RUSKIN JOHN

ARROWS OF THE CHACE, VOL. 1/2

John Ruskin
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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

My good Editor insists that this book must have an Author's Preface; and insists further that it shall not contain compliments to him on the editorship. I must leave, therefore, any readers who care for the book, and comprehend the trouble that has been spent on it, to pay him their own compliments, as the successive service of his notes may call for them: but my obedience to his order, not in itself easy to me, doubles the difficulty I have in doing what, nevertheless, I am resolved to do—pay, that is to say, several extremely fine compliments to myself, upon the quality of the text.

For of course I have read none of these letters since they were

first printed: of half of them I had forgotten the contents, of some, the existence; all come fresh to me; and here in Rouen, where I thought nothing could possibly have kept me from drawing all I could of the remnants of the old town, I find myself, instead, lying in bed in the morning, reading these remnants of my old self—and that with much contentment and thankful applause.

For here are a series of letters ranging over a period of, broadly, forty years of my life; most of them written hastily, and all in hours snatched from heavier work: and in the entire mass of them there is not a word I wish to change, not a statement I have to retract, and, I believe, few pieces of advice, which the reader will not find it for his good to act upon.

With which brief preface I am, for my own part, content; but as it is one of an unusual tenor, and may be thought by some of my friends, and all my foes, more candid than graceful, I permit myself the apologetic egotism of enforcing one or two of the points in which I find these letters so well worth—their author's—reading.

In the building of a large book, there are always places where an indulged diffuseness weakens the fancy, and prolonged strain subdues the energy: when we have time to say all we wish, we usually wish to say more than enough; and there are few subjects we can have the pride of exhausting, without wearying the listener. But all these letters were written with fully provoked zeal, under strict allowance of space and time: they contain the

choicest and most needful things I could within narrow limits say, out of many contending to be said; expressed with deliberate precision; and recommended by the best art I had in illustration or emphasis. At the time of my life in which most of them were composed, I was fonder of metaphor, and more fertile in simile, than I am now; and I employed both with franker trust in the reader's intelligence. Carefully chosen, they are always a powerful means of concentration; and I could then dismiss in six words, "thistledown without seeds, and bubbles without color," forms of art on which I should now perhaps spend half a page of analytic vituperation; and represent, with a pleasant accuracy which my best methods of outline and exposition could now no more achieve, the entire system of modern plutocratic policy, under the luckily remembered image of the Arabian bridegroom, bewitched with his heels uppermost.

It is to be remembered also that many of the subjects handled can be more conveniently treated controversially than directly; the answer to a single question may be made clearer than a statement which endeavors to anticipate many; and the crystalline vigor of a truth is often best seen in the course of its serene collision with a trembling and dissolving fallacy. But there is a deeper reason than any such accidental ones for the quality of this book. Since the letters cost me, as aforesaid, much trouble; since they interrupted me in pleasant work which was usually liable to take harm by interruption; and since they were likely almost, in the degree of their force, to be refused by the editors of

the adverse journals, I never was tempted into writing a word for the public press, unless concerning matters which I had much at heart. And the issue is, therefore, that the two following volumes contain very nearly the indices of everything I have deeply cared for during the last forty years; while not a few of their political notices relate to events of more profound historical importance than any others that have occurred during the period they cover; and it has not been an uneventful one.

Nor have the events been without gravity; the greater, because they have all been inconclusive. Their true conclusions are perhaps nearer than any of us apprehend; and the part I may be forced to take in them, though I am old,—perhaps I should rather say, *because* I am old,—will, as far as I can either judge or resolve, be not merely literary.

Whether I am spared to put into act anything here designed for my country's help, or am shielded by death from the sight of her remediless sorrow, I have already done for her as much service as she has will to receive, by laying before her facts vital to her existence, and unalterable by her power, in words of which not one has been warped by interest nor weakened by fear; and which are as pure from selfish passion as if they were spoken already out of another world.

J. Ruskin.

Rouen, *St. Firmin's Day, 1880*.

EDITOR'S PREFACE

Some words are needed by way of a general note to the present volumes in explanation of the principles upon which they have been edited. It is, however, first due to the compiler of the Bibliography of Mr. Ruskin's writings,[1] to state in what measure this book has been prompted and assisted by his previous labors. Already acquainted with some few of the letters which Mr. Ruskin had addressed at various times to the different organs of the daily press, or which had indirectly found their way there, it was not until I came across the Bibliography that I was encouraged to complete and arrange a collection of these scattered portions of his thought. When I had done this, I ventured to submit the whole number of the letters to their author, and to ask him if, after taking two or three of them as examples of the rest, he would not consider the advisability of himself republishing, if not all, at least a selected few. In reply, he was good enough to put me in communication with his publisher, and to request me to edit any or all of the letters without further reference to him.

I have, therefore, to point out that except for that request, or rather sanction; for the preface which he has promised to

[1] "The Bibliography of Ruskin: a bibliographical list, arranged in chronological order, of the published writings of John Ruskin, M.A. (From 1834 to 1879.)" By Richard Herne Shepherd.

add after my work upon the volumes is finished; and for the title which it bears, Mr. Ruskin is in no way responsible for this edition of his letters. I knew, indeed, from the words of "Fors Clavigera" which are printed as a motto to the book, that I ran little risk of his disapproval in determining to print, not a selection, but the whole number of letters in question; and I felt certain that the completeness of the collection would be considered a first essential by most of its readers, who are thus assured that the present volumes contain, with but two exceptions, every letter mentioned in the last edition of the bibliography, and some few more beside, which have been either printed or discovered since its publication.

The two exceptions are, first, the series of letters on the Lord's Prayer which appeared in the pages of the *Contemporary Review* last December; and, secondly, some half-dozen upon "A Museum or Picture Gallery," printed in the *Art Journal* of last June and August. It seemed that both these sets of letters were really more akin to review articles cast in an epistolary form, and would thus find fitter place in a collection of such papers than in the present volumes; and for the omission of the second set there was a still further reason in the fact that the series is not yet completed.[2] On the other hand, the recent

[2] The letter out of which it took its rise, however, will be found on the 82d page of the first volume; and with regard to it, and especially to the mention of Mr. Frith's picture in it, reference should be made to part of a further letter in the *Art Journal* of this month."I owe some apology, by the way, to Mr. Frith, for the way I spoke of his picture in my letter to the Leicester committee, not intended for publication, though I

circular on the proposed interference with St. Mark's, Venice, is included in the first, and one or twoother extraneous matters in the second volume, for reasons which their connection with the letters amongst which they are placed will make sufficiently clear.

The letters are reprinted word for word, and almost stop for stop, from the newspapers and other pages in which they first appeared. To ensure this accuracy was not an easy matter, and to it there are a few intentional exceptions. A few misprints have been corrected, such as that of "Fat Bard" for "Fort Bard" (vol. i. p. 147): and now and then the punctuation has been changed, as on the 256th page of the same volume, where a comma, placed in the original print of the letter between the words "visibly" and "owing," quite confused the sentence. To these slight alterations may be added others still less important, such as the commencement of a fresh paragraph, or the closing up of an existing one, to suit the composition of the type, which the number of notes rendered unusually tiresome. The title of a letter, too, is not always that provided it by the newspaper; in some cases it seemed well to rechristen, in others it was necessary to christen a letter, though the former has never been done where it was at all possible that the existing title (for which reference can always be made to the bibliography) was one given to it by Mr. Ruskin himself.

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never write what I would not allow to be published, and was glad that they asked leave to print it." (*Art Journal*, August, 1880, where this sentence is further explained.)

The classification of the letters is well enough shown by the tables of contents. The advantages of a topical over a chronological arrangement appeared beyond all doubt; whilst the addition to each volume of a chronological list of the letters contained in it, and the further addition to the second volume of a similar list of all the letters contained in the book, and of a full index, will, it is hoped, increase the usefulness of the work.

The beautiful engraving which forms the frontispiece of the first volume originally formed that of "The Oxford Museum." The plate was but little used in the apparently small edition of that book, and was thus found to be in excellent state for further use here. The woodcut of the chestnut spandril (vol. i. p. 144) is copied from one which may also be found in "The Oxford Museum." The facsimile of part of one of the letters is not quite satisfactory, the lines being somewhat thicker than they should be, but it answers its present purpose.

Lastly, the chief difficulty of editing these letters has been in regard to the notes, and has lain not so much in obtaining the necessary information as in deciding what use to make of it when obtained. The first point was, of course, to put the reader of the present volumes in possession of every fact which would have been common knowledge at the time when such and such a letter was written; but beyond this there were various allusions, which might be thought to need explanation; quotations, the exact reference to which might be convenient; and so forth. Some notes, therefore, of this character have been also added; whilst

some few which were omitted, either intentionally or by accident, from the body of the work, may be found on reference to the index.[3]

The effort to make the book complete has induced the notice of slight variations of text in one or two cases, especially in the reprint of the St. Mark's Circular. The space occupied by such notes is small, the interest which a few students take in the facts they notice really great, and the appearance of pedantry to some readers is thus risked in order to meet the special wish of others. The same effort will account for the reappearance of one or two really unimportant letters in the Appendix to the second volume, which contains also some few letters the nature of which is rather personal than public.

I have asked Mr. Ruskin to state in his preface to the book the value he may set upon it in relation to his other and more connected work; and for the rest, I have only to add that the editing of it has been the pleasant labor of my leisure for more than two years past, and to express my hope that these scattered arrows, some from the bow of "An Oxford Graduate," some from that of an Oxford Professor, may not have been vainly winged anew by

An Oxford Pupil.

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[3] Some of the notes, it will be remarked, are in larger type than the rest; these are Mr. Ruskin's original notes to the letters as first published, and are in fact part of them; and they are so printed to distinguish them from the other notes, for which I am responsible.

October, 1880.

LETTERS ON ART

I.
ART CRITICISM AND ART EDUCATION

[From "The Weekly Chronicle," September 23, 1843.]
"MODERN PAINTERS;" A REPLY

To the Editor of "The Weekly Chronicle."

Sir: I was much gratified by reading in your columns of the 15th[4] instant a piece of close, candid, and artistical criticism on my work entitled "Modern Painters." Serious and well-based criticism is at the present day so rare, and our periodicals are filled so universally with the splenetic jargon or meaningless praise of ignorance, that it is no small pleasure to an author to meet either with praise which he can view with patience, or censure which he can regard with respect. I seldom, therefore, read, and have never for an instant thought of noticing, the

[4] It should be 16th, the criticism having appeared in the preceding weekly issue.

ordinary animadversions of the press; but the critique on "Modern Painters" in your pages is evidently the work of a man both of knowledge and feeling; and is at once so candid and so keen, so honest and so subtle, that I am desirous of offering a few remarks on the points on which it principally touches —they are of importance to art; and I feel convinced that the writer is desirous only of elucidating truth, not of upholding a favorite error. With respect first to Gaspar's painting of the "Sacrifice of Isaac." It is not on the faith of any *single* shadow that I have pronounced the time intended to be near noon[5]— though the shadow of the two figures being very short, and cast *from* the spectator, is in itself conclusive. The whole system of chiaroscuro of the picture is lateral; and the light is expressly shown not to come from the distance by its breaking brightly on the bit of rock and waterfall on the left, from which the high copse wood altogether intercepts the rays proceeding from the horizon. There are multitudes of pictures by Gaspar with this same effect—leaving no doubt whatever on my mind that they are all manufactured by the same approved recipe, probably given him by Nicholas, but worked out by Gaspar with the clumsiness and vulgarity which are invariably attendant on the

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[5] See "Modern Painters," vol. i. p. 159 (Pt. II. § 2, cap. 2, § 5). "Again, take any important group of trees, I do not care whose,—Claude's, Salvator's, or Poussin's,— with lateral light (that in the Marriage of Isaac and Rebecca, or Gaspar's Sacrifice of Isaac, for instance); can it be supposed that those murky browns and melancholy greens are representative of the tints of leaves under full noonday sun?" The picture in question is, it need hardly be said, in the National Gallery (No. 31).

efforts of an inferior mind to realize the ideas of a greater. The Italian masters universally make the horizon the chief light of their picture, whether the effect intended be of noon or evening. Gaspar, to save himself the trouble of graduation, washes his sky half blue and half yellow, and separates the two colors by a line of cloud. In order to get his light conspicuous and clear, he washes the rest of his sky of a dark deep blue, without any thoughts about time of day or elevation of sun, or any such minutiæ; finally, having frequently found the convenience of a black foreground, with a bit of light coming in round the corner, and probably having no conception of the possibility of painting a foreground on any other principle, he naturally falls into the usual method —blackens it all over, touches in a few rays of lateral light, and turns out a very respectable article; for in such language only should we express the completion of a picture painted throughout on conventional principles, without one reference to nature, and without one idea of the painter's own. With respect to Salvator's "Mercury and the Woodman,"[6] your critic has not allowed for the effect of time on its blues. They are now, indeed, sobered and brought down, as is every other color in the picture, until it is scarcely possible to distinguish any of the details in its darker parts; but they *have been* pure and clean, and the mountain is

[6] See "Modern Painters," vol. i. pp. 157-8 (Pt. II. § ii., cap. 2, § 4). The critic of the *Chronicle* had written that the rocky mountains in this picture "are *not* sky-blue, neither are they near enough for detail of crag to be seen, neither are they in full light, but are quite as indistinct as they would be in nature, and just the color." The picture is No. 84 in the National Gallery.

absolutely the same color as the open part of the sky. When I say it is "in full light," I do not mean that it is the highest light of the picture (for no distant mountain *can* be so, when compared with bright earth or white clouds), but that no accidental shadow is cast upon it; that it is under open sky, and so illumined that there must necessarily be a difference in hue between its light and dark sides, at which Salvator has not even hinted.

Again, with respect to the question of focal distances,[7] your critic, in common with many very clever people to whom I have spoken on the subject, has confused the obscurity of objects which are *laterally* out of the focal *range*, with that of objects which are *directly* out of the focal *distance*. If all objects in a landscape were in the same plane, they should be represented on the plane of the canvas with equal distinctness, because the eye has no greater lateral range on the canvas than in the landscape, and can only command a point in each. But this point in the landscape may present an intersection of lines belonging to

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[7] See "Modern Painters," vol. i. p. 184 (Pt. II. § ii., cap. 4, § 6). "Turner introduced a new era in landscape art, by showing that the foreground might be sunk for the distance, and that it was possible to express immediate proximity to the spectator, without giving anything like completeness to the forms of the near objects. This, observe, is not done by slurred or soft lines (always the sign of vice in art), but by a decisive imperfection, a firm but partial assertion of form, which the eye feels indeed to be close home to it, and yet cannot rest upon, nor cling to, nor entirely understand, and from which it is driven away of necessity to those parts of distance on which it is intended to repose." To this the critic of the *Chronicle* had objected, attempting to show that it would result in Nature being "represented with just half the quantity of light and color that she possesses."

different distances—as when a branch of a tree, or tuft of grass, cuts against the horizon: and yet these different distances cannot be discerned together: we lose one if we look at the other, so that no painful intersection of lines is ever felt. But on the canvas, as the lines of foreground and of distance are on the *same* plane, they *will* be seen together whenever they intersect, painfully and distinctly; and, therefore, unless we make one series, whether near or distant, obscure and indefinite, we shall always represent as visible at once that which the eye can only perceive by two separate acts of seeing. Hold up your finger before this page, six inches from it. If you look at the edge of your finger, you cannot see the letters; if you look at the letters, you cannot see the edge of your finger, but as a confused, double, misty line. Hence in painting, you must either take for your subject the finger or the letters; you cannot paint both distinctly without violation of truth. It is of no consequence how quick the change of the eye may be; it is not one whit quicker than its change from one part of the horizon to another, nor are the two intersecting distances more visible at the same time than two opposite portions of a landscape to which it passes in succession. Whenever, therefore, in a landscape, we look from the foreground to the distance, the foreground is subjected to *two* degrees of indistinctness: the first, that of an object *laterally* out of the focus of the eye; and the *second*, that of an object *directly* out of the focus of the eye; being too near to be seen with the focus adapted to the distance. In the picture, when we look from the foreground to the distance,

the foreground is subjected only to *one* degree of indistinctness, that of being out of the lateral range; for as both the painting of the distance and of the foreground are on the same plane, they are seen together with the same focus. Hence we must supply the *second* degree of indistinctness by slurring with the brush, or we shall have a severe and painful intersection of near and distant lines, impossible in nature. Finally, a very false principle is implied by part of what is advanced by your critic—which has led to infinite error in art, and should therefore be instantly combated whenever it were hinted—that the ideal is different from the true. It is, on the contrary, only the perfection of truth. The Apollo is not a *false* representation of man, but the most perfect representation of all that is constant and essential in man—free from the accidents and evils which corrupt the truth of his nature.[8] Supposing we are describing to a naturalist some animal he does not know, and we tell him we saw one with a hump on its back, and another with strange bends in its legs, and another with a long tail, and another with no tail, he will ask us directly, But what is its *true* form, what is its *real* form? This truth, this reality, which he requires of us, is the *ideal* form, that which is

[8] The passage in the *Chronicle* ran thus: "The Apollo is but an ideal of the human form; no figure ever moulded of flesh and blood was like it." With the objection to this criticism we may compare "Modern Painters" (vol. i. p. 27), where the ideal is defined as "the utmost degree of beauty of which the species is capable." See also vol. ii. p. 99: "The perfect *idea* of the form and condition in which all the properties of the species are fully developed is called the Ideal of the species;" and "That unfortunate distinctness between Idealism and Realism which leads most people to imagine that the Ideal is opposed to the Real, and therefore false."

hinted at by all the individuals—aimed at, but not arrived at. But never let it be said that, when a painter is defying the principles of nature at every roll of his brush, as I have shown that Gaspar does, when, instead of working out the essential characters of specific form, and raising those to their highest degree of nobility and beauty, he is casting all character aside, and carrying out imperfection and accident; never let it be said, in excuse for such degradation of nature, that it is done in pursuit of the ideal. As well might this be said in defence of the promising sketch of the human form pasted on the wainscot behind the hope of the family—artist and musician of equal power—in the "Blind Fiddler."[9] Ideal beauty is the generalization of consummate knowledge, the concentration of perfect truth—not the abortive vision of ignorance in its study. Nor was there ever yet one conception of the human mind beautiful, but as it was based on truth. Whenever we leave nature, we fall immeasurably beneath her. So, again, I find fault with the "ropy wreath" of Gaspar,[10] not because he chose massy cloud instead of light cloud; but because he has drawn his massy cloud *falsely*, making it look tough and powerless, like a chain of Bologna sausages, instead of gifting it with the frangible and elastic vastness of nature's mountain vapor.

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[9] This picture of Sir David Wilkie's was presented to the National Gallery (No. 99) by Sir George Beaumont, in 1826.

[10] The bank of cloud in the "Sacrifice of Isaac" is spoken of in "Modern Painters" (vol. i. p. 227, Pt. II., § iii., cap. 3, §7), as "a ropy, tough-looking wreath." On this the reviewer commented.

Finally, Sir, why must it be only "when he is gone from us"[11] that the power of our greatest English landscape painter is to be acknowledged? It cannot, indeed, be fully understood until the current of years has swept away the minor lights which stand around it, and left it burning alone; but at least the scoff and the sneer might be lashed into silence, if those only did their duty by whom it is already perceived. And let us not think that our unworthiness has no effect on the work of the master. I could be patient if I thought that *no* effect was wrought on his noble mind by the cry of the populace; but, scorn it as he may, and does, it is yet impossible for any human mind to hold on its course, with the same energy and life, through the oppression of a perpetual hissing, as when it is cheered on by the quick sympathy of its fellow-men. It is not in art as in matters of political duty, where the path is clear and the end visible. The springs of feeling may be oppressed or sealed by the want of an answer in other bosoms, though the sense of principle cannot be blunted except by the individual's *own* error; and though the knowledge of what is right, and the love of what is beautiful, may still support our great painter through the languor of age—and Heaven grant it may for years to come—yet we cannot hope that he will ever cast his spirit upon the canvas with the same freedom and fire as if he felt that the voice of its inspiration was waited for among men,

[11] "We agree," wrote the *Chronicle*, "with the writer in almost every word he says about this great artist; and we have no doubt that, when he is gone from among us, his memory will receive the honor due to his living genius." See also the postscript to the first volume of "Modern Painters" (pp. 422-3), written in June, 1851.

and dwelt upon with devotion. Once, in ruder times, the work of a great painter[12] was waited for through days at his door, and attended to its place of deposition by the enthusiasm of a hundred cities; and painting rose from that time, a rainbow upon the Seven Hills, and on the cypressed heights of Fiésole, guiding them and lighting them forever, even in the stillness of their decay. How can we hope that England will ever win for herself such a crown, while the works of her highest intellects are set for the pointing of the finger and the sarcasm of the tongue, and the sole reward for the deep, earnest, holy labor of a devoted life, is the weight of stone upon the trampled grave, where the vain and idle crowd will come to wonder how the brushes are mimicked in the marble

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[12] Cimabue. The quarter of the town is yet named, from the rejoicing of that day, Borgo Allegri. [The picture thus honored was that of the Virgin, painted for the Church of Santa Maria Novella, where it now hangs in the Rucellai Chapel. "This work was an object of so much admiration to the people, … that it was carried in solemn procession, with the sound of trumpets and other festal demonstrations, from the house of Cimabue to the church, he himself being highly rewarded and honored for it. It is further reported, and may be read in certain records of old painters, that whilst Cimabue was painting this picture in a garden near the gate of San Pietro, King Charles the Elder, of Anjou, passed through Florence, and the authorities of the city, among other marks of respect, conducted him to see the picture of Cimabue. When this work was shown to the king, it had not before been seen by any one; wherefore all the men and women of Florence hastened in great crowds to admire it, making all possible demonstrations of delight. The inhabitants of the neighborhood, rejoicing in this occurrence, ever afterwards called that place Borgo Allegri; and this name it has since retained, although in process of time it became enclosed within the walls of the city.—Vasari, "Lives of Painters." Bohn's edition. London, 1850. Vol. i. p. 41. This well-known anecdote may also be found in Jameson's "Early Italian Painters," p. 12]. (*Original note to the letter: see editor's preface.*)

above the dust of him who wielded them in vain?

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
The Author of "Modern Painters."

[From the "Artist and Amateur's Magazine" (edited by E. V. Rippingille), January, 1843, pp. 280-287.]

ART CRITICISM

To the Editor of the "Artist and Amateur's Magazine."

Sir—Anticipating, with much interest, your reply to the candid and earnest inquiries of your unknown correspondent, Matilda Y.,[13] I am led to hope that you will allow me to have some share with you in the pleasant task of confirming an honest mind in the truth. Subject always to your animadversion and

[13] This letter was written in reply to one signed "Matilda Y.," which had been printed in the *Artist and Amateur's Magazine*, p. 265, December, 1843, and which related to the opposite opinions held by different critics of the works of Turner, which were praised by some as "beautiful and profoundly truthful representations of nature," whilst others declared them to be "executed without end, aim, or principle." "May not these contradictions," wrote the correspondent, in the passage alluded to by Mr. Ruskin, "be in a great measure the result of extreme ignorance of art in the great mass of those persons who take upon themselves the office of critics and reviewers? Can any one be a judge of art whose judgment is not founded on an accurate knowledge of nature? It is scarcely possible that a mere knowledge of pictures, however extensive, can qualify a man for the arduous and responsible duties of public criticism of art."

correction, so far as I may seem to you to be led astray by my peculiar love for the works of the artist to whom her letter refers, I yet trust that in most of the remarks I have to make on the points which have perplexed her, I shall be expressing not only your own opinions, but those of every other accomplished artist who is really acquainted—and which of our English masters is not?—with the noble system of poetry and philosophy which has been put forth on canvas, during the last forty years, by the great painter who has presented us with the almost unparalleled example of a man winning for himself the unanimous plaudits of his generation and time, and then casting them away like dust, that he may build his monument—ære perennius.

Your correspondent herself, in saying that mere knowledge of *pictures* cannot qualify a man for the office of a critic, has touched the first source of the schisms of the present, and of all time, in questions of pictorial merit. We are overwhelmed with a tribe of critics who are fully imbued with every kind of knowledge which is useful to the picture-dealer, but with none that is important to the artist. They know where a picture *has* been retouched, but not where it *ought* to have been; they know if it has been injured, but not if the injury is to be regretted. They are unquestionable authorities in all matters relating to the panel or the canvas, to the varnish or the vehicle, while they remain in entire ignorance of that which the vehicle conveys. They are well acquainted with the technical qualities of every master's touch; and when their discrimination fails, plume themselves on

indisputable tradition, and point triumphantly to the documents of pictorial genealogy. But they never go *quite* far enough back; they stop *one* step short of the real original; they reach the human one, but never the Divine. Whatever, under the present system of study, the connoisseur of the gallery may learn or know, there is one thing he does *not* know—and that is nature. It is a pitiable thing to hear a man like Dr. Waagen,[14] about to set the seal of his approbation, or the brand of his reprobation, on all the pictures in our island, expressing his insipid astonishment on his first

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[14] Gustav Friedrich Waagen, Director of the Berlin Gallery from 1832 until his death in 1868. He was the author of various works on art, amongst them one entitled "Works of Art and Artists in England" (London, 1838), which is that alluded to here. The passage quoted concludes a description of his "first attempt to navigate the watery paths," in a voyage from Hamburg to the London Docks (vol. i. p. 13). His criticism of Turner may be found in the same work (vol. ii. p. 80), where commenting on Turner's "Fishermen endeavoring to put their fish on board," then, as now, in the gallery of Bridgewater House (No. 169), and which was painted as a rival to the great sea-storm of Vandevelde, he writes, that "in the truth of clouds and waves" … it is inferior to that picture, compared with which "it appears like a successful piece of scene-painting. The great crowd of amateurs, who ask nothing more of the art, will always far prefer Turner's picture." Dr. Waagen revised and re-edited his book in a second, entitled, "Treasures of Art in Great Britain" (1854), in which these passages are repeated with slight verbal alterations (vol. i. p. 3, vol. ii. p. 53). In this work he acknowledges his ignorance of Turner at the time the first was written, and gives a high estimate of his genius. "Buildings," he writes, "he treats with peculiar felicity, while *the sea* in its most varied aspects *is equally subservient to his magic brush*"!! He adds, that but for one deficiency, the want of a sound technical basis, he "should not hesitate to recognize Turner as the greatest landscape painter of all time"! With regard, however, to the above-named picture, it may be remembered that Mr. Ruskin has himself instanced it as one of the marine pictures which Turner spoiled by imitation of Vandevelde ("Pre-Raphaelitism," p. 45).

acquaintance with the sea. "For the *first* time I understood the truth of their pictures (Backhuysen's and Van de Velde's), and the refined art with which, by intervening dashes of sunshine, near or at a distance, and *ships to animate the scene*, they produce such a charming variety on the surface of the sea." For the first time! —and yet this gallery-bred judge, this discriminator of colored shreds and canvas patches, who has no idea how ships animate the sea, until—charged with the fates of the Royal Academy—he ventures his invaluable person from Rotterdam to Greenwich, will walk up to the work of a man whose brow is hard with the spray of a hundred storms, and characterize it as "wanting in truth of clouds and waves"! Alas for Art, while such judges sit enthroned on their apathy to the beautiful, and their ignorance of the true, and with a canopy of canvas between them and the sky, and a wall of tradition, which may not be broken through, concealing from them the horizon, hurl their darkened verdicts against the works of men, whose night and noon have been wet with the dew of heaven—dwelling on the deep sea, or wandering among the solitary places of the earth, until they have "made the mountains, waves, and skies a part of them and of their souls."

When information so narrow is yet the whole stock in trade of the highest authorities of the day, what are we to expect from the lowest? Dr. Waagen is a most favorable specimen of the tribe of critics; a man, we may suppose, impartial, above all national or party prejudice, and intimately acquainted with that half of his subject (the technical half) which is all we can reasonably expect

to be known by one who has been trained in the painting-room instead of in the fields. No authority is more incontrovertible in all questions of the genuineness of old pictures. He has at least the merit—not common among those who talk most of the old masters—of knowing what he *does* admire, and will not fall into the same raptures before an execrable copy as before the original. If, then, we find a man of this real judgment in those matters to which his attention has been directed, entirely incapable, owing to his ignorance of nature, of estimating a modern picture, what can we hope from those lower critics who are unacquainted even with those technical characters which they have opportunities of learning? What, for instance, are we to anticipate from the sapient lucubrations of the critic—for some years back the disgrace of the pages of "Blackwood"—who in one breath displays his knowledge of nature, by styling a painting of a furze bush in the bed of a mountain torrent a specimen of the "high pastoral," and in the next his knowledge of Art, by informing us that Mr. Lee "reminds him of Gainsborough's best manner, but is inferior to him in composition"![15] We do not mean to say anything against Mr. Lee; but can we forbear to smile at the hopeless innocence of the man's novitiate, who could be reminded by them of landscapes powerful enough in color to take their place beside those of Rembrandt or Rubens? A little attention will soon convince your correspondent of the

[15] See the Preface to the second edition of "Modern Painters" (vol. i. p. xix., etc.) Frederick Richard Lee, R.A., died in June, 1879.

utter futility or falsehood of the ordinary critiques of the press; and there could, I believe, even at present, be little doubt in her mind as to the fitting answer to the question, whether we are to take the opinion of the accomplished artist or of the common newsmonger, were it not for a misgiving which, be she conscious of it or not, is probably floating in her mind—whether that can really be *great* Art which has no influence whatsoever on the multitude, and is appreciable only by the initiated few. And this is the real question of difficulty. It is easy to prove that such and such a critic is wrong; but not so, to prove that what everybody dislikes is right. It is fitting to pay respect to Sir Augustus Callcott, but is it so to take his word against all the world?

This inquiry requires to be followed with peculiar caution; for by setting at defiance the judgment of the public, we in some sort may appear to justify that host of petty scribblers, and contemptible painters, who in all time have used the same plea in defence of their rejected works, and have received in consequence merciless chastisement from contemporary and powerful authors or painters, whose reputation was as universal as it was just. "Mes ouvrages," said Rubens to his challenger, Abraham Janssens, "ont été exposés en Italie, et en Espagne, sans que j'aie reçu la nouvelle de leur condamnation. Vous n'avez qu'à soumettre les votres à la même épreuve."[16] "Je défie," says

[16] Abraham Janssens, in his jealousy of Rubens, proposed to him that they should each paint a picture, and submit the rival works to the decision of the public. Mr.

Boileau, "tous les amateurs les plus mécontents du public, de me citer un bon livre que le public ait jamais rebuté, à moins qu'ils ne mettent en ce rang leur écrits, de la bonté desquels eux seuls sont persuadés."

Now the fact is, that the whole difficulty of the question is caused by the ambiguity of this word—the "public." Whom does it include? People continually forget that there is a *separate* public for every picture, and for every book. Appealed to with reference to any particular work, the public is that class of persons who possess the knowledge which it presupposes, and the faculties to which it is addressed. With reference to a new edition of Newton's Principia, the "public" means little more than the Royal Society. With reference to one of Wordsworth's poems, it means all who have hearts. With reference to one of Moore's, all who have passions. With reference to the works of Hogarth, it means those who have worldly knowledge to the works of Giotto, those who have religious faith. Each work must be tested exclusively by the fiat of the *particular* public to whom it is addressed. We will listen to no comments on Newton from people who have no mathematical knowledge; to none on Wordsworth from those who have no hearts; to none on Giotto from those who have no religion. Therefore, when we have to form a judgment of any new work, the question "What do the public say to it?" is indeed

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Ruskin gives Rubens' reply, the tenor of which may be found in any life of the artist. See Hasselt's "Histoire de Rubens" (Brussels, 1840), p. 48, from which Mr. Ruskin quotes; Descamps, vol. i. p. 304; Walpole's "Anecdotes of Painting," Bonn's octavo edition, p. 306.

of vital importance; but we must always inquire, first, who are *its* public? We must not submit a treatise on moral philosophy to a conclave of horse-jockeys, nor a work of deep artistical research to the writers for the Art Union.

The public, then, we repeat, when referred to with respect to a particular work, consist only of those who have knowledge of its subject, and are possessed of the faculties to which it is addressed.

If it fail of touching *these*, the work is a bad one; but it in no degree militates against it that it is rejected by those to whom it does not appeal. To whom, then, let us ask, and to *what* public do the works of Turner appeal? To those only, we reply, who have profound and disciplined acquaintance with nature, ardent poetical feeling, and keen eye for color (a faculty far more rare than an ear for music). They are deeply-toned poems, intended for all who love poetry, but not for those who delight in mimickries of wine-glasses and nutshells. They are deep treatises on natural phenomena, intended for all who are acquainted with such phenomena, but not for those who, like the painter Barry, are amazed at finding the realities of the Alps grander than the imaginations of Salvator, and assert that they saw the moon from the Mont Cenis four times as big as usual, "from being so much nearer to it"![17] And they are studied melodies of exquisite color,

[17] This is a singular instance of the profound ignorance of landscape in which great and intellectual painters of the human form may remain; an ignorance, which commonly renders their remarks on landscape painting nugatory, if not false. [The amazement of the painter is underrated: "You will believe me much nearer heaven

intended for those who have perception of color; not for those who fancy that all trees are Prussian green. Then comes the question, Were the works of Turner *ever* rejected by any person possessing even partially these qualifications? We answer boldly, never. On the contrary, they are universally hailed by *this* public with an enthusiasm not undeserving in appearance—at least to those who are debarred from sharing in it, of its usual soubriquet —the Turner mania.

Is, then, the number of those who are acquainted with the truth of nature so limited? So it has been asserted by one who knew much both of Art and Nature, and both were glorious in his country.[18]

> "III. Οὐ μέντοι εἰώθασιν ἄνθρωποι ὀνομάζειν οὕτως
> ΣΩ. Πότερον, ὦ Ἱππία, οἱ εἰδότες ἢ οἱ μὴ εἰδότες;
> ΙΠ. Οἱ πολλοί.
> ΣΩ. Εἰσὶ δ᾽ οὗτοι οἱ εἰδότες τἀληθές, οἱ πολλοί;
> ΙΠ. Οὐ δῆτα.

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upon Mount Cenis than I was before, or shall probably be again for some time. We passed this mountain on Sunday last, and about seven in the morning were near the top of the road over it, on both sides of which the mountain rises to a very great height, yet so high were we in the valley between them that the moon, which was above the horizon of the mountains, appeared at least five times as big as usual, and much more distinctly marked than I ever saw it through some very good telescopes."—Letter to Edmund Burke, dated Turin, Sept. 24, 1766. Works of James Barry, R.A., 2 vols., quarto (London, 1809), vol. i p 58. He died in 1806].

[18] The answer is put into the mouth of the sophist; but put as an established fact, which he cannot possibly deny. [Plato: Hippias Major, 284 E. Steph.].

Hippias Major.

Now, we are not inclined to go quite so far as this. There are many subjects with respect to which the multitude *are* cognizant of truth, or at least of *some* truth; and those subjects may be generally characterized as everything which materially concerns themselves or their interests. The public are acquainted with the nature of their own passions, and the point of their own calamities—can laugh at the weakness they feel, and weep at the miseries they have experienced; but all the sagacity they possess, be it how great soever, will not enable them to judge of likeness to that which they have never seen, nor to acknowledge principles on which they have never reflected. Of a comedy or a drama, an epigram or a ballad, they are judges from whom there is no appeal; but not of the representation of facts which they have never examined, of beauties which they have never loved. It is not sufficient that the facts or the features of nature be around us, while they are not within us. We may walk day by day through grove and meadow, and scarcely know more concerning them than is known by bird and beast, that the one has shade for the head, and the other softness for the foot. It is not true that "the eye, it cannot choose but see," unless we obey the following condition, and go forth "in a wise passiveness,"[19] free from that plague of our own hearts which brings the shadow of ourselves, and the tumult of our petty interests and impatient passions,

[19] Wordsworth. "Poems of Sentiment and Reflection," i. "Expostulation and Reply."

across the light and calm of Nature. We do not sit at the feet of our mistress to listen to her teaching; but we seek her only to drag from her that which may suit our purpose, to see in her the confirmation of a theory, or find in her fuel for our pride. Nay, do we often go to her even thus? Have we not rather cause to take to ourselves the full weight of Wordsworth's noble appeal—

> "Vain pleasures of luxurious life!
> Forever with yourselves at strife,
> Through town and country, both deranged
> By affections interchanged,
> And all the perishable gauds
> That heaven-deserted man applauds.
> When will your hapless patrons learn
> To watch and ponder, to discern
> The freshness, the eternal youth
> Of admiration, sprung from truth,
> From beauty infinitely growing
> Upon a mind with love overflowing:
> To sound the depths of every art
> That seeks its wisdom through the heart?"[20]

When *will* they learn it? Hardly, we fear, in this age of steam and iron, luxury and selfishness. We grow more and more artificial day by day, and see less and less worthiness in those pleasures which bring with them no morbid excitement,

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[20] "Memorials of a Tour in Scotland. 1814. iii. Effusion."

in that knowledge which affords us no opportunity of display. Your correspondent may rest assured that those who do not *care* for nature, who do not love her, *cannot* see her. A few of her phenomena lie on the surface; the nobler number lie deep, and are the reward of watching and of thought. The artist may choose *which* he will render: no human art can render both. If he paint the surface, he will catch the crowd; if he paint the depth, he will be admired only—but with how deep and fervent admiration, none but they who feel it can tell—by the thoughtful and observant few.

There are some admirable observations on this subject in your December number ("An Evening's Gossip with a Painter"[21]); but there is one circumstance with respect to the works of Turner which yet further limits the number of their admirers. They are not prosaic statements of the phenomena of nature—they are statements of them under the influence of ardent feeling; they are, in a word, the most fervent and real poetry which the English nation is at present producing. Now not only is this proverbially an age in which poetry is little cared for; but even with those who have most love of it, and most need of it, it requires, especially if high and philosophical, an attuned, quiet, and exalted frame

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[21] See the *Artist and Amateur's Magazine*, p. 248. The article named was written in dualogue, and in the passage alluded to "Palette," an artist, points out to his companion "Chatworthy," who represents the general public, that "next to the highest authorities in Art are the pure, natural, untainted, highly educated, and intelligent *few*" The argument is continued over some pages, but although the *Magazine* is not now readily accessible to the ordinary reader, it will not be thought necessary to go further into the discussion.

of mind for its enjoyment; and if dragged into the midst of the noisy interests of every-day life, may easily be made ridiculous or offensive. Wordsworth recited, by Mr. Wakley, in the House of Commons, in the middle of a financial debate, would sound, in all probability, very like Mr. Wakley's[22] own verses. Wordsworth, read in the stillness of a mountain hollow, has the force of the mountain waters. What would be the effect of a passage of Milton recited in the middle of a pantomime, or of a dreamy stanza of Shelley upon the Stock Exchange? Are we to judge of the nightingale by hearing it sing in broad daylight in Cheapside? For just such a judgment do we form of Turner by standing before his pictures in the Royal Academy. It is a strange thing that the public never seem to suspect that there may be a poetry in painting, to meet which, some preparation of sympathy, some harmony of circumstance, is required; and that it is just as impossible to see half a dozen great pictures as to read half a dozen great poems at the same time, if their tendencies or their tones of feeling be contrary or discordant. Let us imagine what would be the effect on the mind of any man of feeling, to whom an eager friend, desirous of impressing upon him the merit of different poets, should read successively, and without a pause, the following passages, in which lie something of the prevailing

[22] Mr. Thomas Wakley, at this time M.P. for Finsbury, and coroner for Middlesex. He was the founder of the *Lancet*, and took a deep interest in medicine, which he at one time practised. I do not find, however, that he published any volume of poems, though he may well have been the author, as the letter seems to imply, of some occasional verses. He died in 1862.

character of the works of six of our greatest modern artists:

Landseer.
"His hair, his size, his mouth, his lugs,
Show'd he was nane o' Scotland's dougs,
But whalpit some place far abroad
Whar sailors gang to fish for cod."[23]

Martin.
"Far in the horizon to the north appear'd,
From skirt to skirt, a fiery region, stretched
In battailous aspéct, and nearer view
Bristled with upright beams innumerable
Of rigid spears, and helmets throng'd, and shields
Various, with boastful argument portray'd."

Wilkie.
"The risin' moon began to glowr
The distant Cumnock hills out owre;
To count her horns, wi' a' my pow'r,
I set mysel';
But whether she had three or fowr,
I couldna tell."

Eastlake.

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[23] The references to this and the five passages following are (1) Burns, "The Twa Dogs;" (2) Milton, "Paradise Lost," vi. 79; (3) Burns, "Death and Doctor Hornbook;" (4) Byron, "Hebrew Melodies," "Oh! snatched away in beauty's bloom;" (5) Campbell; and (6) Shelley, "Prometheus Unbound," Act ii. sc. 1.

"And thou, who tell'st me to forget,
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet."

Stanfield.
"Ye mariners of England,
Who guard our native seas,
Whose flag has braved a thousand years
The battle and the breeze."

Turner.
"The point of one white star is quivering still,
Deep in the orange light of widening dawn,
Beyond the purple mountains. Through a chasm
Of wind-divided mist the darker lake
Reflects it, now it fades: it gleams again,
As the waves fall, and as the burning threads
Of woven cloud unravel in pale air,
'Tis lost! and through yon peaks of cloudlike snow
The roseate sunlight quivers."

Precisely to such advantage as the above passages, so placed,[24] appear, are the works of any painter of mind seen in the Academy. None suffer more than Turner's, which are not only interfered with by the prosaic pictures around them, but

[24] It will be felt at once that the more serious and higher passages generally suffer most. But Stanfield, little as it may be thought, suffers grievously in the Academy, just as the fine passage from Campbell is ruined by its position between the perfect tenderness of Byron and Shelley. The more vulgar a picture is, the better it bears the Academy.

neutralize each other. Two works of his, side by side, destroy each other to a dead certainty, for each is so vast, so complete, so demandant of every power, so sufficient for every desire of the mind, that it is utterly impossible for two to be comprehended together. Each must have the undivided intellect, and each is destroyed by the attraction of the other; and it is the chief power and might of these pictures, that they are works for the closet and the heart—works to be dwelt upon separately and devotedly, and then chiefly when the mind is in its highest tone, and desirous of a beauty which may be food for its immortality. It is the very stamp and essence of the purest poetry, that it can only be so met and understood; and that the clash of common interests, and the roar of the selfish world, must be hushed about the heart, before it can hear the still, small voice, wherein rests the power communicated from the Holiest.[25]

Can, then, will be, if I mistake not, the final inquiry of your correspondent,—can, then, we ordinary mortals,—can I, who am not Sir Augustus Callcott, nor Sir Francis Chantrey, ever derive

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[25] "Although it is in verse that the most consummate skill in composition is to be looked for, and all the artifices of language displayed, yet it is in verse only that we throw off the yoke of the world, and are, as it were, privileged to utter our deepest and holiest feelings. Poetry in this respect may be called the salt of the earth. We express in it, and receive in it, sentiments for which, were it not for this permitted medium, the usages of the world would neither allow utterance nor acceptance."—*Southey's Colloquies* ["Sir Thomas More; or, Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society." Colloquy xiv. (vol. ii. p. 399, in Murray's edition, 1829)]. Such allowance is never made to the painter. In him, inspiration is called insanity—in him, the sacred fire, possession.

any pleasure from works of this lofty character? Heaven forbid, we reply, that it should be otherwise. *Nothing* more is necessary for the appreciation of them, than that which is necessary for the appreciation of any great writer—the quiet study of him with an humble heart. There are, indeed, technical qualities, difficulties overcome and principles developed, which are reserved for the enjoyment of the artist; but these do not add to the influence of the picture. On the contrary, we must break through its charm, before we can comprehend its means, and "murder to dissect." The picture is intended, not for artists alone, but for all who love what it portrays; and so little doubt have we of the capacity of all to understand the works in question, that we have the most confident expectation, within the next fifty years, of seeing the name of Turner placed on the same impregnable height with that of Shakespeare.[26] Both have committed errors of taste and judgment. In both it is, or will be, heresy even to feel those

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[26] "This Turner, of whom you have known so little while he was living among you, will one day take his place beside Shakespeare and Verulam, in the annals of the light of England."Yes: beside Shakespeare and Verulam, a third star in that central constellation, round which, in the astronomy of intellect, all other stars make their circuit. By Shakespeare, humanity was unsealed to you; by Verulam the *principles* of nature; and by Turner, her *aspect*. All these were sent to unlock one of the gates of light, and to unlock it for the first time. But of all the three, though not the greatest, Turner was the most unprecedented in his work. Bacon did what Aristotle had attempted; Shakespeare did perfectly what Æschylus did partially; but none before Turner had lifted the veil from the face of nature; the majesty of the hills and forests had received no interpretation, and the clouds passed unrecorded from the face of the heavens which they adorned, and of the earth to which they ministered,"—"Lectures on Architecture and Painting," by John Ruskin; published 1854; pp. 180, 181.

errors, so entirely are they overbalanced by the gigantic powers of whose impetuosity they are the result. So soon as the public are convinced, by the maintained testimony of high authority, that Turner is worth understanding, they will try to understand him; and if they try, they can. Nor are they, now, as is commonly thought, despised or defied by him. He has too much respect for them to endeavor to please them by falsehood. He will not win for himself a hearing by the betrayal of his message.

Finally, then, we would recommend your correspondent, first, to divest herself of every atom of lingering respect or regard for the common criticism of the press, and to hold fast by the authority of Callcott, Chantrey, Landseer, and Stanfield; and this, not because we would have her *slavishly* subject to any authority but that of her own eyes and reason, but because we would not have her blown about with every wind of doctrine, before she has convinced her reason or learned to use her eyes. And if she can draw at all, let her make careful studies of any natural objects that may happen to come in her way,—sticks, leaves, or stones,—and of distant atmospheric effects on groups of objects; not for the sake of the drawing itself, but for the sake of the powers of attention and accurate observation which thus only can be cultivated. And let her make the study, not thinking of this artist or of that; not conjecturing what Harding would have done, or Stanfield, or Callcott, with her subject; not trying to draw in a bold style, or a free style, or any other style; but drawing *all* she *sees*, as far as may be in her power, earnestly, faithfully,

unselectingly; and, which is perhaps the more difficult task of the two, *not* drawing what she does *not* see. Oh, if people did but know how many lines nature *suggests* without *showing*, what different art should we have! And let her never be discouraged by ill success. She will seldom have gained more knowledge than when she most feels her failure. Let her use every opportunity of examining the works of Turner; let her try to copy them, then try to copy some one else's, and observe which presents most of that kind of difficulty which she found in copying nature. Let her, if possible, extend her acquaintance with wild natural scenery of every kind and character, endeavoring in each species of scenery to distinguish those features which are expressive and harmonious from those which are unaffecting or incongruous; and after a year or two of such discipline as this, let her judge for herself. No authority need then, or can then, be very influential with her. Her own pleasure in works of true greatness[27] will be too real, too instinctive, to be persuaded or laughed out of her. We bid her, therefore, heartily good-speed, with this final warning: Let her beware, in going to nature, of taking with her the commonplace dogmas or dicta of art. Let her not look for what is like Titian or like Claude, for composed form or arranged chiaroscuro; but believe that everything which God has made

[27] We have not sufficiently expressed our concurrence in the opinion of her friend, that Turner's modern works are his greatest. His early ones are nothing but amplifications of what others have done, or hard studies of every-day truth. His later works no one but himself could have conceived: they are the result of the most exalted imagination, acting with the knowledge acquired by *means* of his former works.

is beautiful, and that everything which nature teaches is true. Let her beware, above everything, of that wicked pride which makes man think he can dignify God's glorious creations, or exalt the majesty of his universe. Let her be humble, we repeat, and earnest Truth was never sealed, if so sought. And once more we bid her good-speed in the words of our poet-moralist:

> "Enough of Science and of Art:
> Seal up these barren leaves;
> Come forth, and bring with you a heart
> That watches, and receives."[28]

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient humble servant,
The Author of "Modern Painters."

[From "Some Account of the Origin and Objects of the New Oxford Examinations for the Title of Associate in Arts and Certificates," by T. D. Acland, late Fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford,[29] 1858, pp. 54-60.]

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[28] Wordsworth. "Poems of Sentiment and Reflection." ii. "The Tables Turned" (1798), being the companion poem to that quoted *ante*, p. 17. The second line should read, "Close up these barren leaves."

[29] This work related to University co-operation with schemes for middle-class education, and included letters from various authorities, amongst others one from Mr. Hullah on Music. The present letter was addressed to the Rev. F. Temple (now Bishop of Exeter), and was written in reply to a statement of certain points in debate between him and Mr. (now Sir Thomas) Acland. In forwarding it to his opponent, Mr. Temple wrote as follows: "The liberal arts are supreme over their sciences. Instead of the rules

THE ARTS AS A BRANCH OF EDUCATION

Penrith, Sept. 25, 1857.

My dear Sir: I have just received your most interesting letter, and will try to answer as shortly as I can, saying nothing of what I feel, and what you must well know I should feel, respecting the difficulty of the questions and their importance; except only this, that I should not have had the boldness to answer your letter by return of post, unless, in consequence of conversations on this subject with Mr. Acland and Dr. Acland, two months ago, I had been lately thinking of it more than of any other.[30]

Your questions fall under two heads: (1) The range which an art examination can take; (2) The connection in which it should be placed with other examinations.

I think the art examination should have three objects:

(1) To put the happiness and knowledge which the study of art conveys within the conception of the youth, so that he may in

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being despotic, the great artist usually proves his greatness by rightly setting aside rules; and the great critic is he who, while he knows the rule, can appreciate the 'law within the law' which overrides the rule. In no other way does Ruskin so fully show his greatness in criticism as in that fine inconsistency for which he has been so often attacked by men who do not see the real consistency that lies beneath."

[30] In the following year Mr. Ruskin wrote a paper for the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, on "Education in Art" (Transactions, 1858, pp. 311-316), now reprinted in the eleventh volume of Mr. Ruskin's works, "A Joy for Ever," p. 185. To this paper the reader of the present letter is referred.

after-life pursue them, if he has the gift.

(2) To enforce, as far as possible, such knowledge of art among those who are likely to become its patrons, or the guardian of its works, as may enable them, usefully to fulfil those duties.

(3) To distinguish pre-eminent gift for the production of works of art, so as to get hold of all the good artistical faculty born in the country, and leave no Giotto lost among hill-shepherds.[31]

In order to accomplish the first object, I think that, according to Mr. Acland's proposal, preliminary knowledge of drawing and music should be asked for, in connection with writing and arithmetic; but not, in the preliminary examination, made to count towards distinction in other schools. I think drawing is a necessary means of the expression of certain facts of form and means of acquaintance with them, as arithmetic is the means of acquaintance with facts of number. I think the facts which an elementary knowledge of drawing enables a man to observe and note are often of as much importance to him as those which he can describe in words or calculate in numbers. And I think the cases in which mental deficiency would prevent the acquirement of a serviceable power of drawing would be found as rare as

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[31] "Giotto passed the first ten years of his life, a shepherd-boy, among these hills (of Fiésole); was found by Cimabue, near his native village, drawing one of his sheep upon a smooth stone; was yielded up by his father, 'a simple person, a laborer of the earth,' to the guardianship of the painter, who, by his own work, had already made the streets of Florence ring with joy; attended him to Florence, and became his disciple."—"Giotto and his Works in Padua," by John Ruskin, 1854, p. 12.

those in which no progress could be made in arithmetic. I would not desire this elementary knowledge to extend far, but the limits which I would propose are not here in question. While I feel the force of all the admirable observations of Mr. Hullah on the use of the study of music, I imagine that the cases of physical incapacity of distinguishing sounds would be too frequent to admit of musical knowledge being made a *requirement*; I would *ask* for it, in Mr. Acland's sense; but the drawing might, I think, be required, as arithmetic would be.

2. To accomplish the second object is the main difficulty. Touching which I venture positively to state:

First. That sound criticism of art is impossible to young men, for it consists principally, and in a far more exclusive sense than has yet been felt, in the recognition of the facts represented by the art. A great artist represents many and abstruse facts; it is necessary, in order to judge of his works, that all those facts should be experimentally (not by hearsay) known to the observer; whose recognition of them constitutes his approving judgment. A young man *cannot* know them.

Criticism of art by young men must, therefore, consist either in the more or less apt retailing and application of received opinions, or in a more or less immediate and dextrous use of the knowledge they already possess, so as to be able to assert of given works of art that they are true up to a certain point; the probability being then that they are true farther than the young man sees.

The first kind of criticism is, in general, useless, if not harmful; the second is that which the youths will employ who are capable of becoming critics in after years.

Secondly. All criticism of art, at whatever period of life, must be partial; warped more or less by the feelings of the person endeavoring to judge. Certain merits of art (as energy, for instance) are pleasant only to certain temperaments; and certain tendencies of art (as, for instance, to religious sentiment) can only be sympathized with by one order of minds. It is almost impossible to conceive of any mode of examination which would set the students on anything like equitable footing in such respects; but their sensibility to art may be generally tested.

Thirdly. The history of art, or the study, in your accurate words, "*about* the subject," is in no wise directly connected with the studies which promote or detect art-capacity or art-judgment. It is quite possible to acquire the most extensive and useful knowledge of the forms of art existing in different ages, and among different nations, without thereby acquiring any power whatsoever of determining respecting any of them (much less respecting a modern work of art) whether it is good or bad.

These three facts being so, we had perhaps best consider, first, what direction the art studies of the youth should take, as that will at once regulate the mode of examination.

First. He should be encouraged to carry forward the practical power of drawing he has acquired in the elementary school. This should be done chiefly by using that power as a help in

other work: precision of touch should be cultivated by map-drawing in his geography class; taste in form by flower-drawing in the botanical schools; and bone and limb drawing in the physiological schools. His art, kept thus to practical service, will always be right as far as it goes; there will be no affectation or shallowness in it. The work of the drawing-master would be at first little more than the exhibition of the best means and enforcement of the most perfect results in the collateral studies of form.

Secondly. His critical power should be developed by the presence around him of the best models, *into the excellence of which his knowledge permits him to enter*. He should be encouraged, above all things, to form and express judgment of his own; not as if his judgment were of any importance as related to the excellence of the thing, but that both his master and he may know precisely in what state his mind is. He should be told of an Albert Dürer engraving, "That *is* good, whether you like it or not; but be sure to determine *whether* you do or do not, and why." All formal expressions of reasons for opinion, such as a boy could catch up and repeat, should be withheld like poison; and all models which are too good for him should be kept out of his way. Contemplation of works of art without understanding them jades the faculties and enslaves the intelligence. A Rembrandt etching is a better example to a boy than a finished Titian, and a cast from a leaf than one of the Elgin marbles.

Thirdly. I would no more involve the art-schools in the study

of the history of art than surgical schools in that of the history of surgery. But a general idea of the influence of art on the human mind ought to be given by the study of history in the historical schools; the effect of a picture, and power of a painter, being examined just as carefully (in relation to its extent) as the effect of a battle and the power of a general. History, in its full sense, involves subordinate knowledge of all that influences the acts of mankind; it has hardly yet been written at all, owing to the want of such subordinate knowledge in the historians; it has been confined either to the relation of events by eye-witnesses (the only valuable form of it), or the more or less ingenious collation of such-relations. And it is especially desirable to give history a more archæological range at this period, so that the class of manufactures produced by a city at a given date should be made of more importance in the student's mind than the humors of the factions that governed, or details of the accidents that preserved it, because every day renders the destruction of historical memorials more complete in Europe owing to the total want of interest in them felt by its upper and middle classes.

Fourthly. Where the faculty for art was special, it ought to be carried forward to the study of design, first in practical application to manufacture, then in higher branches of composition. The general principles of the application of art to manufacture should be explained in all cases, whether of special or limited faculty. Under this head we may at once get rid of the third question stated in the first page—how to detect

special gift. The power of drawing from a given form accurately would not be enough to prove this: the additional power of design, with that of eye for color, which could be tested in the class concerned with manufacture, would justify the master in advising and encouraging the youth to undertake special pursuit of art as an object of life.

It seems easy, on the supposition of such a course of study, to conceive a mode of examination which would test relative excellence. I cannot suggest the kind of questions which ought to be put to the class occupied with sculpture; but in my own business of painting, I should put, in general, such tasks and questions as these:

(1) "Sketch such and such an object" (given a difficult one, as a bird, complicated piece of drapery, or foliage) "as completely as you can in light and shade in half an hour."

(2) "Finish such and such a portion of it" (given a very small portion) "as perfectly as you can, irrespective of time."

(3) "Sketch it in color in half an hour."

(4) "Design an ornament for a given place and purpose."

(5) "Sketch a picture of a given historical event in pen and ink."

(6) "Sketch it in colors."

(7) "Name the picture you were most interested in in the Royal Academy Exhibition of this year. State in writing what you suppose to be its principal merits—faults—the reasons of the *interest* you took in it."

I think it is only the fourth of these questions which would admit of much change; and the seventh, in the name of the exhibition; the question being asked, without previous knowledge by the students, respecting some *one* of four or five given exhibitions which should be visited before the Examination.

This being my general notion of what an Art-Examination should be, the second great question remains of the division of schools and connection of studies.

Now I have not yet considered—I have not, indeed, knowledge enough to enable me to consider—what the practical convenience or results of given arrangements would be. But the logical and harmonious arrangement is surely a simple one; and it seems to me as if it would not be inconvenient, namely (requiring elementary drawing with arithmetic in the preliminary Examination), that there should then be three advanced schools:

> A. The School of Literature (occupied chiefly in the study of human emotion and history).
>
> B. The School of Science (occupied chiefly in the study of external facts and existences of constant kind).
>
> C. The School of Art (occupied in the development of active and productive human faculties).

In the school A, I would include Composition in all languages, Poetry, History, Archæology, Ethics.

In the school B, Mathematics, Political Economy, the Physical Sciences (including Geography and Medicine).

In the school C, Painting, Sculpture, including Architecture,

Agriculture, Manufacture, War, Music, Bodily Exercises (Navigation in seaport schools), including laws of health.

I should require, for a first class, proficiency in two schools; not, of course, in all the subjects of each chosen school, but in a well-chosen and combined group of them. Thus, I should call a very good first-class man one who had got some such range of subjects, and such proficiency in each, as this:

English, Greek, and Mediæval-Italian Literature	High.
English and French History, and Archæology	Average.
Conic Sections	Thorough, as far as learnt.
Political Economy	Thorough, as far as learnt.
Botany, *or* Chemistry, *or* Physiology	High.
Painting	Average.
Music	Average.
Bodily Exercises	High.

I have written you a sadly long letter, but I could not manage to get it shorter.

Believe me, my dear Sir,
Very faithfully and respectfully yours,
J. Ruskin.

Rev. F. Temple.

Perhaps I had better add what to you, but not to every one who considers such a scheme of education, would be palpable —that the main value of it would be brought out by judicious involution of its studies. This, for instance, would be the kind of Examination Paper I should hope for in the Botanical Class:

1. State the habit of such and such a plant.
2. Sketch its leaf, and a portion of its ramifications (memory).
3. Explain the mathematical laws of its growth and structure.
4. Give the composition of its juices in different seasons.
5. Its uses? Its relations to other families of plants, and conceivable uses beyond those known?
6. Its commercial value in London? Mode of cultivation?
7. Its mythological meaning? The commonest or most beautiful fables respecting it?
8. Quote any important references to it by great poets.
9. Time of its introduction.
10. Describe its consequent influence on civilization.

Of all these ten questions, there is not one which does not test the student in other studies than botany. Thus, 1, Geography; 2, Drawing; 3, Mathematics; 4, 5, Chemistry; 6, Political Economy; 7, 8, 9, 10, Literature.

Of course the plants required to be thus studied could be but few, and would rationally be chosen from the most useful of foreign plants, and those common and indigenous in England. All sciences should, I think, be taught more for the sake of their facts, and less for that of their system, than heretofore. Comprehensive

and connected views are impossible to most men; the systems they learn are nothing but skeletons to them; but nearly all men can understand the relations of a few facts bearing on daily business, and to be exemplified in common substances. And science will soon be so vast that the most comprehensive men will still be narrow, and we shall see the fitness of rather teaching our youth to concentrate their general intelligence highly on given points than scatter it towards an infinite horizon from which they can fetch nothing, and to which they can carry nothing.

[From "Nature and Art," December 1, 1866.]

ART-TEACHING BY CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Mr. Williams:[32] I like your plan of teaching by letter exceedingly: and not only so, but have myself adopted it largely, with the help of an intelligent under-master, whose operations, however, so far from interfering with, you will much facilitate, if you can bring this literary way of teaching into more accepted practice. I wish we had more drawing-masters who were able to give instruction definite enough to be expressed in writing: many can teach nothing but a few tricks of the brush, and have nothing to write, because nothing to tell.

With every wish for your success,—a wish which I make quite

[32] This letter was, it appears, originally addressed to an artist, Mr. Williams (of Southampton), and was then printed, some years later, in the number of *Nature and Art* above referred to.

as much in your pupils' interest as in your own,—

Believe me, always faithfully yours,
J. Ruskin.
Denmark Hill, November, 1860.

II.
PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AND THE NATIONAL GALLERY

[From "The Times," January 7, 1847.]
DANGER TO THE NATIONAL GALLERY. [33]

To the Editor of "The Times."

Sir: As I am sincerely desirous that a stop may be put to the dangerous process of cleaning lately begun in our National Gallery, and as I believe that what is right is most effectively

[33] Some words are necessary to explain this and the following letter. In the autumn of 1846 a correspondence was opened in the columns of *The Times* on the subject of the cleaning and restoration of the national pictures during the previous vacation. Mr. (afterwards Sir Charles) Eastlake was at this time Keeper of the Gallery, though he resigned office soon after this letter was written, partly in consequence of the attacks which had been made upon him. He was blamed, not only for restoring good pictures, but also for buying bad ones, and in particular the purchase of a "libel on Holbein" was quoted against him. The attack was led by the picture-dealer, and at one time artist, Mr. Morris Moore, writing at first under the pseudonym of "Verax," and afterwards in his own name. He continued his opposition through several years, especially during 1850 and 1852. He also published some pamphlets on the subject, amongst them one entitled "The Revival of Vandalism at the National Gallery, a reply to John Ruskin and others" (London, Ollivier, 1853). The whole discussion may be gathered in all its details from the Parliamentary Report of the Select Committee on the National Gallery in 1853.

when most kindly advocated, and what is true most convincingly when least passionately asserted, I was grieved to see the violent attack upon Mr. Eastlake in your columns of Friday last; yet not less surprised at the attempted defence which appeared in them yesterday.[34] The outcry which has arisen upon this subject has been just, but it has been too loud; the injury done is neither so great nor so wilful as has been asserted, and I fear that the respect which might have been paid to remonstrance may be refused to clamor.

I was inclined at first to join as loudly as any in the hue and cry. Accustomed, as I have been, to look to England as the refuge of the pictorial as of all other distress, and to hope that, having no high art of her own, she would at least protect what she could not produce, and respect what she could not restore, I could not but look upon the attack which has been made upon the pictures in question as on the violation of a sanctuary. I had seen in Venice the noblest works of Veronese painted over with flake-white with a brush fit for tarring ships; I had seen in Florence Angelico's highest inspiration rotted and seared into fragments of old wood, burnt into blisters, or blotted into glutinous maps of mildew;[35] I had seen in Paris Raphael restored by David and

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[34] The "violent attack" alludes to a letter of "Verax," in *The Times* of Thursday (not Friday), December 31, 1846, and the "attempted defence" to another letter signed "A. G." in *The Times* of January 4, two days (not *the* day) before Mr. Ruskin wrote the present letter.

[35] "The Crucifixion, or Adoration of the Cross," in the church of San Marco. An engraving of this picture may be found in Mrs. Jameson's "History of our Lord," vol.

Vernet; and I returned to England in the one last trust that, though her National Gallery was an European jest, her art a shadow, and her connoisseurship an hypocrisy, though she neither knew how to cherish nor how to choose, and lay exposed to the cheats of every vender of old canvas—yet that such good pictures as through chance or oversight might find their way beneath that preposterous portico, and into those melancholy and miserable rooms, were at least to be vindicated thenceforward from the mercy of republican, priest, or painter, safe alike from musketry, monkery, and manipulation.

But whatever pain I may feel at the dissipation of this dream, I am not disposed altogether to deny the necessity of some illuminatory process with respect to pictures exposed to a London atmosphere and populace. Dust an inch thick, accumulated upon the panes in the course of the day, and darkness closing over the canvas like a curtain, attest too forcibly the influence on floor and air of the "mutable, rank-scented, many." It is of little use to be over-anxious for the preservation of pictures which we cannot see; the only question is, whether in the present instance the process may not have been carried perilously far, and whether in future simpler and safer means may not be adopted to remove the coat of dust and smoke, without affecting either the glazing of the picture, or, what is almost as precious, the mellow tone left by time.

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i. p. 189.

As regards the "Peace and War,"[36] I have no hesitation in asserting that for the present it is utterly and forever partially destroyed. I am not disposed lightly to impugn the judgment of Mr. Eastlake, but this was indisputably of all the pictures in the Gallery that which least required, and least could endure, the process of cleaning. It was in the most advantageous condition under which a work of Rubens can be seen; mellowed by time into more perfect harmony than when it left the easel, enriched and warmed, without losing any of its freshness or energy. The execution of the master is always so bold and frank as to be completely, perhaps even most agreeably, seen under circumstances of obscurity, which would be injurious to pictures of greater refinement; and, though this was, indeed, one of his most highly finished and careful works (to my mind, before it suffered this recent injury, far superior to everything at Antwerp, Malines, or Cologne), this was a more weighty reason for caution than for interference. Some portions of color have been exhibited which were formerly untraceable; but even these have lost in power what they have gained in definiteness—the majesty and preciousness of all the tones are departed, the balance of distances lost. Time may perhaps restore something of the glow, but never the subordination; and the more delicate portions of flesh tint, especially the back of the female figure on the left, and of the boy in the centre, are destroyed forever.

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[36] No. 46 in the National Gallery.

The large Cuyp[37] is, I think, nearly uninjured. Many portions of the foreground painting have been revealed, which were before only to be traced painfully, if at all. The distance has indeed lost the appearance of sunny haze, which was its chief charm, but this I have little doubt it originally did not possess, and in process of time may recover.

The "Bacchus and Ariadne"[38] of Titian has escaped so scot free that, not knowing it had been cleaned, I passed it without noticing any change. I observed only that the blue of the distance was more intense than I had previously thought it, though, four years ago, I said of that distance that it was "difficult to imagine anything more magnificently impossible, not from its vividness, but because it is *not faint and aërial enough* to account for its purity of color. There is so total a want of atmosphere in it, that but for the difference of form it would be impossible to distinguish the mountains from the robe of Ariadne."[39]

Your correspondent is alike unacquainted with the previous condition of this picture, and with the character of Titian distances in general, when he complains of a loss of aërial quality resulting in the present case from cleaning.

I unfortunately did not see the new Velasquez[40] until it had

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[37] "Landscape, with Cattle and Figures—Evening" (No. 53). Since the bequest of the somewhat higher "large Dort" in 1876 (No. 961), it has ceased to be "the large Cuyp."

[38] No. 35 in the National Gallery. This and the two pictures already mentioned were the typical instances of "spoilt pictures," quoted by "Verax."

[39] "Modern Painters," vol. i. p. 146.

[40] "Philip IV. of Spain, hunting the Wild Boar" (No. 197), purchased in 1846.

undergone its discipline; but I have seldom met with an example of the master which gave me more delight, or which I believe to be in more genuine or perfect condition. I saw no traces of the retouching which is hinted at by your correspondent "Verax," nor are the touches on that canvas such as to admit of very easy or untraceable interpolation of meaner handling. His complaint of loss of substance in the figures of the foreground is, I have no doubt, altogether groundless. He has seen little southern scenery if he supposes that the brilliancy and apparent nearness of the silver clouds is in the slightest degree overcharged; and shows little appreciation of Velasquez in supposing him to have sacrificed the solemnity and might of such a distance to the inferior interest of the figures in the foreground. Had he studied the picture attentively, he might have observed that the position of the horizon suggests, and the *lateral* extent of the foreground *proves*, such a distance between the spectator and even its nearest figures as may well justify the slightness of their execution.

Even granting that some of the upper glazings of the figures had been removed, the tone of the whole picture is so light, gray, and glittering, and the dependence on the power of its whites so absolute, that I think the process hardly to be regretted which has left these in lustre so precious, and restored to a brilliancy which a comparison with any modern work of similar aim would render apparently supernatural, the sparkling motion of its figures and the serene snow of its sky.

I believe I have stated to its fullest extent all the harm that

has yet been done, yet I earnestly protest against any continuance of the treatment to which these pictures have been subjected. It is useless to allege that nothing but discolored varnish has been withdrawn, for it is perfectly possible to alter the structure and continuity, and so destroy the aërial relations of colors of which no part has been removed. I have seen the dark blue of a water-color drawing made opaque and pale merely by mounting it; and even supposing no other injury were done, every time a picture is cleaned it loses, like a restored building, part of its authority; and is thenceforward liable to dispute and suspicion, every one of its beauties open to question, while its faults are screened from accusation. It cannot be any more reasoned from with security; for, though allowance may be made for the effect of time, no one can calculate the arbitrary and accidental changes occasioned by violent cleaning. None of the varnishes should be attacked; whatever the medium used, nothing but soot and dust should be taken away, and that chiefly by delicate and patient friction; and, in order to protract as long as possible the necessity even for this all the important pictures in the gallery should at once be put under glass,[41] and closed, not merely by hinged doors, like

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[41] On this and other collateral subjects the reader is referred to the next letter; to Mr. Ruskin's evidence before the National Gallery Commission in 1857; and to the Appendix to his Notes on the Turner Gallery at Marlborough House, 1856-7. It is hardly necessary to state that a very large number of the national pictures, especially the Turners, are now preserved under glass. Of the other strictures here pronounced, some are no longer deserved; and it may well be remembered that at the time this letter was written the National Gallery had been founded less than five-and-twenty years.

the Correggio, but permanently and securely. I should be glad to see this done in all rich galleries, but it is peculiarly necessary in the case of pictures exposed in London, and to a crowd freely admitted four days in the week; it would do good also by necessitating the enlargement of the rooms, and the bringing down of all the pictures to the level of the eye. Every picture that is worth buying or retaining is worth exhibiting in its proper place, and if its scale be large, and its handling rough, there is the more instruction to be gained by close study of the various means adopted by the master to secure his distant effect. We can certainly spare both the ground and the funds which would enable us to exhibit pictures for which no price is thought too large, and for all purposes of study and for most of enjoyment pictures are useless when they are even a little above the line. The fatigue complained of by most persons in examining a picture gallery is attributable, not only to the number of works, but to their confused order of succession, and to the straining of the sight in endeavoring to penetrate the details of those above the eye. Every gallery should be long enough to admit of its whole collection being hung in one line, side by side, and wide enough to allow of the spectators retiring to the distance at which the largest picture was intended to be seen. The works of every master should be brought together and arranged in chronological order; and such drawings or engravings as may exist in the collection, either of, or for, its pictures, or in any way illustrative of them, should be placed in frames opposite each, in the middle of the room.

But, Sir, the subjects of regret connected with the present management of our national collection are not to be limited either to its treatment or its arrangement. The principles of selection which have been acted upon in the course of the last five or six years have been as extraordinary as unjustifiable. Whatever may be the intrinsic power, interest, or artistical ability of the earlier essays of any school of art, it cannot be disputed that characteristic examples of every one of its most important phases should form part of a national collection: granting them of little value individually, their collective teaching is of irrefragable authority; and the exhibition of perfected results alone, while the course of national progress through which these were reached is altogether concealed, is more likely to discourage than to assist the efforts of an undeveloped school. Granting even what the shallowest materialism of modern artists would assume, that the works of Perugino were of no value, but as they taught Raphael; that John Bellini is altogether absorbed and overmastered by Titian; that Nino Pisano was utterly superseded by Bandinelli or Cellini, and Ghirlandajo sunk in the shadow of Buonaroti: granting Van Eyck to be a mere mechanist, and Giotto a mere child, and Angelico a superstitious monk, and whatever you choose to grant that ever blindness deemed or insolence affirmed, still it is to be maintained and proved, that if we wish to have a Buonaroti or a Titian of our own, we shall with more wisdom learn of those of whom Buonaroti and Titian learned, and at whose knees they were brought up, and

whom to their day of death they ever revered and worshipped, than of those wretched pupils and partisans who sank every high function of art into a form and a faction, betrayed her trusts, darkened her traditions, overthrew her throne, and left us where we are now, stumbling among its fragments. Sir, if the canvases of Guido, lately introduced into the gallery,[42] had been works of the best of those pupils, which they are not; if they had been good works of even that bad master, which they are not; if they had been genuine and untouched works, even though feeble, which they are not; if, though false and retouched remnants of a feeble and fallen school, they had been endurably decent or elementarily instructive—some conceivable excuse might perhaps have been by ingenuity forged, and by impudence uttered, for their introduction into a gallery where we previously possessed two good Guidos,[43] and no Perugino (for the attribution to him of the wretched panel which now bears

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[42] "Lot and his Daughters Leaving Sodom" (No. 193), bequeathed to the gallery in 1844, and "Susannah and the Elders" (No. 196), purchased in the same year.

[43] The "two good Guidos" previously possessed are the "St. Jerome" (No. 11) and the "Magdalen" (No. 177). The "wretched panel" is No. 181, "The Virgin and Infant Christ with St. John." For the rest, the gallery now includes two other Peruginos, "The Virgin adoring the Infant Christ, the Archangel Michael, the Archangel Raphael and Tobias" (No. 288), three panels, purchased in 1856, and the very recent (1879) purchase of the "Virgin and Child with St. Jerome and St. Francis" (No. 1075). It boasts also two Angelicos—"The Adoration of the Magi" (No. 582) and "Christ amid the Blessed" (No. 663), purchased in 1857 and 1860; one Albertinelli, "Virgin and Child "(No. 645), also purchased in 1860; and two Lorenzo di Credis, both of the "Virgin and Child" (Nos. 593 and 648), purchased in 1857 and 1865. But it still possesses no Fra Bartolomeo, no Ghirlandajo, and no Verrochio.

his name is a mere insult), no Angelico, no Fra Bartolomeo, no Albertinelli, no Ghirlandajo, no Verrochio, no Lorenzo di Credi—(what shall I more say, for the time would fail me?) But now, Sir, what vestige of apology remains for the cumbering our walls with pictures that have no single virtue, no color, no drawing, no character, no history, no thought? Yet 2,000 guineas were, I believe, given for one of those encumbrances, and 5,000 for the coarse and unnecessary Rubens,[44] added to a room half filled with Rubens before, while a mighty and perfect work of Angelico was sold from Cardinal Fesch's collection for 1,500.[45] I do not speak of the spurious Holbein,[46] for though the veriest tyro might well be ashamed of such a purchase, it would have been a judicious addition had it been genuine; so was the John Bellini, so was the Van Eyck; but the mighty Venetian master, who alone of all the painters of Italy united purity of religious aim with perfection of artistical power, is poorly represented by

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[44] "The Judgment of Paris" (No. 194), purchased from Mr. Penrice's collection in 1846.

[45] "The Last Judgment;" its purchaser was the Earl of Dudley, in whose possession the picture, now hanging at Dudley House in London, has ever since remained. An engraving of this work (pronounced the finest of Angelico's four representations of this subject), may be found in Mrs. Jameson's "History of our Lord," vol. ii. p. 414. Cardinal Fesch was Archbishop of Lyons, and the uncle of Napoleon Buonaparte. His gallery contained in its time the finest private collection of pictures in Rome.

[46] The "libel on Holbein" was bought as an original, from Mr. Rochard, in 1845. It now figures in the National Gallery as "A Medical Professor,—artist unknown" (No. 195).

a single head;[47] and I ask, in the name of the earnest students of England, that the funds set apart for her gallery may no longer be played with like pebbles in London auction-rooms. Let agents be sent to all the cities of Italy; let the noble pictures which are perishing there be rescued from the invisibility and ill-treatment which their position too commonly implies, and let us have a national collection which, however imperfect, shall be orderly and continuous, and shall exhibit with something like relative candor and justice the claims to our reverence of those great and ancient builders, whose mighty foundation has been for two centuries concealed by wood, and hay, and stubble, the distorted growing, and thin gleaning of vain men in blasted fields.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
The Author of "Modern Painters."

January 6.

[From "The Times," December 29, 1852.]
THE NATIONAL GALLERY

To the Editor of "The Times."

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[47] The Bellini is the "Portrait of Doge Leonardo Loredano" (No. 189), purchased in 1844; four more examples (Nos. 280, 726, 808, 812) of the same "mighty Venetian master" have since been introduced, so that he is no longer "poorly represented by a single head." The Van Eyck is the "Portrait of Jean Arnolfini and his Wife" (No. 186), purchased in 1842.

Sir: I trust that the excitement which has been caused by the alleged destruction of some of the most important pictures in the National Gallery will not be without results, whatever may be the facts of the case with respect to the works in question. Under the name of "restoration," the ruin of the noblest architecture and painting is constant throughout Europe. We shall show ourselves wiser than our neighbors if the loss of two Claudes and the injury of a Paul Veronese[48] induce us to pay so much attention to the preservation of ancient art as may prevent it from becoming a disputed question in future whether they are indeed pictures which we possess or their skeletons.

As to the facts in the present instance, I can give no opinion. Sir Charles Eastlake and Mr. Uwins[49] know more than I of oil paintings in general, and have far more profound respect for those of Claude in particular. I do not suppose they would have taken from him his golden armor that Turner might bear away a dishonorable victory in the noble passage of arms to which he has challenged his rival from the grave.[50] Nor can the

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[48] Claude's "Marriage of Isaac and Rebecca" (No. 12), and his "Queen of Sheba" picture (No. 14, Seaport, with figures). The only pictures of Veronese which the Gallery at this time contained, were the "Consecration of St. Nicholas" (No. 26), and the "Rape of Europa" (No. 97). It is the former of these two that is here spoken of as injured (see the report of the National Gallery Committee in 1853).

[49] Mr. Thomas Uwins, R.A., had succeeded Sir Charles Eastlake as Keeper of the National Gallery in 1847; and resigned, for a similar reason, in 1855.

[50] The public may not, perhaps, be generally aware that the condition by which the nation retains the two pictures bequeathed to it by Turner, and now in the National Gallery, is that "they shall be hung beside Claude's." ["Dido building Carthage" (No.

public suppose that the Curators of the National Gallery have any interest in destroying the works with which they are intrusted. If, acting to the best of their judgment, they have done harm, to whom are we to look for greater prudence or better success? Are the public prepared to withdraw their confidence from Sir C. Eastlake and the members of the Royal Academy, and entrust the national property to Mr. Morris Moore, or to any of the artists and amateurs who have inflamed the sheets of *The Times* with their indignation? Is it not evident that the only security which the nation can possess for its pictures must be found in taking such measures as may in future prevent the necessity of their being touched at all? For this is very certain, that all question respecting the effects of cleaning is merely one of the amount of injury. Every picture which has undergone more friction than is necessary at intervals for the removal of dust or dirt, has suffered injury to some extent. The last touches of the master leave the surface of the color with a certain substantial texture, the bloom of which, if once reached under the varnish, must inevitably be more or less removed by friction of any kind—how much more by friction aided by solvents? I am well assured that every possessor of pictures who truly loves them, would keep—if it might be—their surfaces from being so much as breathed upon,

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498), and "The Sun rising in a Mist" (No. 479). The actual wording of Turner's will on the matter ran thus: "I direct that the said pictures, or paintings, shall be hung, kept, and placed, that is to say, always between the two pictures painted by Claude, the Seaport and the Mill." Accordingly they now hang side by side with these two pictures (Nos. 5 and 12) in the National Gallery].

which may, indeed, be done, and done easily.

Every stranger who enters our National Gallery, if he be a thoughtful person, must assuredly put to himself a curious question. Perceiving that certain pictures—namely, three Correggios, two Raphaels and a John Bellini—are put under glass,[51] and that all the others are left exposed, as oil pictures are in general, he must ask himself, "Is it an ascertained fact that glass preserves pictures; and are none of the pictures here thought worth a pane of glass but these five?[52] Or is it unascertained whether glass is beneficial or injurious, and have the Raphaels and Correggios been selected for the trial—'*Fiat experimentum in corpore vili?*' " Some years ago it might have been difficult to answer him; now the answer is easy, though it be strange. The experiment has been made. The Raphaels and Correggios have been under glass for many years: they are as fresh and lovely as when they were first enclosed; they need no cleaning, and will need none for half a century to come; and it must be, therefore, that the rest of the pictures are left exposed to the London atmosphere, and to the operations which its influence renders necessary, simply because they are not thought worth a pane of plate glass. No: there is yet one other possible answer —that many of them are hung so high, or in such lights, that they could not be seen if they were glazed. Is it then absolutely necessary that they should be hung so high? We are about to

[51] See p. 42, note.

[52] Query, a misprint? as *six* pictures are mentioned.

build a new National Gallery; may it not be so arranged as that the pictures we place therein may at once be safe and visible?

I know that this has never yet been done in any gallery in Europe, for the European public have never yet reflected that a picture which was worth buying was also worth seeing. Some time or other they will assuredly awake to the perception of this wonderful truth, and it would be some credit to our English common-sense if we were the first to act upon it.

I say that a picture which is worth buying is also worth seeing; that is, worth so much room of ground and wall as shall enable us to see it to the best advantage. It is not commonly so understood. Nations, like individuals, buy their pictures in mere ostentation; and are content, so that their possessions are acknowledged, that they should be hung in any dark or out-of-the-way corners which their frames will fit. Or, at best, the popular idea of a national gallery is that of a magnificent palace, whose walls must be decorated with colored panels, every one of which shall cost £1,000, and be discernible, through a telescope, for the work of a mighty hand.

I have no doubt that in a few years more there will be a change of feeling in this matter, and that men will begin to perceive, what is indeed the truth—that every noble picture is a manuscript book, of which only one copy exists, or ever can exist; that a national gallery is a great library,[53] of which the books must be

[53] "The Art of a nation is, I think, one of the most important points of its history, and a part which, if once destroyed, no history will ever supply the place of; and the

read upon their shelves; but every manuscript ought, therefore, to be placed where it can be read most easily; and that the style of the architecture and the effect of the saloons are matters of no importance whatsoever, but that our solicitude ought to begin and end in the two imperative requirements—that every picture in the gallery should be perfectly seen and perfectly safe; that none should be thrust up, or down, or aside, to make room for more important ones; that all should be in a good light, all on a level with the eye, and all secure from damp, cold, impurity of atmosphere, and every other avoidable cause of deterioration.

These are the things to be accomplished; and if we set ourselves to do these in our new National Gallery,[54] we shall have made a greater step in art-teaching than if we had built a new Parthenon. I know that it will be a strange idea to most of us that Titians and Tintorets ought, indeed, all to have places upon "the line," as well as the annual productions of our Royal Academicians; and I know that the *coup d'œil* of the Gallery must be entirely destroyed by such an arrangement. But great pictures ought not to be subjects of "*coups d'œil*." In the last arrangement of the Louvre, under the Republic, all the noble

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first idea of a National Gallery is that it should be a Library of Art, in which the rudest efforts are, in some cases, hardly less important than the noblest."—National Gallery Commission, 1857: Mr. Ruskin's evidence.

[54] It was at this time proposed to remove the national pictures from Trafalgar Square to some new building to be erected for them elsewhere. This proposal was, however, negatived by the commission ultimately appointed (1857) to consider the matter, and to some extent rendered unnecessary by the enlargement of the gallery, decided upon in 1866.

pictures in the gallery were brought into one room, with a Napoleon-like resolution to produce effect by concentration of force; and, indeed, I would not part willingly with the memory of that saloon, whose obscurest shadows were full of Correggio; in whose out-of-the-way angles one forgot, here and there, a Raphæl; and in which the best Tintoret on this side of the Alps was hung sixty feet from the ground![55] But Cleopatra dissolving the pearl was nothing to this; and I trust that, in our own Gallery, our poverty, if not our will, may consent to a more modest and less lavish manner of displaying such treasures as are intrusted to us; and that the very limitation of our possessions may induce us to make that the object of our care which can hardly be a ground of ostentation. It might, indeed, be a matter of some difficulty to conceive an arrangement of the collections in the Louvre or the Florence Gallery which should admit of every picture being hung upon the line. But the works in our own, including the Vernon and Turner bequests,[56] present no obstacle in their number to our making the building which shall receive them a perfect model of what a National Gallery ought to be. And the conditions of

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[55] The galleries of the Louvre were reorganized on their being declared national instead of crown property, after the Revolution of 1848; and the choicest pictures were then collected together in the "grand salon carré," which, although since rearranged, still contains a similar selection. The "best Tintoret on this side of the Alps" is the "Susannah and the Elders," now No. 349 in that room.

[56] The *gift* of Mr. Robert Vernon, in 1847, consisted of 157 pictures, all of them, with two exceptions only, of the British school. The Turner bequest included 105 finished oil paintings, in addition to the numerous sketches and drawings.

this perfection are so simple that if we only turn our attention to these main points it will need no great architectural ingenuity to attain all that is required.

It is evident, in the first place, that the building ought to consist of a series of chambers or galleries lighted from above, and built with such reference to the pictures they are to contain, as that opposite a large picture room enough should be allowed for the spectator to retire to the utmost distance at which it can ever be desirable that its effect should be seen; but, as economy of space would become a most important object when every picture was to be hung on a level with the eye, smaller apartments might open from the larger ones for the reception of smaller pictures, one condition being, however, made imperative, whatever space was sacrificed to it—namely, that the works of every master should be collected together, either in the same apartment or in contiguous ones. Nothing has so much retarded the advance of art as our miserable habit of mixing the works of every master and of every century. More would be learned by an ordinarily intelligent observer in simply passing from a room in which there were only Titians, to another in which there were only Caraccis, than by reading a volume of lectures on color. Few minds are strong enough first to abstract and then to generalize the characters of paintings hung at random. Few minds are so dull as not at once to perceive the points of difference, were the works of each painter set by themselves. The fatigue of which most persons complain in passing through a picture gallery, as at

present arranged, is indeed partly caused by the straining effort to see what is out of sight, but not less by the continual change of temper and of tone of thought, demanded in passing from the work of one master to that of another.

The works of each being, therefore, set by themselves,[57] and the whole collection arranged in chronological and ethnological order, let apartments be designed for each group large enough to admit of the increase of the existing collection to any probable amount. The whole gallery would thus become of great length, but might be adapted to any form of ground-plan by disposing the whole in a labyrinthine chain, returning upon itself. Its chronological arrangement would necessitate its being continuous, rather than divided into many branches or sections. Being lighted from above, it must be all on the same floor, but ought at least to be raised one story above the ground, and might admit any number of keepers' apartments, or of schools, beneath; though it would be better to make it quite independent of these, in order to diminish the risk of fire. Its walls ought on every side to be surrounded by corridors, so that the interior temperature might be kept equal, and no outer surface of wall on which pictures were hung exposed to the weather. Every picture should be glazed, and the horizon which the painter had given to it placed on a level with the eye.

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[57] An example of a cognate school might, however, be occasionally introduced for the sake of direct comparison, as in one instance would be necessitated by the condition above mentioned attached to part of the Turner bequest.

Lastly, opposite each picture should be a table, containing, under glass, every engraving that had ever been made from it, and any studies for it, by the master's own hand, that remained, or were obtainable. The values of the study and of the picture are reciprocally increased—of the former more than doubled—by their being seen together; and if this system were once adopted, the keepers of the various galleries of Europe would doubtless consent to such exchanges of the sketches in their possession as would render all their collections more interesting.

I trust, Sir, that the importance of this subject will excuse the extent of my trespass upon your columns, and that the simplicity and self-evident desirableness of the arrangement I have described may vindicate my proposal of it from the charge of presumption.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
The Author of "Modern Painters."

Herne Hill, Dulwich, *Dec. 27.*

[From "The Times," January 27, 1866.]
THE BRITISH MUSEUM

To the Editor of "The Times."

Sir: As I see in your impression of yesterday that my name was introduced in support of some remarks made, at the meeting of

the Society of Arts, on the management of the British Museum,[58] and as the tendency of the remarks I refer to was depreciatory of the efforts and aims of several officers of the Museum—more especially of the work done on the collection of minerals by my friend Mr. Nevil S. Maskelyne[59]—you will, I hope, permit me, not having been present at the meeting, to express my feeling on the subject briefly in your columns.

There is a confused notion in the existing public mind that the British Museum was partly a parish school, partly a circulating library, and partly a place for Christmas entertainments.

It is none of the three, and, I hope, will never be made any of the three. But especially and most distinctly it is not a "preparatory school," nor even an "academy for young gentlemen," nor even a "working-men's college." A national museum is one thing, a national place of education another; and the more sternly and unequivocally they are separated, the better will each perform its office—the one of treasuring and the other of teaching. I heartily wish that there were already, as one day there must be, large educational museums in every district of

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[58] At the meeting of the Society, in the Hall, Adelphi, Lord Henry Lennox read a paper on "The Uses of National Museums to Local Institutions," in which he spoke of Mr. Ruskin's suggestions "adopted and recommended to Parliament in annual reports, and in obedience to distinct Commissions," as having been unwarrantably disregarded since 1858. See Mr. Ruskin's official report on the Turner Bequest, printed in the "Report of the Director of the National Gallery to the Lords of the Treasury, 1858," Appendix vii.

[59] Professor Nevil Story-Maskelyne (now M.P. for Cricklade) was then, and till his recent resignation, Keeper of Mineralogy at the Museum.

London, freely open every day, and well lighted and warmed at night, with all furniture of comfort, and full aids for the use of their contents by all classes. But you might just as rationally send the British public to the Tower to study mineralogy upon the Crown jewels as make the unique pieces of a worthy national collection (such as, owing mainly to the exertions of its maligned officers, that of our British Museum has recently become) the means of elementary public instruction. After men have learnt their science or their art, at least so far as to know a common and a rare example in either, a national museum is useful, and ought to be easily accessible to them; but until then, unique or selected specimens in natural history are without interest to them, and the best art is as useless as a blank wall. For all those who can use the existing national collection to any purpose, the Catalogue as it now stands is amply sufficient: it would be difficult to conceive a more serviceable one. But the rapidly progressive state of (especially mineralogical) science, renders it impossible for the Curators to make their arrangements in all points satisfactory, or for long periods permanent. It is just because Mr. Maskelyne is doing more active, continual, and careful work than, as far as I know, is at present done in any national museum in Europe—because he is completing gaps in the present series by the intercalation of carefully sought specimens, and accurately reforming its classification by recently corrected analyses—that the collection cannot yet fall into the formal and placid order in which an indolent Curator would

speedily arrange and willingly leave it.

I am glad that Lord H. Lennox referred to the passage in my report on the Turner Collection in which I recommended that certain portions of that great series should be distributed, for permanence, among our leading provincial towns.[60] But I had rather see the whole Turner Collection buried, not merely in the cellars of the National Gallery, but with Prospero's staff fathoms in the earth, than that it should be the means of inaugurating the fatal custom of carrying great works of art about the roads for a show. If you *must* make them educational to the public, hang Titian's Bacchus up for a vintner's sign, and give Henry VI.'s Psalter[61] for a spelling-book to the Bluecoat School; but, at least, hang the one from a permanent post, and chain the other to the boys' desks, and do not send them about in caravans to every

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[60] In Mr. Ruskin's official report already mentioned, and which was made at the close of his labors in arranging the Turner drawings, and dated March 27, 1858, he divided the collection into three classes, of which the third consisted of drawings available for distribution among provincial Schools of Art. The passage of the report referred to is as follows: "The remainder of the collection consists of drawings of miscellaneous character, from which many might be spared with little loss to the collection in London, and great advantage to students in the provinces. Five or six collections, each completely illustrative of Turner's modes of study, and successions of practice, might easily be prepared for the academies of Edinburgh, Dublin, and the principal English manufacturing towns."—See also the similar recommendation with regard to the "Outlines of John Leech," in the letter on that subject.

[61] Titian's "Bacchus and Ariadne"—already mentioned, p. 40. Henry VI.'s Psalter is in the British Museum ("Domitian A. 17," in the Cottonian Catalogue). It is of early fifteenth century work, and was executed in England by a French artist for the then youthful king, from whom it takes its name.

annual Bartholomew Fair.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
J. Ruskin.

Denmark Hill, *Jan. 26.*

[From "The Leicester Chronicle and Mercury," January 31, and reprinted in "The Times," February 2, 1880.]
ON THE PURCHASE OF PICTURES

Dear Sir: Your letter is deeply interesting to me, but what use is there in my telling you what to do? The mob won't let you do it. It is fatally true that no one nowadays can appreciate pictures by the Old Masters! and that every one can understand Frith's "Derby Day"—that is to say, everybody is interested in jockeys, harlots, mountebanks, and men about town; but nobody in saints, heroes, kings, or wise men—either from the east or west. What can you do? If your Committee is strong enough to carry such a resolution as the appointment of any *singly* responsible person, any well-informed gentleman of taste in your neighborhood, to buy for the Leicester public just what he would buy for himself—that is to say, himself *and his family*—children being the really most important of the untaught public—and to answer simply to all accusation—that is, a good and worthy piece of art (past or present, no matter which)—make the most and best you can of it.

That method so long as tenable will be useful. I know of no other.

Faithfully yours,
J. Ruskin.[62]

[62] This letter was written in reply to one requesting Mr. Ruskin's views on the best means of forming a public Gallery at Leicester.

III.
PRE-RAPHAELITISM

[From "The Times," May 13, 1851.]
THE PRE-RAPHAELITE BRETHREN

To the Editor of "The Times."

Sir: Your usual liberality will, I trust, give a place in your columns to this expression of my regret that the tone of the critique which appeared in *The Times* of Wednesday last on the works of Mr. Millais and Mr. Hunt, now in the Royal Academy, should have been scornful as well as severe.[63]

I regret it, first, because the mere labor bestowed on those works, and their fidelity to a certain order of truth (labor and fidelity which are altogether indisputable), ought at once to have placed them above the level of mere contempt; and, secondly,

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[63] That the critique was sufficiently bitter, may be gathered from the following portions of it: "These young artists have unfortunately become notorious by addicting themselves to an antiquated style and an affected simplicity in painting.... We can extend no toleration to a mere senile imitation of the cramped style, false perspective, and crude color of remote antiquity. We want not to see what Fuseli termed drapery 'snapped instead of folded;' faces bloated into apoplexy, or extenuated to skeletons; color borrowed from the jars in a druggist's shop, and expression forced into caricature.... That morbid infatuation which sacrifices truth, beauty, and genuine feeling to mere eccentricity, deserves no quarter at the hands of the public."

because I believe these young artists to be at a most critical period of their career—at a turning-point, from which they may either sink into nothingness or rise to very real greatness; and I believe also, that whether they choose the upward or the downward path, may in no small degree depend upon the character of the criticism which their works have to sustain. I do not wish in any way to dispute or invalidate the general truth of your critique on the Royal Academy; nor am I surprised at the estimate which the writer formed of the pictures in question when rapidly compared with works of totally different style and aim; nay, when I first saw the chief picture by Millais in the Exhibition of last year,[64] I had nearly come to the same conclusion myself. But I ask your permission, in justice to artists who have at least given much time and toil to their pictures, to institute some more serious inquiry into their merits and faults than your general notice of the Academy could possibly have admitted.

Let me state, in the first place, that I have no acquaintance with any of these artists, and very imperfect sympathy with them. No one who has met with any of my writings will suspect me of desiring to encourage them in their Romanist and Tractarian tendencies.[65] I am glad to see that Mr. Millais' lady in blue[66] is

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[64] A sacred picture (No. 518) upon the text, "And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends" (Zechariah xiii. 6). He had two other pictures in the Academy of 1850, namely, "Portrait of a gentleman and his grandchild" (No. 429), and "Ferdinand lured by Ariel" (No. 504)—Shakespeare, "Tempest," Act ii. sc. 2.

[65] See the next letter, p. 96. With regard to the religious tone of some parts of

heartily tired of her painted window and idolatrous toilet table; and I have no particular respect for Mr. Collins' lady in white, because her sympathies are limited by a dead wall, or divided between some gold fish and a tadpole—(the latter Mr. Collins may, perhaps, permit me to suggest *en passant*, as he is already half a frog, is rather too small for his age). But I happen to have a special acquaintance with the water plant, *Alisma Plantago*, among which the said gold fish are swimming; and as I never saw

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Mr. Ruskin's early writings, it is worth noting that in the recent reissue (1880) of the "Seven Lamps of Architecture," "some pieces of rabid and utterly false Protestantism … are cut from text and appendix alike."—(Preface, p. 1; and see the note on one such omission on p. 19.) So again in the preface to the final edition of "Modern Painters," issued in 1873, Mr. Ruskin stated that his objection to republishing unrevised the first two volumes of that work was that "they are written in a narrow enthusiasm, and the substance of their metaphysical and religious speculation is only justifiable on the ground of its absolute sincerity."—See also "Sesame and Lilies," 1871 ed., Preface, p. 2.

[66] The pre-Raphaelite pictures exhibited in the Academy of this year, and referred to here and in the following letter, were the "Mariana" (No. 561) of Millais, "The Return of the Dove to the Ark" (No. 651), and "The Woodman's Daughter" (No. 799), (see Coventry Patmore's Poems, vol. i. p. 184—4 vol. ed., 1879), both also by Millais; the "Valentine receiving (rescuing?) Sylvia from Proteus" (No. 594), of Holman Hunt; and the "Convent Thoughts" (No. 493) of Mr. C. Collins, to which were affixed the lines from "Midsummer Night's Dream" (Act i. sc. 1),"Thrice blessed they, that master so their bloodTo undergo such maiden pilgrimage;"and the verse (Psalm cxliii. 5), "I meditate on all Thy works; I muse on the work of Thy hands." The last-named artist also had a portrait of Mr. William Bennett (No. 718) in the Exhibition—not, however, alluded to in this letter. Mr. Charles Allston Collins, who was the son of William Collins, R.A., and the younger brother of Mr. Wilkie Collins, subsequently turned his attention to literature, and may be remembered as the author of "A Cruise upon Wheels," "The Eye-Witness," and other writings.

it so thoroughly or so well drawn, I must take leave to remonstrate with you, when you say sweepingly that these men "sacrifice *truth* as well as feeling to eccentricity." For as a mere botanical study of the water-lily and *Alisma*, as well as of the common lily and several other garden flowers, this picture would be invaluable to me, and I heartily wish it were mine.

But, before entering into such particulars, let me correct an impression which your article is likely to induce in most minds, and which is altogether false. These pre-Raphaelites (I cannot compliment them on common-sense in choice of a *nom de guerre*) do *not* desire nor pretend in any way to imitate antique painting as such. They know very little of ancient paintings who suppose the works of these young artists to resemble them.[67] As far as I can judge of their aim—for, as I said, I do not know the men themselves—the pre-Raphaelites intend to surrender no advantage which the knowledge or inventions of the present time can afford to their art. They intend to return to early days in this one point only—that, as far as in them lies, they will draw either what they see, or what they suppose might have been the actual facts of the scene they desire to represent, irrespective of any

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[67] Compare "Modern Painters," vol. i. p. 415, note, where allusion is made to the painters of a society which "unfortunately, or rather unwisely, has given itself the name of 'Pre-Raphaelite;' unfortunately, because the principles on which its members are working are neither pre- nor post-Raphaelite, but everlasting. They are endeavoring to paint with the highest possible degree of completion, what they see in nature, without reference to conventional established rules; but by no means to imitate the style of any past epoch."

conventional rules of picture-making; and they have chosen their unfortunate though not inaccurate name because all artists did this before Raphael's time, and after Raphael's time did *not*

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