure

which nourishes the intellect in delighting the senses, and, through them, the heart. At the head of these greater Arts, the Fine Arts properly so called—Poetry, Music, Painting, Sculpture, Architecture—at the head of each of these stand great names with which we are all familiar; of their minds and works we know something, and that something is usually the basis of our knowledge of those Arts themselves. Our admiration of the music of Handel, and Bach, and Beethoven, grows deeper as our theoretical understanding and practical experience of the Art of Music increases; the more we learn about the nature and powers of language, and the larger our experience of life, the more we appreciate and admire Shakespeare, and Dante, and Goethe; and with inquiry into a study of the nature and history of the Arts, joined with as much practical knowledge of them as may be possible, we shall enter the more fully into the minds and works of the Great Masters of Sculpture and Painting—Pheidias and

Michael Angelo, Leonardo and Raphael and Titian,—so that they may be something more to us than merely great names, and their high reputation may be justified to us. So, too, is there much to be learned and enjoyed in the marvels of the architecture of all ages—that the Greek, the Romanesque, the Gothic, shall be more than barren names; and following in the train of these great men and periods of Fine Art come a crowd of lesser arts, such as the arts of the potter, the carver in wood, in stone, in ivory, of the metal-worker, the weaver, the embroiderer, and many others—arts which lend beauty of form, and pattern, and colour, to the common things of life,—each of which has laws and a character of its own to be studied, in accordance with which Beauty is fitly joined with Use; the one furthering rather than interfering with the functions of the other.

All this opens a very large prospect. But everything must have a beginning; and it is this little beginning that I want to make

in the minds of those for whom it has not already been made—a little gate into that great field, that vast kingdom of Art, which contains within it things small and great, and of infinite diversity, from the pattern on the door-knob to the sculptures of the Parthenon.

And in this great kingdom Nature and History must be our guides. As a first step, I propose to consider the Art of man in three conditions or stages, and to offer to your observation an example of each.

1. Art, in its original stage, purely necessary and useful.

2. Art decorative.

3. Fine Art.

In the first place—to consider Art purely necessary and useful—we are led back to the earliest ages of the world, and we must look for a moment at Primitive Man, in order to find how, out of the purely necessary and useful, grew the germs of that love of beauty which governs the kingdom we are about to explore. From the time of his first existence

Man has to defend himself against Nature and against his own kind—against weather, scarcity, sickness, and times of war; so he must provide for himself food, clothing, shelter, weapons. And so do the first arts arise; he tills the ground, he navigates the sea and rivers, he exercises various kinds of industries, he establishes families, states, and some sort of law and government,—with all this he is a mere animal, only somewhat better provided than the rest of the animals.

We have been told of bees, and ants, and beavers, and the like, that have reached, or almost reached, this point—this stage of proficiency in the Arts of pure use and necessity; but the difference between them and us is this, that here they stop, while man goes on. The cell of the bee, the home of the ant, reached their perfection ages ago, and their makers and inhabiters are content; but the powers, and necessities, and inclinations, of man, go on ever developing and multiplying, and then there comes a time when, having supplied his bodily necessities,

he ceases to care only for them—he ceases to care merely for Use, he begins to have notions of Beauty.

And so we come to the second stage—Art decorative. "The first spiritual want of a barbarous man," says Carlyle, "is decoration." That want began to develop itself ages before the time of which we have any certain record; and the same thing is still to be observed among tribes of savage men at the present day. He—the savage, the barbarous man—scratches patterns on his weapons, his paddles, his tools and utensils of all sorts, and on his own body as well; next he begins to weave stuffs for his wearing, and to trace in their texture, patterns—first geometric, then imitations of animal and vegetable life—in short, he learns to decorate whatever he wears or uses, and to find a pleasure in the object beyond its use, a pleasure of the eye, a delight in Beauty; and so he gradually creates a new and wonderful thing—the Artistic Sense. There have been ages of which there is no historical record other than geology

can furnish, and to which she has given the names of the Stone and the Bronze Ages, from the material of the implements and objects found in different strata of the earth's crust.

To the earliest of all, the Stone Age, belong only roughly-fashioned flints, laboriously wrought by other flints into some semblance of a tool; and one feels that the difficulty of barely living, must have been enough to occupy the whole faculties and powers of man as they were then. But to the later Bronze Period quite beautifully-shaped and decorated vessels belong, and even personal ornaments; but still there is no attempt to reproduce, or in any wise to imitate, the human form. So the Stone Age may represent to us the first stage, which I have attempted to describe, when Art is purely necessary and useful; and the Bronze Age the second stage, when Art has become decorative, and fulfils needs both of Use and Beauty.

As an example of the first, the Stone

Age, I will ask you to notice one of those roughly-fashioned stone hammers which are found everywhere all over the world in those parts of its strata which correspond to the Stone Age (*see tailpiece*). This thing is prehistoric ; it has served some primitive man as his earliest tool or weapon, before he had sufficient knowledge or skill to invent or imagine anything better. Such things are found in Britain, in Asia, in the Arctic regions, and among the ancient lake and cave dwellings —this the rudimentary phase of the Art of Man.

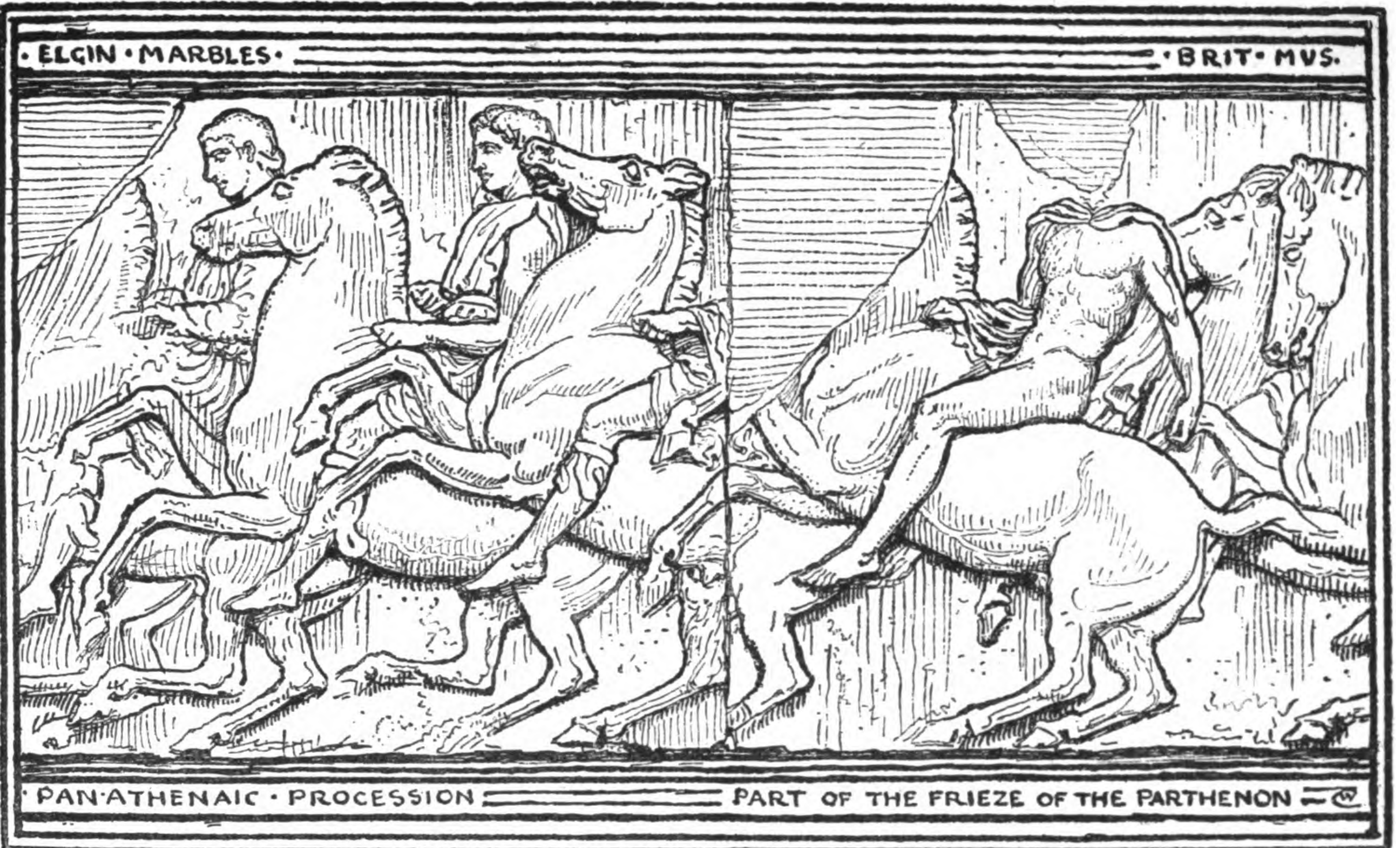
And next, as an example of the second, the decorative stage, here is a vase found in Cyprus (*see tailpiece*), of ancient rough-clay pottery. You see its reddish-brown concentric lines, resembling very closely the sort of ornament still bestowed on vessels made from gourds in the East, and there is even a rudely-drawn bird on the space beneath the spout. This form of vase and its decoration having been invented in very early times, was adhered to for centuries with but little change. Mr.

Murray, the keeper of the vase-room at the British Museum, tells me the date of this vase may be 600 B.C., or it may be four centuries later. At all events it exemplifies the need and taste for ornament at a time, and in a state of civilisation, when appliances and tools were rude, and skill in dealing with them had not advanced very far. Still here *is* the ornament—the desire for beauty.

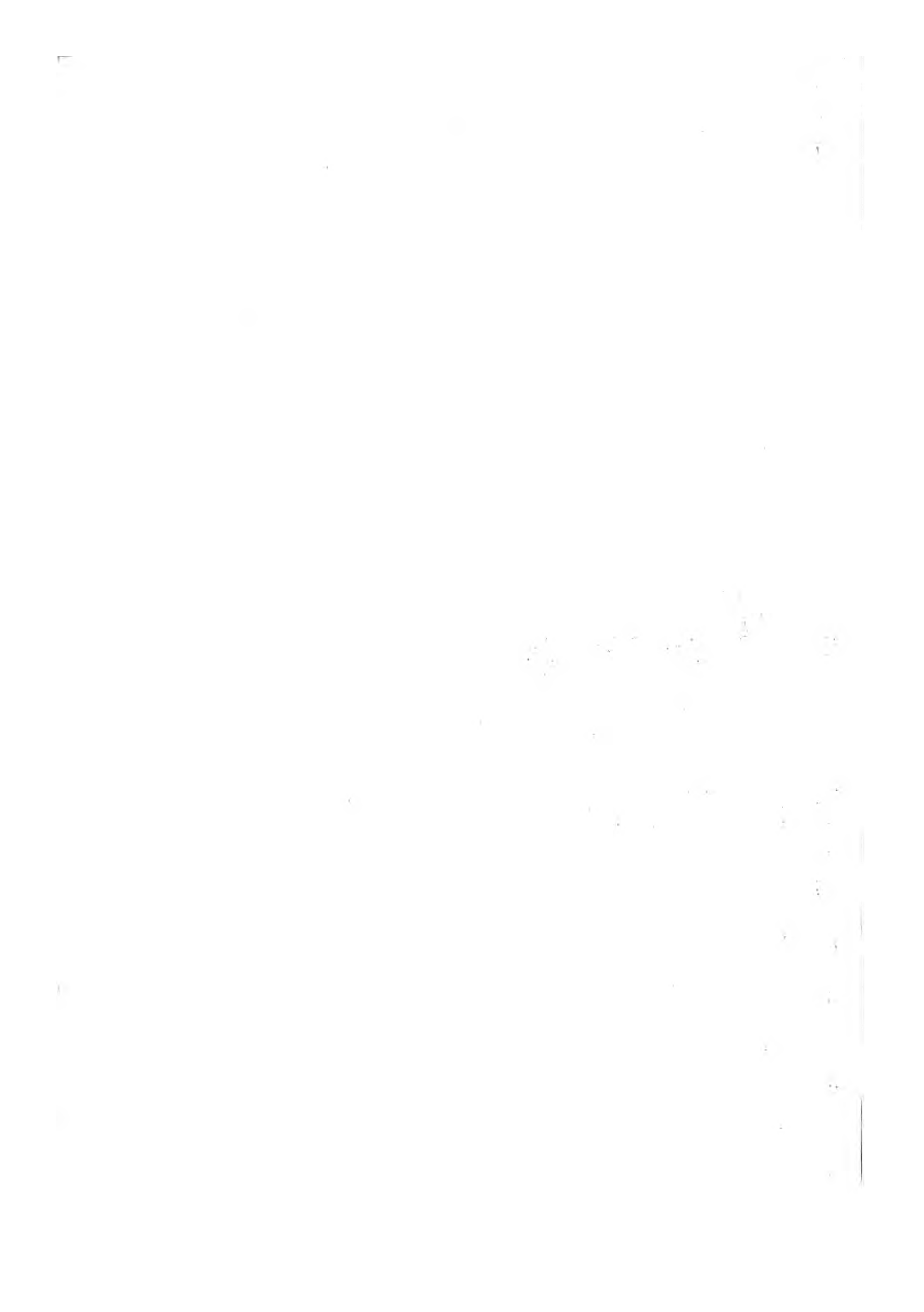
Both of these stages the highly-civilised nations of the past as well as of the present day have gone through and left far behind. For no sooner has Decorative Art been invented than more advanced necessities arise, mental sensibilities grow, and need to be gratified. Man learns to look before and after, concerning the things of the mind, as well as those of the body. Memory, imagination, reflection, with an extended sense of beauty derived from and fed by these, lead him to produce writings, paintings, images—things that supply no bodily need or pleasure whatever, but needs and pleasures of the intellect and the heart. This stage must be

reached before any records of the past, any legend, story, or song, any monuments or noble buildings, any representations of gods or heroes, any rites of religion, can be conceived or produced; and thus time brings about the birth of the Fine Arts (our third stage) Music and Poetry, as well as those which belong directly to my subject, Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture.

The intimate connection which subsists between all these Arts, however, will be more particularly dwelt upon in my fourth Lecture. Of these five Fine Arts, only Architecture is founded on any material use or necessity. I say founded on merely, because very plain and commonplace buildings of various sizes and degrees of strength would give us all we actually *need* for dwellings and defences and places of public assembly; but from the days of the Tower of Babel men have wanted more. So we have had the Egyptian Pyramid, the Greek Temple, the Roman Arches of Triumph, the Byzantine Churches and Mosques, the Gothic Cathedrals of the Middle Ages, and



To face page 16.



the splendid buildings of the Renaissance. These, and such as these, enriched and adorned with the best Sculpture and Painting of their various periods, are the very head and crown of all that man has ever achieved; he has invented these glorious means of expressing the boundless faith and hope and love which are his eternal heritage. To such a culmination have risen the blind instincts, the vague imaginings of man,—the savage.

And this, a reduced copy of part of the frieze of the Parthenon—the triumph and perfection of Athenian Art—is my example of the third stage. I shall have to consider more particularly, in my fifth Lecture, the causes and the nature of this perfection; for the present it is enough to say, that as the stone-hammer is the rudest and lowest type of human workmanship, this Sculpture from the hand of Pheidias is the best and highest—never likely, or even possible, to be excelled in any future age of the world.

I have now roughly sketched the three

stages by which Art has reached so great a place in the life of man,—how, from the mechanical Arts of pure use and necessity, arose the desire and practice of ornamenting the objects formed by these Arts, and how, rising higher yet, came the desire for embodying loftier thoughts in things more beautiful still—the statue, the picture, the noble building. If all this is made clear to you, you will see the scope of my subject, and what in future lectures I shall attempt to set before you.

Setting aside the first stage as already passed and done with, we shall have to consider those Decorative Arts that, still resting on Use and Necessity, seek to add beauty to the things of common life, such as the painting of the vase, the modelling of the glass vessel, and the colouring and pattern of wearing-stuffs, and many more. Then we shall come to the consideration of the greater ideal Arts that have Beauty alone for their end and aim—the Arts of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture. I shall try to point out how,

with the growth and development of these greater Arts, the Decorative Arts have grown and developed too, through the ages,—that there have been periods when the Art of some great nation has seemed to reach ideal perfection for one charmed moment, and then has sunk to decay and almost death. Such have been the great period of Greek Sculpture in the fifth century before Christ, the great period of Italian Painting in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. I shall try to describe these to you, and their fruits, and to show you how, unlike these, Architecture has had various periods and styles of equal excellence. In leading you to see how the common world fared in respect of Art at those great periods, I shall ask you to consider how it is faring at the present day.

But now to proceed with the more general remarks that belong to this, my introductory Lecture; and before quite setting aside the Arts of pure use, let us see for a moment to what an extent they are carried in the present day—Arts subservient to life, that supply

our needs apart from considerations of Beauty or Taste. From the earliest times these Arts have been increasing, improving, developing; new necessities are still arising every day, and new contrivances for supplying them; and the primitive needs of food, clothing, shelter, weapons, have grown rather more comprehensive! Think of the thousands of Arts that are comprised under each one of these four heads—animal, vegetable, mineral substances manipulated in a million different ways. I suppose it would be impossible to find anywhere within present reach a material substance that has not been modified in some way by the hand of man for his convenience—wood is cut and carved, turned, polished, painted; stone is polished, cut, and carved; metals are melted, mingled, moulded, chased; animals are tamed, trained, and modified by breeding; the very flowers are made to assume shapes double or single, and to vary their hues at the will of the gardener—the whole creation bears the signs of man's labour or training, and look where we will in this

country and in these times, we can see nothing untouched but the sky and the sea; and perhaps we must not even except the sky, at least in London—and I may say in Lancashire as well—for it often looks, through the smoke which seems to form it, but another kind of manufacture, and a very disagreeable kind of manufacture too!

And in these manifold labours of the world there is no hand, howsoever idle, but bears its part. We all have a degree of practical knowledge of some purely useful art—some mechanical dexterity at least in managing the hammer or the knife, the needle or the spade—some skill in sewing, in cookery, in gardening, in carpentry; so that at need some of us could play the part of Robinson Crusoe not quite ungracefully.

Practice in these things helps to educate the eye and hand, and gives competence of judging as to the fitness for practical purposes of tools and material, and of the quality of any kind of workmanship; and this competence of judgment is not without import-

ance for my present purpose, as I shall show you presently.

We have seen that as Man extracts a use from every material substance, and makes it serve his purpose in some way, so hand in hand with every use comes also a desire for beauty, so that every useful object has its appropriate, or what *should be* its appropriate, ornament. But suppose that Man, in thus putting forth his hand and operating on Nature, changing her raw material into Art—suppose he produces, instead of Use and Beauty, worthlessness and hideousness; out of good stone, and clay, and wood, making bad houses and bad furniture; out of good coal, making bad magenta dye; causing good sound wood or metal to put on some false varnished face to imitate other woods and metals; using his own wonderful mechanical skill and dexterity in carving nets and scales of fish out of wood, and feathers out of metal, and fringes out of stone; spending his valuable time and brains in contriving how to make cotton look like silk, and paper look like leather, and leather

look like wood, and wood look like stone; till we gaze round us and wonder if *anything* is what it ought to be.

I will read in this place an extract from a lecture of Mr. William Morris's, as he expresses what I next want to say so much better than I could possibly do. He is speaking of the Decorative Arts, "by means of which," he says, "men have at all times more or less striven to beautify the familiar matters of everyday life: a wide subject, a great industry; both a great part of the history of the world and a most helpful instrument to the study of that history. A very great industry indeed, comprising the trades of housebuilding, painting, joinery and carpentry, smith's work, pottery and glass-making, weaving, and many others: a body of art most important to the public in general, but still more so to us handicraftsmen; since there is scarce anything that they use and that we fashion, but it has always been thought to be unfinished till it has had some touch or other of decoration about it. True

it is, that in many or most cases we have got so used to this ornament that we look upon it as if it had grown of itself, and note it no more than the mosses on the dry sticks with which we light our fires. So much the worse! for there *is* the decoration or some pretence of it, and it has or ought to have a use and a meaning. For, and this is at the root of the whole matter, everything made by man's hand has a form which must be either beautiful or ugly—beautiful if it is in accord with Nature and helps her; ugly if it is discordant with Nature and thwarts her. It cannot be indifferent; we for our part are busy or sluggish, eager or unhappy, and our eyes are apt to get dulled to this eventfulness of form in those things which we are always looking at. Now it is one of the chief uses of decoration, the chief part of its alliance with Nature, that it has to sharpen our dulled senses in this matter; for this end are those wonders of intricate patterns interwoven, those strange forms invented, that men have so long delighted in,—forms and intri-

cacies that do not necessarily imitate Nature, but in which the hand of the craftsman is guided to work in the way that she does; till the web, the cup, or the knife, look as natural, nay as lovely, as the green field, the river-bank, or the mountain flint."

"To give people pleasure in the things they must perforce *use*, that is one great office of decoration: to give people pleasure in the things they must perforce *make*, that is the other use of it."

We have indeed only to look round us for a moment in order to verify this—to become aware that as every material substance we see has been modified in some way or other by the hand of man for his use, so there is no finding any place or object without that "touch of decoration" of which Mr. Morris speaks. Only to grow accustomed to *noticing* this decoration is, for my purpose, a step in the right direction. For instance, no door, even of the very humblest, is satisfied with being merely a means of ingress and egress; it must seek to please the

eye in some way,—the lintel, the side-posts, and the door itself, have some pretence of panelling and moulding or grooving, and it is stained, or painted, or gilded, or grained and varnished, in a more or less pretentious style —scarcely any two doors are alike—and its necessary furniture of latch and handle, and key and finger-plate, is made ornamental in some way with the intention of pleasing some one. Originally it pleased both the maker and the user; but now it is made and used as a matter of course, and, ceasing to notice it, we have lost the pleasure. The railway carriage, too, has its mouldings, and groovings, and gildings, its bits of coloured glass—the very letters of the name of the company and the number of the class are woven into ciphers and monograms, and gilded and shaded, and are the result of somebody's taste. It would be tedious to spend more time in pointing out what is so obvious to everybody if they only use their eyes. Still it adds an interest to life to notice these things, and to ascertain for ourselves by continued observation

that there is no object, for whatever use intended, but has something bestowed on it —either colour or pattern laid on, or form added, not conducing to its use in any way— that something being Decoration. I said *not conducing to its* use. I am sorry to say that in these later days of civilisation we often see ornament distinctly hindering use. See to what a pass civilisation has brought our fire-irons, things of everyday use and necessity. A century or so ago they were lightly made, of a size and shape to be held and used easily, and they did their work well; then, as luxury and ostentation increased, the poker, and the shovel, and the tongs became larger and heavier, so as to look massive and handsome, and as if a good deal of money had been spent upon them; their shape was altered to suit new and unreasonable notions of elegance—they began to be made of burnished steel and lacquer-work of a lustre easily tarnished and laboriously renewed; and finally they left off work altogether, being too fine for it, and were obliged

to be provided with a humble deputy to do it for them. Of the same kind are candlesticks that must be preserved like exotics under a glass shade, or call it extinguisher; curtain-poles so gilded that the real work must be done by iron ones hidden behind; and cushions and footstools meant for repose, and to that end studded with hard cold beads. Now such ornament as that, is clear waste and folly, and wrong from the very beginning. The instinct for ornament in earlier stages of civilisation is never found to lead to such a sacrifice. The savage does not so over-decorate his paddle, his knife, his tomahawk, as to render it useless, and a real and capable workman or workwoman has the same true instinct; and to recur to what I said just now, here should come in the practical knowledge, that I suppose we all of us possess in some direction and in some degree, and which we should be proud of possessing.

An accomplished needlewoman rejects the highly ornamented and tasselled work-

basket with its tinselled implements; a practised writer objects to a gilded and elaborate inkstand and a gimcrack penholder; and a really clever amateur cook is not over-anxious about the trimming of her apron, so that it is of stout material and the shape that will best protect her dress. To expend labour in disguising use and falsifying material, shows an utter misconception of Art and ignorance of Beauty. Ornament has come to be, in these days, a thing of itself, whereas, as such, it has no real reason for existing. I am not speaking now of anything of the nature of a picture or statue. The idea has somehow arisen that a thing, if called an ornament,—however useless, cumbrous, and troublesome,—must be prized and taken care of. Now Mr. Morris says "nothing is ornamental unless it is also really useful." This you will think at the first glance condemns all or most ornamental objects; but on examination it is not so. It condemns groups of wax flowers under glass shades; it condemns vast crochet antimacassars; it

condemns glass fuchsias at the end of curtain-poles; it condemns huge china pugs and parrots; it condemns all china and glass objects which will not hold at need flowers, or fruit, or other and more substantial things for which china and glass objects were originally intended. I do not mean that we may not use china, and glass, and metal, and wooden objects exclusively as ornaments,—as their peculiar beauty or rarity may lead us so to preserve them as merely to be looked at,—but they should have been originally capable of fulfilling perfectly some function or other, or they cannot be truly beautiful; and the aimlessness of their structure would give a feeble worthless appearance, no matter how much painting and gilding or carving they have received, or how much skill of hand had been expended on them.

In former times, or earlier stages of civilisation, that axiom "nothing is ornamental unless it is also at the same time really useful" was never lost sight of; but there was no necessity to put it into words, it was

acted upon unconsciously. Regard was had to the appropriateness of the ornament, to the use and material of the object it was intended to beautify; and the forms of nature were studied until the design was invented—found out, that is—exactly suited to the purpose. And man's eye, accustomed only to natural objects, had learned no false taste for glaring colours and exaggerated form; so his handiwork had real fitness and beauty. I believe much of the decoration so often bad and mistaken in these days, is a survival from those better times. By degrees, delight in ornament—delight once felt both by the maker and the user—ceased to be spontaneous: still people expected to have it, and to make it. So patterns, and mouldings, and carvings have been borrowed and copied and reproduced over and over again, like a tale repeated from mouth to mouth until it has lost all point and meaning. An example of this is the familiar Greek key or fret pattern—a simple combination of horizontal and perpendicular lines arranged so as to

form a continuous running pattern: we see this now used in all sorts of inappropriate ways and places—fitted into the rounded border of a plate, running up a muslin curtain, worked in shaded wools on a table-cloth, chopped into little pieces for brooches and earrings. So is the artistic sense in modern days confused and darkened in us by finding ourselves the inheritors of all the work of the past—ornament of all ages and countries—which we mix up together, and apply in all sorts of incongruous ways, not understanding the original motive, or not caring to apply it properly.

Now to inquire into the reason of all this.

We are accustomed to recognise the necessity for intelligence and knowledge in every other department of life but that which belongs to Beauty of Decoration, of form and colour; taste in these things is left to take care of itself. We all readily allow that education and study go to form the literary taste, the musical taste, and even taste in food or wine; but the artistic taste is

left to form itself. Choice in form or colour is usually quite unguided by any principle, and is by many supposed to be unworthy of serious thought. We do not ask the bookseller to guide our taste in reading, or the music-seller to form our taste in music; still less do we allow the cook and the wine-merchant the uncontrolled management of our tables. Yet the furnishing of a house in many, if not in all, important particulars is commonly left to the upholsterer, or decorator as he prefers to be called; and as he, not working with his own hands, takes no pleasure in the work, but has gain for his first object, so his only idea is to carry out what he supposes to be the prevailing style, so as to produce the most show for the money; and the result of this is likely to be a most unhappy one; still people are content with it—educated and refined people too—and they live out their lives complacently, surrounded by evidences of vulgarity and bad taste, at which they would be horrified, if they had ever learned to appreciate them.

It is instructive, in this connection, to remark the tastes of children and uneducated people. Their senses, being immature and undeveloped, require to be strongly appealed to in order to receive an impression. They like a multitude of gaudy colours, glitter of tinsel and gaslight, loud and clanging sounds; and to these the uneducated vulgar add a taste for powerful flavours, strong odours, unrestrained emotions, and circumstantial accounts of horrors.

Let me assure you that, in the region of Art, nothing is more common than to meet with, in otherwise cultivated people, tastes analogous to these. Over-trimmed and befringed and gilded furniture, intense and ill-combined colouring, violent and ungraceful form, and accumulations of useless costly trifles; all these and more are to be found in many a household, and in the shops that supply them. And until the last few years, nothing else was found—in the shops I mean, for in houses there were almost always some more graceful relics of a better time—

and now at last there has come a great change. It is now about fifteen or twenty years ago that a small circle of highly-cultured persons, of whom Mr. William Morris was one, and Mr. Burne Jones another, turned their minds to the consideration of how to improve the construction, and furnishing, and decoration, of dwelling-houses. First, they set to work with their own hands, and made drawings and plans and patterns, and learned to weave and dye stuffs for their own use; they sought out intelligent honest workmen to work under their direction, and to carry out their designs in solid material and good workmanship; and as by these means, things of new and strange beauty were produced, as well as copies and adaptations of good work of past time, they became known and sought after, first by those specially interested in and connected with Art, and afterwards by the shopkeepers and the general public, who set themselves to catch a superficial idea of the general effect of these things, and to imitate and

reproduce them in coarser and cheaper forms. Some, no doubt, being really enlightened by the new ideas, produced good work in accordance with them, and so began the present fashion of "Art-furniture," "Art-decoration," "Art-colours," and so forth ; and all those other useless terms.

But it is not the terms alone that I consider to be in fault, it is the blind adoption of mere passing fashion that I would deprecate. The clothing of walls with dull and dismal papers and hangings, the filling our rooms with black-wood furniture, and the purchase of any article merely because it happens to be called Early English or Japanese. There has been a great deal of satire lavished in *Punch* and elsewhere on a supposed group of æsthetically-minded people, who are described as living only for Art, and expressing themselves in a highly foolish, affected, and melancholy manner. Many people think that "High Art," as they call it, is inseparably associated with affectation, and melancholy, and dull colours, and gen-

eral darkness, and dirt, and discomfort; this is certainly not the sort of thing I wish to advocate: the art that those first teachers originated, is an art of simplicity, of cheerfulness and brightness, of comfort, cleanliness, and hospitality, and is a help to good and healthy living, and not a hindrance to it. What I want to show is that there is a difference between good and bad, between beauty and ugliness, in all the furniture and appliances of life, as in other things; that, while twenty years ago it was almost impossible to get a well-shaped article of furniture, or a stuff, or a wall-paper, of graceful pattern and harmonious colour; now, things are in a more hopeful condition, for the good things are to be had. What is necessary now, is to know what is good, to take the trouble to learn the difference between good workmanship and bad; delicate ornament and coarse; good colour and inharmonious and tawdry colour,—this knowledge, widely spread among the cultivated classes, would cause the decline and gradual disappearance of bad art, if for

no better reason, that it could no longer be made to pay. It is part of my undertaking to lay down a few plain principles as a guide in these things.

One word about those minor decorative arts in the practice of which we are accustomed to employ our own individual skill, taste, and patience.

I have heard in my time of such arts as Decalcomanie, Potichomanie, Vitromanie, of leather-work imitating carved oak, of wax-paper, shell-flower, making, and many other futile industries, of which I can only say that they seem to be some of the mischief specially provided for idle hands to do. These particular embodiments of bad taste are, however, somewhat out of date, yet some of the more fashionable fancy-work is not less mischievous, for some of the same reasons that make the workman's art bad. The love of novelty and of ostentation leads to a misconception of the end and aim of ornament, and hinders wholesome interest and pleasure in the work. How often do

we hear sighs of weariness and distaste from some luckless worker of a huge piece of fancy-work, whose only longing is to get it finished and done with; and the secret of this weariness and distaste is the absolute lack of good qualities, not in the worker, but in the work itself, probably both useless and expensive, and neither chosen, planned, nor prepared, by the worker. To originate and carry out an idea of one's own, were it of the very simplest, would afford more satisfaction, and be likely to lead to a far better result, than the more gorgeous and elaborate prepared work of the fancy shops.

My remarks on Dress will tend the same way. Not indeed to ignore fashion and to go about to construct strange garments of our own invention,—I am of opinion that more is lost than gained by eccentricity in these matters,—but as there is generally some reasonable idea at the foundation of the prevailing style, it seems a better choice to seek for it and carry it out, instead of exaggerating and helping to spread abroad

its worst features; at the same time avoiding a too great uniformity by cultivating individuality of style.

Now, to briefly review the part that the Fine Arts play in our lives. Music and Poetry are indeed part of our true inheritance, and I think we all know something of their just value, because some of the best of both has been produced in our time, and because the study of them, according to right principles, is indispensable—no system of education would be complete without them. Not so with the rest,—Painting, and Sculpture, and Architecture. The real study of these things is *not* considered an indispensable part of education. School routine generally includes a little drawing; but of a mechanical kind, involving no taste and but little principle. Nevertheless, every person, whether arrived at years of discretion or not, thinks himself qualified to judge of a painting or a statue. The most modest say, "I know nothing about it, but I know what I like;" and then proceed to admire all sorts of

incompatible and incongruous things. In all other human productions, an enlightened and reasonable person sees at once, that it is not enough to know what he likes, but what is *worth liking;* but respecting questions of taste in Art, he thinks himself *born* competent to judge,—no matter though he has never given an hour's patient consideration to the subject, or looked carefully at a good statue or picture, or taken a modelling-tool or a drawing-pencil into his hand so as to form an experimental notion of what it really means, to translate natural forms into pictured or sculptured ones; with all this he is quite ready to pronounce criticisms and opinions on any work of Art that comes within his reach. The only way to form a just judgment about these things is to learn, by the study of the masterpieces of Art that have come down to us from former times, what constitutes the greatest and best. How can a man who knows nothing of Shakespeare, Milton, and Dante, pretend to judge of the poets of our day? What sort of a musical

critic would he be who was unacquainted with Handel, and Bach, and Beethoven? So neither can there be real criticism and enjoyment of Painting and Sculpture, without some amount of knowledge and appreciation of the great masters in those Arts. There is, I know, a generally accepted opinion that the works of the old masters of Painting are worthy of a great but distant respect, chiefly because they cost great sums of money, and a vague credit is reflected on their possessors, whether nations or individuals; but I do not think I am wrong in saying that though the names of Raphael, Titian, and Michael Angelo are as well known as those of the poets and musicians just mentioned, yet few of those who love and study the great *poets* have cared to inform themselves of even the broadest distinctions between the great *painters*. So with Sculpture. We have often been told of, and in some sort believe in, the pre-eminence of the Greek ideal, and that in the Elgin Marbles we possess examples of the greatest Sculpture the world has ever seen; yet very

few people, even of those who live in London, ever go to see them or try to enter into their beauty,—very few, who would not think spending an hour or two at the British Museum, but a dull way of passing the time. And Architecture, which, rightly applied to the construction of public and private buildings, should be a source of healthfulness to the mind and body too, the general ignorance respecting it has led to sad results in our time, such as the defacement and so-called restoration of ancient buildings, by which so much of their beauty and historical value has been swept away; while the only thing to console us in most modern buildings is their instability and poverty of construction—which we will hope will soon lead to a substitution for them of more lasting and beautiful structures in the present revival of Taste.

The two great teachers of Art in our day, Mr. Ruskin and Mr. Morris, though they agree as to their view of the past and the present, and as to eternal principles of

right and wrong, and good and bad, in Art, differ completely in the temper with which they regard the future. The one is full of despair, the other of hope. And it seems to me that unless we cling with Mr. Morris to the hopeful side, our own private efforts to combat ugliness, and clumsiness, and pretension, will be lifeless and melancholy, we shall allow our sense of beauty to dwindle from scarcity of nourishment, and Art will decline more and more until it becomes a dead letter. But let us, with Mr. Morris, hope for better things: he says, "To what side, then, shall those turn for help who really understand the gain of a great Art in the world, and the loss of peace and good life that must follow from the lack of it? I think that they must begin by acknowledging that the ancient art, the art of *unconscious* intelligence, as one should call it, which began without a date—at least so long ago as those strange and masterly scratchings on mammoth bones[1] and the like found but the other

[1] See heading of chapter.

day in the drift—that this art of *unconscious* intelligence is all but dead; that what little of it is left lingers among half-civilised nations, and is grown coarser, feebler, less intelligent, year by year. . . . This they must recognise, and must hope to see in time its place filled by a new art of *conscious* intelligence—the birth of wiser, simpler, freer ways of life than the world leads now, than the world has ever led."

We have been so long accustomed to the sight of ugliness, and exaggeration, and deformity, in the common appliances of life, that it is a hard task, and one requiring a good deal of thought and study, to reconstruct our notions. The first step is to give up old prejudices, and to substitute for them, principles. Unless we are content to let the good things of Art remain a sealed book to us, we must take some pains about them. Man has long passed the early, intuitive stage of good taste—"the Art of unconscious intelligence," as Mr. Morris calls it—and it is now only by pains and study, that we can

arrive at the cultured, conscious, possession of taste, that, according to fixed principles and for just reasons, accepts and chooses the good and beautiful, and rejects the bad and unworthy. "Happy is he," says Goethe, "who, at an early age, knows what Art is;" but it is never too late to learn. And when a start is once made on the right road, every new experience is a lesson, a confirmation.

It may be thought that I am in danger of taking all this too seriously, and making my subject of too great importance, seeing that, as I have acknowledged, Art can after all be but a source of pleasure,—an educated and refined pleasure it is true, but of no practical use. I can only say that the love of Art is, to those who understand it, closely connected in the world's history with all that is noble, and sincere, and temperate, and great; and it has been said very truly that if one *learns* nothing from Art, one *becomes* something by studying it.

Then, as I have tried to show you, our

lives in every direction, every occupation, are filled with the presence and influence of Art; and as, every day of our lives, we are called upon to exercise a choice, or to express an opinion bearing on the subject, does it not become a sort of moral obligation to exercise a *wise* choice, to express a *just* opinion? and, since there *is* a good and bad, a true and false in Art, to learn to distinguish between them? as, in the moral world, the power of choice brings with it the obligation to choose well!

And now to gather together the scattered meaning of all I have been saying.

I began by pointing out that from the Arts of pure use and necessity arose the Arts of ornament and decoration—not to hinder or take away from them, but to add Beauty without destroying Use. And that above and beyond these rise the Fine Arts, existing for Beauty only—Sculpture, Painting, Architecture.

Then let me remind you of a few points of general application.

1. That the general aim of Art is Beauty, and the appreciation of that Beauty and the true enjoyment of it is Taste.

2. That there are certain principles by which Taste may be formed and guided.

3. That these principles are worthy to be studied, since we cannot escape from the necessity of exercising a choice.

This will form the ground-work of all I have to say on future occasions, and I will beg my audience to help me in the clear expression of my meaning by taking note of anything I may seem to leave obscure or otherwise unsatisfactory; and I hope very much to have some questions, if not objections, to answer, as by that means I may amend the shortcomings to which I must needs be liable in dealing with so large and difficult a subject.

Goethe says somewhere that one should contrive every day to hear some good music, to look at a beautiful picture, and, if possible, to speak a few sensible words. The first two should be easy enough here, and in the

world of to-day; and I, for one, should like to be allowed to think I had fulfilled the last requirement also. At all events, I beg you to believe that any deficiencies in sense and reason are not due to the ideas and principles belonging to my subject, but rather to my imperfect expression of them.

II.—DECORATIVE ART—FORM.

In the last Lecture I attempted to describe to you the origin and nature of the Useful Arts,—"operations of the hand and the intelligence of man together," the intention of which is to supply his wants and necessities; and I showed you that in almost every object produced by these Arts there is something added over and above its Use; that something being Ornament—Man's expression of pleasure in Beauty; and in this way have the Decorative Arts arisen.

I propose to consider to-day the various forms in which we are chiefly familiar with

these Arts, how they are rightly applied, to what extent they are rightly carried, and what kind and degree of satisfaction and of pleasure we are to expect from each of them.

I am going to speak of the various objects of everyday use by which we are surrounded —productions of the Arts of pottery, glass-making, metal, stone, and wood work, and others. These Arts, as I have said, began to exist ages before the beginnings of History, and in those earlier times the word and thing Manufacture in the modern sense had no existence; every article of use, as well as the ornament belonging to it, proceeded directly from the hand of man; but he has since invented thousands of mechanical means of saving the work of his hand by pressing the other forces of nature into his service: he has not shortened the hours of his labour, but increased the amount of work done in them; and continual new inventions promise to increase it still further; but yet, in spite of wonder-working machines, the human hand remains "the most perfect agent of

material power existing in the universe," and the more delicate and yielding the substance it works on, the higher the execution. "All Art," says Mr. Ruskin, "worthy the name, is the energy, neither of the human body alone, nor of the human soul alone, but of both united, one guiding the other: good craftsmanship and work of the fingers, joined with good emotion and work of the heart."

So that this lies at the root of all good decorative work, that it must not be a so-called manufacture merely, it must be a direct product of the human hand; and of course that was the original meaning of the word manufacture. We all recognise—the very shopkeepers recognise—the superiority of hand-work to machine-work in all kinds of things. If a garment made by the hand is better and more valuable than one made by the sewing-machine—and in the matter of lace, we carry this feeling so far as to call the hand-made lace real, and the machine-made lace sham—should we not all the more be able to appreciate the superiority of

hand-carving over machine-carving, of hand-painting over machine colour-printing? And yet not everybody has learned to know the difference. You will think, perhaps, that I want to bring back the days of black-letter manuscripts and hand-loom weaving; and though I do certainly think these are more interesting now, and were more thought of in their own day than the power-loom weaving and cheaply-printed books of this, yet I know that the world cannot stand still, and that there is much advantage in the cheapness and rapid production of these things; and that, as far as the preparation for use of the raw material is concerned, manufacture must needs have it all her own way, and also as concerns decoration, in so far as when a design for dress or furniture stuffs, carpets, and wall-papers has been made, it must be reproduced and repeated by machinery to make it available: these things are very properly woven or printed, and then sold by the yard, because they have to be used in quantities and masses. Not so with things

of which quantity is not required: wood-carving for instance,—which is not a necessity in the same sense that those others are—which loses all beauty, and with it all reason for existing, when it is turned out by the machine at so much a yard. So with machine-painted pottery and china, machine-woven crewel-work, chromolithographs, cast, instead of wrought metal-work, and machine-made jewellery. These things are to real decoration what a barrel-organ is to music. Let machines be used for hard drudgery and necessary toil, but let us at least have our ornament done by hand.

One difficulty about hand-work is its high price, and of course machine-work has the corresponding advantage of cheapness; but I have to say once for all that you cannot get good Art cheap. Mr. Ruskin says, "Of one thing you may be sure; that Art which is produced hastily will also perish hastily, and that what is cheapest to you now is likely to be dearest in the end. . . [As to the cheap work of the day] We don't like and

can't like *that* long; but when we are tired of one bad cheap thing, we throw it aside, and buy another bad cheap thing, and so keep looking at bad things all our lives. Now the very men who do that quick, bad work for us are capable of doing perfect work. Only, perfect work can't be hurried, and therefore it can't be cheap, beyond a certain point."

If we ourselves, any of us, possess natural capabilities for the Arts, and know something of the delicacy of hand, the accuracy of eye, the trained understanding and insight, that go to invent, arrange, and carry out satisfactorily the smallest piece of original work (I am not speaking of a copy or an imitation), whether it be carving, or china-painting, or embroidery, we should not grudge to pay a fair price for these things, when we have occasion to buy them ; and we should consent not to have them at all, rather than take imitations in machine-work—just as, rather than wear sham jewellery, we would go without it altogether. I do not mean to say that

all hand-work in decoration is necessarily *good*, but that all good work is hand-work.

One defect in mechanical work is its over-finish. The gloss on cloth, which is a beauty to the eye of the draper, is an abomination to the eye of the artist. Marble will take a high polish, but the sculptor leaves this quality to the mantelpiece manufacturer. Lines may be too sharp and forms too distinct. This over-finish is mainly due to division of labour. Division of labour is good for pins, but bad for works of art. "The ornament" (I quote from a long-since printed magazine article) "which begins with the mere draughtsman and ends with the mere salesman, deteriorates at every stage, in its change of hands from the original design." According to the ordinary system of producing jewellery, the design has been made by one man, the dies sunk by another, the striking up by a third, some foliage and filigree work added by a fourth, and some shallow, scratchy engraving to complete the pattern by a fifth, and it becomes what the

accomplished shopman who sells it calls "a truly sweet thing in bracelets of the newest and most original design." In days when goldsmithery was an art, the artist sat in his stall and took his orders himself. And in these days if those who *use* would take the trouble to find out those who *make*, and deal at first hand with them, not only would they get much better and cheaper articles than through the medium of the shopman, but they would get much more pleasure out of the things they buy, as the workman would get more pleasure out of the things he makes. It is often possible to deal directly with the workman, particularly about country neighbourhoods, in such things as carpenter's work, for instance. In London, indeed, it is hardly ever possible to get at the working carpenter, the working jeweller, the working dressmaker; there is always some very smiling and obliging shopman or woman between us and the worker, the person whom I, for one, the most want to see. It is a great pity that those who *can* give intelligible instructions and

designs should not insist on seeing in the flesh the very person who is to carry them out.

Since the importation of so much Japanese Art into England we have had many opportunities of admiring the delicacy, the grace, of the construction of all sorts of objects, of bamboo, of wood, of china. Setting aside for the present all mention of the Japanese sense of colour (so exquisite before they set themselves to please the European taste), the form of all things of their manufacture is so varied, so light, and still each so fully answering its different use, that it puts to shame our heavy and solid, often less serviceable, constructions. Sir Edward Reed, in his book on Japan, puts his finger on the inner cause of this excellence: he says, "I have watched the poor artisan labouring at his work with an earnestness and love such as I never beheld out of Japan, and the very features of the workmen testify to their happiness, and to the love with which they perform their painstaking labour. No thought of

gain appears to enter their minds, and no touch is spared which will make the work more lovely." And this is the great secret of excellence in decoration, in everything that pertains to Art, that the artist workman should take delight in his work. About how many of the common decorations of a room can this be said?

When I observe the thousands of nameless trifles that crowd the shops where they sell "fancy articles," especially about Christmas-time—the useless tawdry bits of glass, china, and metal-work, vases that will hold nothing, candlesticks that won't carry candles, lamps that won't burn, pen-wipers that refuse to wipe your pen, baskets that will hold nothing, besides numbers of articles that do not even pretend to have a use—I cannot help thinking of the misery and grinding poverty that alone could drive intelligent human creatures to get their living by making them—anything worth calling a living they cannot possibly get. The things grow cheaper year by year, and that can be

the only reason why people buy them; else if they thought about the matter, or even cared for the things themselves, how could they bear, as Mr. Morris says, "to pay a price for a piece of goods that will help to trouble one man, to ruin another, and to starve a third?" In always wanting novelty in these things we do indeed obey some better instinct. It is because the thing is bad that it is so soon got rid of—we must have a change from bad, even if it be only to newer bad.

Some details of the manufacture of a fancy article came under my knowledge lately in London: the evening occupation of some educated girls, to whom it was a necessity to earn money, was to paint on pieces of looking-glass, cut ready and sent them by the manufacturer, little groups of figures or flowers in oil-colour; they received for each group fourpence each, and would do two or three in an evening. These were returned to the manufacturer, who surrounded them with a gilt or lacquered frame, and they were

sold to the public as decorative objects to hang against a wall. Being on looking-glass, of course if you tried to look at your own reflection it was obscured by the painting, and if you looked at the painting, it was confused by the reflection ; and so, from any point of view, entirely worthless.

"For," says Mr. Morris, "whereas all works of craftsmanship were once beautiful, unwittingly or not, they are now divided into two kinds—works of art, and non-works of art. Now nothing made by man's hand can be indifferent ; it must be either beautiful and elevating, or ugly and degrading." Can we not carry about us in the world ; can we not be guided in our purchases by some such thoughts as these ? and take care never to buy a cheap, ill-made, useless article, merely because it catches our fancy. Let us consider if there is good work in it,—honest material, actual use,—and if so, let us pay for it a fair price, and we shall be doing what we can to help on the good cause of promoting happy toil and successful labour; in short, of making

Decorative Art to be again what it once was, " An Art made by the people and for the people, a joy to the maker and user."

In Mr. Ruskin's "Two Paths" I find a principle laid down that I am convinced is perfectly sound, and easy of application in these matters.

" The true forms of conventional ornament consist in the bestowal of as much beauty on the object as shall be consistent with its Material, its Place, and its Office."

Every object, then, that we admit into our houses should be able to sustain with credit the following inquiries:

Does it appear to be made of the Material of which it really is, or ought to be made?

Is it appropriate to the Place for which it is intended?

Does it declare its Use or Office, and seem fit for it?

Let us examine a little into the application of each separate requirement. The first, you see, condemns all imitations of a substance, especially when the object is not

likely to have been made of that substance. Such are doors painted in bronze, sham jewellery, paper flowers, glass coloured to look like china, plaster to look like iron and bronze, and many more. It seems a very strange thing, when one reflects, that it should be supposed that we all take pleasure in a thing that pretends to be something else than it appears, and that the deception should be pointed out to us as a recommendation. The advertisement that assures us that Paris diamonds and Abyssinian jewellery cannot be distinguished from the real thing, the shopkeeper who tells us that some stuff of mixed material has quite the appearance of silk, and that a silk-finished velveteen could easily be mistaken for velvet; all this is intended to appeal, and really does appeal, to the tastes and wants of a large class. But how much better and more honest is it to know what the especial article we want *ought* to be made of, and to see that we get it—silk honestly silk, and woollen honestly woollen, and cotton honestly cotton, and linen

really and truly linen ; and when the manufacturers find what is expected of them they will supply it accordingly. It must have been inappropriate and perishable material that first put it into the careful housewife's mind to provide an extra case or cover for various household objects—oil-cloth or drugget to cover the stair-carpeting, holland covers for the furniture, and antimacassars over them again, oil-cloth to cover tables, and table-covers to cover the oil-cloth, and mats to save the table-cloth, and much more of the same kind. In the first place, the materials used should be appropriate and serviceable, and in the second, people should not be ashamed of the signs of honest wear in them. Still, for my part, if I must cover things up at all, I would cover them when they were really shabby than while they were fresh. And when this system of covers extends itself to paper-covers for flower-pots, china-cases and covers for sardine-boxes, silvered perforated cardboard cases for match-boxes, and such like, it seems to express a

dislike to the honest plainness and simplicity, really right and appropriate, of the things themselves, and a false refinement and love of disguise. It is the same feeling that leads people to call shops repositories and emporiums, and florists to call themselves "horticultural furnishers." Simplicity and plain dealing in the material of household goods and appliances will lead us a long way in the direction of taste. And we have high authority for feeling the dignity and admirableness of even a very humble function well performed. Does not George Herbert say:

> "Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws
> Makes that and the action fine."

Now as to the second requirement. The various rooms in our houses are intended for various uses and occasions, and natural instinct for convenience leads us to furnish them in accordance with these uses and occasions—the dining-room solid and severe, with large and steady furniture adapted to serious needs; the kitchen, full of useful

homely appliances, kept bright and clean; and the drawing-room, with its books and pictures and elegancies, suited for leisure and social purposes, and therefore rightly the most decorated room in the house. So bearing the different functions of each room in mind, and furnishing them in accordance with each, we get a general sense of order and appropriateness. All this is obvious enough, and is generally sufficiently well carried out. Only very often in minor appliances, the want of the feeling for appropriateness makes itself felt. A coal-scuttle is an excellent and useful thing in its way, and in its appropriate place; but why have it in miniature on our tables, and scoop salt or sugar out of it? Wheel-barrows and buckets, rink-skates and perambulators, used for similar purposes are really less convenient than a small dish or bowl really designed for use, without any ulterior notion of ingenuity or conceit. A tea-kettle in the form of a drum, with the sticks for handles; a toast-rack formed of wreaths of ivy

(what has ivy to do with toast?), or rifles piled in a very unmilitary manner; a biscuit-box in the shape of a coal-box; gilt chain cables for holding back curtains; are examples of the same thing that occur to me, but a large and very astonishing list could very soon be collected. It is true, as Mr. Morris says, that the best designed and constructed things in a house are generally found in the kitchen; but that is because they fulfil their use, and are appropriate to their place, both of which qualities they lose when transported to the drawing-room.

Now, as to the third requirement, which in its application is closely connected with the second. All things of common use have their appropriate form, which, when once discovered, should be used and repeated without disguise. Thus a salt-cellar is most really convenient when made of glass, of a simple oblong shape, so as not to be easily upset, that the spoon may comfortably rest in it, and the salt be easily renewed; and there are many modifications of form,

and even colour, that might be introduced without hindering use in any way, or making the thing seem other than it is; and so may this principle be carried out indefinitely; and I cannot see, except for the love of novelty and pretentious conceit, why anything more should be wanted. It cannot be a very lasting pleasure to shake pepper out of an owl's head, or help yourself to butter out of a beehive; but it is a lasting pleasure to have a thoroughly useful and soundly-constructed thing made out of a right and good material, appearing in its appropriate place, and declaring and fulfilling its proper use and office. Without directly referring to these three conditions at every moment, I would be understood as keeping them in mind as I go on.

The chief materials of which our household goods are made—wood, stone, metals, glass, china—differ widely in qualities, of texture, and substance; each requiring a different process of manufacture, different handling, different tools; so the kind and

degree of ornament, as well as of use, must be different in each—differently conceived of, differently applied, and with largely different results; and we are not to expect from paper the qualities and appearance of leather, nor from leather those of wood, nor from wood those of stone; each, having its separate and appropriate *use* and *place*, is capable of receiving a separate and appropriate *beauty*. Just a few words on each in its turn.

The principal articles of furniture in our rooms—tables, sideboards, pianos, wardrobes, etc.,—are usually made of some wood, though solid and durable enough for the purpose, yet considered to be in itself of insufficient beauty; so it is overlaid with thin slices of a more valuable and beautiful wood, so that every part of the surface that is visible is covered with it, and it looks as if it were made throughout of rosewood, walnut, or mahogany, as the case may be. I think this process of veneering must be allowed as an exception to our first requirement—that

a thing should seem to be made of that material of which it really is made. The wood is laid on by a recognised process which deceives nobody, it economises valuable material, and the result is agreeable to the eye. The thick coat of French polish, however, which is finally laid on it, is to be condemned; its unnatural lustre interferes with the colour and real beauty of the wood, which, though it should be smooth and finished, need not be so to such an extent as to resemble a looking-glass. Gilding, again, as applied to the frames of pictures and mirrors, is a method of decorating wood surfaces that may be allowed; its value in decorative effect is good, if not too lavishly used, and it must form another exception to the rule, as no one is expected to be deceived into thinking that all that is gilded must be gold. But with wooden chimney-pieces, pillars, slabs, painted to imitate marble, the case is very different; the better the imitation, the greater waste of the painter's time and powers; the appearance is intended to deceive, but

a touch destroys the illusion; one sense is contradicted by another, and some other mode of painting — not imitative — would have a really better effect if the object were of good design and delicate workmanship, and of this last, wood is especially capable. Delicate panelling and wainscoting, turning and carving, used to be much more common than they are now, and, in houses of a hundred years ago, there was much to interest, where now all is dull enough — what panelling there is being most commonly cut into lengths, and fastened on afterwards. The same with the decorative carving of furniture, which, instead of being part of the construction, is made separately, chopped into portions and glued on; no wonder that it is so often clumsy and protuberant and excessive. So many heavy and clumsy things are made of wood, that we are in danger of forgetting of what light and delicate work it is capable; handles are made many times larger than is necessary; legs of tables and pianos more thick and bulging; and curtain-

poles, when they are meant to be visible, too large and ponderous; from a liking, I suppose, for an appearance of strength and massiveness often greatly belied by the actual fact.

The graining of wood to imitate another different kind of wood has something to be said for it, especially when the graining imitates some kind of wood likely to have been used, as it wears well and looks clean a long time; still the plain deal, or whatever it may be, had much better be stained a useful tint, and polished but not too highly. I have seen front doors painted to look like bronze—not a likely material for a front door; this, too, seems a great waste of human time and ingenuity, without a proportionate amount of satisfaction. Ebonized wood, as it is called, has been very fashionable lately; but, as we usually see it, not often good—the polish being too high, and the incised gilded lines on it being so soon dimmed and filled with dust. Wood, stained black, is appropriate for the framework of chairs with slender

rails and legs, or with thicker ones turned; but it is dull and blank in a large surface. I can only thus hint at some of the uses to which wood is applied in our houses, and how it is fashioned and treated; but in all cases it is good to remember that unnecessarily large and heavy construction, high polish, coarse carving, imitative painting, should be avoided; so will use and convenience be furthered rather than hindered, and grace and beauty be helped and promoted as well.

The one indispensable stone in every room of the house—the hearthstone—is, in most old-fashioned houses, of marble, easily kept clean by washing; when it came to be made of inferior stone, whitening was used at the edge, and black-lead under and about the grate. In fireplaces of this kind, instead of these, I would recommend reddening, which has an excellent effect with brass fender and fire-irons, and the red ochre for the purpose can be got everywhere and applied just as easily as whitening or black lead. As all the interest and home feelings of a house

collect about the fireside, in our climate, in which winter holds us half the year,—a fire being, as Dr. Johnson said, "a living thing in a dead room,"—it will be worth while to consider it in other respects carefully. The earlier household fires were made on an open hearth of logs of wood piled on iron supports called dogs, which, at their ends fronting the room, were ornamented with figures and devices of wrought metal. As coal became more commonly used,—being found capable of containing greater heat in a smaller compass,—a sort of basket grate was made to contain it, of slender upright bars crossed by horizontal ones. By degrees the thing was made thicker and more clumsy, and being found incapable of easy removal, was firmly fixed in its place; the upright bars were discontinued, but the knobs finishing them at the top remained, and still remain, having grown bigger and bigger, absorbing heat, interfering with the arrangement of the fire,—a perfect monument of stupidity and superfluousness.

In most cases the open fireplace is a great black hole in our rooms, only tolerable when there is a fire burning in it, and anything we can do to moderate the blackness is a benefit, such as to redden the hearth in the way I have mentioned, or, still better, to pave the hearth with red tiles—not tiles with patterns on them, as the ashes obscure and spoil the effect of the design. In summer, great and wonderful efforts are in these days made to do away with that blackness. I cannot think painted and gilded paper, or lace bibs and aprons, or a heap of shavings garlanded with artificial flowers, or even curtains or a Japanese umbrella, really comfortable and appropriate. The fireplace itself is the root of the difficulty, which will last until there is a general reform. A wide fireplace lined with patterned and coloured tiles,—the hearth of plain ones, red or brown or green,—and the grate itself a separate and detached object, capable of being removed, and its place in the summer filled with plants; like the hearth in *The Deserted Village*,

"With aspen boughs, and flowers, and fennel, gay."

This would be a great improvement. I have before touched upon the uselessness, in every way, of the long-admired bright steel fire-irons; but now it is common to find these things made of more satisfactory material and shape, and I think there is little doubt that brass is the most beautiful and convenient metal for them, and for the fender and the coal-box as well; it is easily kept bright, and has a cheerful effect, always supposing these things to be not too large and heavy, and to have as much elegant shape and delicate detail as are consistent with their use and material.

And so we come to a short consideration of metals. Brass candlesticks, inkstands, chandeliers, and sconces are now to be had of simple and elegant shapes, many being reproductions of some of the old good work; and if, in the same room with these, the door-plates, and handles, and bell-pulls, are of wrought brass-work too, the general effect is so much the better, as the eye is

· A FIREPLACE · IN SUMMER ·

To face page 76.

pleased with the repetition of the brightness in various forms.

There has been lately a taste for old-fashioned plate, so that the specimens of it we still possess have now a chance of being taken care of, instead, as I can remember, of being sold merely for their value in weight, or exchanged for modern and worse, only to be melted down and re-made into new and hideous shapes. The beauty of antique household plate consisted in no undue massiveness of appearance and highly polished and chased surfaces, frosted and encrusted with ornament, only betokening a restless desire of the silversmith to show off his dexterity, and extort admiration and surprise at any cost. In the sixteenth century,—the time of Benvenuto Cellini,—the worker in silver and gold was an artist, goldsmith's work was on a level with statuary, and as such is now a lost art.

Within the present century the ordinary silver table utensils were of more slender and elegant make than now, and more delicately

and appropriately chased,—the spoons, the salt-cellars, the rosewater dishes, of thin *repoussé* work, were of varied and elegant shapes,—so that once to have seen and admired these things, gives a distaste for the heavy spoons and forks loaded with the meaningless bulgings of the Queen's pattern, the tea-pots with coarse chasing, the candelabra and epergnes, all ferns and palm-trees, and camels, and figures in the style of advertisements of the insurance offices. Metal-work is indeed a study and an interest in itself alone. There must be a right form and a right ornament for every piece of railing, every door-knocker, every fire-grate, every piece of table-service and jewellery—of right form when it fulfils and suggests use, right ornament when the pleasure there has been in making it is communicated to the user and purchaser.

As the beauty of glass consists in its transparency and lightness, and its capability of being twisted, or blown, or moulded into a multitude of delicate forms, it early occurred to the manufacturing mind that, if

made thick and solid and cut into facets, it would resemble crystal; and thus it has come to be a fixed idea that hard glitter is its most valuable quality, and so it is made inches thick, and pounds heavy, to enhance its brilliancy; and, being one of the most fragile of substances, it must be engraved with people's crests and monograms, as if it were intended to carry down the name of the family for generations to come! Being of its nature transparent, it must be rendered opaque of set intention by colouring matter, and then painted and gilded! Since, at its strongest, glass can never be anything but fragile, at least let it keep the beauty belonging to fragility; since it is naturally transparent, let the light be seen streaming through it, sometimes delicately tinted, sometimes iridescent; and, instead of being cut, let it be blown and twisted into the thousand delicate shapes to which it easily lends itself, and of which, in the Venetian glass of a bygone day, and in its present revival, there are such delightful examples.

In the word pottery is included every species of earthenware, from the rudest unglazed cup of burnt or baked clay, such as was made a thousand years before the Christian era, to the finest Oriental and Sèvres of to-day.

The first thing to be desired in pottery is beauty of form, combined with a perfect adaptation to use. Then, whatever adornment of pattern and colour be added, it must in no way interfere with the effect of that form, or divert the attention from it. The decoration, the pattern upon it, should be *flat;* any appearance of projection, where none exists in reality, is wrong. Landscapes and groups of flowers in shading and perspective are entirely out of place in pottery, however well the painting may be executed. For household use, pottery must generally be glazed ; it may be coloured in one agreeable tint, throughout, and if painted, the pattern should be laid on it flatly and symmetrically, and without shadow. The search for novelty has produced in our day many

strange things in the potter's art. It is not uncommon to see toilet ware fashioned and coloured to imitate rustic woodwork; flower-vases in the shape of a hand coming apparently straight up out of the table, and holding a cup; shapes of boats, pails, baskets, and hosts of other incongruities, in which the form is generally fatal to the comfort of the flowers in some way. I found the other day a striking instance of incongruity of idea, and the struggle to produce a novelty, quite regardless of any sort of appropriateness or fitness, in the description in an American magazine of a toilet water-jug. I will read the extract. "More original, and decidedly American in suggestion and design, is a toilet called the 'Bullion' in a fine satiny-glazed semi-china; the wide-mouthed ewer, with neck and handle powdered in gold, seems to issue from a bag, shirred and tied up with a carelessly knotted string; the leather-colour of the bag and the scattered gold favour the conceit (!) of the pitcher issuing from a bag

of the precious metal." I am glad to be assured that this is decidedly American—and really, bad as English ideas sometimes are, I think this is a length to which we could scarcely go.

The taste for blue-and-white china, so great a feature in modern decoration, has much to excuse it within due limits. I have never been able to see the fitness of hanging detached plates—however unique and valuable—on walls, as if they were pictures; but on a shelf or ledge where plates can be arranged in a row, the cool clean colour of the older Oriental, or even Delf, is very refreshing and pleasant to the eye. Without pretending to connoisseurship in marks, and periods, and processes, we may easily learn to distinguish between poor imitations, and original and good objects in pottery—between Chinese and Japanese, between early and late work in both, and among the most marked English kinds, Wedgewood, Worcester, Chelsea, Derby, and so on, so as to choose the most decorative. As to the shapes of

the various manufactures, if they are good, they will certainly tell you at a glance for what purpose they were originally intended, —and they may still fulfil that purpose; but if we prefer not to run the risk of losing them by breakage, and to keep them within sight, using them merely for the pleasure of the eye, it is perfectly reasonable to range them on shelves or in open cupboards in our own sitting-rooms. I saw a house lately where the dining-room was lined with dressers, on which all the china and glass of the household was arranged—this was, I suppose, by way of returning to the simplicity of earlier times; but it seemed rather far-fetched and inconvenient. One would choose only the rarest, and least used, and most beautiful of the family possessions of this kind for constant exhibition in the dining-room, unless we introduce also the pots and pans, and kitchen ware generally, because of our inability to make better things.

Often, in the present enthusiasm for the things and manners of old times, people are

apt to be carried away, and, out of disgust at the falseness and artificiality of later civilisation, forget the good things it has brought as well. At any rate, we cannot return in any genuine sense to primitive ways, nor should we try to do so; only, by discovering the mistakes over-sophistication and refinement have led us into by comparison with the simpler old fashion, we may correct them,—not losing what we have gained, but merely putting it to a better use. All manufactures and processes have reached in these days a mechanical perfection hitherto undreamed of; and, in our pride in this perfection, qualities of appropriateness, delicacy, beauty, are often lost sight of.

The texture of a carpet is often exquisite in softness, thickness, evenness, while the pattern on it is detestable in its gaudiness and ugliness; a piece of metal-work is often faultless in finish and polish, but wrong as to every consideration of taste and of use. I need not multiply instances; but it seems as if this modern characteristic

of pride in mechanical perfection, overcoming original pleasure in beauty, is to be found in almost everything; so that, even in music, a singer's power of faultlessly executing bravura passages and shakes, of dwelling on a note for an unprecedented and intolerable length of time, and, in the player of any instrument, the power of executing the sort of effect least properly belonging to that instrument, and the most impossible; these things are more admired than the uttering, with sympathetic expression, of a simple melody, only intended to reach the heart, and not to excite surprise and astonishment at all.

One day, after I had been making some such remarks as these, an old lady said to me—"I have been furnishing my house for the last thirty years; you do not expect me to begin all over again." I assured her indeed that I did not. I think the fact of her having kept alive her interest in it for so long, proved that there must have been a great deal in it both beautiful and useful. I

find it is generally thought that such ideas as these of mine are meant to bring about wholesale destruction of household goods, and immediate purchase of new ones of a different kind. Nothing would be further from my wishes. The greatest sacrifice I would desire is the carrying out of the axiom, "Keep nothing in your house but what you know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful." This done, and then in every future purchase the principles exercised that I have suggested, I should feel that much will have been gained—much simplicity, much comfort, much beauty. And there is a way of arranging a house and its furniture, with regard to natural function and habit and convenience, so that it produces a certain charm and harmony of effect, and the comfort and hospitality of a home. Houses have their character, their physiognomy, as well as people; it is by studying their peculiarities, suppressing this or that defect, and bringing out this or that good quality, that we can inhabit and enjoy them to the best advan-

tage. In this way can they be brought into harmony with the divine order of nature, instead of being, as they often are, discordant with her simplicity and economy.

To any one who has begun to feel the wish, nay, the necessity for some change, some relief from the dead level of household ugliness that has prevailed for so long, the first discouragement, the first difficulty to be encountered lies in the house itself. It is given to comparatively few to have the advantage of living either in beautiful old houses, or in new ones planned and built after the intelligent thoughtful designs of good modern architects. The house we most of us have to inhabit, is a more or less ill or well constructed specimen of the ordinary builder's house, intended to provide its in-dwellers with a certain amount of shelter, comfort, convenience, as little of these as is decently necessary, and as much of pretension, ostentation, insecure workmanship, and inadequate material, as can be got into the contract. So our efforts to make these

houses more beautiful and inhabitable are hindered at every turn by some radical defect, and our utmost success results from a constant struggle merely to make the best of it. We begin to want to make our floors more comely, clean, and convenient; but the planks are so uneven, so badly joined, that they do not admit of the staining and polishing we would desire, and the only means of dealing with them is to cover them up to the walls with matting or carpet, collecting daily accumulations of dust, and leading to the ceaseless labour of the housemaid; then the walls are only too likely to be dreary wastes of height and breadth, ill proportioned and difficult to deal with; the windows too large, too low, and ill-placed, so that they look, from both inside and outside, like large holes made only to be filled up again in some way, veiled in large muslin curtains, and within these again larger and heavier ones, wire or wicker blinds also perhaps, and linen or else Venetian ones as well, and tables with plants. By all these things we express

our need of mitigating the glare of light which would, without them, seem to make the rooms uninhabitable.

Then there are the ugly and meaningless cornices and centre-pieces of the ceiling, looking like the ornaments off a wedding-cake, the clumsily-formed and obtrusive marble mantelpieces, lending a gloom as of tombstones to the room, and the ill-contrived and extravagant fire-grate. All this is very discouraging, and is apt to lead to improvements that are after all merely make-shifts. Still, this is very often all we can do—people with moderate means in these days. There is a Lecture by Mr. William Morris, called "Making the Best of it," which should afford much instruction, much help, and some encouragement, to those of us who have the matter really at heart; but I fear we are still so much in the minority that the time for a general reform is still far off; and it is difficult to feel very sanguine about it.

It has often been said that one reason of the neglect of the principles of Art in modern

days is the general admiration and devotion to science. "Men run to and fro, and knowledge is increased." I know that we owe a great debt to science; but there is one good office we have a right to expect from her, and to which she has only latterly apparently turned her attention, and that office is the teaching us how to get rid of our smoke. Smoke is bad enough in towns where the chimneys of houses used for living only give forth their store of blacks; but in manufacturing towns, and especially, as it seems to me, those of the north, the plague is intolerable, if one comes to think of it. These towns are mostly built in beautiful situations in the midst of fine natural features; but the face of the country is blackened as by some great conflagration. The smoke, and gases, and noisome vapours, destroy every green thing, like the locusts in King Pharaoh's time, and no one seems to care. I see fine houses filled with costly and delicate hangings and fittings, and of course they must suffer. But the great thing of all to point out is, that

there can be no real care for Nature or love of Art where this plague of smoke prevails. I am told that the Smoke Act is in many places a dead letter; so it is impossible not to ask how the rich men of these places can really care for beautiful pictures while they allow their chimneys to blot out and spoil the natural beauty of the hills, and vales, and gardens around them. No doubt there *are* other and perhaps more important things to attend to; but it is impossible not to feel that, as regards the general love of beauty and care for Art, the abolition of smoke is to be earnestly desired and promoted, as far as the influence of each one of us extends.

These remarks of mine on the subject of house-decoration would be incomplete at the present moment were I to say nothing about the phase of taste, mockingly called Æsthetic, through which we are passing, not the least curious of the features belonging to it being that the satirical comments it has called forth, and the numerous travesties that have been founded on it, have acquired far larger

proportions and obtained much more notoriety than the reality they profess to ridicule. It is certain, however, that those in whom the love and pursuit of Art is enlightened and genuine, have nothing to fear from this ridicule. All that is unreal, affected, morbid, professedly eccentric and discordant with nature, in the present revival of taste is sure to disappear in time, and no harm if it be driven away by satire and derision; but the sounder part that is founded on true principles and just reasons will certainly last and serve as a good foundation for a wider and better diffused knowledge of Art than has yet been seen in our day. Those of us who have learned in house-decoration and dress to find how much more becoming and agreeable, delicate and soft colouring is than glaring metallic dyes; how much more delightful and serviceable are softly-falling and clinging silks and stuffs, than stiff and rustling ones; and how much better and more elegant are simplicity and delicacy in form than massiveness and cumbrousness; those, I

say, who have learned all this are never likely to return to mauve and magenta, to crinolines, to yards of gilt cornices and acres of costly looking-glass.

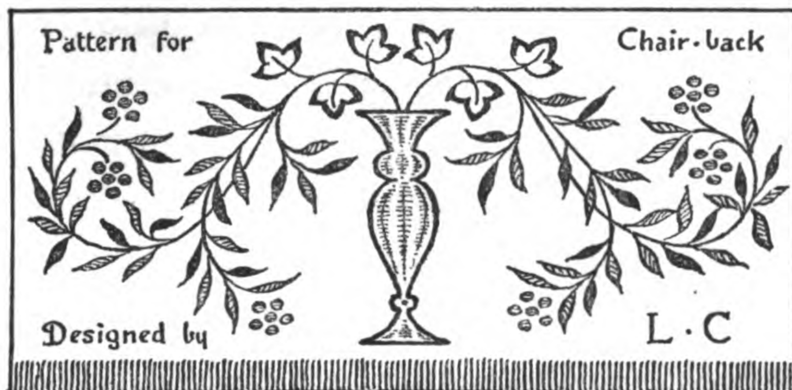
Many people in these days, having their natural sense of beauty revived by the sight and the possession of the good things that are now as easily to be had as ugly things, buy them at first because they are the fashion, and then dimly begin to be aware that some principles, some reasons, must exist by which the beauty of some things and the ugliness of others can be proved, demonstrated, accounted for—and in some measure to do this has been my aim. In spite of all that is written and spoken in these days about Taste and Art, there is very little authoritative teaching on the subject, and this must be my apology for so constantly quoting from Mr. Morris and Mr. Ruskin. We indeed owe everything we learn and know about Art to them—the one being by original genius and long practical experience, the other by splendid gifts of imagination and expression,

joined to a life-long study, qualified to tell us what the Arts really are, and how we ought to think and feel about them. The opinions and views of each on the points we have been considering are, however, not very accessible. Until the other day, of Mr. Morris's few lectures only one has been printed under his superintendence (though a book of them is shortly to be published), and Mr. Ruskin's writings can never appeal to the world at large, their real worth and excellence being, at least for the majority of readers, obscured by much that is visionary and unpractical. In the works of both, many ideas and principles are dwelt upon and enforced that I can only hint at now; but, in thus making quotations from the writings of these teachers, I seem to be helping to clear up their meaning, and at the same time to enforce my own.

For details, the little books of the "Art at Home" series,—and especially one by Mrs. Orrinsmith, "The Drawing-room,"—have been found really suggestive and useful;

especially so, as being the results of actual practice and experience. And only practice and experience can thoroughly teach us what we want to know in such matters. In these rapid, and, I fear, very disjointed remarks, though I may have chanced on little or nothing very new or suggestive, still I have a belief that it is not quite useless to reiterate the desire for simplicity and sincerity, and, by means of these, beauty, in our houses, and therefore in the lives that we spend in them; and I would wish to end for to-day with these words of Mr. Morris's, for I think there is hope and encouragement in them: "We who think and can enjoy the feast that Nature has spread for us, is it not both our right and our duty to rebel against that slavery of the waste of life's joys, which people, thoughtless and joyless by no fault of their own, have wrapped the world in? From our own selves we can tell that there is hope of victory in our rebellion, since we have Art enough in our lives, not to content us, but to make us long for more, and that

longing drives us into trying to spread Art and the longing for Art; and as it is with us, so it will be with those that we win over; little by little, we may well hope, will do its work, till at last a great many men will have enough of Art to see how little they have, and how much they might better their lives, if every man had his due share of Art,—that is, just so much as he could use if a fair chance were given him."



III.—DECORATIVE ART—COLOUR, DRESS, AND NEEDLEWORK.

THE great and peculiar difficulties belonging to this part of my subject make me feel a little diffident in approaching it. Seeing that colour is of so fluctuating, so variable, so indefinite a nature, the words I use in speaking of it must needs partake of the same nature, and will be apt to be rather vague and meaningless, unless they appeal to a vivid natural perception. No one of our faculties is capable of greater or more varied pleasure than the colour-sense; we find that pleasure in all the most beauiful things of

Nature — the sky, the sea, the fields, the woods, the flowers, the birds, the insects; and, in the things of Art, colour is the most valuable quality in paintings; and in decoration, while harmonious colouring may in some degree atone for faulty design, a good design may be spoilt by discordant colouring.

You will see what I mean by the difficulties of the subject, when I remind you that no two people see colour alike—witness the eternal disputes about matching; that a colour may seem one thing when placed by itself, and be quite different beside other colours; that colours alter with the ever-shifting quality of the atmosphere; that sunlight, moonlight, candle-light, lamp-light, gas-light, electric-light, with their thousand degrees of purity and intensity, make colours seen by them partake of their variations; that when two people differ about the proper name or nature of a colour, neither can be proved to be wrong; that most people, except a very few with a highly cultivated natural gift, are in some degree colour-blind;

else how do we account for the common differences of opinion that are always arising —one person calling a colour green, while another calls it blue, one speaking of a tint as red when another would call it brown, one saying a colour is purple what another would call dark blue? Every assertion respecting the *form* of a thing is capable of proof or of disproof; a square object can be mathematically proved to be square, a round object to be round; if one person says a line is crooked, and another says it is straight, *one must be wrong*, and can be shown to be so. Not so with colour; there is no absolute standard, no fixed means of judgment; all is approximative merely. It is a scientific fact that each colour produces its impression on the eye by a certain number of vibrations; but, as the sensitiveness to these vibrations varies in each individual, that fact does not seem to help us much. I believe there are Tables for the Examination of the Colour Sense; but I cannot suppose the knowledge so gained would be readily available in ordinary matters.

It is not easy to avoid the conclusion that most people are insensible to delicate variations of colour. Think, for instance, of the number of tints that "red" has to do duty for. Red brick, red currants, red wine, redbreast, red hair, red faces, red coats, a red Indian, red sandstone, red ink, red ochre, red tape. That vermilion, coral, carnations, cochineal, carmine, rubies, carbuncles, garnets, cherries, poppies, roses, blushes, are all called red. We say as red as fire, as red as blood, as red as a turkey-cock. "The whole hillside was redder than a fox," says Tennyson. These things cannot really all be red, and the fact is that none of them are absolutely red; no one's hair is really red, just as no one's eyes are absolutely blue. Poverty of language and coarseness of perception must have originally given all these colours but one name.

Again—snow, chalk, ivory, lilies, orange-flowers, ermine, swansdown, are all called white; but what differences among them! Their differences are differences of texture

and substance; white being no colour, but the reflection of all; the whiteness of snow being caused by the transmission of light through every one of the infinite transparent particles of frozen moisture, and the whiteness of chalk by the reflection of light from opaque calcareous particles—the result of each, and its effect on the eye, being very different. So with the rest.

I suppose that young children notice colours as soon as they notice anything that is not good to eat. Bright colours, it is said, as a rule attract children, savages, dogs, birds, fishes, and insects. We have often been told of the bower-birds who ornament their nests with different coloured shells, and feathers, and the petals of flowers. The monkey who plucks the splendid tropical flower only to tear it to pieces, and reaches out his long arms to clutch at the bright trailing feathers of an unsuspecting bird, or darts after a brilliant butterfly, is really showing an æsthetic appreciation of colour and delight in it for its own sake. Such is the liking for brilliancy

in undeveloped natures. It is said that red most strongly attracts the uneducated sense, and that it needs high training and refinement to properly enjoy green. How far this is true I do not know ; but it seems to afford some sort of explanation of the present taste for sage-green in dress and house decoration; and children, in whom the colour sense is undeveloped, make up bunches of flowers without any leaves.

It certainly takes a highly cultivated sense to appreciate the more delicate hues and combinations. But, before we proceed to these, some sort of classification of the ordinary colours must be made. In the prismatic spectrum, the original type of colour, or the rainbow, are found what are called the three primary colours—yellow, red, blue. Between these, and composed of them, are the three secondary colours—orange, made of yellow and red ; purple, of red and blue ; green, of blue and yellow. Of the three primary colours, in various proportions, every hue in nature is composed—black, in which all colours are

absorbed, being at one end of the scale, and white, in which all are reflected, at the other end of it. Between the two, the variations may be considered infinite. Some scientific calculation numbers 30,000; but I could easily believe them to be twice as many.

Of the three primaries, blue is said to be cold, yellow warm, and red neither. By this is meant that an admixture of blue with any other colour chills and impoverishes it. A bluish tone in white muslin, or silk, or other white stuff, is at once felt to be poor in effect and unbecoming: we know what is thought of milk when it is bluish. A blue-purple, and a purplish-red are felt to be colder than a red-purple and a brick-red. Blue, in its highest conditions, is perhaps the most beautiful of all colours; but we do not admire it for its coldness, but for its purity. Blue is the only colour that can be obtained in a perfectly pure form. Ultramarine—the type of purity, the colour of the Virgin Mary.

Now, as blue is called cold, so is yellow said to be warm. It is the colour of the

intensest heat we can imagine—white-heat; and as blue cools and chills, yellow warms any colour with which it is mixed. Ivory-white, cream-white, may be called warm white; and, of course, stuffs of such tints harmonise much better with the warm tones of hair and complexion than the snow and ice-cold stuffs of a few years ago. Rich materials, lace and satin and silk, look all the richer in the warm white, and poor materials look less poor. So a yellow olive-green is more soft and harmonious than a cold blue-green, and a brick-red having an admixture of yellow is much softer and more becoming than a magenta-red, which has some proportion of blue in it. And lastly, red being neutral, is incapable of imparting either cold or warm effects to a colour to which it is added in any proportion.

The most striking effect of the modern revival of taste is the change of public opinion it has effected with regard to colour —a change from coldness and rawness to tone and warmth. And if we compare the

magenta, the mauve, the emerald-green of a dozen years ago, with the tints that are now the mode, we shall see that the wide difference between their effect on the colour sense is owing to the adoption in the latter of warm yellow tones instead of cold blue ones, such as I have described them.

It is a very common objection to what are called artistic colours to say that they are gloomy, dismal, and unbecoming. If this is true of any particular shade, the fact would merely go to prove that it is not a colour properly so-called, but some muddy confusion of tints, mistaken for an artistic colour for want of a right apprehension—and it owes its existence to a foregone conclusion that everything heavy and dull must be artistic. People often nowadays growing tired of their white-and-gold drawing-rooms, in which, though the colouring might be cold, it was at least clean, let loose into them the house-painter, who daubs all the wood-work with his muddy and foggy tints, dirty browns, or purplish-chocolates, and

cockroach colour, under the impression he is doing it in true high Art style. Indeed, the Andaman Islander, with his red-ochre and white chalk, has a much better and more refined perception. Suppose, however, we see if we can reach a higher standard than that, by considering first the effects of colour in Nature, before thinking of colour in Art.

The defenders of bright aniline dyes say, that since there is brilliant colour in Nature, in flowers, in the sunset, in birds, in tropical foliage, that it is quite natural and right to prefer them (the aniline dyes), and to use them in dress and in household decoration. But let us see in what the brilliant hues of Nature consist, and then, if we can reproduce them, let us by all means do so.

In the first place all brilliant combined natural effects of colour are transitory—the clouds of the sunset sky, crimson and purple, and green and gold, are gone in half-an-hour, and would be a sad fatigue to the eye if they lasted all day. The hues of the rainbow melt into thin air as we gaze, they have no

time to dazzle us; the brilliant tropical flower fades in a day; the most glowing assemblage of autumn tints burns itself out and turns to dull ashen brown. Suppose, then, we were able to procure stuffs to match some of the hues of the flowers, the rainbow, the sunset, in brilliancy, suppose we hung our rooms with them, they would be always appealing to the colour sense so strongly that they would be as fatiguing as a perpetual succession of loud screams to the ear—and, their first freshness worn off, they would soon look shabby, and with a worse sort of shabbiness than hues of less pretension.

And not only are these natural effects of colour evanescent, but they are variable as well; the hues of the sunset changing every moment, our senses have no time to pall, to be dazed by too much unchanging loveliness. The glancing hues of butterflies are made up of minutest, delicate plumes, and the almost imperceptible soft tints of each, when they are blended together on the wings, give a tremulously flashing brightness that no

evenly laid or stippled tint of ours could produce.

So brilliancy of colour is often owing to texture,—texture by us not to be imitated,—such as the floating vaporousness of clouds, the lustre of water and precious crystals, and the bloom of a peach or a rose-leaf. Not our most perfect manufacturers can reach these. Take a poppy and place it beside the richest and finest silk of the brightest red that can be dyed, and the silk will be coarsened and deadened by the contact. The rose, the ideal perfection of a flower in form, colour, and perfume, owes its glowing hues to the translucent texture of its manifold petals, lying each over each in loveliest curves and involutions, their transmitted colour growing fuller and fuller in exquisite gradations, for their very shadows are colour, till the innermost folds close at last over the fragrant heart of the flower. "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." But we think we may probably succeed better than Solomon, and we have a muslin rose made with plenty

of carmine, a cotton-wool middle, and a wire stem, and we pay a price for it and bear it about with satisfaction.

Consider the blue of the sky; it is not a bright flat shallow even tint, but it seems to palpitate, lighten, darken as we gaze, and the sunset clouds (I am obliged to recur to the sun*set*, as one is apt to be a little out of practice as regards the sun*rise*), besides never remaining of the same hue for two minutes together, are of such an impalpable substance, such an ethereal spiritual quality, that it seems as if we should scarcely dare describe, much less imitate them.

These, then, are a few of Nature's qualities of colour; evanescence, translucence, constant variation and extreme delicacy of texture—these go to produce her *brilliant* effects of colour, which, as I think, we must give up all thoughts of imitating, as we work under such different conditions. In dyeing, embroidering, painting, it is of no use trying for that brightness; in the attempt, generally, every other desirable quality must be sacri-

ficed, and the brightness, even if we do in some measure succeed, must be in a degree faded and sullied the first time the manufacture is worn or used. The infinite powers of Nature supply the place of the faded flower every day with a fresh one, and the sunlight is ever fresh and new, while our dresses and carpets and curtains *must* last a certain time, as they do not grow spontaneously to the hand. Seeing that this is the case, let us give up from the first intense brightness of colour, as being in goods of our own manufacture unserviceable, unlasting (the dye injuring the solid qualities of the fabric), fatiguing to the eye, needing frequent renewal, and of doubtful beauty from the first.

When the mode of extracting dyes from coal-tar was invented, the common admiration for gaudy colours was raised to its utmost by the intensity, the hard ungradated glaring metallic brilliancy of the magentas, the mauves, the emerald greens, the unmitigated blues that were then produced ; it was as if they had thrown people off their

balance as regards colour, and had aroused all the worst tastes of our nature. I find that they bore, besides those I have mentioned, the euphonious names of Violine, Roseine, Fuchsine, Solferino, Emeraldine, Azuline; there is something cloying and sticky about the very names.

It seems to me that dyeing the hair bright yellow, and other arts besides, must have been invented at the same time, for how should delicate *natural* tints of hair and complexion bear the juxtaposition of such intense forced brilliancy without a little *artificial* heightening to help them?

But those intense dyes have had their day; we are no longer called upon to admire, and seldom even to see them. I trust they will never reappear. They were bad enough in rich material; the silky shimmer and soft folds mitigated their glare; but I cannot remember without a shudder the sickly purplish hue that overspread magenta ribbons after they had seen the sun a few times; and into what a greenish

pallor mauve stuffs feebly relapsed after a little wear.

These aniline colours are the result of aiming at brightness as the first object; but in spite of their brightness they are raw and cold—they have no affinity with the natural tints of complexion and hair—so they offend against every principle of harmony. In nature "all this innumerous-coloured scene of things"—colours are never raw—there is always some admixture, softening, gradating. If, as we have seen, natural colours in strong effects of light surpass in brilliancy any dyes of ours, they have their soberer effects as well, and other qualities that we can avail ourselves of. And as the luminous transparency of sea-water, the melting dewy tints of the sky, the tender bloom of fruit, the exquisite texture of flowers, are impossible to be imitated by any processes of ours, let us acknowledge at once that all this is of no use trying at, but let us at the same time consider what it is that we can do, and try and establish some principles to go upon

—principles of harmony in colour. We have only to think of what harmony means in music to understand what the expression is intended to convey when it is applied to colour. It consists, in music, of the unity, connection, similarity, and agreement of tones so as to produce beautiful effects, sometimes soothing, sometimes exhilarating, always fresh and various, their combinations being, within certain restrictions, practically unlimited. So precisely with colour-harmony.

The principles which will be found safe guides both in house-decoration and dress may be arranged under five heads—Analogy, Contrast, Variety, Delicacy, Repetition.

To explain what I mean by Harmony of Analogy, I will suppose a lady of fair complexion and delicate colouring to be seeking harmonious tints for an entire costume. Her hair is light brown, so she may choose a darker fuller brown for the dress; her complexion will bear a delicate pink, so the brown of her dress must incline more to

dove than to russet, and in the brown bonnet that matches her dress there may be a delicate pink feather and lining; and in the lining of her parasol, and the gloves, the pink should be repeated, perhaps of a slightly fuller pink, but still not deeper than the pink of the under side of a mushroom.

I have seen a drawing-room furnished in similar tones, only with a somewhat wider range. The brown was a little warmer, and in stamped velvet for the chair-coverings; some of the cushions and the mantel-border embroidered with wild roses and yellow centres; the walls pink, of two shades; the curtains of brown figured silk lined with pink; and the carpet a blending of all these tints together.

Thus, by beginning with some colour having natural fitness to recommend it, and using one or two of its modifying tints taken separately, by the union of the whole we get a harmony of analogy.

Harmony by contrast is on a different principle; we must suppose a brilliant com-

plexion, and dark hair and eyes, or brown eyes and red-gold hair. The natural colouring already offers strong contrasts, so pale, soft, and subdued tints seem out of place and ineffective. Cardinal red, gold, cream colour, and black, would perhaps suit the dark hair and eyes; and blue and flesh coloured brocade of Louis Quinze might suit the red-gold hair and brown eyes. It seems to me a sure rule that persons whose natural colouring is in a low key, one tint nearly assimilating with another, should wear soft tones of colour in dress, also nearly assimilating with each other; and where the natural colouring offers strong contrasts, the colouring of the dress should be full and strong also. I cannot think that strong contrast can ever be good in the colouring of a room, where it seems to me repose and softened light are always needed. Here is an arrangement of contrast in colouring, however, which still seems simple and harmonious. Two full blues, two rather greener ones, and two shades of a flesh-colour-

like pink. This colouring may be seen in brocades of the time of Louis Quinze.

The next principle I would suggest is *variety*. It is an immemorial custom that dining-room curtains should be red, with leather chairs, red tablecloth, and Turkey carpet in which red prevails. There is not much variety in this time-honoured fashion; nor is there sometimes in the manifestations of the new. I saw a drawing-room the other day with a peacock feather patterned wall-paper, dado and wood work of peacock blue, and curtains and chair-coverings of peacock patterned chintz, exactly matching the wall paper. The result was flat and monotonous, in my opinion. Both these are instances of want of variety. I would never recommend chairs to be covered with stuff like the curtains, or the walls to be like either. The walls of the dining-room may be a brownish yellow; the curtains of a mixed red and yellow—the yellow a little pinkish; and the chairs plain red, and the carpet brown and yellow and red, and a

little green. A great deal of pleasure can be felt in the variety of these tints, which, nevertheless, produce a unity of effect when regarded as a whole. It is a good rule, if the walls have a pattern on them, that the curtains should be plain, and *vice versa;* so a dress should not be entirely figured or embroidered, but only in portions, that the design may show all the more richly.

To come to the next point—*delicacy*—by delicacy I do not necessarily mean paleness; delicacy of effect is gained by suiting exactly the colour to the material. To muslin and such like filmy substances full bright tints are most unsuitable; pale tender hues, and light tracery of pattern belong to them; still, delicacy in these does not involve insipidity, which poverty of tone and design would cause. For richer stuffs, in silk and satin and velvet, fuller hues are quite suitable. The shimmer, the shifting of lights and shadows, the bloom of the texture, modifies the effect of a full colour, which in a dull and common stuff would be

flat and heavy. This principle should lead us not to offend the delicate tints of flesh and hair by surrounding them with coarse hues and hard masses, but to blend and tone down all our adornments according to the example of Nature, who so carefully softens tints and outlines—for example, where the hair begins on the temples and the eyebrows, and the colouring of cheek and lip. We instinctively avoid clothing an infant in dark and hard colours; it would seem unsuitable and discordant. Do not let let us treat ourselves so very much worse.

The senses do not recognise a weak impression at the same time as a stronger one. We cannot listen properly to music going on in a room when people are talking and laughing loudly. A strong flavour in a dish, such as garlic or onions, overpowers every other it may possess; so strong colours in dress and room-decoration catch the eye, and fill it to the exclusion of every softer and more delicate one.

The fourth principle is *repetition.* Never

have a colour concentrated in one spot, but take care to repeat it in others. If you have blue and white chintz in one corner of your room, put some in another corner to balance it. If you have a pink feather in your bonnet, wear pink gloves or a pink parasol. To isolate a colour is to draw the eye to that particular point, and to keep it there, instead of gently leading it on from one to another.

In these ways, therefore—by using either a colour-analogy, or a colour-contrast, and observing delicacy, variety, and repetition, can harmonious arrangement of colour be brought together and applied. "It is the best possible sign of a colour," says Mr. Ruskin, "when nobody who sees it knows what to call it, or how to give an idea of it to anybody else. Even among simple hues the most valuable are those which cannot be defined; the most precious purples will look brown beside pure purple; and the most precious greens will be called blue if seen beside pure green, and green if seen beside

pure blue." A colour may be very agreeable in its real nature, but lose all its pleasing qualities when wrongly combined. Harmony not only brings agreeable tones together, but establishes an affinity between them, both in music and in colouring.

The worst colour discord is said to be purple and green. Yet you will say, how lovely the violet is, half hidden in its green leaves ;—and so it is, but its effect is beyond our imitation ; it is dependent on tone, and texture, and quality, too shifting and delicate for our processes to follow. Violet of the usual tone of quality is the most unbecoming colour to nearly all complexions ; it makes sallow ones appear almost orange, and fair ones yellowish green. But there are many kinds of purple,—redder or bluer,—there are lilac, lavender, peach-blossom, plum, amethyst, puce, mulberry, down to slate and French gray. Out of these some tints might be chosen and worn, but I suppose none of them would be suitable for room-decoration. What among

them might be agreeable in daylight would be of a very dull brown at night. Purple is certainly the most difficult colour. Its more beautiful hues tend to red rather than blue.

Green has been said to be a colour that is only appreciated by cultivated faculties; it has its dangers as well as its attractions. The introduction of great quantities of green is also said to be one of the mistakes that always creeps in when society is become artificial; and there are signs at the present moment that in æsthetic colouring we are declining into a "green and yellow melancholy;" still it is reposeful and soothing to the eye, and out of all its various hues some are very lovely; bird's egg green, grass-green, sea-green, tea-green, myrtle, olive. Green should incline to yellow rather than to blue. A pea-green could never be becoming; its best and most characteristic shade is not at all bright, but inclines to a brownish hue. A green always becomes more agreeable by candlelight, which adds

a further proportion of yellow to it. I find in a colour treatise published some twenty years ago, a recommendation to wear green with red hair, by way of diminishing its intensity. Red hair is now such a fortunate possession, that this piece of advice seems highly unnecessary; and we would rather wish to heighten than diminish the effect. Some kinds of blue will do this. I always feel that blue stands better by itself than any colour, and cannot very agreeably be mixed with anything but white. Used in a room, its tone should approach green, and in dress it should always be modified by gray or yellow in some proportion, and never used pure; it is too cold and hard. Red is the colour that first attracts the untrained sense, and its different tones seem to be the most numerous of all. There is ordinarily only a very small proportion of red in a landscape, so, to supply the want, the common device of the painter of rustic scenes is to introduce an old woman with a red cloak. Only in Devon-

shire and Somersetshire are reds plentiful in nature, and there the red-tiled roofs, the red cattle, the red sandstone cliffs, the red earth, please the original hereditary taste. In dress dark shades of red will bring out whatever red there may be in the hair; a brick-red lends a little glow to fair pale complexions.

Yellow is a colour of which, I am inclined to think, the best effects are neglected; it ought to be more used in town houses, so as to bring a little artificial sunlight into them. It cannot be used, however, in masses, but must be broken and mingled with other colours. Yellow and white are as agreeable in their way as blue and white. Mixed shades of yellow and white and a little myrtle green form a pleasing combination.

Many ladies in the present day choose black for their ordinary wear as being the most convenient and comfortable way of solving the question of colour, but it is not a solution, it is an evasion; as such, it has its

advantages ; it absorbs colour, and reduces form, and is unremarkable and economical. Black is the extinction of colour, and it absorbs some proportion of every colour near which it is placed. A black gown and bonnet make a pale face look more pale, and lower a high colour. Colours in embroidery on a black ground are less brilliant than they would be on any other. I should banish black altogether from room-decoration, except in the form of slender lines, such as chair-rails, slim table-legs, and narrow picture-frames.

While black weakens colour by absorbing some of it into itself, white strengthens and heightens the effect of colour placed near it, as it takes away from that colour the white light which enfeebled it. Clear soft white, which produces the effect of gray, brings out the delicate freshness of youthful tints ; and so it finds its most agreeable use in the dress of infants, and also of young girls on not the least interesting and important occasions of their lives. "There

are not many tints," says Mr. Morris, "fit to colour a wall with. Here is a short list: a solid red not very deep, but rather describable as a full pink, and toned both with yellow and blue, a very fine colour if you can hit it; a light orangy pink, to be used rather sparingly, a pale golden tint, *i.e.*, a yellowish brown, a very difficult colour to hit; and a colour between these two last, call it pale copper colour. All these three you must be careful over, for if you get them muddy or dirty you are lost." And on ending these remarks on colour, which merely form the first half of my present lecture, and which pretend to be no more than suggestions towards an appreciation of it, I wish to point out the differences between three orders of colouring, to one or other of which every hue, every dye, every stain used in these days belongs.

First, there is what I may be perhaps allowed to call Philistine colouring—that produced by the deep intense aniline dyes, cold, flat, ungradated, aiming at brilliancy alone, without tone or harmony.

Second, the mock-æsthetic colouring, which, aiming not at Art, but at artisticalness, if I may coin such a word, is all deadness, darkness, dulness—and is also without tone and harmony.

The third kind is less easy to describe: it is the only true colouring properly so called, in producing which vegetable dyes only are used. I can only say that good colouring is essentially clean, and clear, and cheerful, like a healthy complexion, having tone and harmony; and I feel I cannot too strongly insist on the difference between this and much that is considered æsthetic and artistic.

When the eye has once learned to appreciate the differences between these three classes, I am bold to say there can be no question as to where the choice will be fixed.

And now let me pass to the few words about the Arts of Dress and Needlework that I have time for. They might easily occupy a course of lectures of themselves;

but it is only possible at present to indicate slightly and rapidly the place they fill in the general group of the Decorative Arts. The two Arts of Dress and Needlework have been closely connected from a very early time, even from when the wise man said of the excellent woman, "She maketh herself coverings of tapestry, her clothing is silk and purple."

Periods of beautiful and dignified costume have also been periods of fine embroidery, one art leading to and helping on the production of the other. Nor are they without their influence on other arts besides. In times when the general type of the human form is a poorly developed one, and distorted and trammelled by fashion, there can be no great school of sculpture; so without fine and simple and rich dressing and stuffs and embroidery, there will be the less prospect of a great school of painting. It was the perfect physical development of the Greeks that helped to educate the school of Pheidias, and it was the beautiful

costume of the Italians in the fifteenth century that helped to educate and form the Venetian and Florentine schools of painting.

That dress becomes an Art from the moment it ceases to be merely a covering and a protection from weather,—need not be doubted. We often read of the dress of savages, which consists frequently more of decoration than of anything else; and we read of the fine linen in which Joseph was arrayed by the hands of Pharaoh.

So does needlework become an Art from the moment that it is more than merely a drawing of the edges of skins together with a fish-bone needle, which was probably the earliest kind of sewing; and in the fifteenth century before Christ we read of embroidery in blue and in purple, in scarlet and in fine linen.

Both these Arts in their various departments and branches fill in some way or other so large a part in the lives of women now, and have done so in all past time, that it cannot but be well to learn to think

clearly and reasonably of them—practising the Art of Needlework with pleasure and intelligence, fulfilling the requirements both of beauty and use, and in the Art of Dress, which we must all of us practise whether we will or no, still fulfilling the same requirements, conforming to fashion to a certain extent, but not blindfold and with too great confidence, always reserving the right of private judgment, and with it the charm of individuality—style in its true sense. The greatest objection to the despotism of fashion is the uniformity it leads to. It is surprising how willing people are to forsake their own rights in this matter, and seriously aim at looking like every one else; the fringe of hair worn, however becoming it may be to some young faces, however piquant in effect it may sometimes be in itself, has the tendency to make every young lady look alike, and destroy the effect of individual attractions. There are no doubt good principles, good customs, lying at the root of some of the prevailing

fashions of the day, which those who decry them are apt to ignore; as, for instance, when a fashion for short dresses lasts for any length of time, we may be sure that a healthy custom of walking much in the open air prevails among women.

Those parts of the fashions that originate in reasonable requirements, habits, customs, hours,—these are always rightly to be followed; but those other parts that have their origin in a mere thirst for novelty or love of display, should be looked at with suspicion, and not too hastily adopted. The fashion of the garments of the last few years has had this advantage, that it has offered plenty of freedom for individual taste, whenever people were willing to take advantage of that freedom, besides possessing in itself many elements of grace and comfort, of beauty and use. But there always seems to be the danger of spoiling a good idea in costume by exaggeration. Not content, a few years ago, with the stateliness and dignity of ample flowing skirts, we distended

and stiffened them with wire cages; and in later years, not content with scantier and more graceful drapery, expressing the harmonious lines of the figure, we bound our dresses tightly round us, almost abolishing falling folds, and scarcely allowing ourselves room to move. I suppose that the height of the fashion now is a happy combination of both the tightness and the crinoline. Some fashionable milliner invents a bead trimming, and we clothe ourselves in beads from head to foot. Some fashionable lady, with a brilliantly clear complexion, finds black lace becoming, and instantly white frills, collars, and cuffs vanish from the scene, to the detriment of many a less dazzling bloom. There are also useless and ugly superfluities attending the fashion of the day, respecting which we should do well to question ourselves. All kinds of things added on after the dress itself is assumed should be looked on with suspicion. A modern writer estimates the number of articles of clothing and adornment that a

woman has on by the time she is fully dressed at forty-nine. Out of these surely some may be superfluous. A year or two ago I used frequently to notice that a young lady would wear round her neck, in morning dress, a collar, a lace tie, a tight velvet, a ribbon, a brooch, and a chain and locket, —that would make seven out of forty-nine. But I think that now more simplicity prevails.

And before I leave this part of the subject, I must ask you to bear with me if I join my feeble protest to the many powerful and able ones raised against a fashion—an epidemic, rather—which has arisen, subsided, only again to reappear at different periods of modern history. I have reason to think that it is raging at present with some severity; and its victims are supposed, not without reason, to yearly swell the bills of mortality. I mean the epidemic of tight-lacing. Those who wilfully incur the consequences of this practice must have strangely incredulous minds; they disbelieve

all doctors, as a matter of course, and, what is more to my purpose, they disbelieve artists; and the verdict of all the ages as to the beauty of antique statues has, for them, been given in vain. The Venus of Melos and all the goddesses of Olympus are to them as nothing. Instead of a gently undulating line from the shoulder to the hip, they prefer a sudden sharp bend like the narrow part of an hour-glass. In times when figures of the hour-glass contour are admired, there can be no good sculpture; for there is scarcely any natural beauty of figure, or ease and grace of movement, left for the artist to admire, to learn and study from.

In a discourse delivered, more than a hundred years ago, by Sir Joshua Reynolds to the students of the Royal Academy, he says, after some allusions to the taste of that day in dress: "All these fashions are very innocent; neither worth disquisition, nor any endeavour to alter them; as the change would, in all probability, be equally distant

from Nature. The only circumstance against which indignation may reasonably be moved is where the operation is painful, or destructive to health, such as some of the practices at Otaheite, and the strait-lacing of the English ladies,—of the last of which practices, how destructive it must be to health and long life the Professor of Anatomy took an opportunity of proving a few days since in this Academy."

This was spoken by Sir Joshua on December 10, 1776. It is sad to think that so many of the English ladies are still unconvinced, though many professors of anatomy since that day have said the same thing.

"I believe true nobleness in dress," says Mr. Ruskin, "to be an important means of education, as it certainly is a necessity to any nation which wishes to possess living art, concerned with portraiture of human nature. No good historical painting ever yet existed, or ever can exist, where the dresses of the people of the time are not

beautiful; and had it not been for the lovely and fantastic dressing of the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries, neither French nor Florentine nor Venetian art could have risen to anything like the rank it reached. Still, even then, the best dressing was never the costliest; and its effect depended much more on its beautiful—and, in early times, modest—arrangement, and on the simple and lovely masses of its colour, than on gorgeousness of clasp or embroidery.

"The splendour and fantasy even of dress, which in these days we pretend to despise, or in which if we even indulge it is only for the sake of vanity, and therefore to our infinite harm, were in those early days studied for love of their true beauty and honourableness, and became one of the main helps to dignity of character and courtesy of bearing. Look back to what we have been told of the dress of the early Venetians, that it was so invented 'that in clothing themselves with it they might clothe themselves also with modesty and honour;' consider what nobleness of ex-

pression there is in the dress of any of the portrait figures of the great times; nay, what perfect beauty, and more than beauty, there is in the folding of the robe round the imagined form even of the saint or of the angel; and then consider whether the grace of vesture be indeed a thing to be despised. We cannot despise it if we would, and in all our highest poetry and happiest thought we cling to the magnificence which in daily life we disregard. . . . I do not merely mean magnificence; the most splendid time was not the best time. It was still in the thirteenth century, when simplicity and gorgeousness were justly mingled, and the leathern girdle and the clasp of bone were worn, as well as the embroidered mantle, that the manner of dress seems to have been the noblest. The chain mail of the knight, flowing and falling over his form in lapping waves of gloomy strength, was worn under full robes of one colour in the ground, his crest quartered on them, and their borders enriched with subtle illumination. The women wore

first a dress close to the form in like manner, and their long and flowing robes veiling them up to the neck, and delicately embroidered round the hem, the sleeves, and the girdle. The use of plate armour gradually introduced more fantastic types,—the nobleness of the form was lost beneath the steel; the gradually increasing luxury and vanity of the age strove for continual excitement in more quaint and extravagant devices; and, in the fifteenth century, dress reached its point of utmost splendour and fancy, being in many cases still exquisitely graceful, but now, in its morbid magnificence, devoid of all wholesome influence on manners. From this point, like architecture, it was rapidly degraded, and sank through the buff coat and lace collar and jack boot, to the bag-wig, tailed coat, and high-heeled shoe, and so to what it is now."

I suppose Mr. Ruskin would not allow us to think that there is any good thing in modern dress; but, rather than sink into utter depression and hopelessness, let us consider what good there is and seek to increase it.

I know that in these days some intelligent ladies have learned the art of dressmaking on purpose to modify and improve the form and construction of our garments, and I am in hopes that the reform may be complete and lasting. Few women who have work to do in life, their living to make, or families to care for, can take the trouble to set fashion at defiance and wear a self-devised costume,—the opposition to established rule; the difficulty of getting original ideas satisfactorily carried out; the becoming an object of special remark and comment to one's friends and the general public; these things seem to hinder such an enterprise, and make one feel that more is lost than gained by the attempt. All that, I think, we can clearly see our way to is, by observing reason and simplicity in moderately fashionable attire to gradually lead the way to improvement.

As to form of garments, speaking generally, soft, long, flowing lines must always be the most graceful: they add to the apparent height when it is desirable to do so, while

lines and folds across the figure shorten it. Any tightness *across* any part of the form is a discord, and must destroy the gracefulness of the whole. Any shape that *seems* to fetter and confine, and any that *really* does so, is defective; if a garment interferes with freedom of action there must be something wrong with it. And as to the laying on of trimming, rows and rows of buttons never meant to button, sham button-holes actually constructed of bits of silk and cord laid on, bows of ribbon never meant to tie, immovable lattice-work of cords or laces, sham pockets where none exist in reality,—there can be no possible use or beauty in these. If the material of a gown is rich and soft, and if it is well cut and fits well, every piece of superadded trimming goes to spoil the effect. I except, of course, lace, which softens and harmonises the general effect, and fringe, when its origin is not too hopelessly lost sight of,—that it was first the fraying out and knotting of the edge of the stuff in certain quantity. And if the material is plain and

ordinary, and intended for ordinary occasions, there is all the greater reason to keep the dress simple, and to avoid an elaborate and over-studied appearance. A rigid inquiry as to the use and beauty of every piece of added trimming and adornment we often mechanically wear, would lead, I am sure, to many details being discarded, to the manifest improvement of the general effect. There is such a pleasing description in Richardson's *Clarissa* of his heroine that I cannot help quoting it as a specimen of charming costume. It belongs to the first half of the eighteenth century, a time when much beautiful and delicate embroidery was produced.

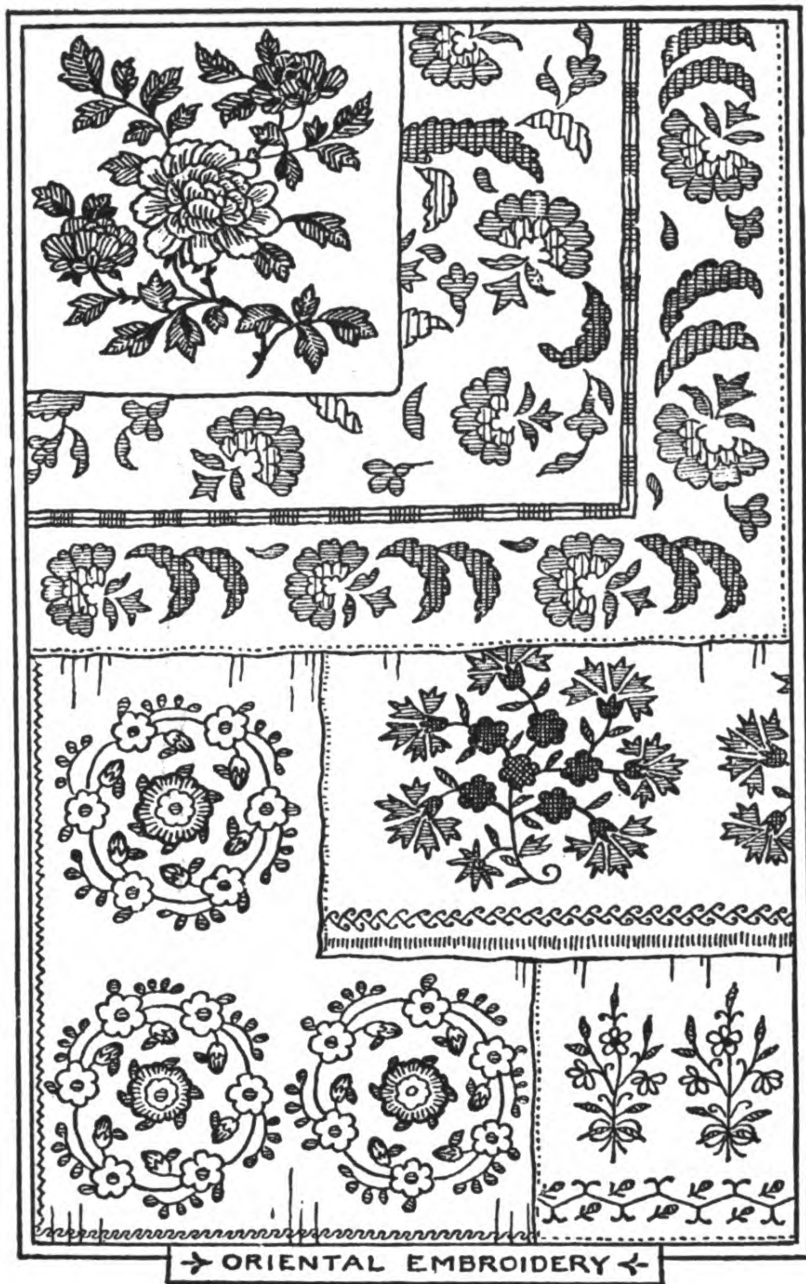
" Her head-dress," says Lovelace, her admirer, " was a Brussels lace mob peculiarly adapted to the charming turn of her features, a sky-blue ribbon illustrated that. . . . Her morning gown was a pale primrose-coloured paduasoy, the cuffs and robings curiously embroidered with a pattern of roses and leaves ; a pair of diamond snaps in her ears ; her ruffles were the same as her mob ; her apron,

flowered lawn; her petticoat, white satin quilted; blue satin her shoes, without lace,—for what need has the prettiest foot in the world for ornament?—neat buckles in them; and on her charming arms a pair of velvet cuffs (?) She is sweetly dressed," Lovelace adds; "and there is such a native elegance in this lady that her person adorns what she wears more than dress can adorn her." This is the Art of Dress carried to a very fine perfection, but we may be quite sure that there are, in every period, people,—both men and women,—of refinement, of judgment, of personal charm, of *good taste*, who can make the fashion of any day seem becoming and graceful.

And now to make the very few remarks that I have time for on the subject of Embroidery—Art Needlework, as we call it.

It is many years since the samplers of our grandmothers gave place to the Berlin-wool fancy-work of our earlier days, and again we are witnesses to another change. An art of greater pretensions than either has arisen,

and we are bound in practising it to see that its pretensions are genuine and genuinely carried out. If we consider our needlework to be an art, we must take care that it fulfils the first conditions of a work of art—namely, that it should be conceived, arranged, and carried out by one and the same person. Division of labour is good for getting through the drudgery of manufacture, but bad for works of art. This is the first defect of the Berlin-wool work : the pattern was drawn and coloured by one person, the materials chosen by a second, the pattern worked by a third, and very often grounded by a fourth. People took so little interest in their work, and were so lazy about it, that the very canvas had to be woven in tiny squares so that the stitches might be all of the same length and save all trouble of judging. Nothing could be of any beauty done in so mechanical a way. Now in Art Needlework that is really worthy the name, the materials should be chosen, the dimensions fixed, the pattern designed or at least selected and arranged,



To face page 142.

and the work executed by one and the same person.

After all, to any one possessed of any power of drawing, the notion of designing the pattern need not seem so very formidable. A plant or flower drawn as if it were pressed flat, as dried flowers are, and arranged, added to, taken away from, so as to fill a required space, will be good practice as a beginning, especially joined with some study of any good examples of design that may be accessible, and a careful observance of some chief characteristic of the chosen flower. I said drawn as if pressed flat; this is of first necessity. The surface decorated by embroidery being flat, no effort should be made to cause the design upon it to appear to project—to stand out from it. It is quite easy by dexterous shading to produce an appearance of this sort, but, as it interferes with every other artistic quality of design and colour, it is perfectly inadmissible. It interferes, because, when the eye is caught by strong shading and high relief, it can see

nothing else ; no suitable beauty of colouring can be had when so many shades are required ; and any grace of design is lost because of the strongly standing-out forms, by means of which one sense is contradicted by another —the sight says the thing is round, the touch says it is flat. A favourite pattern of this kind was a succession of shaded cubes which actually for a moment deceived the eye ; this was appropriately destined for a cushion, and was realistic enough, I should think, to effectually spoil the comfort of an after-dinner nap ; one might with equal good taste and appropriateness depict a row of cannon-balls or cotton-reels. The dangerous ease with which this appearance was produced and the sort of satisfaction there was in it, like that there is in successfully performing some small conjuring trick, were the reasons of its popularity. People say some such thing as this : "If we represent flowers we imitate nature, and must have shading ; see such and such a group, it is like a picture." To which I reply, "That is precisely what it ought not

to be." We do not keep pictures tumbling about the room and use them for cushions or footstools, for obvious reasons.

Those objects intended for use must, as I said before, have decoration upon them in accordance with their *use, place*, and *material.* I do not say that there should be no shading in the sense of variation of tone, but that there should be no effects of light and shade —no appearance of projection ; flat surfaces should have flat decoration upon them. The more skilfully a group of natural objects, say of flowers, is worked and shaded, so as to produce the appearance of a painting, the less suitable is it for a cushion or a footstool or for any other common household use. The most common objects now seen worked in crewels are antimacassars or chair-backs, as they are more conveniently called These have a distinct use belonging to them, and, in order to fulfil it properly, they should not be too elaborately or richly worked, as they require frequent washing, and moreover such slight things ought not to draw the eye from

more important effects in the room. The crewel-work that first became general found its chief attraction, strange to say, in its excessive and barbarous coarseness; people seemed to have taken down the crash roller towel from behind the kitchen door, made sprawling lines and blots of dark and dull colour upon it, and then laid it out in the drawing-room for the general admiration. Now it seems to me that in the drawing-room—the most ornamental room in the house—used only for rest and amusement and society, where we place the richest stuffs and most decorative objects within our compass, such coarse and unfinished-looking productions are out of place. The drawing-room antimacassars should be of a finer sort of linen, edged with lace. The design may be slight and yet delicate and graceful. The most lasting, and on the whole the most appropriate and pleasing effect, is gained by working the entire pattern in one-coloured silk or fine crewel, say blue or gold colour on a white ground. These will wash and

wear, and look delicate and harmonious to the last.

But the time would fail me even to touch upon the many articles that may be fitly beautified by embroidery, and the various kinds of embroidery that are suited to each. I hope you will take the trouble to look at the two or three specimens of modern needle-work, for the designing and working of most of which I am responsible. They may serve as hints to those who are beginning to originate for themselves patterns and colours and styles. As regards the design, it is often expedient to adapt and modify the lines of some ancient pattern that one may come across, which it would seem to be a more rewarding occupation to reproduce than to spend time over constructing an original design that might be but of moderate merit. I would not be understood to insist on the beauty of a piece of work merely because it is old; some of the most ancient that still survives—the Bayeux tapestry, for instance—can only be interest-

ing for historical reasons, and for its quaint archaic simplicity; the older tapestry may be useful for study, as having many beauties in its mode of representing decorative foliage and flowers, but it is not suitable for imitation and reproduction by modern needles. "Better models," I now quote from Miss Glaister's book on Art Embroidery, "may be found in the freer work of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and of the early part of the present century. All embroidery on linen grounds, whether in silks or worsteds, is well worthy of attention. In this style are massive quilts of the seventeenth century, with bold flower patterns overlaying an elaborately quilted ground. There is also coarser work of the same century in crewel worsteds; some of these are very handsome and well designed." The curtains and hangings of Queen Anne's time are of excellent design, grave, and well considered; so that reproduction of some of their patterns and colours would accompany appropriately some of the Queen

Anne fittings and furniture of the modern revival.

At the present time few houses, I should think, can be without some specimens of Oriental embroidery, whether Indian or Japanese. There can be no more admirable models of colour and design than the decorative works of India. But, as Mr. Ruskin points out, " it has one curious character distinguishing it from all other art of equal merit in design—*it never represents a natural fact*." It either forms its compositions out of meaningless fragments of colour and flowings of line, or, if it represents any living creature, it represents that creature under some distorted and monstrous form. Quite different is the spirit and intention of Japanese art, which, with wonderful force and life, like Nature's own, reproduces some of her loveliest works,—the blossoming tree, the poise and flight of birds, the swirl of running water, the level lines of cloud ; all are drawn and coloured with an unerring instinct, as true as the Indian, only with

such different aims. I have a few specimens here of Indian work, and some also of Turkish, Cretan, Maltese, which are kindred to it in spirit and intention, never representing Nature literally, but changing, arranging, conventionalising. In the Chinese Mandarin's robe, the work approximates more to the Japanese method, boldly carrying out a brilliant scheme of colour, and following the forms and the growth of Nature with but little of decorative stiffness.

In bringing my sketch of the Decorative Arts to a close, I cannot but regret that I have been compelled to make that sketch so meagre and broken; but I am tempted to hope that I may have at some future time an opportunity of going more widely and deeply into the subject. A historical survey of the Arts of Dress and Needlework, for instance, with some study of design and detail, would be, I think, not without interest and profit. I trust, whatever else I have failed in expressing, that this at least is clear,—that any serious consideration of any part of the

Decorative Arts can only lead by one path to one conclusion; that the decoration of workmanship is but the expression of man's pleasure in successful labour; that the work must be sincere and good to be successful, and that will tend to make the decoration appropriate and beautiful. Hitherto, we have considered those arts that minister to the body—to its uses and necessities. I shall now seek to turn your attention to those Arts that minister to the mind alone—the Fine Arts, in which ideas of beauty become dissevered from the requirements of material use.

: RAPHAEL: GROUP OF CHERUBIM FROM THE DISPUTE OF THE SACRAMENT.

IV.—FINE ARTS.

In attempting a description of the Fine Arts, their proper aim and various modes of expressing that aim, I must begin by reminding you of what I said in the first lecture. Taking the definition of Art in its widest sense—" Human labour regulated by human design "—I pointed out how, by three stages, we reach the subject of to-day.

First.—The Arts of Pure Use; in which the invention of man, aided by the limbs and fingers, works—unhelped by the soul—to fulfil all human necessities apart from considerations of beauty.

Secondly.—The Arts of Decoration ; in which man, by adorning and enriching the productions of the Arts of Pure Use, ministers to a new sense—the sense of Beauty, the Artistic sense, Taste, whatever we may choose to call it.

Thirdly.—The Fine Arts ; which appeal entirely to that new sense and exist for beauty alone. And these last, the Fine Arts, are our subject here to-day,—Poetry, Painting, Sculpture, Music, Architecture. These are, as I have said, the very head and crown of all that man has ever achieved ; take away these and there is little left but mere animal life ; without these, science would lack her inspiration, the life of man its best gifts, and Religion herself would miss some valuable means of appealing to the heart and to the soul. "It has always been found," says Mr. Symonds in his *Renaissance in Italy*, "that the arts in their origin are dependent on religion. Art aims at expressing an ideal, and this ideal is the transfiguration of human elements into something nobler, felt and

apprehended by the imagination. Such an ideal, such an all-embracing glorification of humanity, only exists for simple and unsophisticated societies in the form of religion."

And thus the productions of the Fine Arts have been among the most lasting and stable things in the world's history. "The human race," Emerson says, "takes charge of them that they shall not perish." The carved mammoth bones, the pyramids, the ancient Celtic stones, the Indian rock-temples, the buried store of ancient art that the earth still yields to modern diggers in Greece and Asia Minor, the older Greek marbles, and the grim remains of a sculpture earlier and ruder still, and old Homeric myths and stories and hymns older than they,—none of these things date later than 3000 years back. In that space of time races of men and animals have become extinct; whole systems of science and cycles of learning have been superseded and forgotten; religions, governments, kingdoms, laws and politics, have crumbled and disappeared; but these ancient fragments of

architecture, sculpture, poetry, still survive and fill the mind with vague imaginings of that ancient world of which we are still a part, inasmuch as we still possess those instincts—we may call them immortal—which lead us, though in such different ways, to practise and study those same great arts, as being embodiments of the highest conception of beauty, spiritual and material, of which human nature is capable.

Now to ask what that beauty is, is to ask a very difficult question. "It is a thing by itself," says Mr. Ruskin, "not dependent on truth, or usefulness, or custom, or association of ideas, though it is certainly connected with all of them." "The sense of beauty," says Mr. Darwin, "in its simplest form is nothing more than the reception of a peculiar kind of pleasure from certain colours, forms, and sounds." All this does not help us much, and it is of no use, I think, to try and answer the question in the abstract, "to find a universal formula," but to consider the generally accepted opinion of mankind at large, and to

consult our own individual feelings as to the effect produced on the mind by an object beautiful or the reverse. There can be no universal formula.

In some things we instinctively take the opinion of the majority. By this I do not mean the opinion of any living majority existing at this moment, but the opinion and belief that has come down to us through the generations, gathering strength as it comes.

For instance, there can be no doubt that Shakespeare is more appreciated, more admired, more studied in these days than he was in his own time (some two centuries and a half ago), or than he has been in any of the intermediate years between then and now. In his lifetime the great world seems to have regarded him merely as an actor and playwright of some vivacity ; his plays kept the stage, it is true, but up to the present century they were largely remodelled, corrected, and cut down by any ignorant manager who had occasion for them, and even literary men of repute rewrote and modified and " improved"

them. But all the while Shakespeare's hold on the hearts of his countrymen grew and grew; his works became known, admired, discussed, translated in Germany, in France —a whole Shakespearian literature has grown up both there and here—and so dear and familiar have his writings become, that wherever the Englishman wanders, in whatever remote and unfriended region, his Shakespeare and his Bible go with him.

This is what I mean by the opinion of the majority, in this instance applied to Poetry, perhaps the most ancient, and certainly the most popular and familiar of the Fine Arts. In the same way a similar preeminence being given by the universal vote to great creators in other arts, such as Raphael in Painting, Pheidias in Sculpture, Handel in Music,—their reputation waxes more and more as the years roll on, their claims to excellence growing ever more fully understood.

So do the best and greatest survive, and not only withstand all shocks of time and

change, but seem to grow the greater for them, because of their strength of unconquerable beauty. "No art that has been considered admirable for ages can be worthless; all erroneous opinion is inconstant, and all ungrounded opinion transitory." There is a vast variety of opinion in the world respecting works of art that are but *middling*, but only one about the *best* or *the worst.* The world may differ as to the exact degree of merit possessed by Landseer's lions in Trafalgar Square, but it has only one opinion about the Venus of Melos, and only one about the Temple Bar griffin.

So much for generally accepted opinion as regards the beauty of works of art: now to come to our own personal individual opinion or feeling. We all know what it is to be impressed, to be struck, to be carried out of ourselves by the beauty of a person, of a natural scene, of a character in a book or in actual life. If we take any real interest in our own sensations we shall be tempted to analyse them, to try to find out what it is in

the thing that so moves us. In a natural scene it may be sense of space, beauty of colour, impression of peace and repose at the end of a day. In a person it may be consistently elevated conduct or aims, or cheerfulness of spirit, or grace of demeanour, or frequent changes of expression, or delicate features and colouring. At all events there is some quality, some virtue, in that person or scene which produces that pleasurable impression, of which the origin may be found if we inquire closely enough. As we make, and respond to, the self-addressed questionings, we find our sensibilities, our perceptions, growing keener and deeper, our experience of life wider and more delightful. And by means of this kind can we learn a true appreciation of the excellent in works of *Art:* their greatness cannot be expected to descend to us,—we must rise to it. A part only of a great work may please us at first; if this is dwelt on and studied by degrees we shall find ourselves capable of appreciating the whole. Mr. Pater says, "What is im-

portant, then, is not that the critic" (or the person of taste, we may say) "should possess a correct abstract definition of beauty for the intellect, but a certain kind of temperament —the power of being deeply moved by the presence of beautiful objects. He will remember always that beauty exists in many forms. To him all periods, types, schools of taste, are in themselves equal. In all ages there have been some excellent workmen, and some excellent work done." Beauty is not to be explained; and when we have said that some forms and colours are agreeable, while others are disagreeable, we have said all we can. As to explaining the reason why they are so, that is impossible: we cannot explain the reason why the taste of sugar is agreeable and the taste of bitter aloes disagreeable. But he who inquires as closely as possible into his sensations of pleasure or aversion with regard to matters of art, and cultivates his faculties to the utmost, is a person of taste.

The generally accepted type of beauty in

natural things alone has varied much in the different periods of the world, and among different races of men. Different qualities, both of mind and of body, are admired at different stages of civilisation.

Personal bravery, for instance—a man's first and most necessary endowment in times of perpetual warfare—becomes, in times like ours, the one for which there is least occasion, and we may know a man from his childhood without being aware whether he possesses it or not. Bodily qualifications, too, have their various estimates. Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson says, in his *Travels in the Cevennes*, that one morning, seeing his landlady combing out her daughter's hair, he made her his compliments upon its beauty. "Oh, no," said the mother, "it is not so beautiful as it ought to be. Look, it is too fine." The Chinese, at the centre of Eastern civilisation, admire a diminutive and distorted foot; the English and French, at the centre of Western civilisation, admire a diminutive and distorted waist; a certain race of Indians cultivate

from infancy a flattened and elongated head ;—it is all, as we say, a matter of taste. Still the more reasonable and enlightened minds of modern times may be supposed to have reached a definite standard in such things as these ; while there may still be differences of opinion in matters of more delicate variation in colours and shapes.

It has been said that no race of man bred in wild country ever enjoys landscape. It is a pleasure that belongs to modern times, to highly civilised nations, and to cultivated minds. A comparison of ancient with modern literature has been made, to prove that among the ancients the feeling for natural scenery was vague and dim. Hence it follows that the art of landscape-painting is of modern origin. An untutored, undeveloped nature like that of the child or the savage is quite insensible to the charm of a beautiful landscape. In the first place they have no perception of the relations of space,—as the child cries for the moon, having no idea that it is more inaccessible than any other round

ball. But among ourselves in modern days what taste, what enjoyment is so universal as that which the beauty of Nature inspires.

Scenes of the English coast, cliff and headland and bay, multiform in shape and colour, with the mystery of the sea about and within them ; the beauty and terror of Alpine heights and mountains of snow and fire ; of long sandy flats, with only a sluggish canal-boat and lazily-moving horses to break the straight lines ; of the moorland full of the sense of light and air and space, with something of wildness of desolation ; and of an English inland home.

> " Gray twilight pour'd
> On dewy pastures, dewy trees
> Softer than sleep—all things in order stored
> A haunt of ancient peace."

Such pictures as these, laid up in the memory, to last long after the delightful experience of the moment is past, we feel to be among the best gifts of life.

And when we are among such scenes as these, we long to fix them by some more

definite hand than that of the "great artist, Memory." We write our description, we turn our sonnet, we take out our sketching materials. So at the sight of a beautiful person there is always some one found to remark, "He or she ought to be painted." This is the universal natural instinct; we perceive, appreciate, and admire the beauty of a person, a natural scene, a character, a noble action, and we long to give expression to our sense of that beauty, to make it our own by fixing it in some permanent form, to turn it into a picture, a statue, a poem. "All men have an irrepressible inclination for works of art." Seeing, then, that we are possessed of these impulses, let us take care they find a fitting direction, not necessarily in the *production* of works of art, for the special gifts are rare, but in the *appreciation* of them. "It is in the power of every one, with care and time, to form a just judgment of the relative merits of works of art. To arrive at this no peculiar powers of mind are required, no sympathy with particular feelings,

nothing which every one of ordinary intellect does not in some degree possess,—powers, namely, of observation and intelligence, which by cultivation may be brought to a high degree of perfection and acuteness."

In spite of the almost universally-expressed admiration of Nature, there is a great deal of ignorance and want of observation regarding its external facts. "Men," says Ruskin, "preoccupied with business or care, receive from Nature merely the inevitable sensations of blueness, redness, light, darkness, etc." He also brings forward as a proof of the common want of observation, that people usually speak of the Italian sky as being blue and clear, whereas in reality it is duller and grayer than ours, and distinguished only by repose, tone, warmth; and the feeling these produce in people's minds is translated by them wrongly as blueness and clearness.

There is occasional incapacity in the eye for distinguishing and receiving pleasure from forms and colours, as there is occasional in-

capacity in the ear for distinguishing and appreciating notes and musical sounds. So that it follows as a matter of course that in order to the complete enjoyment of works of art the bodily senses should not only be in good order, but sharpened and refined by cultivation. That much may be done in this direction is clear to every one who has practised with any degree of intelligence the Arts of Music and Drawing, the best things that appeal to the senses of sight and hearing; and as these senses are capable of a higher pleasure than the other senses, so no one can be accused of intemperance in the enjoyments belonging to them. Sensitiveness to a wrong note, to a badly-tuned instrument, an ill-interpreted passage, as well as quick perception of a crooked line, a clumsy curve, and bad perspective,—this sensitiveness, this perception, by the practice of music and drawing, become keener and quicker—nay, are often called into existence—by such cultivation of the ear and the eye; and so with the corresponding sensations of pleasure in

correctness, in tunefulness, in grace, in harmony. Again, in drawing any object, indeed, we often feel that we are really seeing it for the first time, and that there are qualities of form and colour in it that else we should never have discovered; and if by such cultivation of the eye we learn to see truly the facts of *Nature*, we shall by the same means find ourselves greatly assisted in understanding the aims of Art, less familiar and more intangible as they are; and bringing mental qualifications to the aid of the senses—powers of reflection, memory, imagination—we shall be properly equipped for the judgment and appreciation of the Fine Arts.

The Fine Arts fall naturally into two groups. One group consisting of those Arts whose productions correspond to real objects, they may be called Imitative Arts—Poetry, Painting, Sculpture. The second group consisting of those which belong in part to science, as having mathematical relations,—these are Music and Architecture.

Poetry and Music only belong to my

subject by way of illustration; they, being built up of sounds, not sights, of words and notes, not form and colour, appeal to a set of outward perceptions different from those to which the Plastic Arts,—as Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture have been called—appeal. Still, as I believe, the essence, the soul, of all of these is the same. Writers have amused themselves with fanciful definitions, such as calling Painting a dumb poem, and Poetry a speaking picture, Architecture frozen music, and the like. Such sayings may perhaps help us to realise better the analogy that really exists among the Arts and the identity of the spirit animating them all; but each of them has, none the less, its especial province, and cannot justly encroach upon or usurp the function of any other.

Now, as to the first group the Arts that correspond to real objects—Poetry, Painting, Sculpture. Let us consider for a moment Poetry. The materials of Poetry are words; and by means of these she deals with man and the material world, with natural outward

beauty, and with human thoughts, feelings, emotions, and in so doing has to reject the commonplace, the ignoble, the trite, the *prosaic.* Poetry, in describing "the clang of arms, the battle roar," leaves out details, strategical dispositions, and statistics generally, so that, if we want a satisfactory account from an historical or military point of view, we must turn to a different chronicler; not that the poetical view is *false*, but it is *different:* the rush of melodiously forcible words paint the glow, the ardour of combat, the glory of victory, that are certainly part of the truth, but the part that belongs to the imagination; and that part the sober chronicler leaves alone, busying himself with making out the lesser details, the actual facts,—veracity, not beauty, being his aim. Let me give an example of what I mean; it shall be from Shakespeare:—

> "Many a time has banish'd Norfolk fought
> For Jesu Christ in glorious Christian field,
> Streaming the ensign of the Christian Cross
> Against black Pagans, Turks, and Saracens;

> And, toil'd with works of war, retired himself
> To Italy; and there at Venice gave
> His body to that pleasant country's earth
> And his pure soul into his captain Christ
> Under whose colours he had fought so long."

Think how this would stand in a biographical dictionary, or a dry paragraph of history. "The Duke of Norfolk, banished by King Richard II. in such a year, joined the crusades, and, after so many years of hard fighting, retired to Venice, where he died in such a year at a certain specified age." But the way in which the poet tells the story, presenting only the poetical side of it, is at once felt to be more delightful, more valuable than the other, though dates and figures are left out. This is the Fine Art of Poetry, which, in dealing with real objects, actual circumstances, with a fine instinct rejects the prosaic, and, fixing in the mind the ideal spiritual side of things, gives us an impression, shows us a view that we should never have felt or seen for ourselves, but which, when made to see or feel, we perfectly understand

and delight in. Or, if we have something of the poetical imagination, it is the gift of expression that is wanting; and it is the gift of expression in various forms that makes the poet, the painter, the sculptor. There is a mechanical part, a technical knowledge, belonging to each of the Fine Arts; but the possession of them alone does not constitute the artist. The rules of versification, and knowledge of the sounds and quantities of syllables, and the correct use and management of words,—these are the mechanical parts of poetry; with these the poet works, as the painter with laws of perspective, rules of anatomy, and acquaintance with the nature and effect of colours; as the sculptor by the rules of anatomy too, and skill of hand, and knowledge of the working of clay and stone and marble. These things are the technical, the mechanical side of Art, and though perfection in them is necessary, yet it is not enough to make the poet, the painter, the sculptor; he must have the incommunicable gift of genius as well.

Skill in words alone, without genius, produces long dry descriptions, moral dissertations, and detailed histories, only differing from prose by being cut into lengths and having a certain number of rhyming syllables. Such are Phillip's epic poem (*Cider-Making*) or Armstrong's on the *Art of Preserving Health.*

> "How best the fickle fabric to support
> Of mortal man; in healthful body how
> A healthful mind the longest to maintain."

This sounds sufficiently prosaic. In painting, this same uninspired industry or skill produces literal representations of actual scenes and persons, in which every detail of feature and dress is exactly reproduced, but no new ideas are suggested,—fruit with quite a real bloom, and flies and dewdrops ready to fly or fall; and in Sculpture it results in imitations of veils over faces, of buttons, of tassels, lace and frills, and the *texture* of hair and drapery.

The more we study great *poetry* and penetrate its spirit the better shall we understand what belongs to the great in other arts.

It has over and over been observed that it is an apparent accident which decides a natural genius whether to become a poet, a painter, or a sculptor, and there are many instances in which excellence in all has been united. Michael Angelo was all these, and Leonardo was a poet, a musician, a sculptor, an architect, as well as a painter. And often in our own time, one has occasion to observe that the best artists in any one of the Arts have the greatest understanding of, and insight into, all the rest. One creative spirit, one lofty range of imagination, thought, and feeling, animates them all,—it is only the mode of *expression* that varies. Each different mode of expression demands, of course, different subjects and different treatment, but the spirit, the inspiration, are the same. Shakespeare, Raphael, Pheidias,—each had for his original subjects and models only literal circumstances, actual people; and each in his several manner delivered his message of beauty to the world. The medical poem I quoted above, the picture of the "Derby

Day," the Monster at Temple Bar, deliver no message of beauty; they have none to deliver. They would have been much more welcome and appropriate in the form of a doctor's prescription, a caricature in *Punch*, or a macadamised road, than in their usurping of the *forms* of Fine Art without its *spirit*.

I have said that these three Arts—Poetry, Painting, Sculpture—correspond to real objects, and thus may be called Imitative Arts. Their object is indeed the imitation of Nature, *but not the exact imitation*. In each of these three, clever direct imitations have been produced; but we can tell by the kind of admiration we feel for them that the imitation is not work of a high kind. Southey's *Falls at Lodore*, Poe's *Bells*, are instances that occur to me in poetry. At the first reading they draw attention, they excite curiosity and surprise, and indeed admiration; but for what qualities?—for ingenuity, for command of language, for jingle of rhymes, for clever reproduction in words of natural sounds; and there the admiration must end.

It is short-lived; it has no lasting food to subsist upon. I do not say that these instances are bad and ought not to have existed, but that they are not poetry in any high sense, and I mention them to help me to define the great and the little in other arts.

It is generally considered the highest and indeed the only legitimate praise that can be bestowed on a painting, to say that it is exactly like Nature. And in ancient times before the Art of Painting, properly so called, was understood and practised, an idea seems to have prevailed that the best picture was the one that most completely deceived the senses. Witness the stories that have come down to us of the painters of the fifth century before Christ: of Zeuxis, who painted a boy carrying a basket of fruit, the fruit being so well imitated that the birds came and pecked at it; and when the public applauded, the painter said, "Had the *boy* been as well painted as the *fruit*, the birds would not have dared to touch it;" of Parrhasius, the rival of Zeuxis, who was asked to withdraw

the curtain and show his picture, when the curtain turned out to be the picture itself, and Zeuxis acknowledged himself surpassed, since he had only deceived birds, but Parrhasius, men. These stories, childish as they seem, go to prove that close imitation of Nature, were it the legitimate object in Painting, is only possible with regard to small and insignificant things. Fruit may be closely imitated, but not a tree; flowers may be so painted as to deceive the eye and make one think for a moment that they are real; not so a pasture. Cut-glass may be imitated, but not a rainbow; a dew-drop, but not a waterfall; a curtain, but not the sky; an insect, but not the sacred human form. Art in its highest form expresses nothing mean, nothing transitory. For one moment we are pleased when we see a fly on a picture, and then find that it is a painted one, and that we cannot brush it away; but the little pleasure is gone in a moment, not so the fly, which remains to become a weariness. The small surprise can never be repeated; it is

a juggling trick that has been explained. If in poetry or fiction (which is a kind of poetry) we wanted the same close following of Nature which most people demand in a picture, we should choose verbatim reports of moving scenes that have actually taken place; these might be raw material for the poet's imagination to work on, but they could not be poetry till he transformed them, adding some things and leaving out others. A photograph in like manner is a closer following of Nature than any picture can be (save in respect of colour; but with that deficiency, as we are now told, science is prepared to do away); and the photographic view or portrait contains the elements, the material of a picture; but for want of selection, combination, composition, and above all, for want of a human mind and soul acting on the materials, it is not a picture. In the same way a cast of the human form or of any part of it, is, and must be, absolutely, almost unpleasantly, truthful; but in a piece of sculpture we want something more, and

I may say, something less—we want no clumsiness, no harshness, no angularity, no awkwardness; but grace, strength, beauty. The elements of these are in the human form; it is the sculptor's art to find them out, to draw them forth, and to show us an embodiment of them. Just as we expect the poet to discover and express for us thoughts and feelings and ideas that we should not have discovered nor expressed for ourselves, so we should expect the painter to select, to bring together in a picture, beauties and hidden effects we are not ourselves capable of seeing in Nature. A picture should be a revelation, not a reproduction. I do not say that a painting should not be natural, but that it should not seek to directly imitate Nature. "Realisation to the mind does not necessitate deception to the eye." We should be made by the painter to realise vividly the scenes, the persons, he depicts. But a literal representation, were it possible, is not desirable—a looking-glass would do as much for us, and we want the artist to do something more. "His picture,"

says Mr. Ruskin, "may be likened to a glass indeed, but to a transparent glass of sweet and strange colour, that gives new tones to what we see through it, and of strength and clearness to let us see more than we could ourselves, and bring Nature up to us and near to us."

In pictures we have what is *like* the form of man, but in Sculpture we have the form itself; yet, as an Art, it seems more ideal, more removed from ordinary life than Painting. Details fitly represented and accepted in Painting seem mean or superfluous in Sculpture. The most ordinary worker in stone must feel this—the stone is so severe, so lasting, so uncompromising, that a carver in it must indeed be strongly determined to be wrong who produces a "Veiled Vestal,"—that kneeling figure, swathed face, and all that I can remember at the '62 Exhibition, so deftly carved that it looked almost like a real veil,—wonderful skill all worse than wasted, for who would really think a veil more interesting than a face. The sculptor

must have had nothing to express, to communicate, but an idea of his own cleverness, —that was his notion of a message of beauty. If this sort of thing is wanted, we can have it all, and more, at Madame Tussaud's. The true task of Sculpture is to present the form of man in full natural beauty, and this can be done only by showing that form unclothed; or, if drapery is used, it is not to conceal the body or to disfigure its outline and structure, but in its folds to harmonise with the form and organisation, and, with grace of arrangement, clinging to it, and receiving right direction, just as in music the instrumental accompaniment follows the voice. Finally, to quote from Mr. Pater, "The base of all artistic genius is the power of conceiving humanity in a new, striking, rejoicing way,— of putting a happy world of its own creation in place of the meaner world of common days." "Art is Art," says Goethe, "precisely, because it is not Nature."

To come to the second group—those arts that belong in part to science—Music and

Architecture; Music being based on the science of harmony, and Architecture on the mathematical and mechanical sciences. Music composed and produced in accordance with the fixed relations between musical sounds, appeals entirely, while Poetry only appeals partly, to the ear; it expresses what cannot be expressed by words, or colour, or form. In attempting to describe the sort of pleasure one feels in listening to a Beethoven symphony, for instance, one is at a loss for words; the memory, the imagination, seem to be reached by some dim unfrequented road. We seem to remember a mysterious something, to imagine something formless, delicious, intangible; the music ceases, the sensation is gone, and can only be recovered the next time the notes are heard. Successive sounds, which we call melody, gather definiteness of meaning from the words to which they are often joined; but the simultaneous sounds of harmony alone never give up their secret, even though we know every contrivance by which they belong to each

other and to their place. A certain amount of imitation of natural sounds seems to belong to music in some of her more definite moods; but, as in the other arts, it can only be appropriate when the subject is mean and trivial. The purely imitative parts of Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony can never be the most admirable, nor can that composition take the highest place among the master's writings. I will quote a passage from a well-known critic concerning this work: "At the end of the second movement, Beethoven allowed himself most unwisely, and merely to please a lady admirer, to add a passage of direct imitation of the nightingale, quail, and cuckoo, not originally contemplated, and which is a blot on an exquisite composition; and in the storm movement, parts of which are magnificently and poetically suggestive, he has written in one place a series of rapid groups of four notes for the double basses against five for the violoncello (to be played in the same time); so that no two notes are sounded together, and a confused rumble of sound is

produced. The passage passes quickly over in performance; and those who do not know of the device would perhaps not notice it, but it is a most dangerous precedent, and a method of treatment which most distinctly is not music." We instinctively feel that music is greatest when least translatable, and when she appeals to *moods* rather than *ideas*, and *suggests* rather than *asserts* them.

Architecture, the other art belonging to this second group—the art of designing and executing buildings of all sorts—is, like Music, a science as well as an art; and the artist in it, besides possessing the gift of genius, must be something of a mathematician, mechanic, chemist, philosopher as well, and Mr. Ruskin would have him to be a painter and sculptor too.

He says (and I think his observations will help to illustrate something of what I have been saying): "The gifts which distinctively mark the artist are those of sympathy and imagination. . . . We all have a general and sufficient idea of imagination and of its

work with our hands and in our hearts; we understand it, I suppose, as the imaging or picturing of new things in our thoughts, and we always have an involuntary respect for this power, wherever we can recognise it, acknowledging it to be a greater power than manipulation, or calculation, or observation, or any other human faculty.

"If we see an old woman," he says, "spinning at the fireside, and distributing her thread dexterously from the distaff, we respect her for her manipulation; if we ask her how much she expects to make in a year, and she answers quickly, we respect her for her calculation; if she is watching at the same time that none of her grandchildren fall into the fire, we respect her for her observation; yet, for all this, she may still be a commonplace old woman enough. But if she is all the time telling her grandchildren a fairy tale out of her head, we praise her for her imagination, and say she must be rather a remarkable old woman."

Precisely, in like manner, if an architect

does his working-drawing well, we praise him for his manipulation; if he keeps closely within his contract, we praise him for his honest arithmetic; if he looks well to the laying of his beams, so that nobody shall drop through the floor, we praise him for his observation. But he must somehow tell us a fairy tale out of his head beside all this, else we cannot praise him for his imagination, nor speak of him as we did of the old woman, as being in any wise out of the common way, a rather remarkable architect.

A mere builder with a due understanding of proportion could plan and carry out a sufficiently large and commodious house, church, public hall, to contain the family, the congregation, the assemblage of persons. But from the days of the Tower of Babel, men have wanted more—some sense of beauty, of sublimity, which no mere builder could bring about. And this is the Fine Art of Architecture.

Now though, as I believe, the Art of every period has its peculiar beauty and

fitness, being the natural outcome and flower of the higher instincts of man, yet there have been times in his history when the conditions and surroundings being surpassingly favourable to the growth, some one of the arts has reached apparently the highest pitch of perfection, and must remain an example and a study to all succeeding ages. There have been in the world's lifetime several blossoming times of Architecture and of Poetry. "The essence of a style in Architecture, properly so called, is that it should be practised for ages and applied to all purposes." So there have been Egyptian, Greek, Gothic, and other styles in Architecture. In like manner there have been different great schools of Poetry—the Greek tragedy, the Elizabethan drama, the Augustan age, and many others. But, unlike Architecture and Poetry, Painting, Sculpture, and Music have each had but one great period. Sculpture takes the earliest place, and attains its highest perfection in Greece during the age of Pheidias. Next, at a wide interval, comes the great

period of Painting in Italy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. And from that moment the Art of Music begins to gather importance, until in these days we find ourselves in possession of the best, both in creation and execution.

"No great school," says Mr. Ruskin, "ever yet existed which had not for primal aim the representation of some natural fact, as truly as possible. There have only yet appeared in the world three schools of perfect Art—schools, that is to say, which did their work as well as it seems possible to do it." These are the Athenian School of Sculpture of the fifth century B.C. and the Florentine and Venetian Schools of Painting, nearly contemporaneous with each other during part of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries after Christ. The word School of Art in this sense must be taken to mean a body of workers with one original genius, or perhaps more than one, at their head—a genius so vigorous, so full of strength and originality, as to influence those workers and inspire them with his own

ideas, compelling them, as it were, to work in accordance with his spirit."

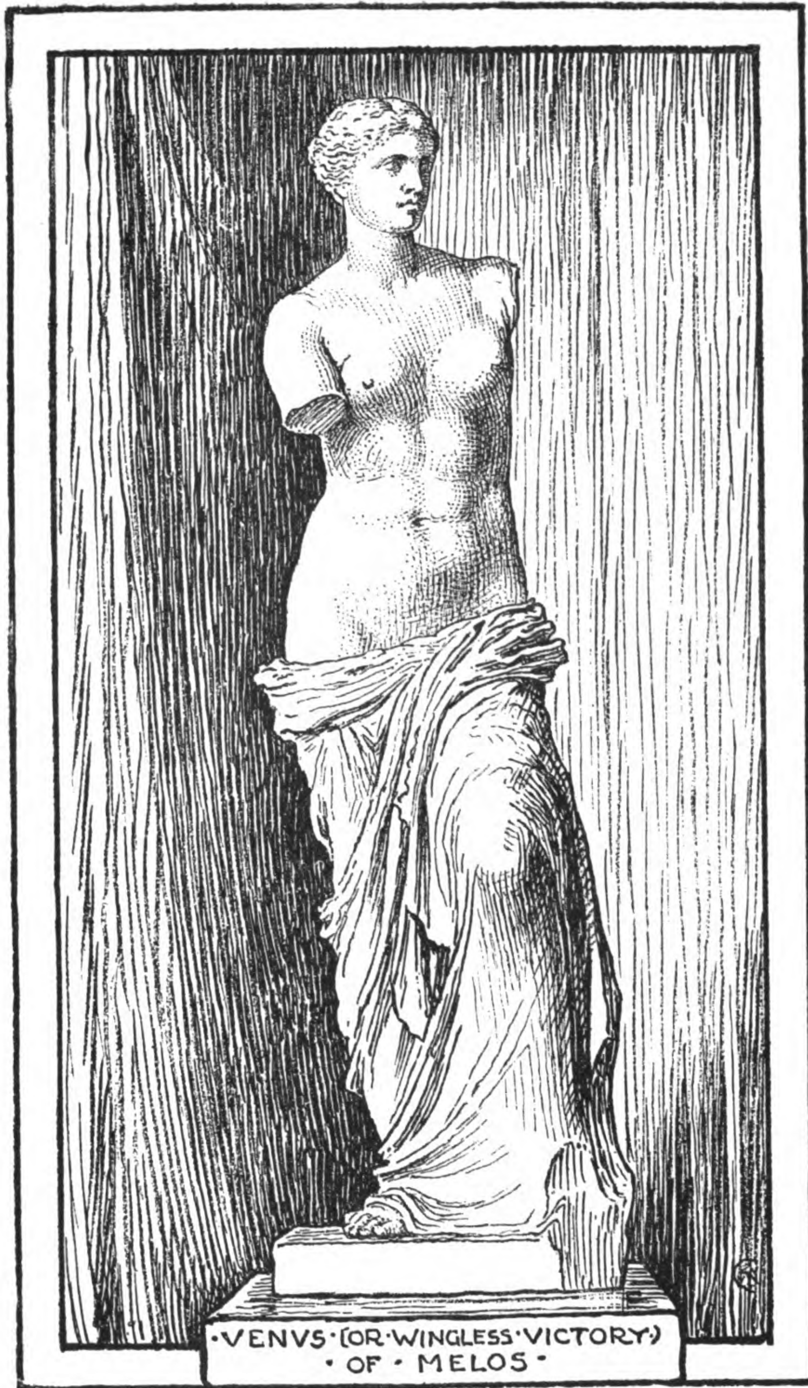
So at the head of the Athenian School stood Pheidias, and his aim and that of his fellow-workers was the perfect representation of the human body in Sculpture.

At the head of the Florentine School we may place either Raphael, or Michael Angelo, or Leonardo, and their aim was the perfect expression of human character and emotion in Painting.

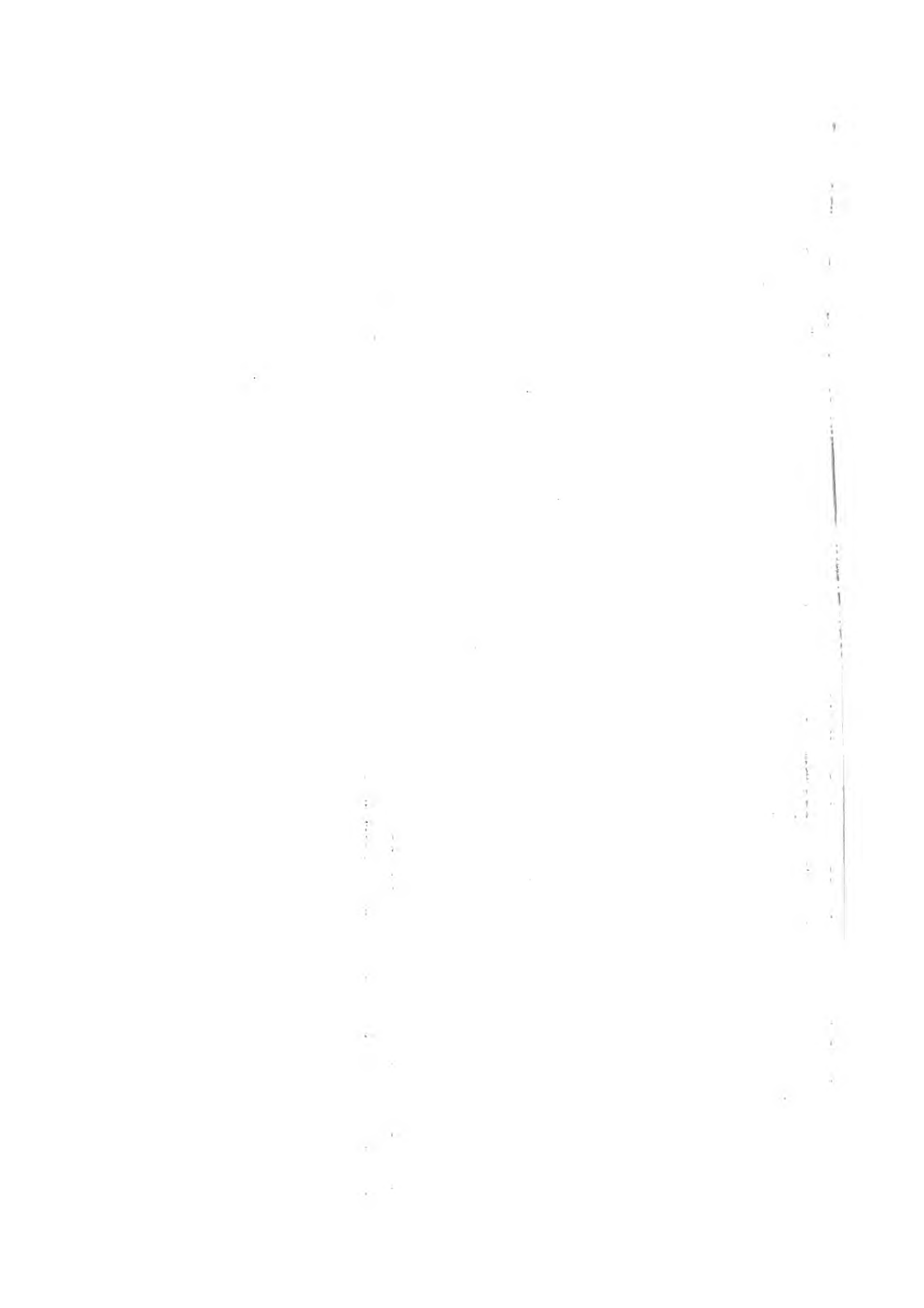
At the head of the Venetian School stand Titian and Paul Veronese, and their object was the representation in Painting of the effects of colour and shade on all things, chiefly on the human form.

A vivid idea, a fixed notion, of these three schools and their characteristics must always be a valuable basis on which to build a better and larger acquaintance with the masterpieces of Painting and Sculpture; and to present that idea, that notion, as clearly and plainly as I can, will be my object in the next two lectures.

For the present I will ask you to bear



To face page 188.



them in mind, and to associate each of them with one of the three works of Art I have here to show you in photographs,—works of Art which doubtless you have all either seen or continually heard of,—the "Venus" of Melos, belonging to the Athenian School of Pheidias; Raphael's "Dispute of the Sacrament" of the Florentine School; and Titian's "Flora" of the Venetian School.[1]

And first the "Venus." The photograph gives, of course, a very inadequate idea of the sculpture, of which the original is in the Louvre. I remember well when I saw it for the first time. I seemed all at once to comprehend what Sculpture at its best really is. A divine grace and radiance seemed to shine forth from this beautiful woman; though the spear on which she is supposed to have rested, and her lovely arms with which she held it, are gone, one feels one's self still in the presence of a charming, dignified, sweet personality. To my mind she is the *Dea certè*, the real goddess, the true Venus of the

[1] See pages 152, 196.

highest pagan ideal; others, such as the Medicean Venus at Florence, and her of the Capitoline collection at Rome, the Venus of the Vatican—these may be almost faultlessly fair, but in them there is something of falseness, something of frailty: this alone is the perfect goddess.

Now, to come to the example of the Florentine School,—the "Dispute concerning the Sacrament," by Raphael.

It was about the middle of the year 1508 that Raphael received from Pope Julius II. a commission to adorn the splendid rooms of the Vatican with paintings. Three of these rooms and a great hall were painted by him on their walls and vaulted ceilings. The paintings on the four walls of the first room were to have for subjects, Theology, Poetry, Philosophy, and Jurisprudence,—the chief ideas of the intellectual powers of that day. This, the so-called "Dispute of the Sacrament," is the Theology. Above the glory of the triumphant Church sits Christ, its builder and maker, enthroned on clouds, and on His coun-

tenance a divine mildness and mercy; by His side are the Madonna, and John the Baptist pointing to Him as the Redeemer of the world; below is the Holy Spirit in the likeness of a dove; and above all is the Godhead Himself in a glory of angels; on both sides seated on clouds are the godly men of old—the prophets, priests, kings, apostles of the Bible story. Below, grouped on both sides of an altar, on which are displayed the monstrance and the consecrated host, are the Fathers of the Church, bishops and teachers; and in their faces and figures are expressed, with complete truth, every variation of feeling that each might be supposed to have at such a time—enthusiasm, exalted belief, concentrated thought, careful investigation, fervent devotion, dispute, and doubt. "This picture," says Mr. Ruskin, "will be a type accepted by everybody, and will involve no possibly questionable points; the Germans will admit it; the English academicians will admit it; and the English purists and præ-Raphaelites will admit it. Well, there you have the truth

of human expression proposed as an aim. That is the way people look when they feel this or that, when they have this or that other mental character. Are they devotional, thoughtful, affectionate, indignant, or inspired? Are they prophets, saints, priests, or kings?—then, whatsoever is truly thoughtful, affectionate, priestly, kingly—*that* the Florentine School tried to discern and show; *that* they have discerned and shown; and all their greatness is first fastened in their aim at this central truth—the open expression of the living human soul."

I can say very little about my third example—the "Flora" of Titian, of the Venetian School, whose aim was the representation of colour and shade—for the very reason that these qualities cannot fitly be reproduced in a photograph or engraving. Perhaps some of my hearers may be so fortunate as to have seen the original in the Uffizzi Gallery at Florence; and nothing but a sight of the original can give a just idea of the glory of the colouring, the tender glow of the

lights, and the melting depth of the shades. We can only see from the photograph that this is a master portrait of a beautiful woman, with a kind of freedom and nobility in her face and figure; whatever Titian chose to paint he treated in this large and healthful style. In my lecture on Painting, I shall try to describe at greater length the characteristics of this Venetian School and the reasons of its greatness.

And now to recapitulate. I have sought to show you that the aim of the Fine Arts is Beauty alone—beauty, physical, intellectual, spiritual; that they aim at no direct material utility, though, as a moral instrument of elevating, purifying, enlightening power, they have a great influence in the world. And the search after and understanding of Beauty is to be promoted by inquiring into the reasons of the general verdict of mankind about the great masterpieces of Art, and also studying and cultivating our own sensations with regard to them.

I will remind you that the Fine Arts are

separated into two groups: those that belong to Science as well as to Art—Music and Architecture; and those whose object is the imitation of Nature alone—Poetry, Painting, Sculpture. And it is to be remembered about these last that though their object is imitation, it is not exact imitation; and it is well to keep in memory this saying, "Realisation to the mind does not necessitate deception to the eye."

Of the Arts thus classified, only Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, belong to my present subject; they appeal, through the eye, exclusively to the sense of beauty; and any practical knowledge of any part of these three is a great assistance to the enjoyment of the great works that have been produced by painters, sculptors, architects.

And, lastly, I have briefly characterised the three great schools of perfect Art:—

The Athenian School of Sculpture.

The Florentine School of expression in Painting.

The Venetian School of colour and light and shade in Painting.

These will be my subject on the next two occasions.

By fixing these in the mind and associating with them these three works of world-wide renown, a sort of framework will be formed into which may be fitted whatever is gained by later knowledge and experience and observation. At first it is very possible that we may feel ourselves slow to perceive what *are* the transcendent beauties of these things which all the world has praised ever since they were made; but one learns to love them by degrees, and to value them far more highly than the transitory Art of the day that will perish with it, as we learn to love Shakespeare and Beethoven.

> "Nor do we merely feel these essences
> For one short hour; no, even as the trees
> That whisper round a temple become soon
> Dear as the temple's self, so does the moon,
> The passion poesy, glories infinite,
> Haunt us till they become a cheering light
> Unto our souls, and bound to us so fast,
> That, whether there be shine, or gloom o'ercast,
> They alway must be with us, or we die."

TITIAN
PORTRAIT, CALLED "FLORA"
UFFIZI GALLERY FLORENCE

V.—FINE ART—SCULPTURE AND ARCHITECTURE.

I HAVE placed Sculpture and Architecture together in this Lecture, because, as they are more dependent on each other than is the case with any other two of the remaining Arts, a sketch, indicating the chief periods and characteristics of both, can be made more comprehensive than by treating them separately. I am only too sensible how meagre such a sketch must needs be. I can only recur to my former words, and repeat that my aim is merely to make a beginning

of knowledge and interest in these things in the minds of those in whom it is not already made; to construct a framework, however slight, into which those who are beginning to care for and to study Art may fit what they learn and observe.

The same *material* is common to both Sculpture and Architecture,—stone, clay, wood, and various metals being used in both. Both are subject to the same laws of gravity; the works of both require a fixed point where they can stand securely on the ground above which they rise. The difference between the two is the *subject* of their works. While Architecture deals with the inorganic inanimate substances I have just named, producing buildings and monuments,—things still inorganic and inanimate,—Sculpture, dealing with the same substances, produces images of organic animate form; the one, by statues, groups, and reliefs, lending her aid to the other by filling, adorning, and enriching pediment and arch, niche and column.

As I have said, Architecture has had

several styles and periods of excellence: Sculpture only one, and that one the School of Athens under Pheidias. The Arts, however, of Sculpture and Architecture, and in fact of Painting too, were practised and carried to great excellence in much earlier times among the Egyptians. The beginnings of their Art are lost in the mists of antiquity; and the earlier its date, the greater its perfection. In this respect Egyptian Art differs in a marked manner from the Art of other nations of which we can trace the origin. The general rule is, that as a nation rises into greater freedom and power, the Arts rise with it, and that the time when their highest perfection is reached seems to be the signal for the nation's fall in power, and with that fall their Art is dragged down and debased. But in Egypt, in the 14th century before Christ, the pyramids of Memphis were raised, rocky tombs were hollowed out, obelisks were erected, and the far-famed Sphinx - Colossus—the mystic combination of a human head with the body

of a mighty lion—was sculptured ; and these things are the highest manifestations of Egyptian Art. Since then, through the succeeding centuries, no alteration took place in its types, as long as Art was practised at all ; all was fixed and unchangeable. The reason of this unchanging type is to be found in the complete subjection of the people, and therefore of the artist, the worker, to one despotic rule—that of the kings and priests, who themselves were subjected to immutable laws, working ever in the same direction. That division of labour which I have before noticed to be destructive to any Art of a high kind prevailed in Egyptian Art. In the production of their wall-paintings, which have come down to us, and from which we learn many curious and useful things, one man prepared the surface, a second drew the outline, a third hollowed the outlines for the sunk relief, a fourth laid on the colour.

Then too, in Egypt, the artist was looked on as an artisan, and was classed in the lowest rank. No one, from natural inclina-

tion or especial impulse, selected Art as his pursuit; but the son followed, as in all crafts and professions, the mode of life of his father, and set his foot in the tracks of his predecessor, so that no one can be said to have left a footprint that could strictly be called his own. In this respect the same may be said of other Eastern nations; it is the same with Assyria, it is the same with India, it is the same with China. Although manifesting admirable powers of design, gifts of colour, perfection of workmanship, the Art of these nations has been so bound down by restrictions and trammelled by slavish conditions that it could never attain to any true development, any positive history. The activity of the imagination was checked—quenched—and so the result was a certain rigidity, formality, uniformity; it was reserved for a real, living, breathing genius of production—the Greek—soon to break away from all this and leave it far behind. The fixed type of the Egyptian pyramid and the lotus-flower decoration, the Assyrian bull and the Chinese

pagoda, are familiar to all of us, for they remained so long the same, being reproduced over and over again for generations. And when we consider the representations of the human form that these nations have produced, we shall still see the same fixed type, the same want of life, motion, expression. Think of the Egyptian warriors, water-carriers, slaves, attendants, priests, kings, all with flat skulls, low and receding brows, oval and oblique eyes, full lips, and the same satisfied shallow expression. So may we recall the stout squat figures on Assyrian monuments, and the faces with large curved nose, large eyes, full lips, and elaborately curled beard, face after face the same; and in Chinese vase and rice-paper paintings, the heads, with flat noses, high cheek-bones, and little eyes, eternally the same. Shall we consider either of these—the Egyptian, the Assyrian, the Chinese—a worthy or beautiful type of the human face divine?

And when we look round for this type it is the Greek face that attracts our admira-

tion and satisfies our judgment; the sweet oval of the face, the straight, delicate nose, the delicately arched brows, the clearly cut chin and mouth,—these go to make up the true type of beauty. "In representing the human figure," says Mr. Pater, "Egyptian Art had held by mathematical or mechanical proportions exclusively. The Greek apprehends of it, as the main truth, that it is a living organism, with freedom of movement; and hence the infinite possibilities of motion, and of expression by motion, with which the imagination credits the higher sort of Greek Sculpture; while the figures of Egyptian Art, graceful as they often are, seem absolutely incapable of any motion or gesture, other than the one actually designed." The water-carrier looks as if he had never done, and could never do, anything but carry water, or the bowman anything but hold his bow extended in act to shoot; so fixed and without play of life is the figure, as if it had been cut out of cardboard. "The work of the Greek sculptor" (I return to Mr. Pater), "together

with its more real anatomy, becomes full also of human soul. . . . In the works of the Asiatic tradition, in the marbles of Nineveh for instance, and in the early Greek Art, so far as we can see, which derives from it, the form of man is inadequate, and below the measure of perfection attained there in the representation of the lower forms of life; just as in the little reflective Art of Japan, so lovely in its reproduction of flower or bird, the human form comes almost as a caricature, or is at least untouched by any higher ideal. To that Asiatic tradition, then, with its perfect craftsmanship, its consummate skill in design, its power of hand, the Dorian, the European, the true Hellenic influence brought a revelation of the mind and body of man."

I propose to-day to lay before you the causes and conditions of the Greek perfection in Art, and to glance, though it must be but slightly and briefly, at the civilisation of the Greeks, something of their habits of life and ways of thinking and feeling. For, in explaining to ourselves, realising, understanding

something of one great period of Art undeniably foremost, according to the verdict of all the ages, we shall have a standard of perfection to which at least one range of notions about Art may be referred ; and from the general principles of taste governing that group of the best human productions, we may gain light on all the rest.

Now the Greeks, more than any other nation of the world, were pre-eminently a nation of taste ; they had a genius for beauty. The first cause of the Greek understanding and love of beauty is found in the physical beauty they, as a race, possessed in a high degree ; and, happy in the conscious possession of the gift, they cultivated and valued it to its fullest extent. The four wishes of the ancient Greek, quoted by Plato, were :— 1st, To be healthy ; 2d, To be beautiful ; 3d, To be rich honestly ; 4th, To be gay and merry with one's friends. And indeed we may say that any person in whom these four wishes were fulfilled would be likely to have a very pleasant time of it.

"By no people," says Winckelmann, "has beauty been so highly esteemed as by the Greeks. The priests of a youthful Jupiter at Ægæ,—of the Ismenian Apollo, of the priest who, at Tanagra, led the procession of Mercury, bearing a lamb upon his shoulders,—were always youths to whom the prize of beauty had been awarded. The citizens of Egesta in Sicily (Greek colonists) erected a monument to a certain Philip—who was not their fellow-citizen, but of Croton—for his distinguished beauty, and the people made offerings to it. And as beauty was so longed for and prized by the Greeks, every beautiful person sought to become known to the whole people by this distinction, and above all to approve himself to the artists, because they awarded the prize; and this was for the artists an opportunity of having supreme beauty ever before their eyes. Beauty even gave a right to fame; and we find in Greek histories the most beautiful people distinguished. There were established contests for beauty by Cypselus, King of Arcadia, by

the river Alphëus; and at Sparta, and at Lesbos in the temple of Juno, and among the Parrhavii, there were contests for beauty among women." So in those times were natural advantages more honoured than learning. The civilised world had not yet learned, moralists and poets had not yet invented, the sentiment, the warning:—

> "Beauty is but a vain and doubtful good;
> A shining gloss that fadeth suddenly;
> A flower that dies when first it 'gins to bud;
> A brittle glass that's broken presently;
>
> A doubtful good, a gloss, a glass, a flower
> Lost, faded, broken, dead within an hour."

Now, when in our times a man or woman possesses great natural advantages, a certain self-consciousness and artificiality of manner nearly always accompanies them; the reason of this may be found in the comparative rareness of the gift; it seems to be such a difficult one to carry about gracefully. People seem often too proud; or else are they rather ashamed of being beautiful? For the severest homilies of the moralist of childhood are

directed against pride of person and appearance; we try to withhold as long as possible from the young any knowledge of their own charms, esteeming that knowledge to be a dangerous thing, and the gift of beauty itself of very doubtful value. The Greeks had a very different estimate, as we have seen. As it has been said, it was given to them to do nothing too much. They seem to have had perfectly healthy, simple, in some respects childlike minds, in perfectly healthy, beautiful bodies; anything morbid or over-wrought was impossible to them. And so a sweet serenity, a constant cheerfulness, was their habitual tone of mind. With them the object of Art, according to Pericles, was "*to chase sadness from life.*" We find that in conduct and manners the qualities they most valued were propriety, grace, modesty, reverence to the aged; they disliked any undignified disturbance of manner, any excitement about trifles, over-haste to tell news, undue eagerness or curiosity, impatience to open a letter, quick walking, crossed legs, any hasty, sudden,

exaggerated action. The result of all this was simplicity, order, calmness—in fine, *taste* in all they said or did; and so it followed that the productions of the common Arts were simple and elegant, of perfect craftsmanship and beauty. Mr. Pater makes us remark how in Homer there is a constant preoccupation with the beauty of the common things of life. "We seem to pass in reading him," he says, "through the treasures of some royal collection; in him the presentation of almost every aspect of life is beautified by the work of cunning hands. The thrones, coffers, couches, of curious carpentry, are studded with bossy ornaments of precious metals effectively disposed, or inlaid with stained ivory, or blue cyanus, or amber, or pale amber like gold; the surfaces of the stone conduits, the public washing troughs, the ramparts on which the weary soldiers rest themselves when returned to Troy, are fair and smooth; all the fine qualities in colour and texture of woven stuff are carefully noted; the fineness, closeness, softness,

pliancy, gloss, the whiteness or nectar-like tints in which the weaver delights to work; to weave the sea-purple threads is the appropriate function of queens and noble women. . . . The numerous sorts of cups are bossed with golden studs, or have handles wrought with figures of doves for instance. The great brazen caldrons bear an epithet that means flowery. The trappings of the horses, the various parts of the chariots, are formed of various metals. The women's ornaments and the instruments of their toilet are described; the golden vials for unguents; *Use and Beauty are still undivided*; all that men's hands are set to make has still a fascination alike for workman and spectators." So great a love for these things had they, that they made their very gods help to make them. Hephæstos (Vulcan) was a worker in metals; Pallas Athene was skilled in spinning and weaving. And all these things ministered to none but simple and healthy requirements; there was no ostentation, no extravagance, no undue luxury, no vulgarity;

great men lived in small houses, and in them there was plain living and high thinking.

Their dress, simple and natural like all the rest, consisted of a longer or shorter under-garment, the "chiton"— like a sleeveless shirt, and worn without a girdle,—and a mantle-like upper garment, the "himation,"* which was only a large four-square, thrown over the shoulder of the left arm, and drawn either above or below the right arm. Hence the style of the garment did not depend on the tailor or the dressmaker, but every man and woman arranged his or her own garment in the way most suited to individual character and taste; so that it became of itself a form of expression.

The natural unity that existed among the Greeks, in spite of their political diversity, has been accounted for by their common language, their common religion, and the games that were open to all, and offered a universal motive and place of assemblage for the whole of the Greeks. The gymnasia,— places of physical training for these games

existed all over Greece; in them the youths practised and perfected their bodily powers, in attempting to rival the strength, the fleetness, the beauty of the gods themselves; thus the artists frequenting the gymnasia had always under their eyes beautiful attitudes and forms. And as a result of this, and of all I have been describing, it followed that the Greek ideal should express itself preeminently in sculpture. To the athlete once crowned in the games a statue was raised; to him who was crowned twice, a second statue—a portrait of himself. In Athens a statue was what a title or order of merit is with us. Cities rivalled each other in the beauty of their statues, and of these the best were of the gods and heroes and were placed in the temples. Every city seems to have had a population of statues as well as of living people; so it followed that the artist was a highly honoured person. While the Greeks felt a kind of contempt for an author, they had the greatest respect for an artist. "The artist is the only wise man" was a saying

of Socrates. An artist might become a law-giver if he desired, or he might be chosen to command an army, and his statue had the especial honour of being placed near to those of the gods: his reputation was not dependent on fashion, or the fancies of patrons, but on the formally delivered judgment of the wisest men.

When Polygnotus, in the fifth century B.C., painted a public edifice in Athens, the Amphictyons ordered that he should be entertained at the public expense throughout Greece. In contrast to this, let me tell you of something that happened in our own day. Some years ago Mr. Watts the R.A. offered, to the Directors of the London and North-Western Railway Company, to paint the central hall of the Euston Station free of any charge, and they refused. I suppose they thought that the public were in danger of being so interested in the paintings as to forget to take their tickets, or might even be tempted by them to stay in London, and not go on their North-Western jour-

neys,—which, of course, would never do at all!

Well, but with the Greeks: so near, in their eyes, seemed the artistic gift to the divine, that they believed their first statues to have fallen from heaven. "Hence," says Dr. Lübke, "Greek art originated with the images of the gods. Homer had glorified the national conceptions in his verse, and had represented the gods, in perfect human form, as acting and suffering, gracious or angry, endowed with all human passions. If the East had filled its mythology with gloomy and fearful legends, and profound or fantastic subtleties, and therefore could only portray the forms of the gods by monstrous deformity of the general type, in the clear pure myths of the Greeks, all misty immensity vanished, and man created the gods after his own image. Although whole stages of child-like helplessness had to be passed through, in which man only succeeded in forming a puppet-like idol; although, in the earliest Greek divinities, much of the mon-

strous creations of the East is still preserved, as in the hundred-breasted Artemis of the Ephesians or the four-armed Apollo of the Lacedæmonians ; still the Greek mind, in the end, discovered the right way of investing its gods with the sublimity and beauty of the human form. This way was the observation and apprehension of nature."

Instead of troubling you, as my space and time are so limited, with what would be a mere string of the names of sculptors and their works, I will only dwell on the name of Pheidias and his masterpieces,—the sculptures of the Parthenon. A clear view of the best work of the best time will be better grasped and retained than a more meagre general account.

After the victories over the Persians, the Greek national character seems to have reached its highest point of development, and in Athens all its best was concentrated, both of literature and of art ; and at the head of all that was greatest in art stood Pheidias. He was born in 500 B.C. and he

died about the age of sixty-eight. One of his earlier works was a colossal statue of Athene, something like seventy feet high; it stood on the Acropolis at Athens, and could be seen by shipmen far out on the open sea. Then he made the Athene of the Parthenon of gold and ivory—it was completed in 437 B.C.; and again, in the evening of his days, he executed another gold-and-ivory chryselephantine statue of the Olympian Zeus. Still it is in the Parthenon, the splendid temple for Athene's feasts, that his genius and its influence over those who worked with him shone at its greatest: probably the whole design of the temple, as well as its sculptural decorations, was planned and executed under his superintendence. The building contained the gold-and-ivory statue of Athene: it was of the Doric order of architecture. The most beautiful and noteworthy parts of its sculptures were—the frieze that covered the upper part of the wall within the colonnade, and the pediments eastern and western. In later times the Parthenon from a pagan temple

became a Christian Church, and again, in the fifteenth century, was converted into a Turkish mosque.

In the struggles between the Turks and Venetians in the seventeenth century it suffered from the explosion of a shell in a powder-magazine contained within the building itself; and from that date downwards it was exposed to constant injury. Some of these priceless sculptures were made into lime, some were built by fragments into walls, and, worst of all, some were mutilated by travellers breaking off pieces as mementos of their brainless excursions. In the years 1801-3 the sculptures of the Parthenon then remaining were removed to England by the Earl of Elgin, purchased from him by the Government, and placed in the British Museum. Lord Byron in his *Childe Harold* bitterly laments what he calls

> ". . . . . . the modern Picts' ignoble boast,
> To rive what Goth, and Turk, and Time have spared."

But I, for one, see no reason but to rejoice

that these sublime and perfectly beautiful works are within our reach, so that we may enjoy them at our leisure without the labour and distractions of travelling. I can only wish that the world in general were not so content with knowing them by hearsay only, instead of using their privileges.

The subject of the eastern pediment of the Parthenon had relation to the birth of Athene from the brain of Zeus. These figures have been variously supposed to be two of the Fates, or else the daughters of Cecrops. The attitude of one of them seems to express a readiness to spring up, the body bent forward and the feet drawn back—a contrast to the tranquil posture of the reclining figure who has not yet heard the tidings. The "chiton" —the shirt-like garment I mentioned as part of the Greek costume—clings closely to the form, and over the lower half of the body is thrown a mantle of thicker substance. The forms of these women are large and robust, but at the same time supple and graceful and expressing perfect maturity of

womanhood. Now, in a few words to describe the frieze which ran along the sides of the temple within the colonnade—that world-famed frieze of the Parthenon—the student's first and the artist's last and highest theme of praise. Its subject is the celebration of the Panathenaic festival. This festival took place every year in Athene. A solemn sacrifice, equestrian and gymnastic contests, and the Pyrrhic dance were all included in the ceremonial, but its principal feature was the offering of a new veil—peplos—to the goddess on her birthday; this was conveyed in solemn procession to her temple, the Parthenon. In this procession all that was best and greatest in Athens appeared. The gentle graces of maidenhood; the fresh strength of beautiful youths trained in the gymnasia; the dignity of older men, and magistrates chosen by the people; warriors, rulers, priests; nay, the very gods themselves, who sit in well-ranged groups—Zeus, Hera, Demeter, Athene—awaiting the presentation of the peplos. The end of the procession

has just reached the temple: first, a group of archons and heralds quietly awaiting the rest; then a troop of Athenian maidens, singly or in groups, with jars and other vessels in their hands,—they are charming modest figures, in festive garments of delicate texture, with a simple and serious air as if absorbed in the ceremony; then come sacrificial animals, following quietly, standing and struggling bearers of sacrificial gifts, flute-players and musicians, warriors in chariots of four horses; then detached horsemen; and lastly, youths in the prime of strength and beauty, preparing for the procession, bridling and curbing their steeds—the matchless horses of the Parthenon. Thus did Pheidias's representation of the Panathenaic procession include all that was fairest, greatest, best in Athens; and so may we take it as a type, an epitome, of Greek life at its fullest and highest.

And so it was to the temple that the Greeks gave their best in sculpture: it was to the temple, too, that their best architecture

was given. The design of private dwellings was quite insignificant. All the greatest of both these arts in Greece belongs to the period immediately following the Persian war.

On the Acropolis of Athens, at that time, stood what we cannot but imagine to have been the most beautiful group of buildings the world has ever seen.—A broad winding way, and broad terraced flights of steps, led up to the splendid gate of the Propylæa ; on the right, the slender and graceful temple of the wingless Victory,—wingless, because she was never to leave Athens more ; over the roof of the central building towered the colossal brazen Athene by the hand of Pheidias ; then the temple of the goddess herself, the Parthenon, rose further to the right, with its forest of pillars and richly-sculptured pediments ; while to the left could be seen a portion of the Erechtheium, the temple for the true *worship* of Athene, while the Parthenon was the temple for her feasts. These things were the glory of Athens at

her greatest and worthiest period of freedom of art.

The time at which such perfect examples of the Arts of Sculpture and Architecture were to be produced, did not last long; it ceased with the beginning of the Peloponnesian War. Great names and great works, it is true, followed; but the period I have described remained ever after unapproached in its perfection. The group of Niobe and her children, of Laocoön and his sons strangled by serpents, the Dying Gaul (usually wrongly called a Gladiator),—these belong to the next period of Greek Sculpture; and, although they impress us greatly by their power of dramatic expression and their wonderful living vigour, they have not the earlier serenity, majesty, and repose that make the figures of Pheidias so perfectly delightful and satisfying.

Next in the list of masters of the world come the Romans. The Greeks, we may say, governed the world by beauty, the Romans by polity. This contrast between

the Greek and the Roman spirit is to be observed in every department of life.

The Greek spirit tended to the ideal, the Roman to the real; the Greek motive was beauty and grace—the Roman, law and dominion; the Greek sought after art and civilisation — the Roman after conquest, polity; the civilisation of the Greek tended to simplicity, that of the Roman to costliness and luxury; the Greek poetry tended to the dramatic or epic—the Roman to the satiric or didactic; the Greek games were peaceful contests of strength, skill, fleetness—the Roman games were the bloody strife of the gladiator. "Let others study Art," says Virgil in the *Æneid;* "Rome has somewhat better to do—namely, Law and Dominion."

And so it was that the Romans became the pupils of the Greeks in poetry, in art, in all expression of intellectual life, even in the embodiment of their religion. "Art was with them—not the hearty delight of the people; not the requisite of the national faith; not the emanation of an imagination

excited by the poet's ideal of the gods; but an article of luxury belonging to the rich and powerful, the handmaid of authority, ready to adorn life, to ennoble power, and to attract the cultivated taste of the few. Architecture, indeed, seemed to bear closer affinity to the Roman character than the rest of the arts, as it belonged to the practical necessities of life; so under their hands rose the rounded arch—first borrowed from the Etruscans, and brought by the Romans to greater artistic perfection—applied first to aqueducts, bridges, viaducts, and then to splendid public buildings and monuments, such as the Arches of Titus and of Constantine, the Coliseum, the Pantheon, the Baths of Caracalla, and many others.

From the time—and even before it—of the subjugation of the Greeks by the Romans, the conquered had been the masters of the conquerors in everything belonging to taste and art.

So, after Greece became in name as well as in fact a Roman province, a new school

of Athenian Sculpture arose in Rome; this was in the early days of the empire. To this later school belong the Medicean Venus, the Farnese Hercules, and the Apollo Belvidere. These, until modern discoveries and taste decided the superiority of the work of Pheidias and his time, were long held to bear the palm of excellence; they are extremely perfect and finished in execution, soft, and delicate, and graceful, but are lacking in the purity, the elevation of the earlier school, and, placed side by side with them, they seem to strive after effect, and are wanting in simplicity—the charm of unconscious beauty.

More essentially Roman than these are the innumerable portrait-statues and busts that have come down to us. A Roman city was said to have more statues than living people in it. In short, Art was used among the Romans to perpetuate the memory of her victories, to commemorate an individual or family name, to enhance the costliness and luxury of life; not for the sake of Beauty, for the love of Art for its own sake.

So it followed that their Architecture, though possessing great qualities of solidity, strength, and richness, of execution, of material; their Sculpture, though possessing accuracy, fidelity, reality,—were yet lacking in the higher ideal qualities of the Greek.

Something I should say of the Pompeiian remains, which are a blending of the later Greek with the Roman. From them we find that house-construction and decoration were very rich and elaborate in the first century A.D.; and so we gain a just idea of the Roman home and its arrangements at that epoch, and add another point of difference between them and the Greeks, who, as I said, cared nothing for pride of appearance in their dwellings.

And now I must take a great leap. I must pass over the early years of the Christian Church. Christianity, fettered by the forms of antique life, at enmity with its spirit, abhorring its superstition and idolatry, rejected and dreaded the art of the sculptor and his graven image. The necessity for

providing buildings worthy for Christian worship led at first to the adaptation, for that purpose, of Roman temples and basilicas, with their rows of columns and rounded arches; and as the seat of empire was transferred from Rome to Byzantium, architecture—that architecture that had been Greek—then put on different features, and became Byzantine Romanesque. The first ten centuries A.D. were centuries of destruction, of struggle,—the old spirit contending with the new,—till, when at last the victory of Christianity over Paganism was complete, arose that wonderful work of man, the expression of the Christian love and hope and faith—the Gothic Architecture of the Middle Ages.

And here, by way of roughly characterising these three great architectural styles—the Greek, the Romanesque, the Gothic—I will borrow Mr. Ruskin's definitions, and will call the first the architecture of the *lintel;* the second, the architecture of the *rounded arch and cupola;* the third, the architecture of the *pointed arch.* And I will ask you to fix

these in your minds by associating them with the characteristics of three buildings.

First, as belonging to the Greek architecture of the lintel (horizontal lines resting on columns) I should name the Parthenon, originally, perhaps, the most perfect example, but too shattered now for any complete observation: instead of this, here is the temple of Poseidon at Pæstum[1] in Lower Italy, which belongs to the same period as all the other best Greek art—the fifth century B.C. This, one of the best preserved monuments of so great an antiquity, stands in solemn isolation on the site of a once flourishing city of Magna Grecia. I have been told by travellers of the way in which, more than any other antique building, it impresses the imagination by its grandeur, as if it had been raised by the hands of gods and heroes, and not by such men as are common at this day. Its columns, channelled by flutings, bear up the mighty beams of the architrave, the capitals marking the place

[1] See heading of chapter.

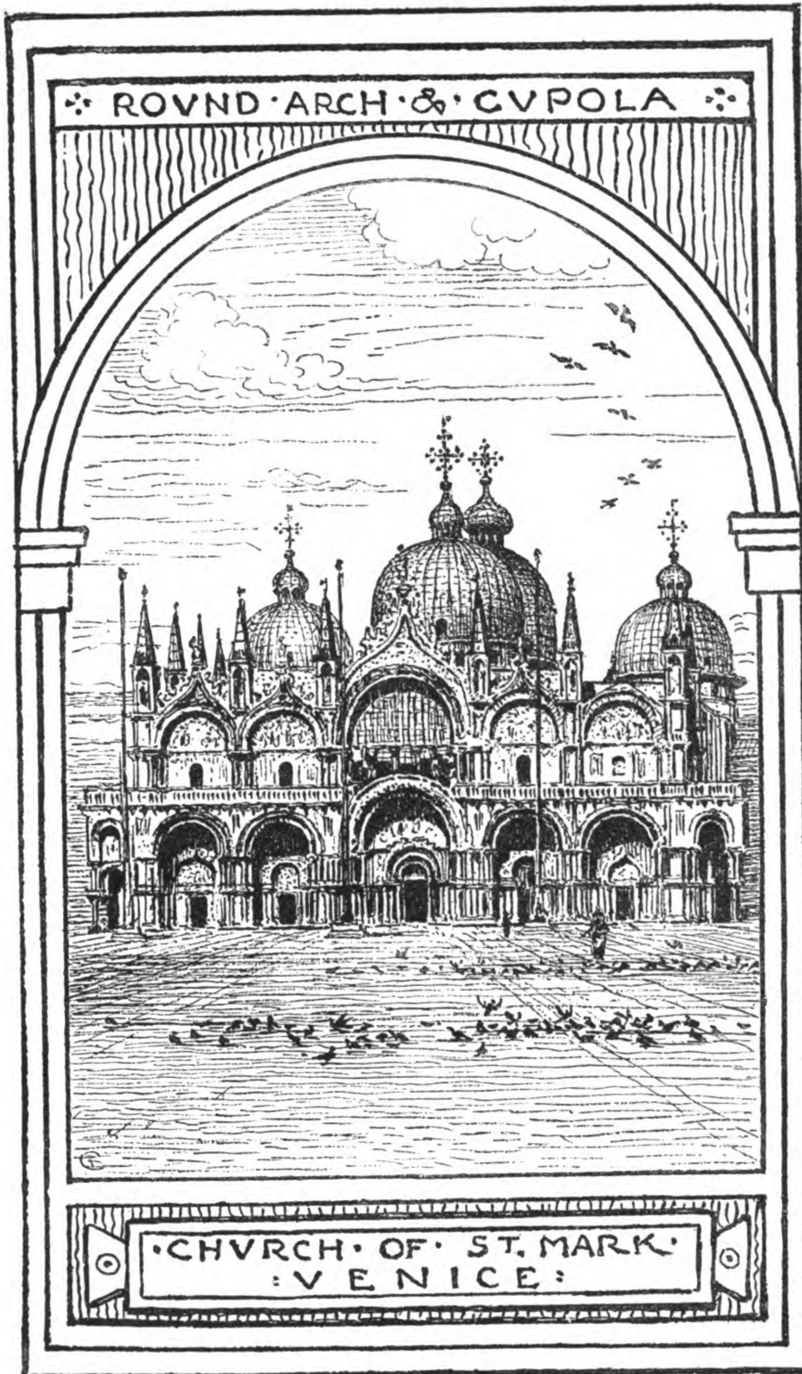
where the support meets the burden; in front, the pediment with its now vanished sculptures. This is the Architecture of the Lintel.

Second, as an example of the Romanesque Architecture—rounded arch and cupola,—here is St. Mark's at Venice.

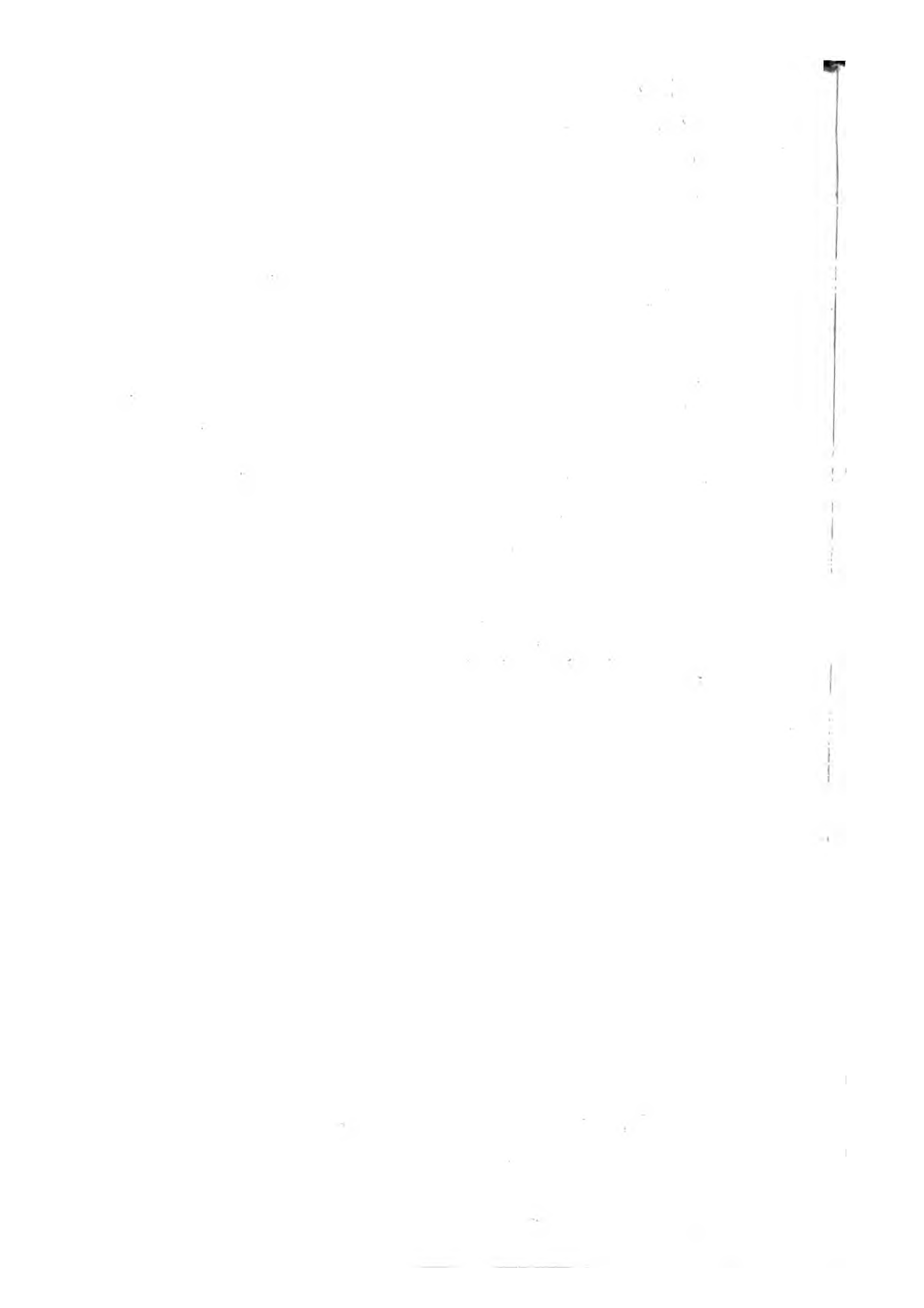
" St. Mark," says an old chronicler, " having seen the people of Aquileia well grounded in religion, and being called to Rome by St. Peter, before setting off, took with him the holy bishop Hermagorus, and went in a small boat to the marshes of Venice. There were at that time some houses built upon a certain high bank called Rialto, and the boat being driven by the wind was anchored in a marshy place, when St. Mark, snatched into ecstasy, heard the voice of an angel saying to him, 'Peace be to thee, Mark; here shall thy body rest.'" And here was to be Venice and the Church of St. Mark, her patron saint. The earlier building was destroyed, and the main portion of the present church belongs to the eleventh century, though additions and alterations went on for two or three

hundred years later. I will quote a few words from Mr. Ruskin's description of it: "A multitude of pillars and white domes clustered into a long low pyramid of coloured light,—a treasure-heap, it seems, partly of gold and partly of opal and mother-of-pearl, hollowed beneath into five great vaulted porches, ceiled with fair mosaic and beset with sculpture of alabaster, clear as amber and delicate as ivory . . . and round the walls of the porches there are set pillars of variegated stones, jasper and porphyry and deep-green serpentine, spotted with flakes of snow . . . their capitals rich with interwoven tracery, rooted knots of herbage, and drifting leaves of acanthus and vine, mystical signs, all beginning and ending in the cross; and above them, in the broad archivolts, a continuous chain of language and of life—angels and the signs of heaven, and the labours of men . . . and above these, another range of glittering pinnacles, mixed with white arches edged with scarlet flowers."

Third, as an example of the Gothic



To face page 230.



architecture of the pointed arch and perpendicular lines we will take the Cathedral of Amiens.[1] When to the Romanesque epoch of architecture—of which the type is the rounded arch—the new style with its pointed arch first succeeded, its builders were called Gothic by way of reproach; for it was thought a rude innovation, such as only barbarian invention could have produced. And since that style has come to be honoured as it deserves, it is still called Gothic, simply because no better name has been found for it. I will not attempt at the present time any detailed description of its characteristics, varying as they did in different centuries and countries, but simply point to Amiens as a crowning example of the culminating power of Gothic architecture in the thirteenth century. "This last place of good Gothic," says Mr. Ruskin, "has no room to spare. It rises as high as it can on narrowest foundation; stands in perfect strength with the least possible substance in its bars; connects niche with niche

[1] See tailpiece.

and line with line in an exquisite harmony, from which no stone can be removed, and to which you can add not a pinnacle; and yet introduces, in rich though now more calculated profusion, the living elements of its sculpture: sculpture in the quatrefoils—sculpture in the brackets—sculpture in the gargoyles—sculpture in the niches—sculpture in the ridges and hollows of its mouldings; not a shadow without a meaning, and not a line without life." Then came a change, and Gothic art became gradually debased. Instead of taking delight in the things he thought of as he carved, the builder began to pride himself in his own workmanship, and how he should win the praise of men for the cleverness of his carving, and what wonderful impossible things he could contrive to do. "And the catastrophe" (our teacher goes on) "was instant and irrevocable. Architecture became in France a mere web of waving lines—in England, a mere grating of perpendicular ones. Redundance was substituted for invention, and geometry for passion; the

Gothic art became a mere expression of wanton expenditure and vulgar mathematics, and was swept away—as it then deserved to be swept away—by the severer pride and purer learning of the schools founded on classical tradition."

For then came the Renaissance—the new birth of antique philosophy and art. I need scarcely remind you of the three events that are said in the history books to have brought about this great and notable change in the world's affairs,—the invention of printing, the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks, and the discovery of America. The first, by increasing the general spread of knowledge and thought; the second, by carrying a stream of Greek culture to the west; the third, by enlarging the ideas and imaginations of men; led to great revolutions in politics, social matters, art, religion, and brought about new ideas of state and polity—the Reformation, the Renaissance.

The revised study of antiquity led to great enthusiasm for classic forms, the revival of the study of Nature in the Greek spirit,

and a renewal of that kind of human power and genius that goes to produce Fine Art; but that power and genius took now a different form—from sculpture it passed into painting. What else I have to say about the Renaissance will find a more appropriate place in my next lecture. I have space to tell of none of the glories of this reflection of the old Greek ideas, expanded into greater splendour by the later civilisation; and I must omit any mention of the Gothic revival in our own century. My more immediate object to-day is to point out what a living influence the Greek has been always, and still is, in the world. After its own greatest period of freedom and perfection, the Greek spirit passed, as we have seen, into the Roman world, keeping alive the traditions of Art in Rome, in Byzantium, in the Christian Church. In the last the flame burned but feebly for a time in hidden corners, with scholars and students; but at the Renaissance it flamed up in great splendour—then in part subsiding, only to re-

appear with a newer and clearer lustre in a new Renaissance of these days. Let us think in what quite obvious ways that Greek influence still shows itself. The Greek is still the standard of personal beauty, the type of all that is greatest in one great school of architecture,—still the standard of unapproached excellence in sculpture. We see Greek influence in the subject and treatment of many modern painters, such as Sir Frederick Leighton and Mr. Albert Moore. Greek literature and art were never so deeply or so widely studied as at the present time, so that the Greeks are really nearer to us by our better understanding and knowledge of them than many a nation of more modern times, and it has been said that a highly cultivated man of the present day would find himself very much at home in the Athens of Pericles. Moreover, the fancy has taken certain people to give evening parties at which it was *de rigueur* to wear Greek costume—patterns for which were sent out with the invitations, to the great confusion

of dressmakers. In London and at Oxford the Greek drama has been played both in Greek and in English; some of our children's favourite story-books are the Greek fairy-tales of gods and heroes; and one thing more, which must not be missed in reckoning up our debts to the Greeks,—as the marvellous beauties of God's work in Nature have been revealed to us through the language of Greek Art, so His gift of the books of the New Testament was given to us in the Greek language of letters.

Some few words I would wish to say in conclusion about the state of the Arts of Sculpture and Architecture at the present day.

"Sculpture," said Sir Frederick Leighton in his speech at the last Academy dinner (1881), "is shaking off its sleep, and striving for a new day of life;" and a few of the works then exhibited seemed to confirm his words to some extent. Nevertheless, the works of modern sculpture that we in London are most familiar with—that are standing ever before our eyes, and form the entire

experience of the vast majority of people in Sculpture: the Trafalgar Square lions, all four exactly alike; the Temple Bar griffin; the golden image of Prince Albert sitting looking at the Albert Hall, assisted by Europe, Asia, Africa, and America; these bring to the mind few ideas or associations other than ridiculous ones. Some few real sculptors there are, no doubt, but none whose works are so well known as these. What wonder if men of taste turn away their eyes from them, and go on studying Greek art instead!

And as to Architecture. Some of the best work of the day is done,—not in doing anything towards the creation of a new style, but in making careful and learned reproductions of old ones; while the worst work is by way of *restoring* the church work of better days than these, often doing it terrible damage in trying to effect the impossible task—that of bringing back its original character and conditions. "Thus the matter stands," says Mr. Morris, "these old buildings have been altered and added

to century after century, often beautifully, always historically; their very value, a great part of it, lay in that; they have suffered, too, almost always from neglect, often from violence (that latter also a piece of history often far from uninteresting); but ordinary obvious mending would almost always have kept them standing, pieces of nature and of history. But of late years a great uprising of ecclesiastical zeal, coinciding with a great increase of study and consequently of knowledge of mediæval architecture, has driven people into spending their money on these buildings, not merely with the purpose of repairing them, of keeping them safe, clean, and wind and water-tight, but also of 'restoring' them to some ideal state of perfection; sweeping away, if possible, all signs of what has befallen them at least since the Reformation, and often since dates much earlier. This has sometimes been done with much disregard of art, and entirely from ecclesiastical zeal, but oftener it has been well meant enough as regards art. From my

point of view this restoration must be as impossible to bring about as the attempt at it is destructive to the buildings so dealt with: I scarcely like to think what a great part of them have been made nearly useless to students of art and history; unless you knew a great deal about architecture you perhaps would scarce understand what terrible damage has been done by that dangerous 'little knowledge' in this matter; but this I think is easy to be understood—that to deal recklessly with valuable and national monuments, which when once gone can never be replaced by any splendour of modern art, is doing a very sorry service to the State."

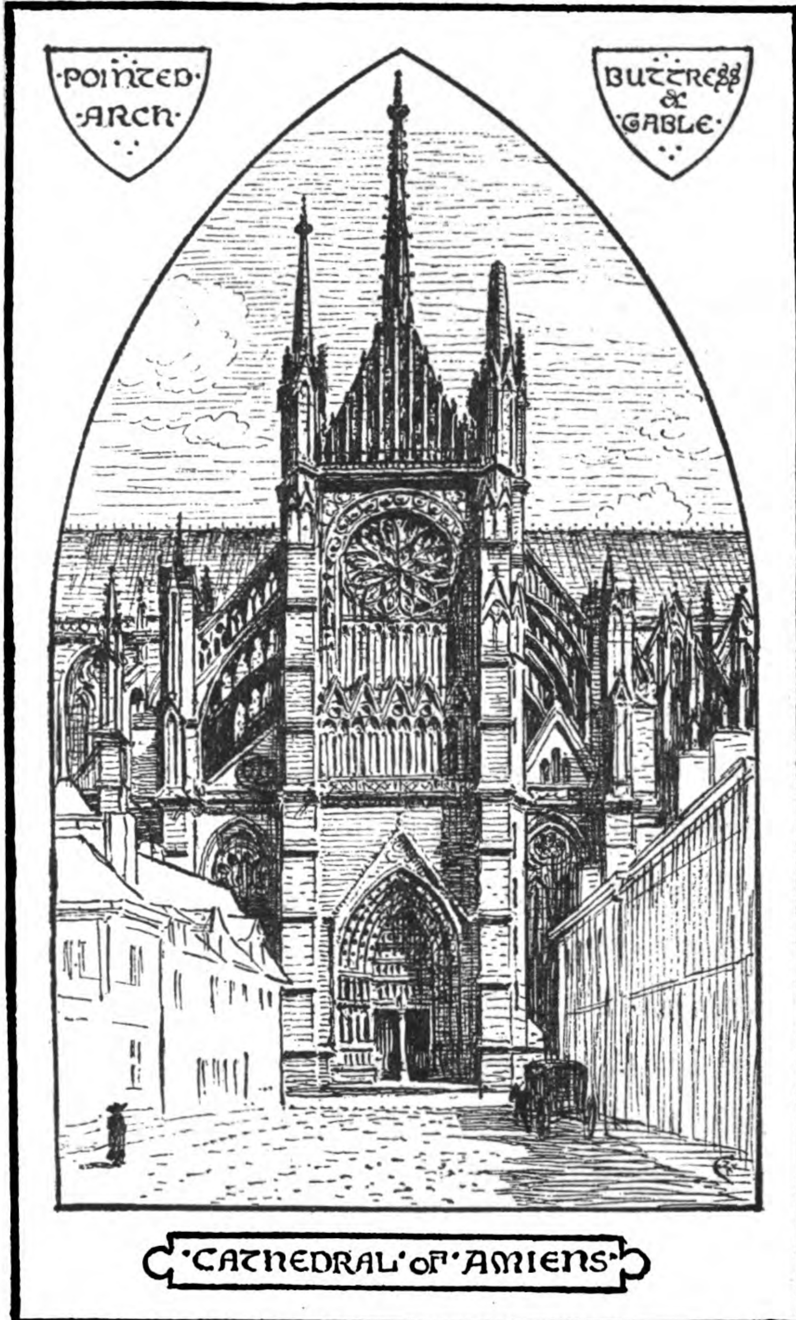
Perhaps it may be said that house-architecture is the thing in which we are really beginning to excel; not the architecture of stucco-fronted terraces, or seven or eight or nine storied flats, but of those gable-roofed, casemented, red-brick houses that are now often to be seen in town and country, attracting the eye by their brightness of colour and cheerful irregularity, in contrast to

the ordinary builder's type—a square box with holes in it. These Queen Anne or Early English houses—whatever they may happen to be called, if they are constructed on a sound good design, and of good and lasting workmanship,—wood seen to be wood, brick openly brick, and paint unmistakably paint; no cast-iron ornament, but hand *wrought* ornament if it is had at all; no huge expanses of plate-glass, but little well-set panes; if to all these are added every modern appliance for health and convenience, we shall have an ideal dwelling-house—a home of cheerfulness, comfort, hospitality,—and this is much nearer of attainment by people of moderate means than it seemed a few years ago.

For our churches it seems we can do no better than follow the patterns set us in ages of more faith than the present; in public buildings, there is much costliness and little grandeur; but the *home*,—that, at least, it seems within our power to make solid and beautiful and comfortable—a something

> "not too bright or good
> For human nature's daily food."

And with this, for the present at least, we must be satisfied.



CATHEDRAL OF AMIENS

VI.—FINE ART—PAINTING.

IT may be said, on reviewing the ground that we have already traversed, that Art is a universal language, intelligible to the whole world alike, of which the rudiments at least were possessed by man in the very earliest stages of his existence, and are so still by him in the lowest existing conditions of civilisation. And this metaphor, the likening of Art to a language, may be carried far in many directions, but it is in one alone that

I would lead your thoughts to-day. It is this :—

The literature of all fully-developed languages has its Classics—masterpieces and models of style, in which not only the subject and the idea are great and elevated, but also the form, the workmanship, are in themselves a perfect expression of the soul, the genius of the language ; and these remain ever after for the admiration, the study, the imitation of succeeding writers and readers of that language. Such are our English Classics—Shakespeare and Milton, Addison and Charles Lamb, and many another. So there are Classics of the language of Art.

I attempted in the last lecture to describe some of the excellent beauties of the best Greek period—the great time of antique classic perfection of sculpture and architecture; and to-day I would wish to direct your attention to the Old Masters and their works —the Classics of Painting. I have already pointed out that though the Art of every age and period has its appropriate value, and is

the natural outcome of that age and period, still there have been times when one of the great Arts has reached a perfection never attained before or since. And what the age of Pericles was for the Art of Sculpture, the age of Lorenzo de Medici was for the Art of Painting.

And—to return to our metaphor—as the *literary* education of an Englishman both begins and ends with the study of what are called the classics,—*par excellence* those of the tongues of antiquity, as well as those of his native tongue; and he is provided with a sound knowledge, from the beginning of what in literature is of pure style, and in good taste, so that he is (or ought to be) incapable of admiring and enjoying base, or trifling, or vulgar writing; so the *artistic* education should begin and end with the classics of Art, for these do exist, undoubted, acknowledged, though—as is too often the fate of such things—neglected and misunderstood by the generality of people, who are accustomed to limit their knowledge and

study of Art to the picture-exhibitions of the year, and the current criticism on those, without having prepared themselves in the least degree by the study of the great paintings that hang all the year round in the National Gallery, or of the great sculptures that stand all the year round in the British Museum.

It is as if we should limit our studies in Music to Gounod, to Sullivan, to Offenbach, and refuse to know anything about Handel and Beethoven; it is as if we should eschew Shakespeare and read nothing but Dickens and Ouida. I do not mean to set apart these as bad and unworthy in contra-distinction to the others, but I mean to say that until we know how to enjoy something of the great men and their works—the classics—we shall have no means, no criterion, to enable us to properly judge of the rest, and appreciate them at their just value.

The reproach attending the too great neglect and ignorance of the great national collections of Art belongs more particu-

larly to those of us who live in and near London.

Yet some part of it belongs to all who pretend to care for the subject of Art, *that* study, as well as every other, being so facilitated in these days by good copies and reproductions of great originals, and by rapidity and ease of travelling, so that the originals themselves are brought so much the nearer to us. I daresay I am not wrong in attributing to the generality of people some confusion of ideas as to the Old Masters (as some one says, often secretly identified with the Brown Masters), or the degree of merit possessed by each. If people have a tolerably just range of notions respecting Raphael, Michael Angelo, Titian, Leonardo, I believe there is rarely any honest admiration at all corresponding to these notions. The fact is, that it is impossible for the untrained eye and mind to admire the works of these men all at once. It is as if you should set a child who had only just learned to read, to admire Hamlet. And this is why so many

people come back from Italy wearied with the acres of canvasses they have glanced at, not knowing what to look for or how to look at it. It is often more possible for a sincere beginner in Art to enjoy the works of Bellini, Botticelli, Fra Angelico, than those of the greatest men of all; but this is being on the right track; a genuine feeling and liking for these forerunners, and secondary names, is sure to lead in the end to the more extended knowledge and understanding that the first and greatest require.

The great period of painting includes the last quarter of the fifteenth century and the thirty or forty first years of the sixteenth century, and contains all that perfect painting that we call the work of the Old Masters. This is the sentence that is painted in letters of gold round the Central Hall at the National Gallery—"The works of those who have stood the test of ages have a claim to that respect and veneration to which no modern can pretend." It is a saying of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and it is a good motto, in this age

of irreverence, for those who are beginning a study of these works. Let me collect a few other ideas that are also necessary for the purpose. I have before pointed out that to each of the Fine Arts there is a technical, a mechanical part, perfection in which is necessary, but not all that is necessary, to make the poet, the musician, the architect, the sculptor, the painter. He must have ideas that we could not for ourselves conceive, and he must express them in such a way as to make us see them clearly and delight in them; and this it is that the truly great among the Old Masters did—1st, They expressed clearly their intellectual purpose; and 2dly, They had a perfect mastery over the material, the technical part of their Art, and in these two things their greatness consists.

You will remember my showing you the two photographs from the pictures of Raphael's "Dispute of the Sacrament"[1] and Titian's "Flora," and my pointing out that the

[1] Heading and tailpiece, chap. v.

first is an example of the great Florentine school of expression, and the last an example of the great Venetian school of colour; but these are, after all, only photographs—mere shadows of the paintings themselves. In the National Gallery there are two others, equally representative of the two great schools, which, being nearer at hand than the others in Continental collections, may be more easily seen and studied.

Belonging to the Florentine school of expression we have the "Virgin of the Rocks" by Leonardo da Vinci; it is a newly-acquired possession, and, as it seems to me, a most perfect one. It has some of the painter's characteristic mystery of expression; still the very spirit of a grave sweet mood of childhood is in the infant Christ as He seems to give His innocent benediction to the little kneeling St. John, and the mother's serene abstraction in her children is in the Virgin's face. In the foreground, spring flowers—narcissus and cyclamen—painted with that curious felicity that belonged to the hand of

Leonardo. For the background we have a glimpse of a strange land of hollow rocks, and of steep cliffs rising perpendicular from clear still water. "It is the landscape," says Mr. Pater, "not of dreams, or of fancy, but of places far withdrawn and hours selected from a thousand with a miracle of finesse. Through his strange veil of sight, things reach him so; in no ordinary night or day, but as in faint light of eclipse, or in some brief interval of falling rain at daybreak, or through deep water." Here is a painter who can indeed do what Goethe required. "Make me feel," he says, "what I have not yet felt,—make me think what I have not yet thought; then I will praise you."

For the Venetian school of colour let us take, as the crowning example in the National Gallery, Titian's "Bacchus and Ariadne," and let me say that for me it will always be the ideal painting—as the Venus of Melos is the ideal sculpture—the one that first revealed to me the wonderful delight that it is possible to receive from a picture

that is at once perfect in colour, in design, in sentiment. I should think myself happy if I could do something to persuade any one who has not yet enjoyed the great beauty of this picture to go and look at it, and feel once for all what the art of painting at its best can do. Once feel this, and you know more than all the treatises, and criticisms, and lectures on Art in the world can teach you.

In one of the other rooms in the National Gallery are two pictures by modern hands which are a great contrast to these. It is from no wish to run down, to depreciate the work of our own time, or to go about to exalt ancient art at the expense of modern, but to enforce a general universal truth, that I would ask you—after honestly trying to see for yourselves and appreciate something of the beauty of the Titian and the Leonardo—to go to the other end of the gallery and look at Mr. Maclise's "Play-Scene in Hamlet," and Mr. Frith's "Derby Day," and if you do not feel the triviality, the staginess, of the ideas expressed and personages represented

in them, and the feebleness and poverty of the colour, at least it would be well to exactly inquire what you do feel about them, and of what the vast gulf of difference between these and those consists. To those who cannot feel it, it is indeed useless to speak of the Old Masters.

But leaving any further mention of the rest of the treasures contained in the national collection, let us take a more general view of the subject, and try and inquire into the causes and the nature of the excellence of painting at the period of the Renaissance.

And as to the history of painting generally. As far as our present purpose is concerned, we must pass over whatever is said of the excellence of the painters of antiquity of the time of Alexander the Great and of a time still earlier, because, whatever has been recorded in their praise by ancient writers, there is no really substantial witness of their excellence, at least as compared with the later period of which I am speaking to-day; we must pass over early Christian art,

though by it certain religious types were created, since scarcely deviated from; we must pass over the Byzantine mosaics and frescoes, and finally in the thirteenth century we come to the name of Cimabue, the original founder of the Florentine school.

Following him come Giotto, and Orgagna, in the fourteenth century; Masaccio, Lippi, Botticelli, Fra Angelico, Perugino, Francia, Signorelli, in the fifteenth century. These men were forerunners of the great time, working through the years that preceded it, —years of preparation, of struggle with incompleteness of resources, of stretching out and reaching towards perfection. The Renaissance came at last suddenly, after centuries of ignorance, of barbarism, of sterile effort; it burst forth almost without a dawn, glorious as a summer's day. Dante and Giotto open that glorious era, and re-create the arts of Poetry and of Painting. After them quickly crowd in the other great workers in the arts: Brunelleschi designs beautiful architecture at Florence; Ghiberti casts his

great bronze gates—and, too, at the same time, Columbus discovers a new world; Copernicus demonstrates the laws of the universe; Guttenberg invents the art of printing; and Luther and Savonarola work their great work of Reformation; and finally, Leonardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Raphael, come also, to adorn, with their transcendent works, this great blossoming epoch of human genius and force.

"For us," says Mr. Pater, "the Renaissance is the name of a many-sided but yet united movement, in which the love of the things of the intellect and the imagination for their own sake, the desire for a more comely and liberal way of conceiving life, make themselves felt, prompting those who experience this desire, to seek first one and then another means of intellectual or imaginative enjoyment, and directing them not merely to the discovery of old and forgotten sources of this enjoyment, but to divine new sources of it, new experiences, new subjects of beauty, new forms of art."

The conditions under which the great art of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was produced, are not quite dissimilar to those of the Greek period. The Renaissance, in calling men to the study of the Greek mind, taught them at the same time Greek tastes and ways of thinking and feeling. The care for physical beauty which had been deadened by the ascetic teaching of the Middle Ages was revived, the preoccupation with the beauty of the common things of life, and the liking for polish of manner and dignity of bearing, reappeared ; only all these things were accompanied by magnificence and profusion, luxury and splendour, greater than the world has known before or since. We have, in George Eliot's *Romola*, a picture of Florentine life at the beginning of the sixteenth century, when classical learning and splendid living seem to have been the rule under the Medici ; but under its superficial vanity and caprice there seems to have lain a certain old-world modesty, and seriousness, and simplicity ;

and beyond the care for outward beauty was a still greater care for the unseen beauty—of the mind, the intellect, the heart; and so it came about that the Florentine was the school of Truth of mental expression. I may mention, that of Piero di Cosimo, the painter who is so vividly described in *Romola*, there is one example in the National Gallery, "The Death of Procris,"—a satyr stoops pityingly over the girl's fallen figure, and touches her shoulder with a pathetic compassion in his rough woodland face. This touch of feeling marks the painter as a true worker in the school of expression, being, as he was, a contemporary of the three great Masters in that school—Leonardo, Michael Angelo, Raphael.

Let me sketch for you, however slightly, a rapid portrait of each of these three.

To all who care for the art, and indeed the general history of the time, Leonardo da Vinci must be one of the most interesting figures of the whole brilliant group of gifted men of that day. He possessed every

physical endowment of strength and beauty, every mental perfection of power and insight and imagination; there seems to have been no part of the intellectual learning of the time that he did not explore, no part of the arts of mechanism, of decoration, of engineering, that he was not master of, as well as of every one of the higher arts of human expression—poetry and painting and sculpture, architecture and music. And in him all this versatility of universal genius begets a mysterious element of mockery, of restlessness, of curiosity, leading him to seek after all kinds of remote knowledge to portray strange subtleties of expression,—the unearthly, the terrible, the grotesque; to be for ever trying some new method of arriving at perfection, and this element it is which makes him and his work so interesting, so fascinating. No one who has looked at the pictures in the Louvre can have failed to be attracted, puzzled, fascinated by "La Gioconda"—that strange woman's face with its mysterious expression of mockery and of wisdom—a

face not beautiful according to any modern acknowledged type of beauty, and yet possessing a quality with as strong an influence. This was the type that attracted Leonardo—power and subtlety of expression rather than fixed standard of beauty. It was at Milan he painted the "Last Supper,"[1] the most renowned of his works. All that remains of it is on the walls of the refectory of the Dominican Church at Milan; whither Leonardo had gone in 1483 at the invitation of Ludovico Sforza. The large photograph shows you its present state, and, even thus defaced, it is better to learn what we can from what is left of the master's actual work than to accept the smooth insipidities of the engraved or lithographed restoration that is common. Our Royal Academy possesses the best copy of the picture, done from the original by a contemporary hand. "About the 'Last Supper,' its decay and restorations," says Mr. Pater, "a whole literature has risen up, Goethe's pensive sketch of its sad

[1] See heading of chapter.

fortunes being far the best. The death, in child-birth, of the Duchess Beatrice was followed in Ludovico by one of those paroxysms of religious feeling which in him were constitutional. The low gloomy Dominican Church of Saint Mary of the Graces had been the favourite shrine of Beatrice. She had spent her last days there, full of sinister presentiments; at last it had been almost necessary to remove her from it by force; and now it was here that mass was said a hundred times a day for her repose. On the damp wall of the refectory, oozing with mineral salts, Leonardo painted the "Last Supper." A hundred anecdotes were told about it, his retouchings and delays. They show him refusing to work except at the moment of invention, scornful of whoever thought that art was a work of mere industry and rule, often coming the whole length of Milan to give a single touch. He painted it, not in fresco, where all must be *impromptu*, but in oils, the new method which he had been one of the first to welcome, because it

allowed of so many afterthoughts, so refined a working out of perfection. It turned out that on a plastered wall no process could have been less durable.

"Within fifty years it had fallen into decay. . . It was another effort to set a given subject out of the range of its conventional associations. Strange, after all the misrepresentations of the Middle Ages was the effort to see it, not as the pale host of the altar, but as one taking leave of his friends. Five years afterwards, the young Raphael, at Florence, painted it with sweet and solemn effect in the refectory of Saint Onofrid, but still with all the mystical unreality of the school of Perugino. Vasari pretends that the central head was never finished ; but finished or unfinished, or owing part of its effect to a mellowing decay, this central head does but consummate the sentiment of the whole company—ghosts through which you see the wall, faint as the shadows of the leaves upon the wall on autumn afternoons, this figure is but the faintest, most

spectral of them all." So says Mr. Pater; but faint and spectral as it is, it is the outward type of Christ, fixed for us by Leonardo, as it has been presented to us by all the succeeding generations; so that our mental image of Him is associated inseparably with the clear oval countenance, the long hair parted in the middle, the expression of sweet and pensive benignity. Besides the imperfection of the methods of the painter, and the dampness of the walls, the picture has suffered every kind of misfortune and indignity: it has been restored; the monks cut a door through the lower part of it; the imperial arms were nailed on it close to the central figure; and Austrian and French soldiers in turn vied with each other in desecrating the place, and destroying its chief treasure.

"Leonardo's life has three divisions,—thirty years at Florence, nearly twenty at Milan, then nineteen years of wandering, till he sinks to rest under the protection of Francis I. at the Château de Clou."

And now let me say a few words about Michael Angelo, a genius of more power, but of less familiar sweetness. Less sympathetic, and more rugged and difficult, are his works than those of either Raphael or Leonardo. Architect, sculptor, poet, and painter,—a man with four souls, as said a writer of his time, —Michael Angelo is the central figure of the first half of the sixteenth century, and seems almost to monopolise its creative power. A story is told of his early youth, that one winter night when the snow lay in the court of the Pitti palace, Piero de Medici caused him to mould out of the snow a statue of a Faun (that woodland creature of the antique fancy—half-man, half-goat) and then criticised it by observing that the head had too young an air for the faun who was supposed to have ranged the woods for centuries. With a touch, Michael Angelo hollowed a tooth from its jaw, giving at once the look of age that was wanted. "Something," says Mr. Pater, "of the wasting of that snow-image lurks about all his sculpture—

a certain incompleteness, as if the half-hewn form had never quite emerged from the rough-hewn stone." And in his painting there is something of the same quality; in it there are no lovely natural objects like Leonardo's, but only blank ranges of rock, and dim vegetable forms as blank as they; no lovely draperies, or comely gestures of life, but only the austere truths of human nature,—"simple persons," as he replied in his rough way to the querulous criticism of Julius II. that there was no gold on the figures of the Sistine Chapel, "simple persons, who wore no gold on their garments." "You should put a little gold on them," said the Pope; "my chapel will look very poor." But Michael Angelo answered, "The people I have painted there *were* poor." This, the painting of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, was his great work; the long central surface contains the great scenes of Genesis from the Creation to the Deluge.

"Fair as the young men of the Elgin marbles, the Adam of the Sistine Chapel is

unlike them in a total absence of that balance and completeness which expresses so well the sentiment of a self-contained independent life. In that languid figure there is something rough and satyr-like, something akin to the rough hill-side on which it lies. His whole form is gathered into an expression of mere expectation and reception; he has hardly strength enough to lift his finger to touch the finger of the Creator; yet a touch of the finger-tips will suffice."

In the triangular compartments of the vault were the Prophets and the Sibyls, and those different voices of the past who prophesied of the coming of Messiah, and in the corners the stories of the four great deliverances of Israel. We have no finished picture of Michael Angelo's in the National Gallery, and altogether his work seems more removed and difficult of apprehension than that of the other two of the Florentine school. His colossal Titanic works are sometimes half-formed in their grandeur, as if his world were in the very process of

To face page 264.

creation. The splendour and terror of his conceptions seemed to heighten and deepen as his age advanced. He was sixty when he painted his terrible picture of the "Last Judgment," and, in 1546, he undertook to finish the rebuilding of St. Peter's at Rome, and made the design for the dome which overshadows in its grandeur the Eternal City, at the age of seventy-two, and "for nothing," as he said, "but the honour of God.". The colossal figures of David and of Moses, and the figures on the tombs of the Medici at Florence, these are the greatest of his works; the "Pieta" at Rome, carved at the age of twenty-one,—a dead Christ lying across his mother's knees,—speaks all the professed religious feeling that pervaded his mind and work from first to last.

Very different from the severe and stern genius of Michael Angelo, was the graceful and gentle one of Raphael, who of the three great Florentines is the one most familiar to us all, and his works most widely understood and admired; he was the latest born and

youngest of the three. Though his first master was Perugino, the Umbrian, and though his first and last years were spent at Rome,—his greatest works being to be seen there,—yet it is to Florence that Raphael truly belongs. It was during two residences in Florence that he learned all that it behoved him to learn from Leonardo and Michael Angelo; his genius had its own path to tread. His life and his character from the first seem to have had a serenity, a harmony, a happiness that was denied to the others. In a virtuous and refined home governed by tender and intelligent parents, and guided in habits of truth and of industry, Raphael grew up; and it is no doubt to these early influences that the peculiar sweetness and purity of his work are owing. He had not the creative energy of Michael Angelo, nor the subtlety or the fascination of Leonardo, but a sensibility, a charm, a felicity of his own,—a kind of happy intelligence of temperament that communicated itself to his works. The small

pictures, two of them Madonnas, in the National Gallery, express perfectly these characteristics, and so do the well-known often-reproduced "Madonna" of the Dresden Gallery, the "Holy Family" of the Louvre, and many others. I have in a former lecture mentioned the paintings of the Vatican, which he was commissioned to do by Pope Julius II., of which the "Dispute of the Sacrament" is one. In the National Gallery we have Raphael's portrait of Pope Julius,—the irascible old man is painted with a noble and pathetic simplicity. Julius's successor, Leo X., was even more urgent in the tasks he gave the artist, and the ten cartoons for tapestries were executed at his bidding. The tapestries were woven at Arras in Flanders after his designs, and were intended for the walls of the Sistine Chapel; they are now in the Vatican. We possess seven of the original cartoons, which are now at the South Kensington Museum. The Miraculous Draught of Fishes, The Consignment of the Keys to Peter, The Curing of the Lame Man, The

Death of Ananias, The Stoning of Stephen, The Conversion of St. Paul, The Punishment of Elymas the Sorcerer, The Preaching of St. Paul at Athens, The Preaching of St. Paul at Lystra, and Paul a prisoner at Philippi. These are the ten original subjects, and all of them are familiar to every one in the numerous engravings, drawings, lithographs, photographs. Let me take this opportunity of saying that it is a good thing to learn to distinguish between a photograph from a drawing or engraving, and a photograph taken directly from the picture itself; the former having no value save as an easy reproduction of a copy—the translation of a translation; the photograph taken directly from a picture being the nearest practicable approach, save in respect of colour, to the artist's work, and should always be chosen in preference to the other kinds. A little careful observation will soon make the difference clear (compare the little highly-finished "Last Supper" with the one from the original). If we have learned to value a Master's work,

we shall like it best as it really is, however unfinished or injured; and not want to go to the clever engraver or French lithographer to make it all smooth and clean for us.

In Florence, in 1504, Michael Angelo competed with Leonardo in a design for the decoration of the walls of the great council-chamber. And Michael Angelo was twenty-seven years old, Leonardo more than fifty, when Raphael, then nineteen years old, visiting Florence for the first time, came and watched them as they worked. And so do the three great names of the Florentine school come together in history; and so together should they be remembered, with all else about their lives and minds and works that I must leave here untold.

Now, to dwell for a short time on the characteristics of the Venetian school of painting, at the head of which stand the great names of Titian and Giorgione, Tintoret, and Paul Veronese. Colour was the great element of their power in painting, and on this point it is not easy to say much. Form

and expression may more easily be discussed and described, and here I may perhaps pause to say that form or expression and colour are seldom, if ever, found united in highest excellence in a work of art. If a masterpiece of Athenian sculpture were to be coloured, it would lose instead of gain by the addition. "The use of colour in sculpture," says Mr. Pater, "is but an unskilful contrivance to effect by borrowing from another art what the nobler sculpture effected by strictly appropriate means. To get not colour but the equivalent of colour, to secure the expression and the play of life,"—this is the problem of sculpture, whose aims therefore are perfectly distinct from those of painting; so, only with a less strongly marked difference, do the two great schools of painting stand apart. The Florentine, having for its first object expression of character and emotion, does not excel in splendid effects of light and shade and colour; while the Venetian, aiming first at those latter qualities, has small range of character and

subject, and little variety of emotion and expression; so that it is easy to keep the two schools distinct in the mind, and easy to perceive their different characteristics.

The Venetians found the elements of their glowing effects of colour in the realities of their everyday life—an enchanted life of wealth, profusion, and pageantry. A glittering vision of the most glorious earthly splendour rises in the mind as we think of the Venice of those days, the sixteenth century Venice, the centre of Italian wealth and culture, the seat of the greatest maritime power in the world, the storehouse of all that was rich and precious from the eastern and western hemispheres. Venice,—her people excelling in pageants, and feasts, and music; famed for her carved and painted marriage coffers, her mirrors, her brocades—scarlet and purple and crimson, like the dyes of ancient Tyre; for the richest of point lace; for stamped and gilded leather; for mosaics, in wood of different colours, and in stone of agate, cornelian, amethyst, and many-

hued marble ; cabinets of ebony, alabaster, or ivory, with gold and silver figures inlaid with cornelian, jasper, heliotrope, lapis-lazuli, and agate. All this seems a gorgeous and fitting setting for those glowing gems of painting that the Venetians have left to us, the glory of their colouring no doubt in some respects dimmed by time, but also ripened and mellowed. A great tranquillity, majesty, dignity, fill their canvasses and sink deep into the mind as we gaze at them. Such is the "Bacchus and Ariadne" of Titian which I have already described, and such is Veronese's "Family of Darius," and the "Saint Helena." These are in the National Gallery. And such also is Veronese's "Marriage in Cana" at the Louvre. "There," says Mr. Ruskin, "you have the most perfect representation possible of colour and light and shade, as they affect the external aspect of the human form and its immediate accessories—architecture, furniture, and dress. This external aspect of noblest nature was the first aim of the Venetians, and all their greatness depended on their

resolution to achieve and their patience in achieving it."

And in these schools and the works of these masters is expressed the fulness of the Renaissance spirit. Mr. Symonds, in his *History of the Renaissance in Italy*, bids us mark the character of each. "Leonardo," he says, "is the wizard or diviner; to him the Renaissance offers her mystery and lends her magic. Raphael is the Phœbean singer; to him the Renaissance reveals her joy, and dowers him with the gift of melody. Michael Angelo is the prophet and sybylline seer; to him the Renaissance discloses the travail of her spirit; him she indues with power; he wrests her secret,—voyaging, like an ideal Columbus, the vast abyss of thought, alone." And to the Renaissance the Venetian masters lent their splendour of colour, their love of physical beauty, and of all costly and beautiful things of the world. So in all these magnificent conditions the great period of painting culminated and was made perfect.

I can say no word of what then followed; it seems better at this time to think only of the best work and of the best men. Correggio is the last of the great Italian painters, and even in him there is something of sentimentality, of conscious charm,—something of that decadence with which the names of the Carracci, Guido Reni, Salvator Rosa, and many another must be associated. To other countries or other times belong Velasquez, Vandyck, Rubens, Claude, and Rembrandt, of the first rank, or nearly the first rank; each in his different way. And the Dutch and the French schools, too, have their peculiar excellence; but this is all I have attempted to do. To distinguish as clearly as possible the two great schools—the Florentine and the Venetian; to sketch something of the character of the aims and tendencies of the three great Florentine Masters—Leonardo, Michael Angelo, and Raphael.

It is by some little preparation of this kind that one may be led to enjoy any opportunity that offers of seeing any of their

works, especially our own possessions in the National Gallery,—possessions in which, though they are called national, we cannot truly be said to have a share, unless we understand something, not only of their various homes and periods, but also of the more universal kingdom of Art which includes them all.

May I recommend a few books on this especial branch of my subject to any of my hearers interested in following it up?

The History of the Renaissance in Italy, by J. A. Symonds. (The third volume is devoted to the Fine Arts.) A little handbook of *Classic and Italian Painting*, edited by Mr. Poynter, R.A., is an excellent introduction to the subject; *Studies in the Renaissance*, by Mr. Pater, is a most delightful book for the more advanced student; and a sketch by M. Clément of the lives of the three great Florentines, contains all that is certainly known of their lives, and is full of interest and charm.

I find myself, much against my will,

obliged to give up for the present any attempt to speak of the English Masters—of Hogarth, of Sir Joshua Reynolds, of Gainsborough, of Richard Wilson, of Turner. There has been no English school, properly so called. Detached great names we have had, such as those I have just mentioned, but no *school;* so that the history of painting in England would merely mean a study of each of these men taken separately, and their works, and for this there is no time. I will now only attempt a few general remarks on the prevailing feeling and commonly expressed opinion regarding the art of painting, and its productions at the present day.

As I have said before, we are all ready, at any time and at the shortest notice, to form an opinion and deliver a judgment, a criticism, respecting a picture, without greatly caring whether that judgment, that opinion, is a right and just one. I have already warned you that the power of arriving at a just judgment, a right taste in art is not born with us; but it must be acquired by study,

and pains, and observation. Once started on the right road, every piece of new experience is certain to be a confirmation of all that has gone before. I repeat that, in every department of human industry, we must recognise that it is not enough to know what we like, but what is worth liking; and, above all things, this is necessary to a right enjoyment of painting.

I suppose that no house, from the poorest to the richest, but has something on its walls in the semblance of a picture; but not all the people who possess that something—very few of them, I am afraid—have ever thought much about why they have it, whether they like it, what it expresses to them, what ideas it suggests, what qualities it possesses. A picture may be treasured for its commercial value, for its associations, for its real or supposed resemblance to a beloved person or place, for its representation of a dramatic scene or incident out of a book or in real life; or it may have been handed down for a family generation or two, and may have re-

mained in sight from earliest childhood, so that it is as familiar as the wall on which it hangs, and suggests as few ideas: we should miss it if it were gone, but that is all. A picture ought to do more than this. We may have any or all these reasons for liking it, and yet it may possess no artistic quality whatever.

Every year, with the flowers of spring, bloom some hundreds, nay, thousands of pictures, in the London exhibitions; in other places they appear later in the summer or the autumn. They flourish for a month or two, weathering the cold blast of criticism, or basking in the sunshine of public favour, or withering under the general neglect. At the end of the season they are gathered by purchasers to be transplanted into private collections, or they return into the hands of their originators; in any case, for the most part, they disappear, forgotten by the world at large, and their successors year after year bloom and pass away in like manner. Every one would feel a strange want if the season

brought no show of pictures ; it would seem like an interruption of the course of nature. They are a necessity of social life, a safe theme for discussion, a fruitful subject of small-talk. And these assemblages of pictures—but for about a score or two, which *do* possess some originality of treatment or some remarkable power of execution—might consist of the very same pictures year after year, such is the similarity of their subject, the constant repetition of the same manner, the same ideal. Who does not know of old the portrait of a lady in red velvet or white satin, on a terrace; the official gentleman with his arm-chair and inkstand; the flower-pieces ; the fruit-pieces ; the cottage interiors ; scenes of domestic happiness or affliction ? There must be a large demand for these things, or there could not be so abundant a supply. In all of them the artist, it seems to me, makes himself into a sort of shopman. The public wants these articles, and he supplies them accordingly: every year, so many baskets of fruit and flowers, so many acres

of Welsh or Scotch or Swiss scenery, so many yards of satin and lace, so much fashionable attire, and so much sentiment and domestic affection.

If people must have these things to cover their walls with, simply as part of the furniture of a room, let them by all means; but they are not worthy the name of pictures, and should be judged of by a different standard—that of the picture-dealer—and treated as articles of commerce. They are not pictures in the sense that Raphael's "Sacrament" or Titian's "Flora" are pictures. The painters of them stoop to supply the wants of the age; the true artist raises the age up to his level. He shows us different aspects of persons and things, new facts about them, new ideas; he makes us see what we have never seen before, feel what we have never felt before. If any picture we know has done something of this kind for us, we may be sure that it is a real work of art.

It is not that the *subjects* of such pictures as I have described are in fault, but the

ideas, or rather *want* of ideas, expressed in them. That very portrait of a lady, with meaningless simpering face and over-gorgeous attire, might have been an interesting and graceful subject if the artist had set himself to discover, to express the interesting side of her character and the subtler graces of her demeanour, instead of caring so much about her jewels and her velvet gown, as to make them the most prominent things; it seems, too, as if the lady must have cared about them unduly too.

So with the portrait of a gentleman. There *must* be something in his character, his powers, his brains, that is more interesting than the shininess of his coat, his inkstand, his arm-chair. Very likely it is a good likeness as regards shape and size of features; but the painter should do something more. Sir Joshua Reynolds seems to have had the power of discovering in faces and figures—that often, no doubt, seemed sufficiently commonplace to the rest of the world—some nobility of expression, some grace of form or tender-

ness of colouring ; so that in all his portraits the subject has the air of being somebody, distinguished by some gifts of mind or person that the painter knew how to seize and avail himself of,—at the same time, we may be sure, passing over defects, and ignoring the disagreeable and the positively unbeautiful. For these reasons have his pictures been treasured and handed down, their beauties explained, commented upon, and praised afresh by each succeeding generation of the family to whom the original subject belonged ; so that it has become a distinction highly prized, a kind of patent of gentility (in a good sense), to have a Sir Joshua in the family. This is what the art of portrait-painting may be, and what in one or two modern painters' hands it still is. A coloured photograph is just as valuable as the average portrait. Of course it is faithful, but we want something more ; we want to be made to feel the application of the human mind to the subject ; we want some idealising, some transforming power. The same with land-

scape. The true painter, in choosing a natural scene for his subject, does not seek to get everything that he sees into his picture, but to get what makes the beauty of that scene, and to leave out what does not. There is often something jarring, something incongruous, in a real scene or that would be so if it were put into the picture.

In a landscape, or in some accidental grouping of real figures, Nature is so complex, and crowded, so full of infinite details of form and tint, that it would be a life-long and fruitless labour for a painter to set himself to reproduce even a very small part.

This should not be difficult for any one to understand who has practised in any degree the art of drawing. I do not mean copying other drawings,—that is merely, as Hogarth said, "pouring water from one vessel into another,"—but really drawing something from nature, say, a flowering branch. The very outline itself is a bold stretch of imagination. There is no outline in Nature. There are masses of colour and light and shade relieved

against other masses of colour and light and shade, and the outline is a device for defining the exact point where they begin and end. And, beside the outline, there is much more: when we think we have it correctly,—and that is not easy, for people are so apt to draw a thing as they think it ought to be, not what it really is,—then come light and shade, colour, projection, space; our difficulties are multiplied a thousand-fold; we very soon find that some details, some irregularities of form and surface, some lights, some shadows must be left out,—they are too infinite and crowded for us; we begin to feel that the thing for us to study is the inmost character of the object we are drawing, and our business must be to express that, leaving many details alone. So must it be on a larger scale: the artist must penetrate the innermost spirit of the person or scene he paints, and show it to us no longer obscured by the commonness of the detail of every-day life and appearance—but this is asking a great deal;—and the painter's aim,

his thought, his motive must be distinct and clear in his own mind, in order to appeal to ours; and, besides this, great technical knowledge and mastery are needed in order to paint the simplest subject worthily.

It is impossible to refuse to see that the England of to-day does not afford a favourable soil for the growth of Art. Science, Commerce, Literature, flourish; but Art, considered in its relation to the world at large, languishes. All the social or public scenes of modern life lend themselves more readily to caricature than as subjects for great pictures. Little beauty of form or colour can be found in groups or assemblages of ordinary English people; we have no leisure to cultivate such things; we are too full of cares, of pleasures; we are for ever busied in the making of money, or else the spending of it; there is too much to do, too much luxury, too little simplicity. This is expressed in the costume of the day, of men and women too; it is too tight-fitting, too crowded with mean detail. Think how the

golden copes, the jewelled mitres, the armour of steel inlaid with gold and silver, and plumed and crested headgear of a former age, compare in pictorial effect with the black-silk gown, the lawn sleeves, the padded coat and chimney-pot hat of this. The degeneracy of costume in modern times, is a great hindrance to all but exceptionally gifted painters. Pictures of incidents of modern life, in which the figures are clothed in the height of this year's fashion, are sure to look quite out of date and dowdy in a year or two. Compositions representing weddings, and picnics, and such-like scenes, in which the chimney-pot hat flourishes in great perfection, are to be found in every exhibition. The life they depict has no pictorial aspects; the painter has no thought to express, no beauty to reveal,—only a little sentimentality, a little feeble moralising. Still there are English painters of the present time, of much higher aims, whose works range from poetical interpretation of Nature in landscape, from noble portraiture up to

paintings of a higher order, still aiming at ideal beauty, and appealing almost exclusively to poetical ideas. It is not possible for me now to enumerate these artists, or to describe their pictures; they can be easily singled out by those who truly care for art in its highest sense.

I will ask you to look at a few photographs from the works of Mr. Burne-Jones. I know I am expressing not merely my own feeling, but the highest deliberate judgment of the time, when I say that here is a painter who really treads in the same glorious path as the great Masters, and—having splendid gifts of colour, and poetic idea and feeling, of exquisite and noble form and execution—he may be reckoned as their true descendant; and I venture to say that the more the Masters of acknowledged great periods are studied, the more will the works of Burne-Jones be appreciated and admired.

Two of these photographs are taken from a series of pictures whose subject is "The Sleeping Beauty." The first one, which I

am sorry not to have been able to procure, shows the hedge of strong thorns through which the first adventurers could not pierce, because the man and the hour had not yet arrived; and there lie their dead and ghastly forms, huddled together, caught in the cruel hedge, all wreck and despair; but, when the hundred years are over, the thorn blossoms at last, and breaks into constellations of fair wild roses.

In the first of those before us, we see, enthroned on the carpeted dais, the aged king, his head sunk on his breast, bowed down by the weight of the one hundred years of slumber; and, as Tennyson says, "His beard has grown into his lap." His chief minister of state lies next him, and then the singers and attendant musicians; and the musical instruments lie waiting, too, for their recall to life and sound. And, behind all this, still the strong fence of thorn thrusting forcibly its strong arms in among the sleepers, and beginning to enclose the king's throne itself. And then we come

into the presence of the princess; she lies on a long low couch, surrounded by a closer growth of leaf and blossom, so that the thorny fence is scarcely seen, and round her head and feet, and in her hand, grow the roses, and in the interstices of the pavement spring delicate columbines, ready for the foot of the prince; here the attendant maidens too, weighed down by slumber, await the waking hour; but there is expectancy in the air—the sleeping girl is almost ready to turn and lift her head, and stir the delicate folds of the drapery that have lain still for so long. —Tennyson's little poem, when I looked at it again, intending to quote from it, has a slighter meaning than all this; we have here ideas nearer to the soul of beauty, blending the charm of story and sentiment (the medium of the art of poetry) with the charm of line and colour (the medium of the art of painting).—And here we have a figure of Temperance standing with pure white feet, pouring water on the hot unruly flame. The eddying curves of her drapery, blown by the

wind from the fire, are so exquisitely drawn, that there is almost a breath of motion in them.

And here, lastly, is Hope—a fair maiden imprisoned in an upper chamber of a strong tower. Behind the iron grating we can see the cold blank walls and friendless aspect of the great world; but still Hope lives and blooms in her prison. She holds in her right hand a bough of apple-blossom, rich in promise of the fruit that is to come. Above her is a dim veil or curtain suspended, through which her other hand is barely seen, reaching into the future as she gazes up. So let us fitly end with Hope.

And now I have come to the end, not, indeed, of all I have to say, but of all that at this time I can ask you to listen to. I am afraid—I *know*—that my great subject has suffered at my hands, in being contracted into too small a space, and it is only too likely that it has suffered in other ways as well. There is one idea that I hope I have kept fully in view in all that I have said from

the beginning,—that art is not a thing having a separate existence; it is not merely a costly exotic, only cultivated by the wealthy few and intended to please a narrow circle of highly refined people; not this, but a blossoming of the universal nature of man, a natural outcome of every age, every stage of civilisation, every condition in life.

It is true that this growth is sometimes stunted and meagre, and the general influences abroad in the world may be adverse to it; but there is no doubt that it will again rise and flourish, for it is rooted in the love of Beauty—that Beauty that is in all the best things of life, all things of Divine creation and of the divinity working in man; so that art seems to have, in its essence, something Divine, something immortal; and, unless we will give some portion of our time and of our powers to acquiring a knowledge of and interest in these things, a great part of the good things of life will be lost to us, and some of the most glorious and delightful work of man's hand, will,

for us, have been accomplished in vain.

·BURNE·JONES·
·HOPE·

R & R
C
PRINTERS
EDINBURG

MESSRS. MACMILLAN AND CO'S PUBLICATIONS.

BOOKS ILLUSTRATED BY WALTER CRANE.

Grimm's Fairy Tales. A Selection from the Household Stories, translated by LUCY CRANE, and done into Pictures by WALTER CRANE. Crown 8vo. 6s.

⁎ Also an Edition, limited to 250 Copies, printed on large paper. Royal 8vo. 21s.

"'Miss Crane's translation is still much better than any of those on which the infancy of the present was fed. It is very readable; and the dialogue is always brisk and life-like. Her choice, too, fell on some of the best stories in Grimm's collection. What delightful stories they are . . . The book is prettily got up, and is sure to be a great favourite both with children and older folks."—*The Athenæum.*

"Here we have fresh evidence of Mr. Walter Crane's peculiar, and what is in these days a most rare, power of art—expression. While it is, in its very essence, artistic, in the highest and most wholesome sense of the term, it is at the same time spontaneous and direct, and done apparently with the greatest care; possessing the fresh, brilliant qualities which a full and rich invention, combined with a natural facility of execution, probably alone can give. . . . Meantime all should hail with gratitude this new picture-book, which we recommend to every nursery and schoolroom; and not only to every nursery and schoolroom, but to every one who cares for good art."—*Spectator.*

The Necklace of Princess Fiorimonde, and other Stories. By MARY DE MORGAN. Illustrated by WALTER CRANE. Extra fcap. 8vo. 6s. Also a Large Paper Edition, with the Illustrations on India Paper. 100 copies only printed.

MRS. MOLESWORTH'S NEW BOOK.

Rosy. By Mrs. MOLESWORTH, Author of "Carrots," "The Cuckoo Clock," "Herr Baby," etc. With Illustrations by WALTER CRANE. Globe 8vo. Price 4s. 6d.

By Mrs. MOLESWORTH. With Illustrations by WALTER CRANE. Globe 8vo. 4s. 6d. each.

"Carrots," Just a Little Boy.
The Tapestry Room.
Grandmother Dear.
The Cuckoo Clock.
Tell Me a Story.
A Christmas Child.

With Illustrations by WALTER CRANE. Globe 4to. 6s.

The Adventures of Herr Baby.

Agatha's Husband. By the Author of "John Halifax, Gentleman." New Edition. Illustrated by WALTER CRANE. Crown 8vo. 6s.

Head of the Family. By the Author of "John Halifax, Gentleman." New Edition. Illustrated by WALTER CRANE. Crown 8vo. 6s.

MACMILLAN AND CO., LONDON.

MESSRS. MACMILLAN AND CO'S PUBLICATIONS.

Lectures on Art. Delivered in support of the Society for protection of Ancient Buildings. By REGD. STUART POOLE, Professor W. B. RICHMOND, E. J. POYNTER, R.A., J. T. MICKLETHWAITE, and WILLIAM MORRIS. Crown 8vo. 4s. 6d.

The Makers of Florence: Dante, Giotto, Savonarola, and their City. By Mrs. OLIPHANT. With Illustrations from Drawings by Professor DELAMOTTE, and a Steel Portrait of Savonarola, engraved by C. H. JEENS. *Cheaper Edition.* Crown 8vo. 10s. 6d.

The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry. BY WALTER H. PATER, M.A., Fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford. Second Edition, revised. With a Vignette engraved by Jeens. Crown 8vo. 10s. 6d.

Our Sketching Club. Letters and Studies on Landscape Art. BY R. St. JOHN TYRWHITT, M.A. With an authorised Reproduction of the Lessons and Woodcuts in Prof. Ruskin's "Elements of Drawing." Second Edition. Crown 8vo. 7s. 6d.

Talks about Art. By WILLIAM HUNT. With a Letter from J.E. MILLAIS, R.A. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d.

A **Primer of Art.** By JOHN COLLIER. With Illustrations. 18mo. 1s.

ART AT HOME SERIES.

Edited by W. J. LOFTIE, B.A. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 2s. 6d. each.

Art in the House. A Plea for Art in the House. By W. J. LOFTIE, B.A.

House Decoration. Suggestions for House Decoration, in Painting, Woodwork, and Furniture. By RHODA and AGNES GARRETT.

Music in the House. BY JOHN HULLAH.

The Drawing-Room: its Decorations and Furniture. By Mrs. ORRINSMITH.

Amateur Theatricals. BY WALTER H. POLLOCK, and Lady POLLOCK.

The Minor Arts: Porcelain, Painting, Wood Carving, Stencilling, Modelling, Mosaic Work, &c. By CHARLES G. LELAND.

The Dining-Room. By Mrs. LOFTIE.

The Bedroom and Boudoir. By Lady BARKER.

Dress. By Mrs. OLIPHANT.

Needlework. BY ELIZABETH GLAISTER.

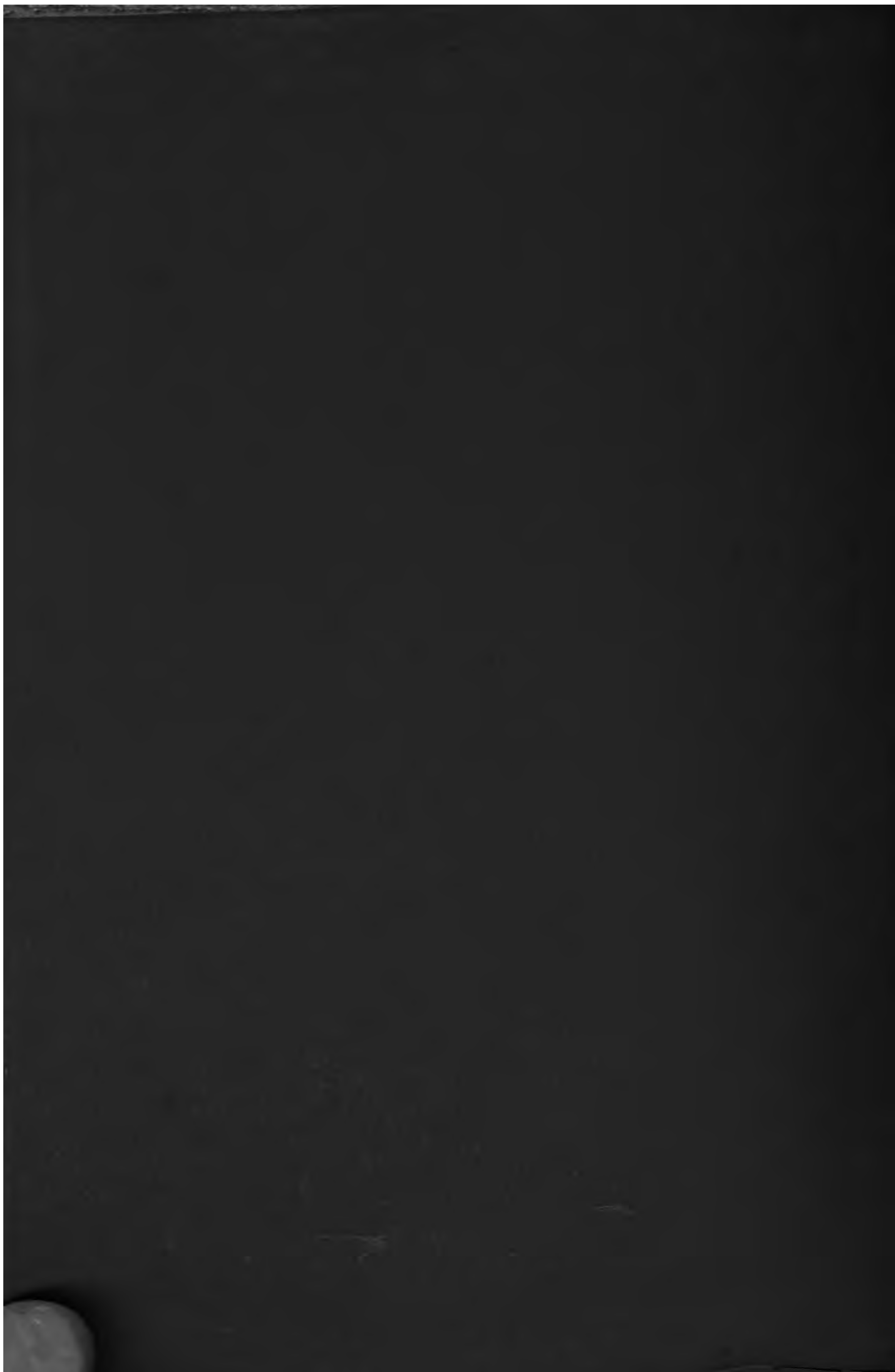
Sketching from Nature. BY TRISTRAM ELLIS. With Illustrations by H. S. MARKS, R.A., and the Author. [*In the Press.*

The Library. By ANDREW LANG. With a Chapter on English Illustrated Books, by AUSTIN DOBSON. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d.

Other Volumes in preparation.

MACMILLAN AND CO., LONDON.

11



M & Co