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THE HISTORY OF TASTE

THE HISTORY OF TASTE

AN ACCOUNT OF THE
REVOLUTIONS OF ART CRITICISM AND THEORY
IN EUROPE

BY

FRANK P. CHAMBERS



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TO

ARTHUR BERESFORD PITE

PROFESSOR OF ARCHITECTURE

THIS WORK IS DEDICATED

IN GRATITUDE

BY A FORMER PUPIL

PREFACE

The present book contains the substance of a course of lectures on the history of taste in Europe in the arts of painting, sculpture and architecture. In so ambitious a field some method of procedure was soon felt to be necessary. But I had become convinced, in the course of my researches, that all taste could be interpreted in its relation to what we have learned to call "classicism" and "romanticism"; so that, by arranging the work principally to show the origin and opposition of those two mentalities in art, I was at once enabled to cover the bigger issues while restricting a subject, which sooner or later must have involved the whole range of human intelligence and behavior.

None of my material is new; and some of it may seem very elementary to readers already familiar with the vagaries of criticism. Generally I have selected the less known material at the expence of the better known; and for that reason, the treatment of the most modern movements of taste has been somewhat perfunctory. But if taste is regarded in its centuries rather than through our own local standards today, that treatment ought not to appear so very unbalanced.

Of America nothing has been said. It seems hardly possible for any man yet to decide whether America has merely magnified and exaggerated recent European conditions in the arts, or whether she has made any original contribution of her own. Were this book rewritten a hundred years hence, she might figure more prominently than now.

The present literature of the history of taste is scanty.

Histories of aesthetics are common, but, needless to say, they cover at once a different and a narrower field. France seems to have been the chosen guardian and exemplar of taste during the most critical years of the late Renaissance and during a considerable part of the Romantic Movement; and it is proper that the majority of authorities should be French. Of them Bougot,[1] Fontaine,[2] Petroz [3] and Rocheblave [4] may be mentioned. I know of no Italian authorities; but there is Cicognara's bibliographical guide,[5] and the *Antologia* of D'Ancona and Wittgens.[6] And there is the periodical *L'Arte*, which since 1917 has enjoyed a regular festival of articles on the critics and criticism of the past. In German, there is one book of great value, Dresdner's *Kunstkritik*, unfortunately not completed.[7] To my knowledge, no history of taste exists in English.[8]

A short time ago I published an essay on certain developments of taste in classical antiquity; and I am much obliged to the Harvard University Press to be allowed to requote passages from that essay in the Appendix of the present book.

I have been indebted to several friends for helpful advice and information, and among them I wish to acknowledge particularly Mr. E. Bullough, Mr. E. Vulliamy and Mr. C. D. Bicknell of Cambridge, Prof. R. Traquair and Prof. P. E. Nobbs of McGill, Mr. G. A. Neilson of Quebec and Miss K. Fisher of Montreal. The late Prof. W. H. Lethaby gave me much encouragement in the earlier stages and was always most ready of his sympathy and counsel. Finally I should thank the Directors of the Commonwealth Fund, whose generosity gave me a very needed interval of leisure for study.

It is my hope that this work will encourage some scholar, better qualified in European languages and nearer the origi-

nal documents than myself, to make more exhaustive researches. Taste is a much neglected subject, but has, or seems to me to have, important bearings upon our consciousness and estimate of modern civilization.

F. P. C.

McGILL UNIVERSITY, 1931

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Chapter I

THE MIDDLE AGES

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2. The Ascetic Tradition and the Gold-and-Glitter.
3. The Mediaeval Artist.
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5. The Idea of Nature.

CHAPTER I

THE MIDDLE AGES

1. *The Fall of Rome and the Early Christian Church.*

In the fall of Rome, as in every great historical transition, there was a partial disappearance and survival of old forms. Some imaginations were cast down and some were brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. Some arts were lost, but some were adopted by the new faith. The story has come down the ages of the fury and blindness of early Christian vandalism; but modern archaeology has often found pure paganism in early Christian art. Many temples were burned, but as many were stripped, purified and converted into churches; pagan statues were accepted as representations of the saints. In the catacombs around the city of Rome are shown today, still well-preserved, plaster and fresco decorations of the same family as the decorations of the palaces of the Palatine or the houses of Pompeii. Early Christian architecture adopted the plan of the basilica in the ancient forum and set its bishop on the tribune's throne. Early Christian building arts, East and West, descended in a direct line from the Roman vault, Roman concrete and Roman mosaic.

But if some arts survived, the aesthetic consciousness gradually disappeared. Evidence is found in the writings of late Greek and Latin authors of the existence of an art criticism and a connoisseurship, and a highly developed aesthetic consciousness is known to have flourished throughout the Graeco-

Roman and Imperial eras. But that consciousness proved uncongenial to the new religion. Christian and barbarian both ignored the polite tastes, which the old masters of the Roman world had cultivated with so much care. The ancient arts had lost their virtue as ornaments of life, and were accounted only as illustrative agents in the more important matters of the Church. An interest, hitherto paid to works of art for their own sakes, was suppressed or diverted, and the aesthetic consciousness suffered thereby, not only from a ruthless opposition, but also from the more effective forces of indifference and disuse.

The aesthetic consciousness was more enduring in the East, and for a time Byzantium protected the remnants of the ancient civilization of Greece. The Emperor Constantine had decorated his most Christian capital with examples of Classic art, the greater part of which remained untouched until its spoliation by the Crusaders of 1204. The numerous scholars, whom he patronized, ensured the continuity of literary culture. As the Byzantine architecture perfected itself, its many beauties were celebrated by a number of panegyrists, and the rare phenomenon appeared of a great art existing simultaneously with an aesthetic appreciation of it. Great authors, like Eusebius and Procopius, wrote of the glories of the royal architects, and even Christian saints were known to compose the praises of their marble churches. St. Basil, the founder of monastic rule in the East, and his brother St. Gregory of Nyssa, were conscious of no antagonism between their austerities and their sensibility to the beautiful.

But the aesthetics of Eusebius and Procopius was involved in the misfortunes of the Eastern Empire. The artistic opinions of the "Cappadocian" fathers were exceptional in that

ascetic age, and the luxury of the capital was denounced by every responsible leader of the Church in Egypt and Syria. Tatian, St. Clement, Origen, St. John Chrysostom had proscribed the arts in general and pagan arts in particular. During the Iconoclastic Controversy the aesthetic consciousness was not relevant. Never once in the surviving literature of the Controversy is there found an appreciation of a statue as a statue. St. John Damascene, whose treatise *On Images* was then written and who is still quoted by Catholics in defense of image-worship, could see no value in images but that they "were devised for greater knowledge and for the manifestation and popularization of secret things, as a pure help and benefit to salvation; so that by showing things and making them known, we may arrive at hidden truths, desire and emulate what is good, shun and hate what is evil." St. John did never commend an image as an ornament in the architecture of a church. The Second Council of Nicaea, which closed the Iconoclastic Controversy, and was ratified by both Greek and Roman Churches, decreed: "It is defined with all certitude and accuracy that just as the figure of the precious and life-giving Cross, so also the venerable and holy images, as well as painting and mosaic as of other fit materials, should be set forth in the holy churches of God, in the sacred vessels, and in the vestments and hangings, and in pictures, both in houses and by the wayside, to wit, figures of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, of our stainless Lady, the Mother of God, of the honourable Angels, of all the Saints and of all pious people. For by so much more frequently as they are seen represented, by so much more readily are men lifted up to the memory of their prototypes, and to a longing after them. For the honour which is paid to the image passed to

that which the image represents, and he who reveres the image reveres in it the subject represented." There is no mention of art or taste in all the decrees of the Council.

The Western Churches of Italy and Africa enjoyed no inconsistency or compromise at any time. Beyond the Alps, the aesthetic consciousness never hoped to find a place in the intellectual degradation of the age, and even had the monks possessed the learning and the taste to qualify themselves for aesthetic teaching, they were fully occupied with the more urgent work of civilizing their barbarian converts. The very Gospels, whose only reference to the admiration of art is coupled with the seeming reproof of Christ, gave them authority.[1] The true tabernacle of God is a temple not made with hands and the true and living architecture is of the City which is to be hereafter.

St. Augustine had respected Plato, and to the reading of Cicero's works he had sometimes attributed the beginnings of his conversion. But he blamed, sooner than praised the ancient culture. The Greek philosophers, he said, would tremble among the dead to hear the name of Christ. The poets were inventors of lies and immorality. The pagan gods were demons, and pagan statues demons in stone. St. Augustine discouraged the destruction of pagan shrines only on the ground that spiritual conversion was a higher end of missionary zeal. Among the many vanities of his pre-conversion life, he confessed to the authorship of a treatise, *On the Fair and Fit* (*De Pulchro et Apto*), in which he had discussed "lines, colours and masses (lineamenta et colores et tumentes magnitudines)," and had evolved apparently a regular aesthetic philosophy. He wrote of music as "a contentment of the flesh, to which the soul must not be given over to be enervated."

"What innumerable toys," he wrote, "made by divers arts and manufactures in our apparel, shoes, utensils, in pictures and divers images, and these far exceeding all necessary and moderate use and all pious meaning, have men made to tempt their own eyes withal." "The beauty of God's temple is the beauty of righteousness. . . . God's holy temple is marvelous, not in pillars, marbles and in gilded ceilings, but in righteousness." [2]

After the earlier fever of suspicion and fanaticism had died down in the West, a certain grudging toleration of the arts prevailed. St. Gregory the Great is represented in many modern histories as the type of Christian vandal, who devoted his life to the extirpation of idolatry and heathenism. But even he would allow images for purposes of religious teaching. "To adore a picture is one thing," he wrote, "but to learn through the story of a picture what is to be adored is another. For what writing is to them that can read, a picture is to them who cannot read, but only look, since in it even the ignorant can see what they should follow." [3] On the authority of the famous Second Council of Nicaea, images, pictures and ornaments were universally introduced into places of worship to serve as exemplars to their unlettered congregations.

And upon this partial sanction of moral instruction the great cycle of mediaeval art was to be built. The aesthetic consciousness had gone; the arts were justified as sermons. Rome survived her fall as a political ideal, and her laws and institutions were built into the fabric of the new European states; but the inheritance of classical traditions in art descended without appreciation or acknowledgment. Occasionally the monastic reformations would revert to the harshest forms of early Christian fanaticism, but the more mature

genius of mediaeval Christianity was left free to express in architecture, sculpture and painting its illustration of sacred story and doctrine.

2. *The Ascetic Tradition and the Gold-and-Glitter.*

For the modern reader, the safest source of mediaeval aesthetics is mediaeval literature. Only by allowing mediaeval authors to speak for themselves it is possible to make any just estimate of the thoughts and feelings of their time. Ancient monuments, especially in their present-day nakedness, are unreliable guides, for they are invariably misinterpreted by the language and mental habits of an alien criticism. But, however extensive mediaeval literature may be, its references to art and to the arts are few and disappointing. In the course of the last century, the memory of the Middle Ages cast a strange spell over Europe; but no mediaeval author ever described the romance and beauty of a mediaeval cathedral in quite the style a modern reader might expect of him. Mediaeval authors are peculiarly silent in the matter of fine art, and there is no surviving evidence that they ever reacted to their own works of architecture, sculpture and painting with that emotional intensity of writers of the type of Schlegel, Hugo, Huysmans, Ruskin in more recent times.

There would be no difficulty in disposing of the silence of ecclesiastical documents. The greater creative minds of mediaeval religion clung tenaciously to the intolerance of the early fathers. Monastic apologists, to a man, ignored the arts, and offer, as a matter of fact, a very mean corroboration of the favorite theory of the monastic influences on art. The monastic reformations periodically uprooted every artistic corruption which periodic decay had allowed to grow

up. The Cluniac revival in its early years destroyed as much as later it inspired in the years of its laxity, when the countryside was covered with its "white robe of churches." The Cistercians vowed to remove from their lowly chapels "everything which might flatter curious eyes and charm weak souls." They prohibited painting, carving, fine cloths and precious metals, "as vain things that were good for worldly folk." St. Francis, whose holy life inspired a century of Italian artists, always taught the ungodliness of art. He preferred that the religious of his house should suffer inconvenience for the love of God, than that they should set an example to other monasteries for superfluous building. "Let the brethren have care not on any account to accept the churches or dwellings that may be built for them, unless they are in accordance with the rule of Holy Poverty; always living here on earth as strangers and pilgrims." "We most willingly dwelt in poor, little, abandoned churches," he said, "and were simple and subject to all."

Common superstitions did not encourage respect for art and artists. The "mechanic" arts were low in the scale of labor, and masons and painters at the best of times were classed as "mechanic" artisans. The idleness and mischief of masons was proverbial and indicated perhaps the vagabond reputation, which has clung to artists to this very day. Learned monks would cite the fourth chapter of Genesis to prove the descent of masons from the cursed progeny of Cain, and would derive the word "mechanic" from "moechus," an adulterer.

But the harsh proscriptions of the monks were not intended to be obeyed universally, and the popular theology, outside the monasteries, adhered more easily to the lenient authority

of the Second Council of Nicaea. There exists therefore a fairly extensive tract literature, interpreting art and iconography as moral agencies. Regular forms for titles of pictures, with appropriate moral comments, were written and circulated. Mediaeval clerical writers expressed themselves enthusiastically upon the subjects of pictures or carving, and every one of their descriptions was the occasion for long allegorical moralities. A crucifix inspired a fervent homily on the Passion of Christ; whole Old and New Testament histories were written round a series of frescoes. Many of these descriptions or "histories," like the pictures, which were supposed to represent them, were entirely conventional, and it would no doubt have been possible for a practiced theologian to describe the details of pictures he had never seen. There was a complete absence of technical knowledge and of aesthetic opinion; a "Paradise," for instance, might as well have been suggested to its author by a ninth-century illumination as by a twelfth-century fresco, so far as may be judged from the artistic information given; but always the illustrative matter was exhaustively described, with the usual moralities and citations of Scripture. Evidently art was a kind of liturgy.

The first purpose of art, of which the mediaeval mind was fully self-conscious, was usefulness. The word "art," in the mediaeval languages of Europe, had no other meaning than making and doing, and one example of "art," in this sense, has descended to modern times in the English Bible. The usefulness of the building arts was strength and shelter; the usefulness of the figurative art was the illustration of moral doctrine and sacred history. Architecture was admired for being well and skillfully built; painting and sculpture were admired because they bore some semblance of reality. There

are numerous mediaeval appreciations which signify the wonder and charm of "living" pictures and images. Sometimes, so it was said, images came to life, moved or spoke. Mediaeval buildings conventionally expressed certain allegories and symbols, in their plans and in their details; and there was a type of mediaeval author over fond of reading quite unintended allegories and symbols into architectural forms. He never admired or criticised an ornament as such.[5] Ornament for its own sake was the conception of a later time.

The one characteristic admiration of the mediaeval mind was brilliance, an admiration, agreeable neither to the strict tradition of asceticism, nor indeed to the modern romantic who has fallen under the spell of mediaevalism. In the eyes of a mediaeval author, "beauty" signified the brightness and variety of colors, the glitter of gold and jewelery, and he has approved that beauty in many a book of poetry and travel.

The heroic sagas of the Dark Ages have told the story of lordly wealth, brave deeds and good living, and have described their treasures, gifts of hospitality, armor, weapons, harness and drinking-cups. The lord was called "a giver of rings" or "a giver of bracelets"; his hall was decked out in gold and embroidered finery:

> There in the olden time full many a thane,
> Shining with gold, all gloriously adorned,
> Haughty in heart, rejoiced when hot with wine;
> Upon him gleamed his armour, and he gazed
> On gold and silver and all precious gems;
> On riches and on wealth and treasured jewels,
> A radiant city in a kingdom wide. . . .[6]

The reader will recognize from these poems the character

of old and familiar fairy tales throughout the world, the *Nibelungenlied*, the *Arabian Nights*, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The Holy City of the Apocalypse, with its amethyst, beryl, chrysolite and gold "like unto clear glass," was undoubtedly the model of much mediaeval poetry in this vein.

Chroniclers and travelers have told the same story, but with some pretence of truth. Often they were men well educated in the learning of their time, and their writings show the general levels of culture in the Middle Ages. Matthew Paris, the monkish chronicler of England at the height of early thirteenth-century Gothic art, and himself an artist, referred occasionally to the building and dedication of churches and cathedrals, but he was never more generous in his praise than to call some of them "handsome (nobilis)." Yet he would indulge in a passage like the following: "[The Queen of France gave the King of England] a peacock, that is to say a curious washing-basin, in the shape of a peacock, in which was inserted a precious stone commonly called a pearl. And other ornaments were artfully worked into the body of the bird in gold and silver and sapphires, so as to resemble a real peacock spreading its tail. So richly was this jewel ornamented, and so new and wonderful the workmanship, that it created admiration in all beholders." [7]

Villehardouin, the French chronicler of the Fourth Crusade of 1204, and the first of vernacular historians, described at length the siege and sack of Constantinople by the Crusaders, an operation in which he himself took part. But when he had the chance to describe the city of Constantinople and its treasures, he merely remarked that: "Many of the great host went to see the city, and the rich palaces and the great churches, and all the vast wealth of the city, for never was

there a city that possessed so much. And of the relics it does not behoove me to speak, for at that time there were as many as in all the rest of the world." The Crusaders stripped the city, but for art they had no respect and less understanding. The remains of the Emperor Constantine's sculptures were destroyed; priceless Greek and Latin manuscripts were burned.

In 1271, Marco Polo, set out from Venice on his famous travels in Central Asia, China and India. His book describes the impressions of a mediaeval traveler of unusual curiosity, observation and courage. But his architecture is the architecture of golden columns, azure roofs and precious ornaments; and this man, who knew the culture of two continents, could see no beauties but the extrinsic beauties of luxury and display. "The whole enclosure of the [Great Khan's] Palace was divided into three parts. The middle one was entered by a lofty gate, on each side of which there stood on the ground-level vast pavilions, the roofs of which were sustained by columns painted and wrought in gold and the finest azure. Opposite the gate stood the chief pavilion, larger than the rest, and painted in like style, with gilded columns, and a ceiling wrought in splendid gilded sculpture, whilst the walls were artfully painted with the stories of departed kings." Here annually the Khan was accustomed to hold his court. "This court lasted for ten or twelve days, and exhibited an astonishing and incredible spectacle in the magnificence of the guests, all clothed in silk and gold, with a profusion of precious stones, for they tried to outdo each other in the splendor and richness of their appointments. . . ." [8]

The friars, who from time to time penetrated Tartary and the Far East in the joint office of ambassador, missionary and

spy, wrote some copious travel-books, describing the adventures and marvels of their journeys. The book of Odoric of Pordenone was taken down in 1330 and recorded his itinerary through Asia Minor, Persia, India, Sumatra, Java and China. Odoric's main interests were the graves of St. Athanasius and St. Thomas, the mountain where Noah's Ark was said to have rested, the remains of the Tower of Babel and the various sites of martyrdoms and miracles. Odoric was a Franciscan, trained presumably in the self-denial and austerity of his Order. His piety was seriously affronted by the idolatry of the peoples of India. But his piety was not so severe that he would altogether pass by the artistic splendors of the East. He says: "There is in this kingdom [of India] a certain wonderful idol, which all the provinces greatly revere. It is as big as St. Christopher is commonly represented by the painters, and it is entirely of gold, seated on a great throne, which is also of gold. And round its neck it hath a collar of gems of immense value. And the church of this idol is also of pure gold, roof (and walls) and pavement. People come to say their prayers to this idol from great distances. . . ." Or he says of the Great Khan's palace: "The basement thereof is raised about two paces from the ground, and within there be four-and-twenty columns of gold; and all the walls are hung with skins of red leather, said to be the finest in the world. In the midst of the palace is a certain great jar, more than two paces in height, entirely formed of a certain precious stone called Merdacas (and so fine, that I was told its price exceeded the value of four great towns). It is all hooped round with gold, and in every corner thereof is a dragon represented as in act to strike most fiercely. And this jar hath also fringes of network of great pearls hanging therefrom,

and these fringes are a span in breadth. Into this vessel drink is conveyed by certain conduits from the court of the palace; and beside it are many golden goblets from which those drink who list. . . . In the hall of the palace also are many peacocks of gold, which flap their wings, and make as if they would dance. Now this must be done either by diabolic art, or by some engine underground." [9]

3. *The Mediaeval Artist.*

The mediaeval artist has sometimes been credited with a genius far above his deserts; but if existing records are to be believed, he cannot claim a taste in art very different from his contemporaries. There have been left from his hand a series of documents, relating to his training and his work, the manufacture of his materials and their application in practice. The documents take the form of instructions to apprentices, "recipe-books" like the *De Diversis Artibus* of Theophilus, or even of rough notes, like the *Notebooks* of Villars de Honnecourt. They are treatises on masonry or on painting or more often on the precious metals, whose glittering workmanship was so desirable to the mediaeval eye. They reveal the writer's apparent religiousness and the essentially technical bent of his mind; they reveal moreover the conservatism of his methods. In every case the style is legislative, and provisions are made, not only for matters of technique and workmanship, but for the "story" also. For the mediaeval artist had little will of his own. His Church controlled his life, and his guild controlled his work. The idea of a romantic liberty, such as the modern artist holds necessary for the full exercise of his genius and imagination, was then neither desired nor conceivable. The departure, even by ignorance or accident,

from the strict conventions were quickly visited by the penalties of Church and guild. "The composition of figures is not the invention of painters, but the law and tradition of the Catholic Church, and the ordination and dispensation of our fathers. . . ." [10]

The artists's mind was bred upon geometry, the divine and ancient science, a knowledge of which the basest mechanic could share with a professor of the liberal arts, a science "worthy of the contemplation and practice of the greatest princes." So formalized a background as geometry facilitated and somehow symbolized the ruling of the guilds. Its high ancestry was proved by the tradition long current that Abraham first taught Euclid geometry, and that Euclid was a master-mason. There was something magical and emblematic, almost Pythagorean, in numbers.[11] Villars de Honnecourt was evidently an accomplished geometer. His *Notebooks*, above cited, contain plans and elevations, constructive devices and problems of drawing, such as the setting out of an arch over a confined space, or obtaining correctly the diameter of a column only part of which is showing, or computing the size of distant objects. Villars applied geometry even to the drawing of the human figure. There is an unaffected schematic and symmetrical quality about his *Notebooks*, the identification of good building with good geometry, the conception of architecture as a grandiose "engine." "Totes ces figures sunt estraites de geometrie." "Villars de Honnecourt salutes you," he writes, "and implores all who labour at the divers kinds of work shown in this book to pray for his soul and hold him in remembrance. For in this book will be found good advice for the great power of masonry and of engines in carpentry, also the power of drawing and delineation, as the

art of geometry commands and teaches, (de la grande force de maconnerie et des engines de carpenterie, les trais ensi come li ans de iometrie le command et ensaigne.)"

4. *The Aesthetic Consciousness.*

A review of mediaeval literary sources, relative to art, must leave impressions, of which the meagerness of the sources is not the least curious. The abhorrence of the arts, expressed by mediaeval ascetics, is easier to expect, for it has been a recognized phenomenon of deeply religious minds of every age; nor does the practical and utilitarian character of mediaeval art seem very novel, if for no other reason than that character has appealed to a philosophy of very recent times. The art of the Middle Ages, it is now allowed by every mediaevalist, was ignored, abominated and used in turn; but the immediate moral and religious ground of mediaeval life was the single motive of the silence, persecution or approval of mediaeval authors.

The mediaeval artist no more believed in self-conscious aesthetic canons than he believed that God had made the blossoms and the songbird for no other purpose than to inspire some springtime lyrist. The mason's ideal was skill, not beauty; like Villars de Honnecourt, he may have been a showman, overkeen sometimes to execute a *tour-de-force*, an artist's trick for the trick's sake. He had no more compunction in destroying some old and splendid monument and replacing it by new, than the modern buyer of an automobile. The rebirth of the aesthetic consciousness was the first symptom of mediaeval decadence. Perpendicular and Flamboyant Gothic were often well aware of architectural "effect." Literature, like the mechanic arts, became self-conscious, and a

great deal of later mediaeval poetry is spoiled by evident experiment in meter. Dante may be called the first of European "men of letters," and he has made perhaps the earliest records of criticism and jealousy among painters. The guilds in many European cities were then already declining and becoming monopolies vested in a few families, with all the dignity and incapacity of privilege, and only too vulnerable to the attacks of some future revolution in the arts.

Until the fourteenth century aesthetic problems had not disturbed the student of philosophy. The nearest approach to a doctrine of beauty in the Middle Ages was perhaps the Neo-Platonic treatise by Dionysius the Areopagite, *On Divine Names*, which obtained so extraordinary a popularity in all the learned circles of Europe. Dionysius represented Beauty indeed as one of the Divine Names, a proper attribute and ornament of God, but that beauty had no more to do with aesthetic beauty than the moral beauty of Plato aforetime. The earlier Schoolmen do not appear to have included aesthetics in their curriculum of disputations. But St. Thomas Aquinas, on his own initiative or from his master Aristotle, had vaguely guessed the intellectual values of the arts. He divided human life into speculation and practice and put art in the latter division. Practice he defined as either making or doing, and art, he said, must always be a useful practice. "The name of art should be applied to those arts only which contribute towards and produce the necessaries of life." St. Thomas had taken for granted the logical, scientific character of art. He associated the perception of beauty with the "knowing powers," and therefore said "those senses especially regard the beautiful which are destined to know, namely sight and hearing, which are themselves the

handmaids of reason." "Art is nothing else but the right reason about things to be made, (ars nihil aliud est, quam ratio recta aliquorum operum faciendorum). He writes of "the lustre (claritas)" of beautiful objects, "whence things are called beautiful which have a bright colour (unde quae habent colorem nitidum, pulchra esse dicuntur)." He confused the abstract principles of beauty and goodness. And to this extent he is in agreement with the mediaeval conception of the arts, as it is described in this Chapter. But he has also felt the "integrity, perfection, proportion and harmony of beautiful things (integritas, perfectio, proportio, consonantia)," and, even if St. Thomas' ideas were poor indeed compared with the full-blooded aesthetics, which was to vitalize Europe at the Renaissance, one mild sophistication at least he added to the usual artistic innocence of mediaeval thought.

After Dante and St. Thomas the feeling for art as art increased. It is impossible to think that the poet of Piers Plowman or Chaucer,[12] for instance, were ignorant of such feeling. And in the last of the mediaeval recipe-books, the *Treatise on Painting* of Cennino Cennini, the conceptions of artistic style, of proportion and of the imitation of nature are all in evidence. Cennino Cennini created an aesthetic precedent, and was in fact one of the early instruments of that upheaval of the mind, which, beginning in his native land of Italy, quickly overspread the nations of Western Europe. And that upheaval, known as the Renaissance, was nothing more than the rebirth of what this book has called "the aesthetic consciousness."

5. *The Idea of Nature.*

The consciousness of nature in the early Christian era and

in the Middle Ages ran parallel to that of art. Hellenistic and Graeco-Roman authors are sometimes remarkable for their appreciations of nature and it is evident that antiquity, since the time of Theocritus in Greek lands and Lucretius in Latin, was familiar with a conception of nature, which modern sensibility can understand and admire. Early Christianity encouraged and abhorred in turn the pagan love of nature, and Scripture was cited as the authority for both opinions. St. John had said: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." St. Paul had said: "The invisible things of time from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." Therefore some Fathers of the early Church regarded the sights of nature as a sinful temptation, convinced that the world and all its beauty possessed only the very limited value of a thoroughfare to the Eternal Kingdom; others argued that the order and harmony of nature were eloquent witnesses to God's bounty and omnipotence. As in the arts, the more vigorous view was held by the Latin Fathers and the more lenient by the Greek; the Cappadocians again were a shining example of leniency. The hermit and monk retired into the depths of nature, not to contemplate her sights and scenery, but to escape the evils of civil society.

The early vernacular poetry of Europe shows no trace of nature appreciation. Nature is desired for her kindnesses and feared for her cruelties. The constant references to the sea in Anglo-Saxon poetry acknowledge none of its romantic fascinations, though several fanciful names are given to it: "whale-road," "home of the sea-bird," "mingling of the waters," "cup of the waves." Nature is generally something

terrible. The image of the hungry seafarer keeping his night-watch, "all hung round with icicles," is the constant type. There is little nature appreciation in the literature of the Crusaders or in the travel-books; but the sunny fertility of the East and its inexhaustible resources by comparison with the poverty of the Crusader's own homeland is often mentioned. Forested or mountainous scenery, moonlight or starlight, are always the occasions of fears and lamentations. The Alpine exploration in the first centuries of the Holy Roman Empire, which prepared the closer contact of Italy and Germany, inspired none of the enjoyments of modern travelers in Switzerland. Nothing is recorded but the names of places, the dangers of roads and passes, and the discomforts of the mountain winters. The mediaeval peasant, who earned a hard living in the fields, had no heart but for the good things his labour yielded; winter was a time of poverty and cold, spring of hope and summer of fruitfulness. And he was incurably superstitious; a flight of crows or the fall of a sparrow were omens of famine or plenty. There was a mass of magical and medicinal lore connected with certain herbs, and most common flowers were emblems of unearthly powers.

Hence the ideas of benevolence or malevolence set limits to the mediaeval landscape. The typical mediaeval Paradise was stocked with every luxury, delicious fruits, fragrant shrubs, and rivers of wine and milk. The typical mediaeval Hell was, like Dante's, a mountainous valley or cavern. Dante provides his Garden of Eden in the *Purgatory* with gentle breezes, songs of birds, streams of purest water, blossoms and fruits, "la gran variazon dei freschi mai"; and sets it above the level of clouds and storms.[13] In his *Paradise* are numerous

references to flowers. Hence there is a certain type of poetry, usually lyrical, which celebrates the benefits of springtime:

Sumer is i-cumen in,
Lhude sing cuccu!
Groweth sed, and bloweth med,
And springth the wude nu —
Sing cuccu!

These are the first lines of the well-known song, written in the first half of the thirteenth century, and the earliest English poem in which nature is more than mentioned incidentally.

St. Francis is sometimes pictured ideally as a Christlike figure in mystic conversation with trees, flowers and birds, and "devoutly praising the Creator in them." But St. Francis looked upon the sights of Bevagno or La Vernia with other eyes than do modern pilgrims to these holy places, anxious as they are to magnify the name of their saint; and it is all too probable that St. Francis owes much of his recent popularity to his being the only Latin saint whose sensitiveness to nature can be caricatured in the interests of romanticism. "Albeit the Brother minor should speak with the tongue of angels," said St. Francis, "and know the courses of the stars and the virtues of the herbs; and though all the treasures of the earth were revealed unto him and he understood the virtues of birds, and of fishes, and of all animals, and of men, and of trees, and of stones, and of roots, and of waters, write that not therein is perfect joy." [14] St. Francis' adoration of the benevolence and providence of nature is illustrated by his famous *Canticle of the Sun*:

Praised be my Lord and God for Mother Earth,
Who governs and sustains us; who gives birth
To all the many fruits and herbs and coloured flowers.

With the close of the Middle Ages, the aesthetic consciousness of nature, as of art, revived. Petrarch climbed mountains for the view they gave. Aeneas Sylvius, who became Pope Pius II, was called the "Silvarum Amator." It is related that Alberti, the architect, shed tears to see noble trees and corn-fields, and when he fell sick, the sight of a beautiful landscape cured him. The Italian humanist had evidently found his "tongues in trees, books in the running brooks sermons in stones, and good in everything."

Chapter II

THE RENAISSANCE IN ITALY

1. Roman Survivals.
2. The First Year of the Renaissance in Italy.
3. Early Aesthetic Disputes.
4. Early Amateur Criticism.
5. Early Literary and Artistic Societies.

Chapter II

THE RENAISSANCE IN ITALY

1. *Roman Survivals.*

Historians have been puzzled and their opinions divided by the suddenness, completeness, and apparent absence of antecedents of the Renaissance in Europe. They have described it as the emancipation of individuality; but they have made no allowance for the violent outbreaks of individuality, which characterized the Romantic Movement three hundred years later. They have described it as a revolt against the tyranny of the mediaeval Church; but they have made no allowance for the many revolts and heresies of equal magnitude, if not of equal permanence, which have afflicted the Catholic Church since its earliest days on earth. They have also described it as the revival of ancient Rome; but they have made no allowance for the deep Romanization of Europe throughout the Middle Ages. The revival of ancient Rome has been perhaps the commonest and the most misleading of the favorite Renaissance hypotheses.

In the West, it may be said, the name of ancient Rome had never died. There was no date of absolute extinction, such as the events of 1452 provided in the East. From the earliest times, Church and state had always been anxious to justify the privileges they claimed by some reference to ancient usages, and always preserved the semblance of old Roman dignity and power. Centuries before, since the general enfranchisement of the subject races of the Empire by Cara-

calla, successive invasions from the North were more easily conceived of as additions to the numbers of the ancient population, or as new incidents in the already heavy annals of the Empire's civil wars. The citizens of Rome had learned to see no paradox and feel no injury in the election of barbarian Emperors, in the recruiting of their armies in Gaul and Germany, or even in the sight of Gothic wars upon their territory. All the bitter rivalry of succeeding centuries seemed to have been brought about in answer to the single question: Who shall now be Caesar? The Papacy borrowed its credentials from the Donation of Constantine, a document which was the more significant for having been a pious forgery. Frankish kings were crowned Roman Emperors. The Holy Roman Empire maintained itself by virtue of its honorable pedigree for a thousand years. A recent writer was not mistaken in interpreting the history of mediaeval and modern Europe as the continuous dissolution of ancient Rome.

How therefore can the Renaissance be considered as the revival of Rome? Throughout the Middle Ages, wise and serious men had looked back to the memory of Roman greatness as the one cure of all their troubles, and mediaeval writings unanimously repeat the inferiority of their own time as compared with classical antiquity. After the first ages of early Christian fanaticism were passed, pagan science and pagan philosophy were revived; Virgil, Cicero, and Aristotle became the standard authors for monk and scholar. The Middle Ages knew a hundred ancient texts and studied them with all the earnestness and industry of a later generation.

The hypothesis of the Renaissance as the revival of Rome needs careful reconstruction. In so far as the arts and literature were concerned, the Renaissance was the revival of the

aesthetic consciousness, which had existed in Graeco-Roman times, but which had been suppressed or ignored in the revolutions of early Christianity; and that consciousness, reborn into a world already jealous of its Roman traditions, demanded that the arts and literature should immediately put on the vesture of old Roman forms. The essence of the Renaissance was the conception of "fine art"; it was the accident of the Renaissance that fine art should be Roman. The Renaissance was not the discovery of the ancient classics, long since buried in darkest ignorance, but the discovery that the ancient classics were beautiful. The Middle Ages had read the classics for "what they spake," the Renaissance read the classics for "how they spake." The Renaissance was careful to recover those classics, which the Middle Ages had disdained, because they taught no lesson but the lesson of pure literature. A poet, like Catullus, whose matter was immoral, but whose verses were exquisite, had been all but lost; the Renaissance restored him to an eminence which he would have found flattering in the golden age of Latin letters. Cicero, no longer a writer of moral essays, took his seat of old among the orators, and Virgil, who had owed his mediaeval reputation to his supposed prophecy of Christ, was crowned anew with the laurels of the poet. Aristotle, that learned, but dull doctor of the sciences, lost his popularity to Plato, who expressed the profundities of philosophy in a happier style. The Renaissance was careful to recover the actual language of the classics. The mediaeval Schoolman had formerly provided himself with abstracts and digests of the more useful works of ancient learning; he was satisfied if Latin, or even Arabic, versions of those works were reliable transcripts of their matter, and he never felt the need of the original texts,

copies of which any intelligent pilgrim to Constantinople could have procured for him. The fifteenth century laboriously revived the study of Greek and searched every corner of the Mediterranean world for ancient manuscripts.

2. *The First Years of the Renaissance in Italy.*

Italy was the first of European nations to experience the Renaissance, and in the fourteenth century she was already looking back with an unwonted curiosity upon the Roman relics which littered her ancient sites. The ruins of the city of Rome had always fascinated its mediaeval citizens and pilgrims from abroad. But they were ruins built, as it is said, by fiends and demons, and local superstition had ascribed the powers of magic to the figures still standing in the pediments and friezes of the pagan temples. In the day of Petrarch, the ancient ruins were observed as history. Petrarch was the first of antiquarians and the first to protest against wanton vandalism which still continued in his time among the ancient buildings. Through his writings are scattered numerous passages appreciative of the arts and especially of ancient arts. He was the friend and patron of living painters such as Simone Martini and Giotto. His knowledge of the classics was no worse, and always more sensitive, than the learning of contemporary scholars. It is said that as a youth he read the orations of Cicero aloud and admired the great charm of their periods, long before he knew sufficient Latin to understand their meaning. In his wanderings through the ancient sites, he collected coins, medals and inscriptions. Often, accompanied by a friend, he would climb above some ruined vault, and, sitting there among the weeds and creepers that

grew over it, he would survey the ancient city, recall its departed worthies and grieve for its pillage and decay.

But while Petrarch was converting the learned world to a just appreciation of its classical inheritance, the Tuscan sculptors were independently imitating classical types. Niccola Pisano had seen the antique sarcophagi in the Campo Santo at Pisa, his adopted city. His work was never free from its natural Romanesque precedents, but he affected a mild revolution by his discovery of the possibilities of the nude human form. He was the first to combine a knowledge of the antique with a knowledge of the living model, and thus anticipated the basic principle of Renaissance sculpture. Nakedness in mediaeval sentiment was the state of shame. It had sometimes been imposed as an extreme penance, when all other measures of discipline had failed. In mediaeval art, nakedness appeared only in the representations of the Crucifixion and of the damned in Hell, both incidents of shame. But Niccola's bas-relief of Hell, carved on his pulpit in the Duomo of Pisa, tacitly acknowledged another use for human nakedness, and recalled, if distantly, the nude torsos and limbs of pagan sculpture. Niccola's art, far from exciting the jealousy of fellow sculptors or the apprehensions of ecclesiastical authority, was favourably received. He left behind him a school of sculptors which executed works in all the principal cities of Tuscany, — Pisa, Siena, Perugia and Florence, and which show the beginnings of that technique later to develop into the classic naturalism of Donatello and Michelangelo.

Italy at this time was rich and prosperous, and prepared for magnificent ambitions. The unfortunate rebel, Rienzi, had warned her to seek her fortune in other fields than poli-

tics, and she turned her mind to art. The opening of the fifteenth century found the precocious Republic of Florence primed for her first adventure. In 1401, the Florentine Signoria held a competition to select a sculptor to complete the doors of the Cathedral Baptistry. The very suggestion of a competition was significant of the aesthetic temper of the time; — no mediaeval guildsman could have thus tested or displayed his skill. The leading Tuscan sculptors submitted the required specimens of their art. One Brunelleschi was competing; but envious of the unexpected talent of Ghiberti, and feeling perhaps that a unique profession awaited him elsewhere, he withdrew, and the jury of award, whom he had much embarrassed, gave the commission to Ghiberti. Ghiberti therefore set his hand to execute the last of Gothic sculptures on the soil of Italy; and Brunelleschi, nothing daunted, betook himself to Rome.

Brunelleschi lived fifteen years in Rome, accompanied for a while by the young Donatello, and there made a profound study of the city's antiquities. And, says his biographer, "as he was free from all household cares, he gave himself up so exclusively to his studies, that he took no time either to eat or sleep; his only thought was of architecture, which was then extinct, — I mean the good old manner, and not the Gothic (tedesca) and barbarous one, which was much practised at that period. . . . He also well examined and made careful drawings of all the vaults and arches of antiquity; to these he devoted perpetual study, and if by chance the artists found fragments of capitals, columns, cornices, or basements of buildings buried in the earth, they set laborers to work and caused them to be dug out, until the foundation was laid open to their view. . . . Nor did he rest until he had drawn

every description of fabric — temples, round, square or octagonal; basilicas, aqueducts, baths, arches, the Colosseum, amphitheatres. . . . The different Orders were next divided by his cares, each Order, Doric, Ionic or Corinthian being placed apart; and such was the effect of his zeal in that study, that he became capable of entirely reconstructing the city in his imagination, and of beholding Rome as she had been before she was ruined." The loafers of Rome, unused to the sight of antiquarian studies, called the artists treasure-seekers, and popular curiosity was satisfied to hear that on one occasion Brunelleschi had turned up an ancient vase containing coins.[1]

When Brunelleschi returned to his native land, his mind was well stored with antique lore. His masterpiece was the dome of the Cathedral in Florence, a Gothic structure, dressed out in Roman ornaments and moldings; and about the city he erected some dozen smaller buildings of faultless classic detail. Ghiberti, his old rival, learned the classic forms, and in the second of his famous Baptistery doors he declared for all the world to see the changes that had been wrought in the taste of one generation.

The scholarship of Petrarch and the science of Brunelleschi were united in Leo Battista Alberti. Like them, a Florentine, he was educated in the cultured literary environment of Florentine humanism. The story is told how a Latin comedy of his own composition was mistaken for an original work of Terence. And this man, essentially a student and a virtuoso, now applied his versatile mind to the antique. His noble birth gave him an entry into the aristocratic circles of Florence and Rome, and there he made influential proselytes to his architectural and archaeological doctrines. When, therefore,

Pope Nicholas V was contemplating the rebuilding of the Church of St. Peter on the Vatican, it was Alberti who recalled to His Holiness the ancient grandeur of old Rome and proposed the means of its resurrection. And it was to Alberti that Poggio, the Florentine scholar and bibliophile, gave his Vitruvius, which he had found during one of his expeditions in search of ancient classic manuscripts.

Alberti was variously employed in the capacity of adviser. He was the prototype of the modern architect who directs and plans, but knows no craft and does not build himself. He was the first to teach the doctrine of the architectural Orders, and from that auspicious day the Orders were imposed upon the design of classic structures. Hence Alberti applied his Orders to the cumbersome masses of a Tuscan palace or to the pointed openings of a mediaeval church. He originated the conception of architecture as decorated building, an architecture namely of surface effects and forms, much as poetry was at that time conceived of as "embellished language."

Brunelleschi's authorities were the ancient ruins, whose dimensions and details had held his patience through fifteen years of study. Alberti's authority was the book of Vitruvius, presumably of the Augustan age, the only document on architecture which had survived from antiquity. It was a single book; — but the actual words of an architect, who had lived in the greatest century of ancient Rome was worth scores of others which had disappeared. Vitruvius had been known as early as the eleventh century, and some mystified mediaeval craftsman perhaps had used him as a recipe-book; [2] but not until the Renaissance, could a type of mind have existed capable of understanding him as "architecture."

Alberti's friend, Poggio, found a manuscript of Vitruvius, long neglected and useless, in the Monastery of St. Gall. For Alberti it was the find of ages. In a work of his own authorship, *De Re aedificatoria*, he published the conclusions of his study of Vitruvius. *De Re aedificatoria* was printed in Florence in 1485 and created the liveliest impressions on the scholars and artists of the day. The text of Vitruvius was printed in Rome in the following year. The importance attached to these two works may be realized, when it is remembered that they appeared as printed books, only twenty years after the setting up of the first printing press in Italy. They were the beginnings of a literature that was to grow up about the art of architecture, conferring upon it an air of literary and antiquarian scholarship, which seemingly it is not likely ever to lose again.

Alberti's book is modelled on Vitruvius, but he quotes freely from Theophrastus, Frontinus and Pliny the Elder; and from these erudite sources, rather than from practical experience, he obtains his information on building-stones, on noxious winds and vapours, on water-supply and the salubrity of sites, subjects which occupy so large a part of the work. He makes much parade of his classical learning and of his familiarity with ancient myths, and his text is full of literary allusions. He believes that ancient Rome was the home of the only true architecture, an art born in Asia, nourished in Greece, brought up to perfect manhood under the protection and patronage of the greater Caesars and hopelessly corrupted by the barbarities of the Middle Ages. He defines the architectural Order as a certain necessary and unalterable proportion between the Roman column and the members it supports; and he believes that the Order is the alphabet of all

architectural form; "in tota re aedificatoria primarium certe ornamentum in columnis est." Thence he tabulates the kinds of Orders, — Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian, — and gives the minutest details of their proportions. The novelty of his system may be judged from his complaints of the difficulty he had in finding trained workmen to follow his instructions.

The doctrines of Alberti fell like rain upon a thirsty soil. In the course of his life it seemed that Italy had gone pagan. The streets were faced with classic columns; churches and palaces were hung with classic paintings. Painters, sculptors, architects, as well as poets, were flattered that they had not only restored the greatness of Rome after the unfortunate lapse of mediaeval barbarism, but had even surpassed their ancient masters. The cultivation of the Greek and Latin languages was the serious business of life. One cardinal advised a brother humanist to avoid the reading of St. Paul's Epistles in the original Greek, "lest their wretched style corrupt your taste." Pious men, whose fathers had listened to the sermons of St. Francis, diverted themselves with the myths of Theocritus and Ovid. Popes and cardinals, nobles and merchants, spent fortunes on libraries of ancient manuscripts, played the Maecenas to the artists of their fancy, exchanged letters like Pliny, built country villas like Cicero, collected busts of the Emperors, statues of the gods and heroes of paganism, antique gems, coins, vases.

Travel in Rome and archaeological study became the prerequisites of every Italian artist's education. There are numerous stories of artists, who, happening to have some argument over the measurement of an antique detail, immediately set out on a journey of many miles to Rome to decide the matter on the spot. Simone Pollaiuolo, the Florentine archi-

tect, earned his nickname, "Il Cronaca," because of his loquacity in describing the antiquities of Rome. A discovery, like that of the Laocöon statue, or of the arabesques and grottesche in the cellars of the Palatine, was an event equal in importance to the accession of a sovereign to his kingdom. Approximation to antique types and models was the criterion of an artist's ability. Michelangelo owed his first invitation to Rome to the fame of his Sleeping Cupid, carved while he was a youth of nineteen, and mistaken for an antique. The third, the grandest and maturest manner of Raphael was always dated by his admirers from his first experience of the city of Rome; and the shortcomings even of painters like Titian were attributed to their want of antique study. The German Dürer was always reproached for his spending time in Venice which he could have better spent in Rome. Ancient Rome was rescued from barbarism, the artists of Italy had seen the light, and only the perversity of ignorance could now prevent the diffusion in all places and the perpetuation for all time of a knowledge so sublime and perfect.

3. *Early Aesthetic Disputes.*

The aesthetic consciousness may be defined as the association of the arts with beauty. The mediaeval mind had made no such association. The arts had been admired in the Middle Ages for the success with which they served their objects. It was exceptional for a mediaeval writer, before the time of St. Thomas Aquinas, to appreciate a work of art apart from its usefulness or to call it beautiful, and, even for St. Thomas, the ideas of art and beauty were still distinct. But the business of the Renaissance was the creation of an idea of art as a thing of beauty, justified by its beauty, to be seen and praised

as such, the idea of art satisfying in the mere contemplation, the idea of pictures for the picture gallery, architecture for the street-front, plays for the theater, music for the concert-chamber. The Renaissance created the idea of ornament and decoration apart from symbolism, an idea which the Middle Ages, in its sense of practicalities and fondness for allegory, hardly knew. The Renaissance created the idea of style, of a superimposed form, conditioned by the character of the artist and by the age in which he lived. The Renaissance created the idea of the spectator, of the art-lover and connoisseur, for whom art was an intellectual diversion. The Renaissance created the idea of the individual artist, devoting his life to the production of beautiful things. The Renaissance created the idea of the artist's inspiration and inborn talent.

The Renaissance upset the old distinction between the liberal and the servile arts. Had not Pliny the Elder written of painting and sculpture and recorded the tributes paid to those arts by the ancients? In the Middle Ages painting and sculpture were no nobler than carpentry or cobbling. The idea of the Fine Arts, or as they were first called "le arti del disegno," was slowly infused into the European mind and superseded the degrading distinctions of the Middle Ages.[3] Noblemen like Alberti were flattered to own the name of artist. Hence the Renaissance adopted a whole new nomenclature of the arts, expressive of their new virtues: — "grazia, componimento, composizione, unità, armonia, varietà, invenzione, imaginazione, grandezza, fantasia, capriccio, bizzaria, perfezione, la gran maniera," and so forth. The words were mostly taken from Aristotle's *Poetics*, Pliny's *Natural History*, or from the various aesthetic comments in the works of

Cicero. In the course of time, words like "wit (ingegno, belli ingegni)" and "taste (gusto)," were added to this vocabulary, and developed in all their philosophical implications.[4]

The Renaissance introduced into the learned world disputes of aesthetic theory. Poetry and painting became subjects, fit for polite study and discussion. Men formed themselves into societies and academies for their literary and artistic improvement. The new culture was become so much a personal ornament that social conventions were adapted to its display. For that reason the warfare of aesthetics continually involved personalities and lapsed into libel. The worsted contestant had no conception of being martyred for a cause, as he undoubtedly would have felt in the nineteenth century, but rather of receiving a personal affront. Quarrels between Renaissance artists, as between humanists in the arena of scholarship, led more than once to scandal, to lifelong enmities and even to bloodshed. Leading scholars of the day conducted endless feuds over the idlest points of grammar or scansion in some new-found classical text. Of criticism, in the modern sense, there was very little. Artists disputed the relative merits of painting and sculpture or the relative merits of Raphael and Michelangelo. The immediate usefulness of these disputes was to exercise the minds and tongues of the disputants in the new words, which the Renaissance had coined. The aesthetic consciousness had need of expression and employment; men delighted in it like children with a new toy; and there was often heard a premonition of the greater aesthetic controversies of the future.

The dispute over the relative merits of painting and sculpture had begun in the lifetime of Petrarch, who had been convinced that sculpture, the more durable and naturalistic

medium and also the chief medium of the ancients, was incontestibly the superior.[5] And Petrarch's argument on behalf of sculpture was often repeated. Alberti had interested himself in painting and sculpture, and published a treatise on each. He always regarded painting as the mistress art, but had suggested tentatively that the sculptor's was a more direct means of representation. Later the dispute was involved in the whole question of the "kinds" of art, and corresponded to the literary discussion over functions of epic, tragedy, ode and sonnet, or to the minuter distinctions that were so often made between the forms of versification, meter and rhythm. There had been similar discussions among the literary men of antiquity and even among the mediaeval Schoolmen, for whom apparently the relations of the "kinds" of the liberal arts had been a favorite topic. For instance, Plutarch, quoting a more ancient author, had defined painting as silent poetry, and poetry as blind painting. There were obscure passages in Vitruvius upon music, which could be interpreted according to the fancy or learning of the disputants, and the proportions of the architectural orders were dexterously discovered to be the analogues of a musical scale. The Pythagorean doctrines of music and number were confirmations of the obscurities of Vitruvius. Centuries later, in obedience to the conclusions of the early Vitruvians of the Renaissance, the philosophers of Germany were still amusing themselves with the definition of architecture as "frozen music." The relationship of architecture to the arts of painting and sculpture was deducible from another passage in Vitruvius, which compared the Orders to the human body.

The progress of the dispute over the kinds and relation-

ships of the arts was helped by the fact that the Renaissance never developed an aesthetics of technique, an aesthetics, namely, which interprets all the arts equally as representations of Form, but distinguished by the technical medium, which that Form may accidentaly inhabit. Occasionally the more advanced of the humanists had felt the antithesis of content and form which was destined to loom so large in the future, and had asked the significant question: "Does style arise from thought or language (dalle sentenzie o dalle parole)?" [6] But the artists as yet did not trouble themselves with such subtleties. During the Renaissance, the common denominator of painting and sculpture so to speak, was drawing, "il bon disegno," and their avowed aim was the representation of natural objects. In such a philosophy technique and the interest that comes from technique did not enter into consideration. It is strange therefore for modern critics, trained in the recent philosophy of functionalism, to read that Vasari, for instance, saw no objection to the representation of perspective in relief-sculpture, but on the contrary praised Ghiberti's perspectives in the panels on the second of the Baptistery doors; or that he admired the tapestries Raphael executed for Leo X for resembling paintings; or that he believed Titian's mosaics in St. Mark's at Venice were the best possible, "because they could not have been more excellently done in pencil and colours." [7] The aesthetics of technique began in the later years of the eighteenth century. The Renaissance would not have understood it and was therefore free to discuss the proper places of the arts in the aesthetic hierarchy.

The triumph of painting over sculpture dated from the

time of Leonardo da Vinci. That great artist, who, in a versatile age, had tried his hand at almost every one of the occupations it recognized, had considered himself primarily as a scientist and engineer. But in the matter of arts, he had argued the superiority of painting and had honored himself in proportion as his employers commissioned him to paint pictures. He had made an entry to that effect in his *Notebooks*; for painting, he said, represents natural objects more vividly than does any other art, more vividly indeed than poetry. Leonardo's criterion of excellence in art was the accuracy and convincingness of representation.

Vasari tells how, on one occasion, the painters, Giorgione and Verrocchio were disputing the respective merits of painting and sculpture, Verrocchio declared that sculpture was superior inasmuch as it displayed all sides of the figure. Giorgione declared that painting was superior inasmuch as it displayed the figure at a glance and did not require of the spectator the effort of walking around it, adding furthermore that it was possible for painting to show all sides of a figure. Accordingly, writes Vasari, to illustrate his point, "he painted a nude figure, with its back turned to the spectator, and at the feet of the figure was a limpid stream, wherein the reflection of the front was painted with the utmost exactitude; on one side was a highly burnished corselet, of which the figure had divested itself, and wherein the left side was reflected perfectly, every part of the figure being clearly apparent; and on the other side was a mirror, in which the right profile of the nude form was also exhibited. By this beautiful and admirable fancy, Giorgione desired to prove that painting is, in effect, the superior art, requiring more talent and demanding higher effort; he also showed that it is

capable of presenting more at one view than is practicable in sculpture. The work was, indeed, greatly commended and admired as both ingenious and beautiful." [8]

Michelangelo never had much patience with these discussions, though, unless he declined all human society at that time, he must have assisted at them. The letter is still extant which he sent to Benedetto Varchi, the writer of a book upon the relationship of sculpture and painting. He writes as follows: "So that it may be clear that I have received your little book, which duly reached me, I will make such a reply as I can to what you ask, although I am very ignorant on the subject. In my opinion, painting should be considered excellent in proportion as it approaches the effect of relief, while relief should be considered bad in proportion as it approaches the effect of painting. I used to consider that sculpture was the lantern of painting and that between the two things there was the same difference as that between the sun and the moon. But now that I have read your book, in which, speaking as a philosopher, you say things which have the same end are themselves the same, I have changed my opinion; and I now consider that painting and sculpture are one and the same thing, unless greater nobility be imparted by the necessity for a keener judgment, greater difficulties of execution, stricter limitations and harder work. And if this be the case, no painter ought to think less of sculpture than of painting and no sculptor less of painting than of sculpture. By sculpture I mean the sort that is executed by cutting away from the block; the sort that is executed by building up resembles painting. This is enough, for as one and the other, that is to say both painting and sculpture, proceed from the same faculty, it would be an easy matter to establish harmony be-

tween them and to let such disputes alone, for they occupy more time than the execution of the figures themselves. . . ." Benedetto Varchi's book, which elicited this letter, still exists. The reader may see in it the unhappy perplexities to which the rivalry of painting and sculpture reduced some contemporary philosophers.[9]

Francisco de Hollanda, a painter who claims to have enjoyed the friendship and confidence of Michelangelo, represents the great artist as preferring painting. Painting, so Francisco contends, is the superior art and sculpture is the handmaid of painting. Every painter can carve, but no sculptor without previous experience can paint. Moreover, the authority of the ancients has confirmed the superiority of painting even over poetry; for, adds Francisco courageously, poetry is confined to those that know its language, but men of every race appreciate a painting, "Hence I, with my meagre understanding, the disciple of a voiceless mistress, hold that painting has even greater power than poetry to produce higher effects and forcibly and vehemently move the mind and soul to gaiety and laughter or to sadness and tears, and that its eloquence is more effective." [10]

Baldassare Castiglione had made the knowledge of painting an important qualification of his perfect Courtier. Painting, he wrote, is no vile mechanic's art; on the contrary, it was honored in antiquity and Greek boys of gentle birth studied it. He admitted that painting springs from the same source as sculpture, namely "il bon disegno," that sculpture is more enduring and its execution demands more labor; but painting is more charming and its execution demands more skill and science; it can represent objects, like landscape, beyond

the sculptor's reach, and it enables men to see the beauties of the living form.[11]

Castiglione represented the general suffrage of the disputants of this question in Italy. The invidious distinctions of the Middle Ages between the liberal and servile arts survived to some extent even in his enlightened days, and painting, the less manual and therefore the more liberal art, was elected queen. In the future, all the greater battles of criticism were fought about her, and to this day painter and artist are almost interchangeable terms. Architecture became gradually separated from the other arts and was handed over to the direction of specialists. The glory of architecture, as a liberal art, was its correctness and scholarship, not its connection with mere building. Michelangelo alone remained the grand exception and seemed to unify in himself, without false discrimination or opposition, the three arts of painting, sculpture and architecture.

A similar discussion to the above, to which the Renaissance was very partial, was the relative merit of its two heroes, Michelangelo and Raphael. The discussion was already warm during the artists' lives. In later years it was taken up by the academies and became a convenient peg on which to hang opinions on the virtues of different styles of painting. It was the subject of a *Dialogue*, written by Ludovico Dolce, a scholar of the court of Pope Clement VII. The wide circulation which the *Dialogue* enjoyed in Europe proves both the popularity of its discussions and the bitterness to which they were sometimes subject. Dolce was a Venetian and favored Venetian artists, especially Titian. He acclaimed Michelangelo as "the equal of the sculptors of antiquity"; but he

censured the nudity of his figures. Finally he awarded Raphael, the modest master of gracefulness, the highest honors.[12]

But all these disputes, petty as they often seem now, contained the germ of the great controversies, which were soon to trouble the artistic soul of Europe. Meanwhile they familiarized the disputant with the new ideas and terms to which the Renaissance gave currency, they discovered the pride and individuality of the artist, and they acknowledged the unity of art and the function of art as the stimulus of a recognizable, honorable human experience. They had even revived a vague Neo-Platonism and had spoken darkly of artistic inspiration as "the sacred fury." And all these things were questions of high destinies.

4. *Early Amateur Criticism.*

The original example of Petrarch and Alberti and the persistence of the aesthetic disputes of the Renaissance left upon the arts that mark of literary culture, which to this day they have never lost. The age of Lorenzo de' Medici, the Magnificent, saw the transference of the business of criticism to the hands of men of letters, and from that time, the artist, who would also aspire to the rank of an expert, sought, as Alberti had done, to qualify himself in the school of literature. In 1499, the Aldine Press in Venice published the *Hypnerotomachia*, a romance of the arts, written by a Dominican monk. It is a work of curious and massive erudition, containing descriptions of architecture and antiquities. The author calls himself Poliphilus; and Polia, who is the heroine of the romance and the object of his love, is a personification of antiquity. But Poliphilus was no artist, and his book, by

implication, claims for a pure man of letters the knowledge of art and the privilege of criticizing it. Poliphilus and Polia were the progenitors of the race of amateurs in Europe, a race which was to prove itself very prolific. Fifty years later occurred the famous quarrel between Michelangelo and Pietro Aretino, and amateur criticism won its first great victory. The incident is worth the digression of a couple of pages.

Pietro Aretino is known to English readers as a combination of bestiality and refinement, typical of the decadent Renaissance. He styled himself the "divine" and the "scourge of princes," and lived by flattery and blackmail. The satire that poured from his pen made him feared in his own time and well remembered in later generations. But he had the saving graces of a critical taste. He made himself out to be a patron of the arts; Raphael, Titian and Tintoretto sought his friendship and made him gifts of their sketches and pictures. He knew neither Greek nor Latin, a rare defect in a man of letters at that time, but a defect which made him easy of approach to uneducated artists. He reposed benevolently in the gratitude of his numerous protégés, whose talents he advertised and whom he claimed to launch upon careers of success.

He was avoided by Michelangelo alone, although he improved every opportunity to ingratiate himself with the great artist. From Venice he wrote regularly to Michelangelo, in the terms of an equal, tactfully exhibiting his technical acquaintance with painting, as if to prove himself deserving of the trust of a man of genius. One letter only Michelangelo sent in answer, and on it Aretino must have much preened

himself; but thereafter nothing shook the artist's silence. For six years the injured Aretino never mentioned the name of Michelangelo.

The Counter-Reformation had revived a certain puritanism in the arts. Aretino judged his time and attacked the nudes in Michelangelo's "Last Judgment." His letter to Michelangelo on that occasion reads: "As a baptised Christian, I am ashamed of the licence so flagrant, which you have taken, to express your conception of that End, that all of our true faith aspire to . . . It is possible that you, who, in your divine pretensions, have not deigned to accept the friendship of your fellowmen, that you have made this thing in the greatest temple of God, before the first of the altars of Jesus, where great cardinals of the Church, reverend priests, the Vicar of Christ himself hold Catholic ceremony, recite the holy office, pray, confess, adore and contemplate His body, His flesh and His blood? . . . Even the Gentiles, depicting the naked Venus, caused her to cover with her hands those parts that should be covered. . . . Remember that our souls have more need of the aspect of devotion than of vivacious pictures, that God will inspire His Holiness Pope Paul as he inspired St. Gregory, who stripped Rome of the superb statues of idols, the better to improve the reverence due to the humble images of the saints. . . ." A postscript follows: "Now that I have a little vented my anger upon the cruelty with which you have seen fit to repay my adulation, and have proved that, if you are indeed divine, I am not of water, then tear to shreds this letter and all that I have set down therein, and resolve if I am not a man with whom kings and emperors have wished to correspond!"

Pope Paul IV, lending his ear to the outcry the letter ex-

cited, ordered the retouching of the picture. Michelangelo was not then in Rome and was spared the indignity. Aretino later published the letter with his collected correspondence, and then, with a fine gesture of magnanimity, continued placidly to praise the divine genius of a master whose failings he had once found it necessary to reprove.

5. *Early Literary and Artistic Societies.*

Habits of literary discussion and criticism naturally centralized artistic creeds within self-appointed bodies of influential men, for instance a court, a society or an academy. The court-artist replaced the old journeyman, and the guilds at last made an awkward bow and retired without applause from the stage of history. Artistically as well as politically, the city grew in importance, and the countryside declined. A style was no longer confined to a river-valley or a county, but radiated from a center of culture located in a city. The provinces and the countryside were continually excluded from the direct rays of such a center, or received them by reflection; they were even known, in their beneficent unenlightenment, to persevere in their ancient traditional crafts, in the practice of which they were joyfully discovered centuries later by the descendants of those very scholars who had once so effectively ignored them. Hence the vulgar and elect for ever parted company, and the centers of culture assumed the direction of taste.

The band of scholars who gathered about Luigi Marsigli, the pupil of Petrarch and a monk of Santo Spirito in Florence, may be called the first of the literary academies. Many a scholar, in the early days of the Renaissance, had owed his education to its meetings. In course of time the

courts and entourages of the humanistic Popes and the households of the wealthy families attracted to them troops of poets and artists. Nicholas V, Pius II, Alexander VI, Julius II, Leo X, Clement VII; the Cardinals Bembo, Bessarion, Riario, Bibbiena, Farnese; the Visconti family, the Sforze, Medici, Malateste, Este, all discharged their duties as founders of local academies. Most famous of them all was the Platonic Academy of Lorenzo de' Medici, which met in Florence or in Lorenzo's country villas. Alberti and Michelangelo were among its members. Lorenzo admitted artists to study from the collection of antiques in his gardens, and there, so goes the story, he had originally recognized the great genius of Michelangelo. Lorenzo's garden of antiques was the earliest academic school of art. Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici founded a society in Rome, known as "La Virtu," consisting of certain nobles and gentlemen, who met periodically to read the book of Vitruvius. He employed Vignola, then a young student of architecture in Rome, to make measured drawings for him. The *Courtier* of Baldassare Castiglione can still give the modern reader an idea of the procedure and conversation of a cultured Italian society at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Distinguished scholars sometimes formed their own academies, Pontanus at Naples, Pomponius Laetus at Rome, Aldus Manutius in Venice.

Societies grew up among artists themselves, whose purpose and constitution it is instructive to compare with the old guilds. There had been founded, as early as 1350, a "Company and Fraternity of Painters," with St. Luke as its patron saint, "that the painters of Florence might give thanks unto God for their improvement upon the mediaeval barbarities and for the revival of their art." [13] The Company was also phil-

anthropic to its needy members. In his *Life* of Rustici, Vasari describes the gatherings and revelry of societies of artists, — evidently the beginnings of Bohemianism. The studios of many famous artists became societies or schools, which replaced the older guild system of apprenticeship. Leonardo da Vinci founded such a school in Milan. The Battle-Cartoons of Leonardo and Michelangelo were the school of Italian art for a generation. The academy of the Carracci in Bologna has been proved a myth, but a myth which, in its turn, proves the need at that time of a center of academic teaching.

The circles of scholarship and criticism remained the ornaments of Italian intellectual life long after the highest colors of the Renaissance had faded. With her political independence gone, Italy relapsed into an age of static culture, not without its dignity. The restlessness and ambition of the early Renaissance gave place to the quieter moods of exquisite connoisseurship and aristocratic airs. And as this chapter comes to an end, it were well perhaps to leave the artist and amateur of Italy exchanging still the courtesies and rivalries of aesthetic dispute. Some years before the French Revolution, the poet Goethe wrote from Rome a letter, describing the Society of Arcadians, founded in the seventeenth century to propose remedies for the degeneracy of Italian letters and art: "To prevent their meetings from acquiring notoriety, and so provoking opposition, they betook themselves to the open air, to rural gardens surroundings, of which Rome includes so many even within her walls. In this way they gained the further advantages of coming nearer to nature, and under the fresh breezes of heaven attaining to some presentiment of the primordial spirit of poetry. There in pleasant places they reclined on the lawns, or seated themselves on architectural

ruins and blocks, cardinals who were also present being honored only by a softer cushion. Here they deliberated with one another on their convictions, principles and aims; here they read poems into which it was endeavored to breathe afresh the spirit of the higher antiquity of the noble Tuscan School. In such a situation one of the company exclaimed in transport: "Here is our Arcadia! This gave rise to the name of the society and determined its idyllic direction. No great and influential man was to extend to them his protection; they would acknowledge no supreme head, no president. A Custos should open and close the Arcadian meetings, and in case of necessity a council of seniors to be elected would stand as advisers by his side. . . ." [14]

Chapter III

THE EMERGENCE OF CLASSICISM

1. Emergence of Classicism.
2. Classicism as a Moral Principle.
3. Classicism as the Imitation of Nature.
4. The Ideal and the Real.
5. Classicism as a Mathematical Ideal.
6. Classicism as a Legislative Principle.
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Chapter III

THE EMERGENCE OF CLASSICISM

1. *Emergence of Classicism.*

The Renaissance was the revival of the aesthetic consciousness and the assumption by that consciousness of Roman forms. Out of it classicism emerged, moral, idealistic and legislative. Classicism was, so to speak, a rigorisation of mediaeval artistic principles; for mediaeval art had also been, in its own way, moral, idealistic and legislative.

In the first place, classicism was a moral principle. In practice and in fact, the Renaissance may have been too pagan, and the men and women of the Renaissance often were pleasure-loving and profligate; but in theory and by its own account, the Renaissance was a moral awakening. If, therefore, the arts were enjoyed and enjoyment was the motive force of artistic production, the Renaissance felt obliged to prove also that the arts were good. In the second place, classicism was an idealistic principle. Nature was thought to be defective. The bodies of individual men, for instance, fell far short of that highest possible beauty imaginable, the beauty of the ideal man, such as the antique evidently represented. Painting and sculpture, like poetry and drama, were imitative arts; but they imitated not the commonalty of mankind, but the ideal. In the third place, classicism was a legislative principle. The ideal, once established and proved to be good, was forcibly taught and imposed. No artist dare execute and no critic admire any representation but that of the ideal.

The three principles of classicism must now be discussed in some detail.

2. Classicism as a Moral Principle.

That classicism was a moral principle is proved by the strenuous efforts of Renaissance writers to justify the arts. Awed perhaps by the ascetic tradition in the Church, by the experience of ascetic revivals, such as that of Savonarola or of the Counter-Reformation, the Renaissance seemed too sensitive to the reproaches of a guilty conscience. A reprobate, like Pietro Aretino, could, as has already been described, attack the greatest artist of his time on the grounds of indecency and carry off a conspicuous moral triumph.

The moralism of the Renaissance was taken not from mediaeval sources so much as from ancient texts. The famous couple, "use and beauty," as old as Socrates, was often remembered and dutifully quoted. From Lucretius and Horace came the idea of poetry as a "docere delectando," a philosophy without tears. From Cicero and Plutarch came the idea of art as a civilizing and refining agent. Artists, especially architects, found in Vitruvius the recommendation of good character and encyclopaedic knowledge as the two most invaluable of professional qualifications; and it was firmly believed that an artist or poet must also be a good man. Moralism was often the excuse for long digressions into antique lore, in which the writer would cite the honors bestowed upon artists in ancient times. Then according to the ancient teaching, tragic *catharsis* was meant to demonstrate the instability of fortune, or to terrify by example, or to proclaim the triumph of justice, or, by familiarizing the spectator with the aspect of suffering, to render him insensible to the vicissi-

tudes of fortune. The idea, so often repeated by Renaissance writers, that the poet must tell the truth, was a consequence of the moral principle. Hence serious doubts were entertained as to the legitimacy of representing myth and fable, and it was sometimes argued that, if the representation of myths or fables was unavoidable, they should at least point a moral and bear the semblance of truth. "Invention" was allowed so long as it was true to facts, and "fancy" was merely a playful rearrangement of realities. The later Renaissance developed on these lines the complicated doctrine of verisimilitude.

Alberti begins his work on architecture with an apology, as if in his day the uses and beauties of architecture were so little recognized that they had to be set out at length. In the course of the work, he refers to the refining and civilizing powers of fine arts and speaks of the magnificence of temples as an encouragement to piety. He expounds the probity and virtue of architects and suggests edifying subjects for historical pictures.

Michelangelo's mind had never recovered from the shock of Savonarola's preaching and execution. He was deeply imbued with the moral purpose of the arts. According to Vasari, he set himself too high an ideal and destroyed many of his works, because "his hand could not express those grand and terrible ideas of his thought." [1] In his old age he often wondered if he had loved his art too much and his Heavenly Father too little. His later sonnets sadly recall the years that might have been more profitably spent. Francisco de Hollanda, Michelangelo's self-appointed amanuensis, has recorded in his *Dialogues* the sayings of the great master. Painting, says, Francisco, is a more noble art, representing virtuous

and pious men, glorious martyrs, brave soldiers, powerful kings, for the emulation of all beholders. Painting is useful in time of war, to represent the design of fortifications, maps and engines of destruction; but it is especially honorable in peace and suited to the most lofty intellects. It inspires the fear and reverence of the vulgar and celebrates the creations of God.[2]

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries there grew up an important discussion on the noblest subject for pictures, and historical subjects were usually given the highest place in the scale of nobility. "The Great Style (la gran maniera)," to which Vasari made occasional and uncertain references, was soon bound up with history; and history, as every ancient author had declared, was the supreme school of morality and statesmanship. Myth and fable were considered to be unworthy of the great style, and the mixture of history and fable in the same picture was a double offence against good taste. Discussions on the noblest subjects were continued in the French Academy and were revived spasmodically until the end of the nineteenth century.

3. *Classicism as the Imitation of Nature.*

The Middle Ages had been accustomed to look upon pictures and statues as real and living; but, for the Renaissance, the reality and livingness of pictures and statues was a self-conscious principle, and the necessary rule was laid down for the guidance of all painters and sculptors that it is the object of art to hold a mirror up to nature. The conquest of nature by art was therefore the proper theme of panegyric in honor of successful artists. It was the theme of many sonnets then

written about artists and their works. The following lines are Michelangelo's:

> If with the chisel or colors
> Thou hast made art equal nature,
> Now thy hand has e'en surpassed her,
> Rendering us her beauties more beautiful.
> (Se con lo stile o coi colori avete
> Alla natura pareggiato l'arte,
> Anzi a quella scemato il pregio in parte
> Che'l bel di lei piu bello a noi rendete.) [3]

It was also the theme of the memorials and epitaphs of artists, often composed by the great poets and scholars of the day. The following, by Cardinal Bembo, is inscribed over the tomb of Raphel in the Pantheon:

> Here lies Raphael.
> Nature feared to be conquered when he lived,
> And to die when he died.
> (Hic est ille Raphael; timuit quo sospiti vinci
> Rerum magna parens et moriente mori.)

This type of panegyric was no idle convention, but a proven maxim of taste. The Renaissance artist would even stand before a statue and pretend to speak to it as if it had been a living being.[4] The Florentine painter, Stefano, went by the name of "Nature's Ape (Scimia della natura), so well did he imitate natural forms." [5] Titian was "beloved of the world and envied of nature." Boccaccio wrote of Giotto: "he was of so excellent a wit that there was nothing in Nature, but that he could with his pen and pencil depict it, so

that it seemed not to be a mere likeness but the very thing itself; and the visual sense of man was deceived, taking those things to be real which were only painted. And therefore, having brought back to light that art, which had for so many centuries lain buried of those, who painted more to delight the eyes of the ignorant than to satisfy the intelligence of the wise, he justly deserved to be called one of the lights that compose the glory of Florence." [6] So also Alberti, in the treatise he wrote on painting, defines painting as the art of imitation: "The painter's business is to design and paint any given bodies with lines and colours in such a manner that whatever is painted may appear prominent and be as like as possible to those given bodies." [7] Leonardo used to compare pictures to mirrors, — or rather to imperfect mirrors, because, as he said, the artist cannot be expected to imitate the actual brightness and relief of reflections in mirrors. He recommended the trick of drawing upon the surface of a mirror the outlines and perspectives of objects seen therein, and obtaining in that manner very accurate representations. "That painting is most praiseworthy," he said, "which has the greatest conformity to the thing imitated. (Quella pittura e piu laudabile la quale ha piu conformite con la cosa imitata)." "Have we not seen pictures," he asked, "which bear so close a resemblance to the reality that they have deceived both men and beasts?" [8] For Leonardo, composition was the synonym of observation, and fantasy the rearrangement or combination of possible natural forms. His painstaking study of botany, anatomy, physiognomy is sufficient evidence of a ruling passion to represent the objects of nature as they do most truly appear to be.

Vasari, the painter, architect and writer, is a reliable au-

thority as much for the biographies as for the critical temper of the artists of his time. He may be considered a man of culture — certainly he aspired to the reputation and distinction of culture; — he used his eyes, his ears and his wits, and was proud of his friendship and association with artists more able than himself. His aesthetic orthodoxy was never questioned, and his opinions may be taken as opinions generally acceptable to his contemporaries. He always believed in the exact imitation of nature. In his writings are the usual references to mirrors or windows as similes of pictures. He would say of sculptured figures; "they seem rather of flesh than marble." And the pictures may be numbered by the score, of which he writes; "Herein art has vanquished nature, or rather nature has confessed herself unable to do more than art can do. (. . . che l'arte vince la natura, anzi che ella confessa non poter far in quella piu di questo.)"

For Vasari, Raphael was the greatest of painters, and, in his *Life* of Raphael, he has given his readers an instructive account of the reasons to which in his eyes Raphael attributed such greatness. "It may indeed be said with truth," so runs one passage, "that the paintings of other masters are properly to be called paintings, but those of Raphael may be called Life itself; for the flesh quivers, the breathing is seen, the pulses beat, and life vibrates in all his figures." Thus does Vasari, not once but many times, commit himself to the aesthetics of realism.

"He painted a portrait of his 'inamorata,' which might be supposed alive."

"These figures seem more like living beings than mere works in line and color."

"The beauty and the coloring of these saints give them all the appearance of life."

"And the same man in real life is not more animated than this portrait of him."

"And these objects might be mistaken for real objects."

"All is painted so naturally and so truly that no one would ever affirm it to be painted, but must believe it to be real, so powerfully has the artist rendered this most difficult subject."

"The figures in this work seem rather to be in full relief and living than merely feigned and on a plane surface. The velvet softness of the skin is rendered with the utmost fidelity; the vestments in which the Pope is clothed are also most faithfully depicted, the damask shines with a glossy lustre; the furs which form the linings of his robes are soft and natural, while the gold and silk are copied in such a manner that they do not seem to be painted, but really appear to be gold and silk."

And so forth. Such appreciations are very typical throughout the *Lives* of Vasari.

To such extents was realism carried that the same miraculous legends grew up about pictures and statues as can be read in the crudest chapters of Aelian or Pliny. Vasari gives the following instances, to whose truth he testifies in all seriousness: Bramantino painted a picture of horses in a stable near Milan, which deceived a real horse and was kicked repeatedly. Bernazzone painted landscapes in fresco round a courtyard, with such fidelity to nature that a strawberry bed shown therein was pecked at by the peacocks kept in the courtyard, and entirely destroyed. A real dog flew at a pic-



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A PLATE FROM DÜRER'S "ELEMENTA GEOMETRICA," 1532

ture of a dog by Francesco Monsignori. A bird, trained to sit on the wrist falconwise, tried to sit on the foreshortened wrist of an infant Christ, painted by the same Francesco. Living birds would try to fly through a tree painted in a picture by Girolamo, the Veronese illuminator.[9]

Long after Vasari's day, artists and critics were still speaking of realism, or rather of "verisimilitude," as they then called it. In the classic age of reason, it was the business of man to learn and to know, and the business of the arts to instruct. Hence painting was conceived of as the vehicle of knowledge, a literary art. Favorite poets were compared to favorite painters, Homer to Raphael, Virgil to the Caracci, Ovid to Titian. To some extent, realism lasted until the invention of photography in the nineteenth century, and was only then discarded, not because it was realism, but because it was too closely allied to a mere mechanical process. But that is a story which must be told in its proper place.

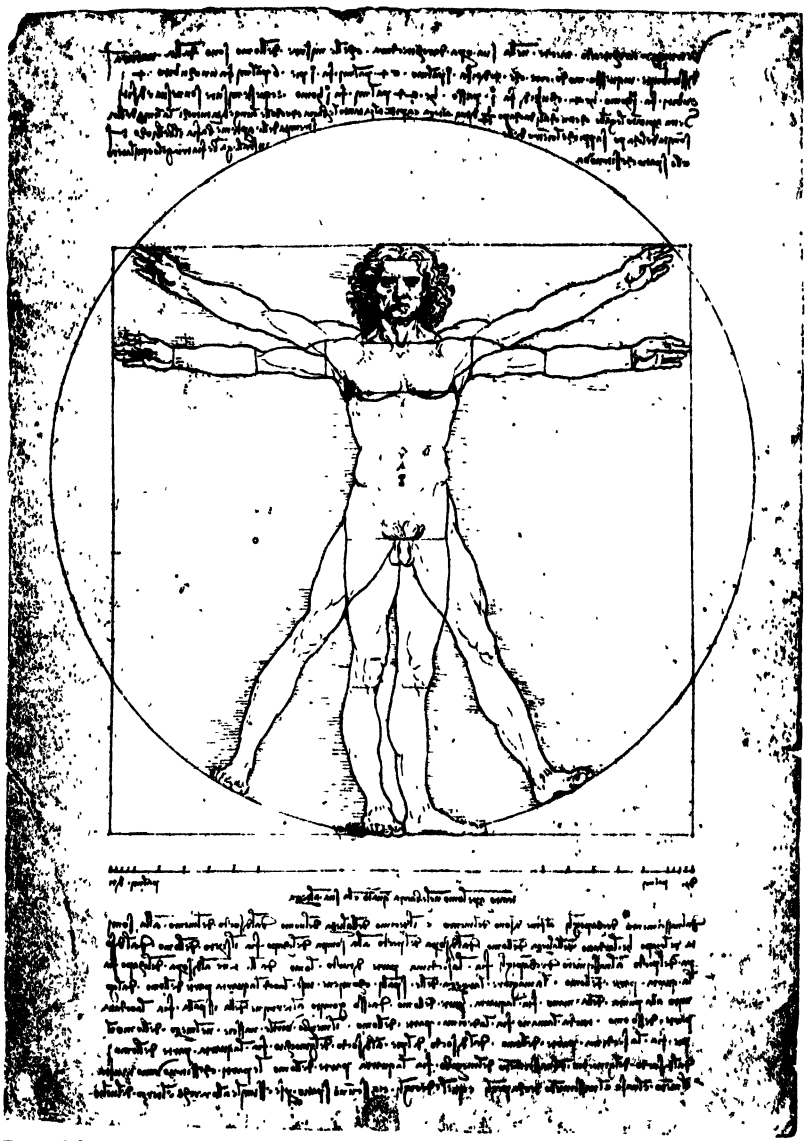
4. *The Ideal and the Real*

But the artists of the Renaissance were soon sensitive of the occasional incompatibility of their doctrines of imitation and of the antique. "Like life itself" and "superior to the ancients" were two complimentary expressions, both most flattering to the ears of artists, but in theoretic disagreement. Nature was real, nature was imperfect and brutal; the antique was ideal and represented a perfection and a grace never to be found in nature. A compromise was called for.

The incompatibility came to a head in the art of portraiture, and in the first vague idea of "character." The idea of character was bound up with the humanism of the Renaissance. The political and social condition of Italy at the time

was favorable. Contemporary historians were already discarding the conventional miracles and marvels of the mediaeval chronicler in favor of a more intelligent analysis of individual characters and motives. Men and women became fit subjects for delineation, and an entirely new art, the art of biography, was suddenly created. At the same time the artists of Florence were introducing accurate likenesses of their friends and patrons into their pictures. Donatello, Pisanello, Signorelli, were precocious portraitists. The importation of the Flemish methods of oil color into Italy acquainted the Italians with the portraits of Campin and the Van Eycks, which were so much in advance of their time. Leonardo, in his devotion to the exact observation of nature, was studying the types of human physiognomy, and, it was said, followed cripples, idiots, and clowns about the streets of Florence that he might impress their likenesses upon his memory. Monstrosities fascinated him. "Let us be attentive to the variety of nature," he wrote. "A painter should delight in introducing great variety into his compositions, avoiding repetition, that by the novelty and abundance of his forms he may attract and charm the eye of the beholder." Leonardo criticized contemporary painters for their exclusive study of the antique, saying that they drew heads of no individuality.[10] There came a day when even Raphael, the divine Raphael, was found wanting in his appreciation of character and was accused of painting all his figures from one model.

But, if in practice the Renaissance was sometimes inclined to realism in the arts, in theory it was inclined to idealism. Alberti, probably quoting Aristotle, used to advise painters to idealize their sitters, certainly to omit their more obvious deformities, and he would make a remark like the following,



From "The Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci," 1883

LEONARDO DA VINCI ON THE PROPORTIONS OF THE HUMAN FIGURE

so quaint and startling to a modern critic: "Among the ancients, we see statues of two or four horses and of their drivers, so exactly like to each other, that art in them may be said to have exceeded nature, in whose works we hardly ever see one feature so exactly like the other." [11] Alberti could not have better expressed the incompatibility between nature and the antique, the real and the ideal.

It is very probable that the first investigations into the problem of an artistic ideal were made during the sessions of Lorenzo de' Medici's Academy, which, in its study of Plato, must often have been confronted with the philosophy of idealism. But the problem of the ideal became more serious in proportion as the Italians made the better acquaintance of Aristotle's *Poetics*. The first reliable Latin translation of that treatise had appeared in 1498, and the Aldine Press in Venice had published the Greek text in 1508. Poetry, according to Aristotle, deals not with particulars, but with universals and aims at describing, not what is or has been, but what might have been or ought to be; poetry is the imitation of the ideal. It was felt that Aristotle had almost disposed of Plato's most perplexing objections to fine art.

The Italian artists of the sixteenth century, in the great hour of triumph of their Renaissance, encountered one of the oldest problems of the human mind, a problem as old as Plato, a problem known to the mediaeval Schoolman as the problem of the Universal, a problem, which perhaps is still awaiting its solution; and their answer to it must now be explained.

5. *Classicism as a Mathematical Ideal.*

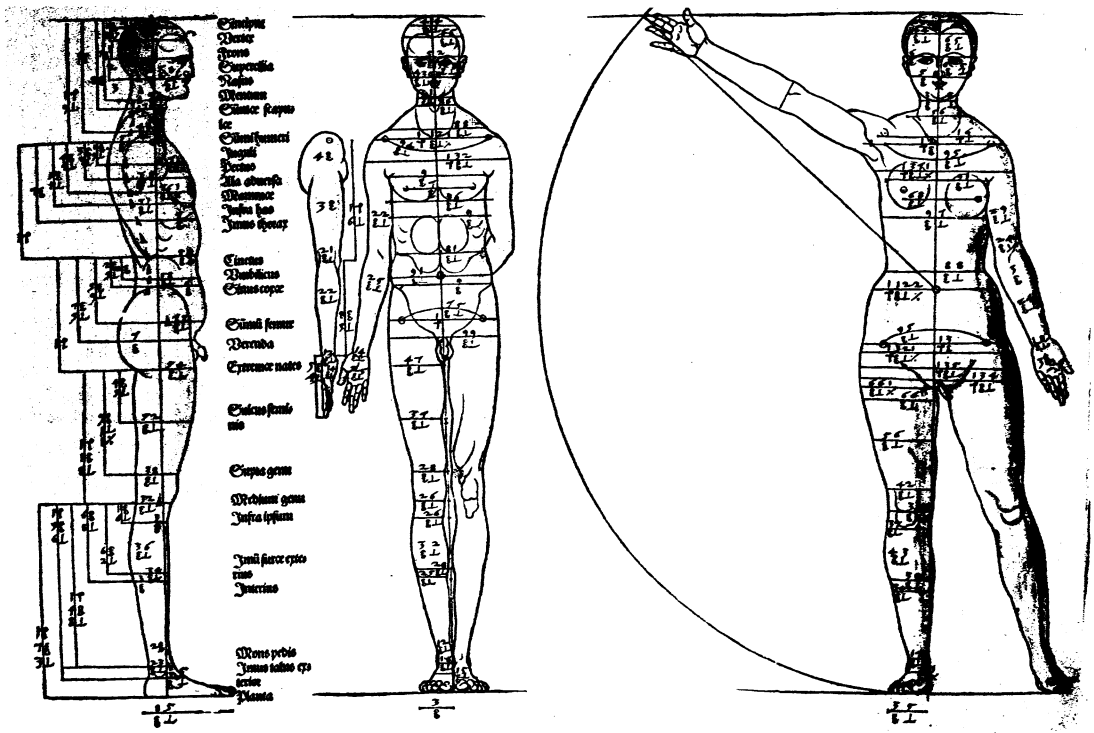
In theory, the compromise between the ideal and the real

was very simple. Art, said the artists of the Renaissance, should indeed imitate nature, but only ideal nature. The business of art, they said, is to represent a selection of the beauties of nature rather than to reproduce her endless variety and imperfection. "Beautiful nature," as they called it, was alone the proper subject matter of art. The antique was evidently an example of just such a compromise between the ideal and the natural real as they now enjoined.

But although in theory the classic compromise was so simple, its application in practice was hedged about with several difficulties. The selection of the beauties of nature was very well, but the problem still remained as to how the said selection should be made. And the classic artists were soon involved in arguments and subtleties whose consequences were not apparent in the simple terms of their original compromise.

The selective principle, which the classic artists used, was mathematics. Mathematics had long since been, even in the Middle Ages, a liberal study, and, during the revival of the sciences during the Renaissance, it had quickly fallen into line with the bigger intellectual activities of that many-sided time. The methods, therefore, whereby the artists of the Renaissance arrived at their ideals in architecture, painting and sculpture were all mathematical. The Orders of Vitruvius were mathematical, the ideal proportions of the human figure were mathematical, pictorial composition was mathematical, symmetry was mathematical, perspective was mathematical.

It is to be remembered, of course, that the artists of the Renaissance did not regard mathematics and the practice of the arts as incompatible. The absolute opposition of art and



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TWO PLATES FROM DÜRER'S "DE SYMMETRIA PARTIUM," 1532

science, of imagination and understanding, which now-a-days is taken so much for granted, did not then exist. Like St. Thomas Aquinas, above quoted, the artists and philosophers of the Renaissance also associated the productions of art and the perceptions of beauty with "the knowing powers." For instance, more than one poet was then to be found in Italy who believed that a knowledge of logic was essential to versification. "Invention," a word so often used by both Italian and French writers of the Renaissance, signified the thinking out of an artistic theme, and was not connected, as it is today, with the sudden creative flash of an original genius. Vasari seems sometimes to speak now of art and now of "science (scienza)," as if the two words were interchangeable, much as French writers were later to speak of art as "sapience." Not until the Romantic age was art regarded as a unique, almost sacred, activity of the human soul and irrevocably alienated from the "knowing powers."

Many of the artists of the Renaissance were distinguished mathematicians, — Brunelleschi, Leonardo da Vinci, Piero della Francesca; and even those artists, who were born with no special mathematical gifts, would nevertheless recommend mathematics as the necessary preparation for an artist's training. Of all the numerous branches of knowledge, which Alberti required of an ideally qualified painter, none was so essential as mathematics. Perspective was therefore a perfect mental exercise, and every artist of the Renaissance was gripped by the study of a science, which could mathematically and infallibly teach him how to represent the appearance of solid objects on a plane. Mathematical ratios invaded and ruled the province of fine arts. Golden Sections and Harmonic Mediums were wrung from their secret hiding places

in nature. Luca Paciolo, a Franciscan monk, a mathematician and a friend of Leonardo, published a treatise on the Divine Proportion.[12] The story was current that Michelangelo himself believed in the power of a cryptic figure, "pyramidal, serpentine and multiplied by one, two and three," which he imparted to one of his pupils.[13] The double square and the $\sqrt{2}$ rectangle were discovered and used. The construction of circles, triangles and squares upon the elevations and plans of buildings, as a guide to their proportions, became a very serious occupation among certain architects. The principle of the unit measurement soon commended itself and was apparently a well-attested usage of the ancients. The Orders of Vitruvius, for instance, were built up on a series of modules, each member of an Order being thus numbered as a multiple or fraction of one module. It was not long before departure from the prescribed tables of modules became a violation of the laws of taste. Vitruvius had written of ancient architecture in this style: "The thickness of the columns [of a Doric Temple] will be two modules, and their height, including the capitals, fourteen. The height of a capital will be one module, and its breadth two and one sixth modules. Let the height of the capital be divided into three parts, of which one will form the abacus with its cymatium, the second the echinus with its annulets, and the third the necking. . . . The height of the architrave, including taenia and guttae, is one module, and of the taenia, one seventh of a module. The guttae, extending as wide as the triglyph and beneath the taenia, should hang down for one sixth of a module, including the regula. . ." and so forth. The Vitruvian method was the spiritual food of the Renaissance.

But nowhere were mathematical canons set up so often and so elaborately as in human figure. The human figure was the basis of the noblest painting and sculpture. But, since the human figure was always considered to be the mystic analogue of the Order, it was the natural basis also of architecture. Throughout the Renaissance the uncertain conviction persisted that architectural proportions were somehow related to human proportions and that architects, like painters and sculptors, were students of nature. Alberti even held that Noah's Ark must have been built according to the proportions of the human figure.

The canons of proportion for the human figure were obtained by calculating the average of a number of models, — or, according to Vasari, the average of the most beautiful parts of nature. "Il disegno fu lo imitare il piu bello della natura in tutte le figure." [14] The inevitable authority of antiquity was sought and found, for instance in the story of the canon of Polycleitus; or in the story of Zeuxis, who desiring to paint a perfect goddess, selected five of the loveliest maidens and combined their various excellences in one lovely whole. Vitruvius had prescribed certain proportions for the human figure, using the foot as the unit of measurement, six feet being the height of the perfect man. "It was by employing this unit," so Vitruvius had written, "that the famous painters and sculptors of antiquity attained to great and endless renown." Alberti in his treatise on statuary and painting, drew up tables of human proportions, probably derived from the antique by a method of averages. But, in respectful opposition to Vitruvius, he preferred the head as a unit of measurement, the head being, as he said, a "nobler" member than the foot; this unit he subdivided into degrees

and minutes. The plumb-line and square were much in evidence in his treatise. Leonardo da Vinci speculated upon ideal human proportions. He adopted from Vitruvius the well-known draughtsman's rule for drawing the human figure, taking the navel as a center and describing a circle from it, so that when the arms and legs are stretched out, like a cross of St. Andrew, the tips of the fingers and the soles of the feet lie exactly on the circle's circumference.

Albert Dürer, during his visit to Venice, made the acquaintance of the book of Vitruvius, and was impelled thereby, so it is said, to investigate the proportions of the human figure. He brought to the task a sound knowledge of practical mathematics and an untiring industry. He wrote, or rather compiled, two works, one on geometry, treating of architectural forms, spirals, conic sections, sun-dials, lettering, sciography and perspective, and one on the proportions of the human figure, making detailed tabular measurements of various types, of both sexes, of all ages and sizes. Dürer's foundation was the method of averages, but he studied life rather than the antique. He said: "I hold that the perfection of form and beauty is contained in the sum of all men." "Doubtless those arts and methods which approximate most to measurement are regarded as noblest and most honourable; and, excepting only the sacred arts, such as theology, metaphysics, and the love of natural wisdom, there is no art by which measurement is more and more variously, needed, than the art of painting, which not only requireth geometry and arithmetic, the foundations of all measurement, but, much more than any other art, depends upon perspective, catoptics, geodesy, chorography. . . ."

Accordingly the Renaissance was absorbed by its mathe-

matics, and mathematics was the starting point of its artistic conceptions of every kind. The elements of architecture, painting, and sculpture in classic theory were mathematical, one and all.

But mathematics contained one serious difficulty, whose importance was not immediately recognized. It made no provision for color. Line-drawing alone was accountable to mathematics, but the laws of color were unknown. The Florentine painters generally ignored the importance of color altogether. The surviving marble antiques had conveniently lost their original coloring and could therefore be easily regarded as ideal forms expressible by line-drawings. The typical Florentine, deriving his technique and tradition from fresco, was a line-draughtsman primarily, and his early training could thus be based on geometry. Writers, who sympathised with his tradition, were accustomed to refer to "regola, ordine, misura" in the same breath as "disegno." "No composition, no colouring can ever deserve praise," wrote Alberti, "where the outline is defective; whereas outline is often pleasing by itself." [15] In the *Dialogues* of Francisco de Hollanda, above quoted, painting seems to be identified with drawing in outline. Vasari looked upon drawing as the point of departure of all the arts, and he would define painting as "the filling in the outlines" with color.[16] The Venetians were often blamed for their preoccupation with color. Their technique was founded upon oils, and the comparative absence of antique study among them had caused them to maintain the old mediaeval fondness for glitter and brilliance. Titian was a painter as much suspected as admired by his purist contemporaries in Florence and Rome. Vasari had remarked his almost impressionistic technique, but could not understand

it. He felt that Titian's abilities as a draughtsman might have been improved by a prolonged stay in Rome and by a more intensive study of the antique than had been possible in far-away Venice. Titian was adversely compared with Michelangelo, who had always been the protagonist of "Disegno, disegno, disegno!" Tintoretto, seeking to improve upon his masters, proposed to himself the motto: "The drawing of Michelangelo and the colour of Titian." Federigo Zucchero, an honored and popular painter in the sixteenth century, made drawing a sort of magical process. "Drawing is the very conception and idea of art," he said; "it is not material, not corporeal, not accidental, but it is the form itself, the rule, the order, the end and aim of the intellect." [17] As late as the eighteenth century, the Italians were still describing the fine arts as "le belle arti del disegno." [18]

The opposition of line and color bid fair to become a major issue of the aesthetics of the Renaissance. Classicism, founded as it was upon mathematics, naturally adopted the principle of line, and the protagonists of color, for instance the Venetians, thus remained outcasts from the general classic movement. An age which had given birth to such men as Toscanelli, Copernicus, Tycho Brahe and Galileo, and later to Descartes, Leibnitz and Newton, eliminated color as a phenomenon, reducible to no known mathematical laws, but dependent entirely upon the dubious and hence inferior principle of direct observation. Line-drawing became the common denominator of all the arts of classicism, and only in the declining days of the Renaissance were painters enabled properly to develop an aesthetics of color.

Ideal nature, "beautiful nature," ideal and colorless like the colorless antique, mathematically selected and mathematically

correct, was the supreme product of the classicism of the Renaissance.

6. *Classicism as a Legislative Principle.*

The artist of the Renaissance had cast off the obsolete tyranny of the mediaeval guilds, but had triumphantly submitted to a tyranny of far greater rigor, the tyranny of correctness. The ideal of beautiful nature, which classicism had discovered, became a legislative principle and was forcibly imposed. The belief was encouraged that taste was a thing definable, therefore prescribable and as infallible as the mathematical laws which were its necessary basis. The writers on art assumed certain rules and inveighed against their infringement. "One man's judgment," wrote Alberti, "is no index of taste," and Alberti was already aware of the dangers of individual license. Hence he wrote: "as the several kinds of artists, though they go several ways to work, nevertheless direct themselves to this one end, that their work shall resemble nature and be as like the life as may be; for the bringing of which to effect, it is most evident, that by how much the more exquisitely they follow some determined rule or method, so much the fewer defects will they be guilty of, so much the fewer errors commit, and in all manner of accounts their works will succeed and come off with the greater advantage." [19]

One supreme monument of legislative classicism was the architecture of Vitruvius. There was a time when Michelangelo exasperated even his most devoted admirers for not observing the Vitruvian canon; they used to apologize for him, saying that, had he given architecture more study in his youth and not presumed to profess it when already an old

man, he would have made fewer errors. Of Vignola, it was said; "To him, will architecture be eternally obliged; for he formed a system and laid down rules; but in order to make his rules more practicable, he modified the accepted proportions of the ancients, and in this matter his work has done more harm than good." [20] Serlio wrote as follows: "By mistake I mean to do contrary to the precepts of Vitruvius; and, as in every art there is one more learned than another to whom such authority is given that his words are fully accepted and without doubt believed, who will deny (if he be not ignorant) that Vitruvius in architecture is worthy of the highest eminence and that his writings, where no other notable reason or cause is to move us, ought from their own worthiness to be inviolably observed and to be better credited than any work of the Romans." [21]

A series of publications appeared, describing the minutiae of the Vitruvian Orders. Fra Giocondo, Serlio and Vignola were the principle authors. They were invited to reside in France, which in their day was opening herself to the first influences of her Renaissance, and there they initiated the French builders into the mysteries of ancient architecture. The Vitruvian doctrine was finally formulated by Andrea Palladio, the Vicenzan architect. Born in 1518, he studied for a time in Rome, and in 1570, he published his *I quattro libri dell' Architettura.* His buildings are still to be seen in Vicenza, Venice, Brescia and Padua, and were objects of pilgrimage, especially among English and German architects of the eighteenth century. He died in 1580, full of honors, his name a synonym of the phase of architecture, of which he had been so illustrious a teacher.

Palladio has been accused of a want of originality. But

originality was the last of virtues which architects of his generation would have wished to possess. He was a collector of precepts and a summariser of the last hundred years of archaeological work. He was neater than Serlio and more comprehensive than Vignola, and a touch of pedantry gave his writings the requisite air of fine scholarship. "My natural inclination leading me, from my very infancy, to the study of architecture," he said in his Preface, "I resolved to apply myself to it: and because I ever was of opinion, that the ancient Romans did far excel all that have come after them, as in many other things so particularly in building, I proposed to myself Vitruvius both as my master and my guide, he being the only ancient author that remains extant on this subject. Then, I betook myself to the search and examination of such ruins of ancient structures as, in spite of time and the rude hands of Barbarians, are still remaining; and finding that they deserved a much more diligent observation than I thought at first sight, I began with the utmost accuracy to measure every minutest part by itself; and indeed, I became so scrupulous an examiner of them (not discovering that any thing of this kind was performed without the justest reason and the finest proportion) that I afterwards, not only once, but very often, took journeys to several parts of Italy, and even out of it, that I might be able, from such fragments, to comprehend what the whole must need have been, and to make draughts accordingly. . . ." He had therefore resolved to publish to the world "the designs of those edifices which with equal expense of time and danger of my person, I have collected. . . . Thus men, by degrees, will learn to lay aside the strange abuses, the barbarous inventions, the superflous expenses, and (what imports them more than the

rest) to avoid the various and continual ruins, which have happened in several buildings." In the tradition of Vitruvius and Alberti, Palladio gave his readers many details of practice and construction, but as usual the Orders took the most prominent place. "The architrave (of the Doric Order) is plac'd upon the capital, and is to be in height a module, or half the diameter of the column. 'Tis divided into seven parts, one of which makes the tenia, whose projecture is equal to its height. The whole is again divided into six parts, one whereof is given to the guttae and the listel, under the tenia. The guttae are six in number, and the height of the listel is a third of the said guttae. The whole, from the tenia downwards, is again divided into seven parts, of which the first fascia takes three, and the second four. . . ." and so forth for many a long page. The modern architect has successfully revolted from the laws and regulations of Palladianism but those laws and regulations once upon a time sharpened the wits of his ancestors, loaded their memories and confined their creative abilities.

7. *Final Formulation of Italian Classicism.*

In 1584, Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo of Milan, Palladio's contemporary, published his *Trattato dell ' Arte pittura, scultura ed architettura*, a treatise in which he attempted to reduce the several principles of classicism to a definite academic system. Lomazzo had been trained as a painter and executed some works in Milan, but he had gone blind and thenceforth devoted his life to theorizing about an art whose practice had been denied him. His famous treatise is the epilogue of the Italian Renaissance.

Mankind invented painting, he writes, as it invented writ-

ing, to be an aid to the memory, to incite the mind to religion, to illustrate the virtues of its heroes and to stand for an example to posterity. He discourses upon the respective merits of painting and sculpture and concludes that both arts have the same end, "both of them intending nothing else but to resemble things as near life as may be." Hence painting and sculpture are arts of imitation. An emotion represented in a picture should arouse the same emotion in the beholder; a laughing picture will arouse laughter, grieving arouse grief, wondering arouse wonder, and so forth. He quotes the opinions of former masters upon the inestimable values of mathematics. "Without geometry and arithmetic, no man could hope to be a painter. . . . A painter without perspective is like a doctor without grammar." "Painting is an art, which, with proportionate lines (con linee proporzionate) and life-like colours, by observing the perspective light (il lume prospettivo), so imitates the nature of corporeal things, that not only does it represent upon a plane the thickness and roundness thereof, but also their motions, and shows to the eye the affections and passions of the soul." "Hence it appears that painting is an art, because it imitates natural things most precisely and is the counterfeiter and, as it were, the very ape of nature: whose quantity, relief and colours, it ever strives to imitate, performing the same by the help of geometry, arithmetic, perspective and natural philosophy, with most infallible demonstrations." "Neither is proportion proper to painting alone, but extendeth itself to all other arts; in so much as it is drawn from man's body, which as the painter chiefly proposeth to himself (as Vitruvius noteth), so doth the architect much imitate it, in the rules whereby he builds his buildings, and without which, neither

the sculptor, nor any handicraftsman can perform any work . . . so that there is no art but is some way beholding to proportion." Lomazzo proposes a system of proportions for the human figure, using the height of the face as a unit of measurement. He speaks of variants of this system, and describes the orders of architecture, the proportions of horses, ships and ancient temples. He exalts line over color. However skilful the painter may be in imitating the colors of nature, "if he have not mastered delineation (disegno), he is unfurnished of the principal matter of his art." By delineation the artist depicts his proportions and achieves his ideal. For it is necessary that art should supply the defects of nature; "so that if a lady have any disproportionable part in her body, the painter shall not express it too strictly in her picture . . . yet with such discretion that it lose nothing of the resemblance; but only that the defect of nature may be shadowed by the veil of art."

Lomazzo's aesthetics is logical and calculating. He even reduces the human passions to a system, much after the style of contemporary philosophers. He is somewhat fearful of license and speaks with anxiety and embarrassment of "that stirring virtue, which continually lies hid in the heart (quella virtu motiva che di continuo stando nel cuore nascosta)," which the ancients attributed to Apollo and the Muses. The most consummate masters, he decides, curb the fury of their gifts by a deliberate and discrete observance of the fundamental laws of their art.

The various threads of classicism that have trailed confusedly through the decades of the Italian Renaissance were thus gathered together by Lomazzo. Classicism in his treatise is become self-consciously defined, a doctrine of moral worth,

of a mathematical ideal, and of a despotic legislation. But already in Italy in the time of Lomazzo, classicism was reactionary. A reformed church and an extravagant society were demanding the gaiety and licence of the Baroque, and the arts were coming to serve a people, who seemed to disguise the loss of their political liberties by indulgence in a perpetual festival. The great Bernini, architect, sculptor, painter and "cavaliere," professed the ethics of Vitruvius, but built according to the gayer demands of his clients. Lomazzo's fame and influence were accordingly stronger north of the Alps, and in France classicism was to make the next steps of its grand progress.

8. *Summary.*

The study of the intricacies of classicism is at best a dull and difficult business. Its issues are now dead, and some effort of patience is needed to believe that it was ever a living philosophy. The sheer childishness of Vasari is the more unaccountable in an age whose works are still admired, and even Alberti or Lomazzo would seem unfairly treated were they to stand comparison with more recent leaders of taste, of the calibre say of Winckelmann, Baudelaire or Ruskin. Yet by his own standards Vasari was full of wisdom, and Alberti and Lomazzo were as great in their day as were Winckelmann, Baudelaire or Ruskin in theirs, — and were accepted moreover with a greater degree of unanimity.

But classicism cannot be belittled or dismissed. For classicism represents the Positive, as it were, of art theory and taste in Europe. All other artistic movements and revolutions that have occurred since may be interpreted as degrees of divergence from it. Classicism may be supremely dead to

the modern age, but it became the unavoidable inheritance even of philosophies that disclaimed it. In a very true sense, the history of taste in Europe is the history of the rise and fall of classicism.

By way of conclusion and summary of this chapter, the classic creed may be represented by a table:

1. Classicism is a moral principle. Classic art concerns itself only with noble subject matter, and the beauty of its productions is not to be regarded apart from its value as moral instruction. The classic artist himself aspires always to a virtuous and improving life.

2. Classicism represents an ideal. Classic art imitates nature, — not, however, the ordinary realities of nature, but nature idealized, "beautiful nature." The proper aspect and proportions of the ideal may be discovered by mathematical calculation. For instance, the proportions of the human figure and the proportions of the architectural Order are both reducible to a regulated mathematical system. Hence classicism is an eminently logical system, which scorns the waywardness of unschooled genius, values reason above imagination and knowledge above passion.

Classic painting values line above color; for line is accountable to mathematics, color only to the uncertainties of direct observation. Line-drawing is thus the basis of every technical process in classic art.

The antique is the finest example of the classic ideal, a perpetual illustration of its beauties and an unfailing guide to the classic artist.

A classic work of art has unity, regularity and harmony, and makes its appeal to the intellect.

3. Classicism is to be enforced by law. Individual genius is to be repressed.

In the pages that follow, classicism and its fortunes will be a recurrent theme. The next chapter will describe the crystallization of classicism into a hard and polished code at the hands of the Academy in France. But thereafter the fragmentation begins. Temporary compromises and philosophies of transition take their uncertain turns; the revolutions of taste become varied and curious. One by one the articles of the classic creed are doubted, disputed and rejected. The fragmentation of classicism is a complex story covering four centuries.



SHEPHERDS IN ARCADIA, BY NICHOLAS POUSSIN

Chapter IV

THE RENAISSANCE IN FRANCE

1. Italian Influences in France.
2. Poussin, Junius, Du Fresnoy.
3. The Academy and Le Brun.

Chapter IV

THE RENAISSANCE IN FRANCE

1. *Italian Influences in France.*

The Renaissance in France post-dated the Renaissance in Italy by a full century. It was first introduced by French statesmen who had served in embassies in Italy, by Italian clergy appointed by the Vatican to French benefices, and finally by the French military expeditions into Italy, beginning with that of Charles VIII in 1494. Charles VIII, deeply impressed by the luxury and splendor of Renaissance Italy, returned from his campaign with some twenty Italian artists in his train and established them at his château of Amboise. One of the twenty was Fra Giocondo, the Veronese architect and engineer, an editor and expositor of Vitruvius, whose maxims he dutifully advertised in France. The works of the Italians may still be seen in Amboise; but their influence elsewhere did not extend beyond some hybrid ornamentation and general misunderstanding of the classic spirit. Then Francis I, in his policy of magnificence, established a second colony of Italian artists at Fontainebleau, and employed agents to collect and import into France Italian works of art and casts of the antique. Benvenuto Cellini, Andrea del Sarto, Leonardo da Vinci, Primaticcio, Rosso, Vignola and Serlio were of this colony. Henry II, a son of Francis I, his mistress Diane de Poitiers, and his redoubtable queen, Catherine de' Medici, neglected public works and wasted the substance of the kingdom in foreign wars; but they patronized

the arts with a lavish hand. Magnificent châteaux in the classic style sprang up in Paris and in the provinces, which seemed to redeem and disguise the ruin of their reign. Their architect was Philibert de l'Orme.

De l'Orme was born in Lyons in 1515, the son of a builder. Lyons was a half-way house between Paris and Rome, and the young De l'Orme would there have had invaluable opportunities of meeting traveling scholars and artists. In early youth he resolved to study architecture in Italy. On his return to France, he was appointed Inspector of Fortifications in Brittany, where he made a name for himself by forcing corrupt contractors to disgorge their overcharges. The greater part of his active life was spent in the service of Diane de Poitiers and Catherine de' Medici. He superseded the great Serlio, and enjoyed unlimited influence as architectural adviser to the court. By his own pride and the jealousy of his rivals, he fell at last on evil days. He retired from his offices and devoted his leisure to the writing of a book on architecture, dedicated to his patroness, Catherine de' Medici, in which he reproached the ingratitude of his friends and justified his title to the first native classic architect of France.

The *Premier Tome*, as the book was called, published in Paris 1567, three years before De l'Orme's death, was the earliest exposition by a French architect of the Vitruvian principles. It is a mixture of bombast and knowledge. There is considerable information upon the planetary harmonies, magic numbers and astrological figures. The fondness for symbols and allegories shows the basic mediaevalism of De l'Orme's mind. Quotations from Scripture are very numerous. De l'Orme has treated as usual of bad winds, vapors, waters and the salubrity of building sites. He has made much



ENGRAVING BY SÉBASTIEN LE CLERC

THE FOUNDATION OF THE ACADEMIES BY LOUIS XIV

of his classical allusions and of his proportions of the Orders, and he refers constantly to his own "grande et admirable diligence pour rechercher les choses antiques et belles." His accusing the ignorance and presumption of the French "maistres maçons" recalls Alberti's complaint of the difficulty of finding workmen to execute classic designs and perhaps implies altercations with the surviving mediaeval guilds. There are directions for the setting out of masonry vaults, spiral stairs and openings of various shapes and obliquity, and he shows his familiarity with that art of stereotomy, which seems always to have appealed to the ingenious tastes of the French. And there is the usual dissertation on the need of geometry in good architecture, on "symmetrie et vraye proportion." "Certainly arithmetic is of such excellence and utility that I hardly know how to praise her enough, as also is geometry which offers a thousand subtle inventions to them that understand her." Indeed, De l'Orme claims that his *Premier Tome* has evolved the first system of geometry suited to architects. Of Gothic he writes: "Mais telle façon barbare est abolie entre les ouvriers pour avoir trouvé meilleure celle que ie leur ay monstré et apporté en France il y a plus de trente ans, sans en prendre aucune gloire ne iactance." And there is a vague but repeated promise that, in a future work, he will describe fully "les diuines proportions et mesures de l'ancienne et première Architecture des pères du vieil Testament, accommodées à l'Architecture moderne." The reader is left to suspect that these divine proportions are none other than the Orders of Vitruvius. The conclusion of the work is a rehearsal of the virtues of all true architects and a defense against the calumnies they so often suffer in the faithful discharge of their duties.

De l'Orme's buildings contained archaisms, which subsequent architects treated with contempt, but his book was accepted as authoritative and its example was strengthened by the wide publication of works of Fra Giocondo, Serlio and Vignola. Then the works of Alberti and Lomazzo were introduced into France and studied as textbooks. Hilaire Pader, the Toulousian painter, who had translated Lomazzo's *Treatise* into French, believed that Lomazzo "had shown the artists the way out of the labyrinth of their errors and led them to the Temple of Truth and taught them to do by reason what they oftentimes thought to acquire by practice alone." [1] Italian influence was long dominant; and native French artists gained their prestige as communicators of Italian classicism.

Nothing stood in the way of the final conquest of the Renaissance in France, but the political confusion of the country, the feebleness of its rulers and the apathy of the Church. In 1589, Henry IV of Navarre, the first of the Bourbons, a man keen of mind and loving safety, ascended the throne. From weariness rather than from any decisive event, the restoration of order was made possible. There was a conscious effort towards discipline and peace, and a determination that at all costs the dignity and unity of the monarchy should be inviolate. Under Louis XIII and his great cardinal-ministers, Richelieu and Mazarin, France at last emerged from her almost feudal chaos an emblem of power and an example to the nations. Meanwhile the Council of Trent rehabilitated the Church. Louis XIV began his long reign in 1643. His minister, Colbert, made himself responsible for those measures of economy and military aggrandizement which made his royal master the most powerful and magnificent of

European rulers. The arts of France were centralized in the court and dedicated to the glorification of the monarchy.

The despotism of Louis XIV was the necessary foundation of the new artistic philosophy. The French genius formalized Italian theories and articles and built up its academic structure, cleanly cut and logical as a Roman column, allowing of no liberties outside the established canons of correctness. It is a proof of the vitality and strength of France at this time that, however often she was defeated in the wars that were soon to gather on her frontiers, her culture continued to dominate in Europe till the Revolution.

2. *Poussin, Junius, Du Fresnoy.*

The first native French painter of importance to adopt the Italian methods was Nicholas Poussin. He was born in 1594 at Les Andelys and began his education near his birthplace under a local painter who had recognized his talent. He gravitated naturally to Paris and placed himself under a Flemish painter. But he found French art in an unhappy stage of transition and the old apprenticeship system in hopeless decay. He determined on study in Italy, inspired, so goes the story, by engravings after the Italian masters, which he had seen in the collection of one of his clients. After delays and disappointments, he arrived in Rome in 1624 and there he spent twenty-six years of varying fortunes. He returned to Paris where he was already well known. But two years of the intrigues and jealousies of the court were enough for him, and he retired to Rome in disgust. He died in Rome in 1665.

Poussin was the precursor of the many generations of artists north of the Alps, who have looked to Italy as the home of all true art and have spent there the best years of

their studentship and productiveness. He was devoted to the literature of his art. From his first arrival in Rome he had taken up the study of Lomazzo, and, on the eve of his death, his letters show him still much preoccupied with aesthetic theory. The antique and the old masters, especially Raphael, were his models. The figures in his pictures were often transcripts of antiques. He made a practice of calculating his proportions from antiques, rather than from the "imperfections" of nature. But, at the same time, he was a careful student of nature, and, as he claimed, "je ne négligeais rien." Drawing he honored before color; for drawing, he used to say, was the essence of painting, and color only an agreeable accessory. His early pictures, painted before he had thrown off the influence of his Flemish master in Paris, were fully alive to the sensations and enjoyments of color; but his reading of the academic writers had proved to him the error of his ways, and in later years, whenever he was confronted by a Titian or a Rubens, the masters of color, he used sadly to say: "What a pity such genius had to paint the pictures they painted!" Hence came that "greyness" into his pictures, which his critics blamed and his admirers excused. And reason was his supreme guide. "Our appetites," he said, "cannot judge by themselves; reason judges alone." Poussin was the founder of French academic painting, and his four-fold aesthetics, — the antique, nature, drawing and reason, — was law to painters for a century.[2]

While Poussin was thus patiently forging the irons of the future Academy, a literary corroboration of his speculations was published in England. The author was Franciscus Junius, or François du Jon as he came to be known in France, a man of Huguenot parentage, educated in Holland, but resident

the major part of his life in England in the household of Lord Arundel. Junius was a pure scholar. His treatise, *De Pictura Veterum*, is a work of pure scholarship, a veritable encyclopaedia of classical quotations, which probably exhausts every reference to the art of painting in extant Greek and Latin literature, but ignores entirely the technique and practice of painting. The treatise is good evidence of the subservience to the letter of antiquity at that time; and also proves the respect accorded to a man of letters, who, though he knew nothing of technicalities, was yet able to set himself up as a connoisseur and teacher upon the strength of his literary attainments alone. The original Latin edition of the treatise was published in Oxford in 1637, together with a "Catalogus architectorum, mechanicorum, pictorum, aliorumque, artificum," an appendage about as long as the treatise itself. The treatise, minus the Catalogue, was then "Englished with some additions and alterations" by Junius himself. The publication of this English version, only a year after the Latin, was prophetic of wide circulation. The treatise was particularly popular in France.

Junius' acquaintance with the authors of late antiquity, for instance, Quintilian and Philostratus, provides him now and then with sentiments in advance of the classicism of his day. He is conversant with ideas of imagination and inspiration, which have an almost romantic sense, and he knows well the dispiriting effects of too much restraint. Yet he writes: "Although now in the former exhortations we have studied to bring the Artifices to a forward and generous boldness, it is for all that required here, that great witts should moderate something the hot furie of their firie spirits; seeing young beginners verie often are so taken up with the love of their

Imaginations that they entertaine them with greater delight than judgment. . . . An Artificer, therefore, is to take good heed that he does not by a malepart wantonnesse of his vainly conceited wit devise all kind of monstrous and prodigious Images of things not known in nature . . . (for example) all sorts of idle and giddie-headed Imaginations, but only of such Phantasies as are grounded upon the true nature of things . . . so must also a right lover of Art preferre a plain and honest worke agreeing with Nature before any other phantastically capricious devices." Accordingly Junius compromises wisely between aesthetic freedom and aesthetic dogma. Before all things he must have "a great and well-rooted fulnessse of learning." "The Art of painting requireth studious endeavours, assiduous exercitations, great experience, deeper wisdome, and a most readie counsell." Which considerations lead Junius into a discourse upon the sciences, "Geometrie, Arithmetic, Optiks, Philosophie, Historie, Poesie," so necessary to a painter.

Junius had properly opened his treatise with the praise of nature, the source of all artistic forms. Evidently the art of painting is the representation of realities. He speaks habitually of "the arts of imitation." Poetry and painting alike are such arts, and both aim to please by mirroring nature. "A good picture is nothing else in itself but a delusion of our eyes." Book II of the treatise is probably the most curious instance in literature of the defense of the illustrative usefulness of fine art, for preserving the memory of men and events, honoring the virtues and instructing by example. For Junius earnestly adheres to the classic ideal of a moral and noble art. Composition, or Disposition, as Junius calls it, is the telling of the story. "The chiefest help of Disposition consisteth

therein, that wee acquaint our thoughts with the very presence, as it were, of the conceived matter." And all these things may be comprised in a small number of precepts, "which as they are in any wise necessary, so are they for all that to be delivered after a short and plaine way." Therefore he searches the writings of the ancients, in whom perfection alone is to be found, for the records of their painting, that he might prescribe for modern artists the doctrines that governed the ancients. This search is the true intent of his treatise.

Junius speaks at some length upon proportion. He believes that the ancient division of "Symmetrie, Analogie and Harmonie" was equivalent to proportion. He is conscious of some mathematical law presiding over the structure of the human figure and corresponding to the ideal of beauty. This ideal is never realized in nature, but is to be arrived at "out of the imitation of the fairest bodies." The ancients, he writes, "studied rather to produce a perfect pulchritude according to the true law and rule of Symmetrie; aspiring ever to that same grace of comeliness and beauty, which as it cannot be found in any particular bodie, so may it be gathered out of many bodies." Color, according to Junius, is a kind of adventitious pretence and must always be sacrificed to good drawing. He speaks also of motion, that is behavior and physiognomy, and lastly of grace, "most commonly called the aire of the picture."

The technique of Poussin and the theory of Junius were given a finished and conclusive form by Charles Alphonse du Fresnoy. Du Fresnoy had been destined for medicine, but heeding the call of the arts and of the Renaissance, he betook himself to Rome and painted pictures of the ancient ruins.

But his career as a painter was crowned by no great success. He was a born "littérateur," and condoled with himself for twenty-five years in the composition of a Latin poem, embodying his aesthetics. He died near Paris in 1665, the same year as Poussin, and his poem, *De Arte Graphica*, was published shortly afterwards by the care of his friend and fellow-student, Pierre Mignard. It won unexpected and immediate fame, and became a credo of the academic painters. It was translated into several languages, — into French by Roger de Piles, and into English by Dryden. In 1750, when Count Caylus presented the Academy with le Brun's portrait of Du Fresnoy, he declared: "All that has been said since his time can only be regarded as the amplification of the admirable ideas which he was the first to express in his most excellent Latin poem." [8]

According to Du Fresnoy's poem, art exists to please, and art pleases by imitation of the beautiful things in nature. The antique is a perpetual example of the imitation of beautiful things in nature. A study of the antique discloses that certain rules are to be followed when imitating the beautiful things in nature. These rules do not clog or check artistic effort, but are more easily acquired by those to whom Providence has granted artistic gifts. It is the purpose of artistic education to familiarize the student with the rules. The first requisite of that education is geometry, the science of beautiful necessary forms. Upon a foundation of geometry, the student may build up his knowledge of the antique, may copy the best Italian masters, who have studied the antique before him, and finally may approach nature herself. The best Italian masters in the order of their usefulness are Raphael, Michelangelo, Julio Romano, Correggio, and the

Caracci. Titian the colorist is admittedly great, but must be studied only by the experienced student and then with certain qualifications. The student, who has successfully passed through such a training, may with confidence observe the objects and sights of nature; for he should then be able to rely upon his own tastes and be independent of vulgar opinion.

The parts of painting, writes Du Fresnoy, are Invention, Drawing and Color. Invention is the setting forth of the beautiful thing or things in nature, which the picture imitates. Drawing is the technical basis of the art, and indeed of all arts. The title of the poem, *De Arte Graphica*, is therefore very proper. Color is the filling in of the spaces between the lines of the drawing. Color is useful only in so far as it clarifies the drawing. If there is a choice of colors, the palest must be used.

All true painting, Du Fresnoy continues, is suffused with a certain pellucidity, grace and beauty. It must therefore avoid the commonplace, the barbarous, the cruel and the obscene. Its forms are ideal, its colors pure, its lines easy and flowing, its composition balanced and harmonious, its invention noble and majestic. There may be variety, but the parts must be in friendship, and evidences of incongruity or effort be suppressed. If there is passion, it must be passion in restraint, like the philosopher of antiquity who has passion, but shows it not. The field of the picture must be evenly filled, the principal figure being in the center and distinguished by the strongest lights. The sides and edges of the field must be of less importance. Therefore the foreground must be brighter in color and more highly finished than the background. The figures must be poised and stable about their centers of grav-

ity, they must have the aspect of reality and stand out in high relief. There must be no opposition or discord in their lines. Figures of age and dignity must wear long robes, slaves and country folk short and coarse robes, maidens light and thin robes. Hands and feet must be naked. Finally the artist must set his art above all things, no day shall pass but he must put pencil to paper; glory he must love and hard work, but hate lucre with all his heart.

Poussin discovered and Du Fresnoy codified the laws of French academic painting. Junius contributed the all-important authority of the ancient classics. The mild cogitations of Alberti, Vasari and Lomazzo had become a legal system, which only waited for the coöperation of an executive body for its proper and effective administration. The Academy, founded by Louis XIV in 1648, had the necessary power and was not slow to accept the necessary responsibilities. And the soul of the artist, antique-ridden and hungry for the peace of certitude, willingly surrendered itself to the despotism of one monarchy and one aesthetics.

3. *The Academy and Le Brun.*

The history of French letters, science and art, has many a happy example of informal societies of friends, meeting periodically for the discussion of their mutual interests. During the seventeenth century one such society grew sufficiently powerful to deserve official recognition, and, probably much against the inclination of its members, it was converted by Cardinal Richelieu into an academy under royal protection. In this manner was founded in 1635, the old Académie Française dedicated "to the giving of certain rules to our language,



THE ENTRY OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT INTO BABYLON, BY CHARLES LE BRUN

to rendering it pure, eloquent, and capable of treating of the arts and sciences."

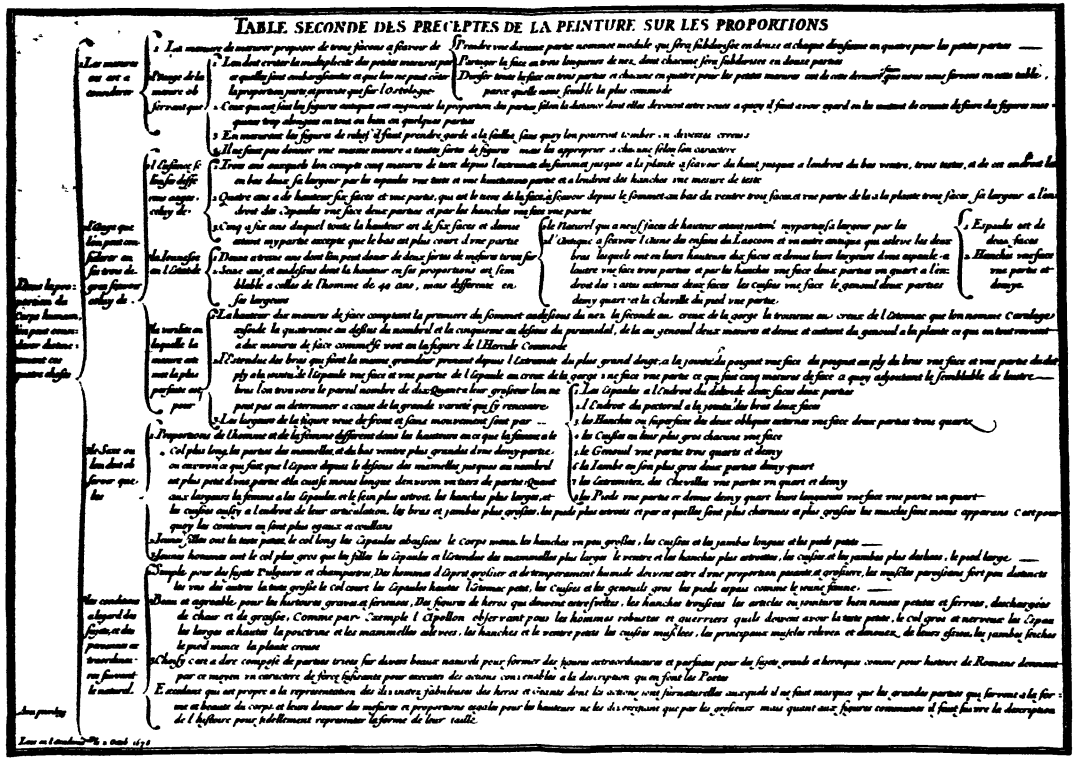
The Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture, — or the Academy, as it shall be called hereafter in this book, — the analogous foundation of Colbert in 1648, was dedicated to the advancement of the fine arts. The Académie d'Architecture was added to it in 1671. It served not only as a center for its distinguished members, but also superseded the authority of the old guilds in the matter of education. Its conferences and discussions were intended for the direction of students, and were published as such. The French Academy at Rome was founded in 1666, dependent upon the Academy, and superintended by a member of the Academy. To this Academy at Rome were sent students chosen by competition, to complete their studies in Italy at the expense of the Government. Accordingly the Academy recognized from its early beginning both its responsibilities as an educational body and the Italian tradition in French academic art.

The leading spirit behind the foundation and subsequent organization of the Academy was Charles le Brun. He was born in Paris in 1619, and was therefore the junior of Poussin by twenty-five years. At the age of fifteen he was receiving commissions from Richelieu. He worked for a time in the atelier of Simon Vouet, which was already becoming a center of opposition to the old guilds. In 1642, the year before Louis XIV came to the throne, he was in Rome, where he met Poussin, and where he studied some four years. On his return his reputation as a painter and his aptitude for a courtier's life assured him of the patronage first of Mazarin and then of Colbert. His friendship with the influential De

Charmoys, an enthusiastic antiquarian, enabled him to resist and overthrow the last powers of the mediaeval guilds. Colbert appointed him successively to every official post in the Academy, and to the directorship of the Gobelins, originally a school of manufacture, not only of the tapestries which now bear its name, but of all the furniture required in the royal building programme. Thus Le Brun controlled absolutely both the fine and the industrial arts of France during the administration of Colbert. He was ennobled by Louis XIV and made "first painter in ordinary" to His Majesty. He supervised, and himself executed the most important parts of the decorative work in the royal palaces, especially at the Louvre and Versailles. On the death of Colbert in 1683, Le Brun's power suffered a decline, which, in spite of Louis' own continual favors, he felt only too keenly. Disappointment was aggravated by sickness and he died in 1690.

The aesthetics of the Academy, as taught and practiced by Le Brun, was derived immediately from Poussin. Le Brun himself never tired of praising Poussin. He imitated Poussin's style, and considered his own paintings to have succeeded, in proportion as they resembled Poussin's. The Academy met for periodical conferences, especially at the annual prize-giving to students, when Colbert himself presided, and on such occasions Le Brun or one of his colleagues would expound the doctrine of the antique and the imitation of beautiful nature, as it had once been expounded by Poussin. There was always something benevolent and infallible about the conferences of the Academy.

Under Le Brun, the Academy enforced its rule and law upon the arts. As Richelieu and Colbert in the province of politics, Malherbe and Boileau in literature, so Le Brun in the



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FROM HENRI TESTELIN'S

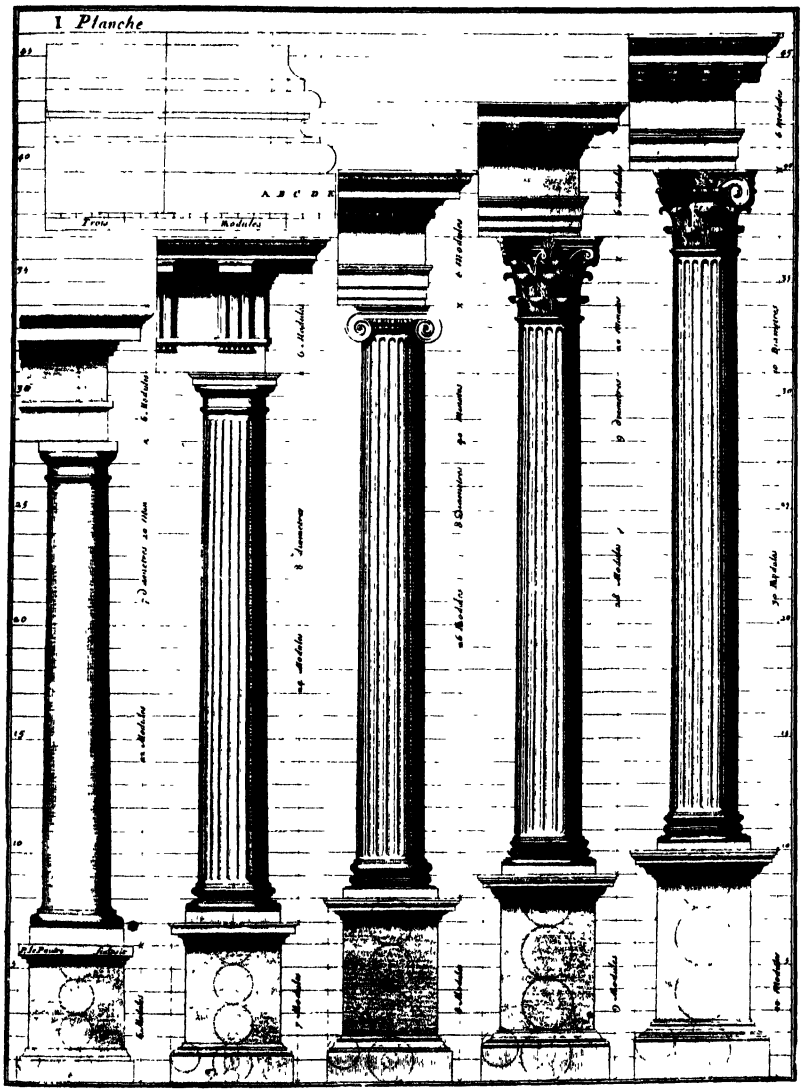
"SENTIMENTS DES PLUS HABILES PEINTRES SUR LA PRATIQUE DE LA PEINTURE ET SCULPTURE," 1696

fine arts set up a court of discipline and correctness, against whose decisions there was no appeal. The "indépendent," who objected to the undignified position of deputy to the Academy, was suppressed, boycotted or compelled to retire abroad. Long before the Academy was a realized fact, Poussin himself, a name sacred in the academic calendar, had had a foretaste of the stifling conditions of academic Paris. Claude Lorrain, the painter of classic landscape, resided permanently in Italy. The brothers Le Nain persevered in patient obscurity, and their art was recognized only in the days of the Academy's decline. Abraham Bosse, the great engraver, an "Académicien honoraire" and "Conseiller," a man of strictest classic principles, who had provoked an unfortunate quarrel with Le Brun and had then dared to exonerate himself vehemently in print, was hounded out of Paris, and the many favors he had once received at the hands of the Academy were rescinded. Pierre Mignard dissimulated, encouraged disaffection and bided his time.

Le Brun's own literary production, the *Expression des Passions*, typifies the academic method, imperiously reasoning, defining, classifying. It was a work, which had induced Louis XIV to call him "the greatest of all men (le plus grand de tous les hommes)." Much after the manner of contemporary philosophers, it had attempted to "préciser les passions," and to subject the multiform phenomena of human natures to an orderly and practicable system. On the same lines, the Academy had divided the whole art of painting into Drawing (Traict), Proportion, Expression, Clair-Obscur, Ordonnance, Color. Significantly drawing was placed first and color last. Elaborate directions, applicable to each division, were drawn up in Tables of Precepts, and published for

the use of students. Geometry was always the basis; "vraisemblance" was the means; nobility of mind was the end of fine art. "It is an insufferable abuse," wrote Fréart de Chambray, who had made the works of the learned Franciscus Junius accessible to French readers, "to confound painting with the mechanical arts, since she is founded upon a demonstrable science, clearer and more reasonable than that pedantic philosophy, which produces for us nothing but Questions and Doubts; . . . whereas our Painting, established upon the Principles of Geometry, makes at the same time a double demonstration of what she represents. But it is necessary to have two other eyes to enjoy her beauty truly; for the eyes of Understanding is the first and principal judge of her Works." [4] There was a firm conviction that fine painting could be specified in so many words, that there were necessary principles which the perfect painter must learn, analogous to the "ordre des ordres, l'ordre divin" of Vitruvianism. There was a mass of literature on the several problems of proportion, perspective and anatomy, elucidating the academic doctrine. The Academy prescribed the very subjects of its pictures, and insisted upon the morality and nobility of the arts. The conception of the Great Style exalted the importance of the arts; solemn discussions took place on the "noblest subjects" of painting. History and classical mythology were usually awarded the palm of nobility.

The architects published volumes of *Ordres* and *Lois*. Discrepancies in the sacred text of Vitruvius and the many variations, which the intensive archaeological research of two centuries had found to exist so alarmingly in the surviving specimens of the Roman Orders, were explained and set to rights in Parallels. Yet what seems more remarkable to mod-



FROM CLAUDE PERRAULT'S
"ORDONNANCE DES CINQ ESPÈCES DE COLONNES
SELON LA MÉTHODE DES ANCIENS," 1683

ern critics than the discrepancies and variations of classic authority is the harmony of the examples which the Parallels select. "It is the very least of my thoughts to broach Novelties," wrote Fréart de Chambray in his *Parallèle*; "on the contrary I would, were it possible, ascend to the very source of the Orders themselves, and derive from thence the Images, and pure Ideas of these incomparable Masters, who were indeed their first Investors, and be instructed from their own mouths; since doubtless the farther men have wandered from their Principles, transplanting them as it were into a strange soile, the more have they become degenerate, and scarce cognoscible to their very authors." ". . . The misery is," he continues, "that noble Genius's are in very small numbers, whereas the vulgar workmen like unto Ants swarm prodigiously in all places. . . . Honest Vitruvius in his time well foresaw the ill consequence which those of the Profession would introduce out of their love of Novelty, which already began, it seems, to incline them to Libertinism, and the disdain of the Rules of that Art, which ought to remain most sacred and inviolable; so that we must look on this as on a grey-headed evil which grows worse and worse daily, and is become now almost incurable."

The academic idea has been bitterly reviled. It has more often been misunderstood. It was an ideal, — the ideal of the Ideal. It held up impossible abstractions, the unities of drama, the Orders of architecture, beautiful nature and the antique. No sooner did it rise to power than it opened itself to dangerous attacks by very reason of the impossibility of its abstractions. It suppressed passion and individuality, — "Et sur mes passions ma raison souveraine." But the academic idea did not deny to genius its proper exercise within

prescribed laws, — any more than mathematics, the ideal science, has at any time excluded true genius, — and it threw a very significant doubt on the too common supposition that passion and individuality are good for men. The academic idea was a grand exhibition of human will and human legislation. It was the very intellectual peak of the Renaissance. Not Leonardo, not Michelangelo, not Raphael, not Titian, but Le Brun, is the consummation of the aesthetic consciousness in Western Europe; to him European taste theoretically converges and from him recedes. But it was the accident of history that the consummation coincided with the life of an inferior artist.

Chapter V

THE DISPUTES OF THE ACADEMY

1. The Insecurity of Academic Doctrine.
2. The Color Controversy.
3. The Realist Controversy.
4. The New Archaeology and the Discovery of the Imagination.
5. Amateur Criticism.
6. Reflection of Academic Dispute in England.

Chapter V

THE DISPUTES OF THE ACADEMY

1. *The Insecurity of Academic Doctrine.*

The Academy had bred the germs of its own corruption. It had set up too high a standard. It was soon assailed by the knowledge that no rule is without its exceptions and that to legislate for so frail a thing as fine art is not within the power of human institutions. The extreme idealism of its painting had ennobled the art out of all recognition, and modest souls were tiring of the magnificence of the Grand Monarque. The discrepancy between Vitruvius and so many of the antique remains was disquieting, and no two architectural authorities, Italian or French, were themselves in honest agreement. The visit of the great Bernini to Paris to supervise the design of the new Louvre had ended in failure, and the obsolete achievement of an earlier French architect had been allowed to stand in the way of the grandiose planning of the greatest of contemporary classicists. The support of ancient Rome, the very foundation-stone of the Renaissance, was weakening, and if the older Italian writers had reverently referred to Vitruvius and Pliny, the newer French writers referred with more persistence and prescience to the original Greek sources, whence the Romans were supposed to have derived their culture; Junius, Du Fresnoy, and Fréart de Chambray had already identified the true antique with Greece. Then the world of letters had been scandalized by the impiety of Charles Perrault, to the effect that the ancients too were human, fit to be judged on their merits:

Le belle Antiquité fut toujours vénérable,
Mais je ne crus jamais qu'elle fust adorable.
Je voy les Anciens, sans plier les genoux,
Ils sont grands, il est vray, mais hommes comme nous,
Et l'on peut comparer sans craindre d'estre injuste,
Le Siècle de Louis au beau Siècle d'Auguste.[1]

The logic and autocracy of the Academy was visibly ruffled.

But the ultimate dissolution of the Academy took a hundred years to effect, and, like all mighty ideas, the aspect of its dissolution is as impressive as of its greatest power. Le Brun's authority long survived his death. The early critics of academicism, like Charles Perrault, were critics unknowingly, and the great aesthetic controversies, which spread horror and discord among the academicians, grew up at first from the most unexpected and inoffensive sources.

2. *The Color Controversy.*

Le Brun's successor in the Academy was the painter, Pierre Mignard, the same Mignard who had first published Du Fresnoy's poem. Mignard had been trained under the old apprenticeship system and whatever remained of opposition to the classicism of Le Brun had centered about him. But the opposition, as far as Mignard was concerned, was a professional matter, for on Le Brun's death he deserted his supporters, accepted the membership of the Academy, which hitherto he had contemptuously declined, and was soon promoted to all the posts and honors once held by his opponent. Le Brun and Mignard had differed over the aesthetics of color; for the academic Le Brun color was of inferior value, but Mignard had courageously admired the rich colors of the Venetians, especially of Titian.

It is noticeable, in the published *Conferences* of the Academy in the time of Le Brun, that, whenever Poussin's works were under discussion, the topic of color was considerately avoided and, whenever Titian's works were under discussion, the topic of drawing was likewise considerately avoided. Any intrusion of the forbidden aesthetics of color was quashed. When the young Blanchard, an ardent lover of Titian, had had the temerity to suggest that painting could not repudiate the one quality that differentiated it from other arts, it had fallen to the older academicians to forestall an inconvenient dispute by their pronouncement: "Painting can form no figures without drawing. . . . Drawing makes the merit of painting. C'est le dessin qui fait le mérite de la peinture et non pas la couleur." The academicians, who cultivated a classic harmony in their official proceedings as in their arts, carefully and successfully postponed the urgent problem of color, and some years were to pass before an admission of its essential importance was extorted from them.[2]

The problem of color was first taken up by amateurs outside the membership of the Academy, possibly with the sympathy of Mignard. Blanchard had expressed a popular assumption that the province of painting was color, and of sculpture was drawing. This natural but not very sophisticated opinion, persisted in spite of academic remonstrances to the contrary, and was gradually accepted in amateur circles for the truth it was supposed to contain and in learned circles for the truth it more properly misrepresented. In effect, the amateur, untutored in the high geometrical processes of the Academy, could not convince himself of the redundancy of so essential a quality as color, merely because it could not be subjected to any of the sciences which the

Academy acknowledged. Incidentally, the amateur proved his own growing power in the world of the arts, asserted the rights of common sense and forewarned the Academy of the precariousness of its position.

The most extreme and influential of the amateurs was Roger de Piles. Born in 1635 of a wealthy family and trained in diplomacy, he had traveled extensively in Europe. He met Du Fresnoy in Italy, and translated Du Fresnoy's famous poem into French. He had occasionally tried his hand at painting. The Academy granted him the title of "Conseiller Amateur." In the course of a versatile career he published three works, the *Abrégé de la Vie des Peintres*, the *Cours de Peinture par Principes*, and the *Dialogues sur le Coloris*. He died in 1709.

De Piles, though he sometimes alarmed his contemporaries, was no revolutionary. The days of revolutionaries had not yet come. He was an orthodox admirer of the antique, of the old Italian masters, and of Poussin, and he was as much addicted to aesthetic law-making as Le Brun. He firmly believed that there existed one true idea of painting and one ideally perfect painter, whose virtues and graces could be defined. He accepted the doctrine of beautiful nature, "la belle nature," and wished that the moderns might learn to correct the imperfections of nature with the same success as had the ancients. But he would positively distinguish the painter from the "tinturier."

He denied to Leonardo da Vinci, and to the Florentines as a whole, a proper knowledge of color; though he allowed that Leonardo's pictures might have faded. Raphael's colors, he affirmed, were none too strong and his clair-obscur deficient; otherwise Raphael had been a master triumphant.

Caravaggio, alone, of the Roman school understood the principles of clair-obscur. Michelangelo's color was almost nonexistent and his designing extravagant. Titian might have surpassed Raphael had he studied the antique. De Piles appreciated the Caracci, as exponents of both drawing and color; and the section on the Caracci in the *Abrégé* is unusually long. "It is a common fault with almost all painters, who have drawn correctly," he wrote in that section, "that they imagined they lost the sole fruit of their labours, if they did not let the world see how far they were master of that part of their art . . . and, to prevent their drawing being overlooked, they did not scruple to offend the sight by the crudity of their outlines (contours)." Hence, argues De Piles, in his *Dialogues*, "Colouring is not only an essential part of painting, but is indeed its differentia, and is the very part that makes the painter a painter." Drawing is the body and color the soul of a picture. "As an artist, I would prefer Raphael; but, as a painter, Titian is greater." The theory of color has been neglected, "because drawing has rules founded upon proportion and anatomy . . . whereas colour has not yet any well-known rules; observation alone makes colour, and observation lacks the precision required for rules."

The growing appreciation of color, brought about a modification of the exclusive reverence paid to the Italian masters. De Piles himself allowed that non-Italian painters, like the Van Eycks, Breughel or Dürer, whose works he had seen in his travels, were not altogether destitute of merit; and De Piles was one of the first Frenchmen to purchase and exhibit a Rembrandt. But the reputation of the painter Rubens more particularly invaded the field, and the adherents of drawing and color, as if they wanted names to symbolize their

ideals, ranged themselves on the side of Poussin and Rubens respectively. Rubens' courtly accomplishments commended him to the French aristocracy and, if his reputed opinions betrayed some heresies, they proved at least his unfaltering allegiance to the antique. An honorable compromise was effected between the Poussinists and the Rubenists, and Rubens was canonized by the Academy as a master upon the same level as Titian or the Caracci. De Piles, with his academic mind, had made a numerical "Balance" of the greatest masters of painting and had valued the colorist, Rubens, equal to Raphael:

	Composition	Drawing	Color	Expression	
Raphael:	17	18	12	18	= 65
Rembrandt:	15	6	17	12	= 50
Rubens:	18	13	17	17	= 65
Titian:	12	15	18	6	= 51
Poussin:	15	17	6	15	= 53

When De Piles died it was expected that the color controversy would die too. Once more the conferences of the Academy were as courteous and as unanimous as in the past, and the "ancienne contestation" had so far abated in the first years of the eighteenth century that for one conference there only remained the curt entry in the minutes: "N'ayant eu a lire, la séance a fini." The Academy occupied its vacant time with a dignified defense of its own proper arts against the pride of literature. It had always resented the priority of the Académie Française, a priority both of date and importance, and it suddenly remembered that the very name of Academician had never been given to its members except by the ignorant and conventional respect of public opinion. Meanwhile artists like Cochin took up the study of color with a

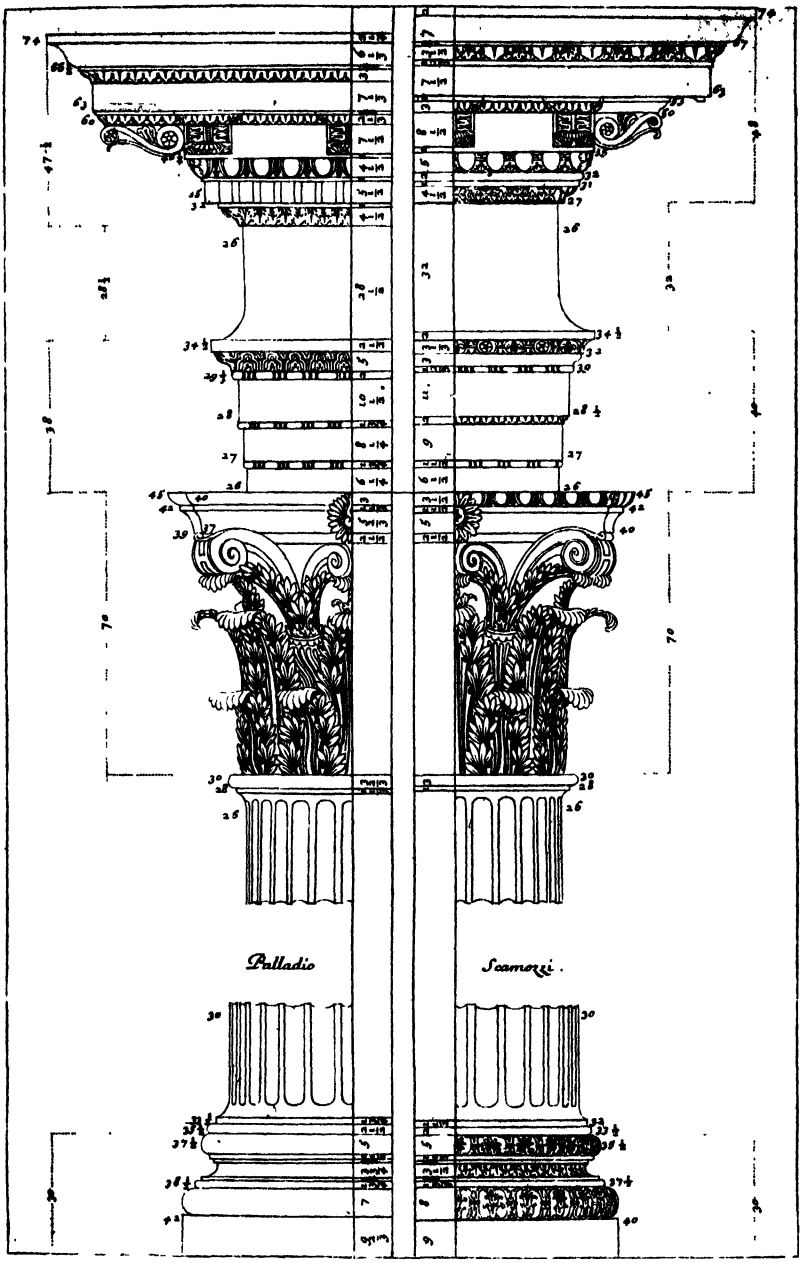
new enthusiasm. Jouvenet plainly showed the influence of Rubens, Antoine Coypel introduced into France the heavy grandeur of the Venetians. And so the matter stood for a while.

3. *The Realist Controversy.*

The doctrine of beautiful nature, "la belle nature," had been adopted by the Academy. In his treatise, *Les beaux Arts reduits à un même Principe*, the Abbé Batteux made it the central prinicple of his aesthetics, the principle from which all arts derive their excellence. "What is painting?" he wrote, "It is an imitation of visible objects. Elle n'a rien de réal, rien de vrai, tout est phantôme chez elle, sa perfection ne depend que de sa ressemblance avec la réalité." But he did not wish that painting should imitate the particularities of nature, but "an exquisite mixture (un mélange exquis)" of nature's forms and colors. The Greeks, he believed, first discovered that it was not sufficient merely to imitate objects slavishly, but to choose tastefully from among them. "La belle nature," he wrote again, "such as she ought to be represented by art, includes all the qualities of the beautiful and the good. She is to entertain the mind by the representation of objects, which, perfect in themselves, are capable of rendering our ideas likewise more extensive and perfect. This is the beautiful. She is likewise to indulge the heart by pointing out in those objects such circumstances as are more particularly interesting to it, in tending either to preserve or improve our being. This is the good; which joined to the beautiful, in one and the same object, gives to it all the qualities necessary, as much for the entertaining as for the perfecting of heart and mind."

The eminent Abbé was a faithful academic, but while he was thus discoursing, the painters of France were already playing cautiously with naturalism. Painters of landscape were learning to distinguish between the kinds of trees and rocks. Painters of history were objecting to anachronisms. Noel Coypel at one conference, at which Le Brun himself assisted, had criticized Poussin, deposing that in certain pictures of Poussin's there had been inexcusable historical errors. To transfer Coypel's criticisms from history to nature was no very irrational proposition, and the academicians were soon to feel the weight of the new doctrine of realism in history and in nature.

Meanwhile an indirect confirmation of realism had come from philosophy.[8] Leibnitz had evolved a universe made up of distinct and individual beings, which he called monads. No two monads in his universe were alike. Hence, at one of his lectures, he had announced the novel doctrine that no one object in nature was like any other object in nature, that no leaf or blade of grass was exactly like any other leaf or blade of grass; and, so goes the story, he had then sent his incredulous audience of ladies and gentlemen into the garden to see for themselves. Leibnitz' monadology had little kinship with Plato's hypothetical ideal, which had hitherto been the tacit assumption of the academic theory of fine art; and, though the fact may not then have been realized, Leibnitz sanctioned a theory absolutely opposed to the academic ideal. The "characteristics" of everyday objects of nature, far from being "imperfections," as the academicians thought, were real and true. Leibnitz' philosophy sank very deeply into French critical thought; and his influence was still felt up to the time of Diderot, when realism in fine art was at last finding whole-



FROM FRÉART DE CHAMBRAY'S
"PARALLÈLE DE L'ARCHITECTURE ANTIQUE ET DE LA MODERNE," 1560

hearted supporters who were perfectly aware of the significance of their philosophy.

As in the contemporary controversy of color, the standard of realism, hesitating, experimental, presumably loyal, was first raised by the amateurs; and again Roger de Piles was the leader. And if the advocates of color had chosen Rubens as their example, the advocates of realism chose Dürer and Rembrandt; and the recognition of Dürer and Rembrandt increased with the progress of the realist cause. As noted above, De Piles had already felt a certain genius in these non-Latin painters. He wrote of Dürer: "He imitated nature only according to his own idea of her, and was so far from increasing her beauty, or seeking out the graces that may be found in her, that he very rarely copied those beautiful places, with which fortune often furnishes a painter." He excused Dürer for his Gothic taste, and suggested that had Dürer only seen the antiques of Rome he would have become a celebrated painter. De Piles wrote of Rembrandt: "We cannot find in him either the taste of Raphael or of the antique, or any poetical thoughts or elegance of drawing. We meet with nothing but what the nature of his country and a lively fancy were capable of producing. He sometimes enriched the poverty of his subjects by a happy motion of his genius (Il en a quelques fois relevé la bassesse par un bon mouvement de son Genie), but, having no knowledge of beautiful proportion, he easily relapsed into the bad taste to which he was accustomed." Rembrandt's "antiques," he added, were "old armour, old clothes, old head-gear and une quantité de vieilles étoffes ouvragées." But he admitted Rembrandt's peculiar penetration and masterly color. De Piles' opinion of Dürer and Rembrandt was almost generous at the

time it was uttered. French connoisseurs before the eighteenth century hardly deigned to know these painters at all.

"Simple truth (le vrai simple)" according to De Piles is the truth of everyday characteristic nature; "ideal truth (le vrai idéal)" is a selection of various perfections, none existing in any individual thing or creation, but observable in several. The union of the two truths is "perfect truth (le vrai parfait)." Yet nature is "the fountain of variety," and her abundance is the sustenance of all art. De Piles, in an access of boldness, criticizes Poussin, "who has sometimes fallen into repetitions," and Le Brun "who is to be censured for a style too ideal, too little diversified and too unnatural (du côté de sa manière trop idéale, trop peu varié, et trop peu naturelle)." De Piles was a close observer of nature and a keen critic of landscape art. He taught the character of trees; in paintings "we must be able to distinguish at once oaks, elms, firs, sycamores, poplars, willows and pines." Equally he taught the character of draperies, carefully distinguishing stuffs and textures. He speaks of character in portraiture: "as the greatest merit of a portrait is absolute likeness, so its greatest fault is to resemble a person after whom it was not made; since there are no two persons quite like one another. . . . There is not a person in the world who has not a peculiar character, both in body and feature." "I have found it impossible to give particular demonstrations of the passions. . . . I conceive that if they were fixed by certain strokes, which the painter should be obliged to make use of, as of essential rules, this would be depriving the art of painting of a most excellent variety, which has no other principle than diversity of imaginations, the number of which is as infinite as the thoughts of men. The same passion

may be finely expressed several ways, yielding each more or less pleasure in proportion to the painter's understanding, and the spectator's discernment." Wherefore De Piles can declare his creed and polemic: "I love the several celebrated schools, I love Raphael, Titian and Rubens, and I seek always to discern the rare qualities of those great painters; but whatever qualities they may have, I love truth more!"

Between these two great academic controversies, drawing versus color and the ideal versus the real, a relationship was supposed to exist, namely, that ideal forms were expressible by drawing alone and real forms by color. The reader, who is curious to investigate the philosophic subleties of this relationship must be referred to the original writings of De Piles and his literary brethren. But it may be remarked that as the cause of color prospered, so did the cause of realism and the characteristic prosper also. Both colors and characteristics depend less upon prescribed rules and more upon the direct observation of nature. Herein art reflected contemporary science, which in the eighteenth century was learning to rely more upon experiment and less on mathematics. The two controversies, meeting in the disquisitions of De Piles make him the remote originator of a movement which was at last to complete itself in the revolt of Delacroix and the Impressionists. The Academy in its day affected to tolerate the ignorant insinuations of a mere "homme de lettres," but, so soon as De Piles' honest doubts had been expressed and understood, the Academy had already served its purpose in the world.

4. *The New Archaeology and the Discovery of the Imagination.*

One of the first academic artists, whose work was to show

the influence of the new realism, was the sculptor Coyzevox. In 1689, he modeled his equestrian statue of Louis XIV. He studied some sixteen or seventeen of the finest horses in the royal stables, "to reunite in his own horse the excellences which were dispersed among them"; he consulted regularly with the king's equerries upon the attitudes and movements of horses; and, so reads the proud declaration of Fermel 'huis, the surgeon who delivered Coyzevox' funeral oration, "he would dissect the bodies of horses in order that he might produce nothing that was not justified by certainty." [4] Coyzevox was praised for his imitation of the rich variety of nature and indeed for presuming to supply to such antiques as he copied whatever they lacked of truth.

Antoine Coypel, son of Noel Coypel, above mentioned, published his *Conférences* in 1721. As befitted a great academic painter, he had received a careful literary education, whose effects appear in his pictures. He was professor and finally director of the Academy and among his many distinguished friends he counted Roger de Piles. He believed that the antique chastened artistic studies; "It is impossible to take a road contrary to that which the ancients have laid down, and guided by that proper genius one will never wander in the midst of darkness." But the antique was useful for reflection and discernment, not imitation; and he would have no pity upon those students, "who could admire only what death has sanctified, adoring the very faults of the ancients and not condescending to honour, even with a look, the beauty in the works of those artists who have the misfortune to be living." "The arts exist to please, and it is dangerous to allow a method to interfere with sentiments which nature has implanted, to submit the taste to rules which are not

always understood, and to set up prejudices which blind instead of enlightening the mind." [5]

In the French Academy in Rome, Wleughels, its director, was writing that the exercises of his students were intended to educate, not imitators and copyists, but painters of knowledge and self-reliance. In the old days copying antiques and old masters was their routine and only occupation. But Wleughels would take his students into the country to see the "bizarreries" of nature with their own eyes; he would pose church decorations and draperies for them to study; he would agree to any means "pour diversifier et pour s'impatroniser du vrai, qui est l'âme de notre métier." Wleughels put no restraint upon the tastes of his students. If they must copy old masters, then they must copy the old masters of their choice. "One should never repress the genius of a painter," he wrote; "so long as a student chooses the good, I am content." [6]

The arts, so to speak, were insensibly secularized, and the artist turned his eye with confidence and eagerness to nature. The intimacy and simplicity of Watteau, Boucher, Fragonard, Oudry, Chardin, were of a different cast from the noble heroics of Poussin and Le Brun. Watteau is found advising a pupil; "not to lose time with one master, but to go to the master of masters, nature herself . . . to go, and draw landscape and figures in the environs of Paris, and to construct a picture of his own imagination and choice." [7] More attention was paid to the life school than to the antique. Artists habitually betook themselves to the open-air, and Claude Lorrain, once the greatest master of the classic landscape, who himself is supposed to have been fond of open-air study, was now the symbol of an archaic and odious mannerism.

Rembrandt was at last taken to the heart of the French critic, and even Teniers, whose pictures Louis XIV had once spurned as "magots," was considered a safe and respectable master.

Count Caylus was a notable amateur at this time. He was born in 1692 of a military family and himself served with distinction in the later campaigns of Louis XIV. After the Peace of Rastadt, he accomplished the Grand Tour of Italy, Greece, Egypt, England and Germany, studying, collecting and writing upon their respective antiquities. He was one of the first of Egyptologists and an international authority on numismatics. He wrote the lives of the well known painters and published engravings of their works; he was also an author of romance, humor and fairytales. He died in 1765, and was gratefully remembered by his friends, for his refinement and learning, and for the generosity and kindliness of his character.

Caylus worshipped the antique; but his was the worship of an archaeologist, who never wished to see contemporary painting and sculpture adopting the antique style, and who had the good sense to realize, what no man had realized before him, that the antique had been modern in its own day. He anticipated Winckelmann and the Neo-Classic Revival of the nineteenth century. He worshipped nature also; the ancients of all people, he said, knew just how to imitate her. He anticipated the nature-lore of Rousseau. When, in the Academy, he founded a prize for "expression" — that is, the expression of the passions, — he provided as a prerequisite: "This study is to be made through nature and not otherwise (par le naturel et non autrement)." And to one young painter, newly gone to Rome to continue his training, he

wrote: "You must at your age follow your own taste, let your sentiment lay hold of you, and seek to charge your memory with beautiful things, that is to say, with the things that affect you, — it matters not what things they are; but you should mind their beauty as you study them, accounting for the reason that they appeal to you rather than copying them slavishly." [8]

While realism and Greek archaeology were thus undermining the outworks of academism, a blow at its main stronghold was delivered by the philosophic Abbé Dubos. Like De Piles, whom he resembles in many ways, Dubos had followed a diplomatic career, but had retired from active life to devote himself to literature and history. He was elected member and Perpetual Secretary of the Académie Française. In 1719, he published his *Réflexions critiques sur la Poesie et sur la Peinture*, a dissertation on individuality, feeling and imagination.

Dubos was not an original thinker. Even in the writings of Franciscus Junius certain qualities in art, for example grace, had been sometimes admitted as lying outside the province of exact reasoning. For Roger de Piles, grace had been a matter of the highest significance. The idea of a "je ne sais quoi" in fine art was being hinted at by more than one author of the late seventeenth century.[9] Occasional English and German thinkers, unrestrained by the oppressive nearness of the Academy, had much concerned themselves with the queer properties of the imagination and fancy. In France, Pascal was writing, "Tout notre raisonnement se réduit à céder au sentiment." Dubos evidently collected, rethought and applied what was already suspected in some exceptional and isolated circles.

In his *Réflexions*, Dubos takes for granted the imitative idea of art, and speaks as usual of "vraisemblance"; he takes for granted the idea of *catharsis*, and speaks of the dramatic purging of the passions; he also takes for granted the hedonic idea of art, and speaks of the object of art as pleasure, not instruction. "In history," he says, "instruction is the end and pleasure the accessory; in poetry, pleasure is the end and instruction the accessory." Pleasure indeed is the only criterion of the arts; "the greatest painter for us is he whose works give us the greatest pleasure." But, adds Dubos, pleasure comes of taste, and there are as many tastes in the world as there are discerning men. Taste is conditioned by habit, age, nationality. Therefore it is useless to discuss the relative importance of line, color, composition, expression and so forth. The several parts of painting follow no rule but that of personal taste. "The predilection, which causes us to prefer one part of painting to another part, does not depend upon our reason, any more than does the predilection, which causes us to prefer one kind of poetry to another kind. The predilection depends on our taste, depends on our organization, our present inclinations and the situation of our spirit." "Men would be right, if everyone was content to judge for himself. Their wrong consists of wishing to judge for the world. Men believe naturally that their taste is good taste; and consequently they think that those, who do not judge as they do, have imperfect senses or are led by their prejudices, not realizing the extent of their own prejudices."

Furthermore, says Dubos, it is not enough for a picture to be well painted; a picture must powerfully move the spectator. "It is by the intention of the painter or poet, it is by the excogitation (invention) of ideas and images capable of

moving us, which he uses in the carrying out of his intention, that the great artist is distinguished from the common workman, who is often the cleverer technician. The greatest versifiers are not the greatest poets, nor are the most correct draughtsmen (les dessinateurs les plus reguliers) the greatest painters." The rules of art must be obeyed, but rules alone produce a dull mediocrity. Genius redeems the insufficiency of rules, but genius cannot be imparted by teaching. Genius is the divine enthusiasm, "l'enthousiasme divin, la fureur poétique, l'yvresse du Parnasse." Quoting Perrault, genius is:

> Ce feu, cette divine flamme,
> L'esprit de notre esprit, l'âme de notre âme.

Dubos' attack on academicism is a striking instance of unintentional treachery. So far as is known, his reputation did not suffer, and he remained an honored academician to the end of his days. But a state of blissful ignorance could not last for ever, and the Academy was rudely shaken into a realization of its dangers. There was now growing up a succession of literary men, who were also thinkers and writers on the problems of fine art. They demanded that pictures should be painted in a style, and critized in a language, that the amateur could understand, and they asserted in clear-spoken terms that the public is the arbiter of taste, "le public est l'arbitre souverain du mérite et des talents." Some of them were pronounced reactionaries, or "retardataires," as they were called, and one such reactionary, the Abbé Batteux, cited in this chapter, wrote what is still the most readable defense of the old classicism of Le Brun. But Dubos was not of that class; and the artists of the Academy raised the cry

of alarm to find their amateur enemies entrenched among them unawares.

5. *Amateur Criticism.*

The social conditions of the time were favorable to amateurs. The patron of the arts in the reign of Louis XIV belonged to a hierarchy, limited in numbers, but lavish in expenditure. He had been subject to Le Brun, and ultimately to the king. But the monarchy under Louis XV had abdicated its leadership, and that vague genius called Society began its doubtful dictatorship in the arts. Men cultivated polite conversation and used the arts as topics appropriate to polite conversation. Philosophy and criticism were the vogue, and the center of intellectual life was transferred from the galleries of the Grand Monarque to the salon, the coffee-house and the theater foyer. The great Académie Française itself became a salon, and the conversational mark was impressed upon the whole of eighteenth-century literature. The salons represented the strongest influences; the salon of Madame de Lambert was called the ante-chamber of the Académie Française, and important elections to membership were constantly and successfully engineered behind its doors. Madame Geoffrin made the happy discovery of the social possibilities of artists; Boucher, La Tour and Van Loo were regular visitors of her salon. Hence a new public was created, the public of polite society, unlimited in numbers, less lavish in expenditure, but controlled to some extent by its centers of criticism. The monumental arts of the previous generation had disappeared, and the age of Madame Pompadour, the age of Rococo, was the age of domestic building and small easel-pictures. It was at this time that the very word "public"

first came into general use, and even for Dubos that public represented the society of France with its inevitable leaven of "amateurs éclairés."

The presumption and responsibility of the amateur critic and his relation to the artist were the first principles to be revised. Starting from his premises of art as imagination, Dubos had said that the artist's vocation was not judgment, and moreover it was not desirable for one artist to judge the works of another. On the contrary, the artist, conscious of the weight of an arduous training behind him, naturally resented the opinion of a critic, who trifled ignorantly with his very livelihood. The wealthy critic, who was also a good buyer, was usually the most imperious and exasperating. The artists did not dispute the right of criticism so much as the critic's pretension to speak with the voice of the public. Hence animosities grew up between artist and critic, which the Academy in its tradition of dignity and calm used every effort to pacify. The recognized battle-field of artist and critic soon came to be the Academy's own exhibition of works, the annual Salon.

The conception of the art exhibition had long since been adopted from Italy as an integral part of the Renaissance. The custom had grown up in Italy of exhibiting pictures to the public before they were delivered to their owners, especially when that owner was a foreigner and the pictures were to follow him abroad. In the same way, sketches for pictures, commissioned by the state or Church, were exhibited for public approval. In France, the exhibition became an indispensable element in the life of painting. Colbert, with his peculiar genius for organization, had ordered periodical exhibitions under the auspices of the Academy, but they were

not very satisfactorily received and were eventually discontinued owing to the lack of funds, difficulties of transportation, and because successful academicians considered them as insulting to a painter's dignity. Colbert's exhibition of 1667 may be called the first of the Salons proper. Then the Academy tried to enforce a law that all competitors for membership must exhibit a work on their day of election.

At the same time open-air exhibitions of religious pictures were held on Corpus Christi day in the Place Dauphine. Young artists had welcomed the exhibitions as a means of publicity. They were frowned upon by the Academy, which strove vainly to prevent its own members from exhibiting. But from the reign of Louis XV, academicians and non-academicians were sometimes very glad of this opportunity to display their wares, and the exhibition was gradually opened both to religious and secular subjects. The Academy made a virtue of necessity and again organized annual exhibitions, which somewhat superseded those of the Place Dauphine, and its efforts were now more readily supported for the reason that the arts were deliberately catering to the taste of a wider public. From 1737, the Academy's Salons came to stay. The venue was the Louvre. The artists by its means hoped to make sales, but they did not expect or desire the public to criticize. But criticism became an institution, to which the public was passionately devoted, and no measures, but the closing of the Salons, could have dissuaded them from their favorite indulgence.

In 1720, Antoine Coypel, Director of the Academy, alarmed by the bitterness, which criticism was exciting put the weight of his own official authority to the test by an attempt at compromise. He was far-seeing enough to recognize that,

since the decline in the purchasing power of the Church and the monarchy, the public was the artist's principal employer and had therefore every right to criticize whom and as it pleased. But neither was he blind to the incapacity of average public criticism, and he was particularly bitter towards those who ventured only to appreciate the works of artists long since dead. He besought the critics to use their feelings and not allow themselves to be prejudiced by theoretic rules of taste. Coypel had spoken in good faith and with some wisdom, but with the permanent establishment of the Salons, even his respected judgment was thrust aside.[10]

The immediate targets of public impatience were the *Mercure* and the Salon pamphlets. The *Mercure* was the first journal to give regular reports of the Salons, but it valued its reputation for independence and confined itself to plain facts. The Salon pamphlets, which were issued from time to time, had taken up the unexceptionable attitude that only the merits of the exhibits were to be discussed. But dissatisfied, or satiated, with praise, the artists conceived that the order, in which the *Mercure* and the pamphlets had mentioned them, was to be construed as an order of merit, and omissions were naturally the more mortifying. The public were not to be deceived by the principle of too much praise and knew well enough that the reports of the *Mercure* and the pamphlets were not always fair. Academicians themselves made an appeal for an impartial examination of the exhibited pictures.

Since the shelving of the great controversies after the death of De Piles, the conferences of the Academy had been neglected. But in 1747, Count Caylus had restored them, and his *Réflexions sur la Peinture* was read to a full academic

concourse by the secretary. Charles Coypel, the son of Antoine Coypel, was then Director, and himself a friend of the amateurs. In the same year, La Font de Saint Yenne, an amateur, printed his reflections on the Academy's Salon of the previous year, entitled *Réflexions sur quelques Causes de l'État présent de la Peinture en France, avec un Examen des principaux Ouvrages exposés au Louvre le Mois d'Aout, 1746.* It was the first of the journalistic critiques. The older conferences of the Academy had been models of graciousness, but, as if they were releasing the dissimulation of years, they now became the scene of anger and violence. It is possible that La Font enjoyed his notoriety; but he was sincere, and his aesthetic philosophy was loyally classical. The academicians led by Coypel himself, resorted to every means in their power to silence him. Clearly La Font signalized the final and lasting triumph of the amateur and the depreciation of the Academy's aesthetic monopoly. But so fearful is the prospect of declining prestige, that the academicians, who had once indulged and even patronized the meddlesomeness of amateurs, were at last moved to action against a defender of their interests.

La Font's critique was formulated without apology or ambiguity, and he claimed for every man the right to judge a picture. "Chacun a le droit d'en porter son jugement." He believed, like Dubos, that sentiment and feeling, not theory, are the guides of criticism and that the artist is a poor judge himself. The best judge of a picture is "un spectateur désinteressé & éclairé, qui sans manier le pinceau, juge par un goût naturel & sans une attention servile aux régles." Criticism is the intermediary which passes on to the artist the judgment of the public and is therefore in the nature of a

gratuitous help to the artist. La Font made plain that the principle of criticism is the instruction of the artist, — he had no conception of modern criticism whose principle is rather the instruction of the public, — and it was that principle of La Font, which so aggravated the Academy. The public, tired of the Salon reports, received La Font's dissertation with delight. His example was immediately followed, and the Salon of 1748 brought down a whole shower of critiques. The artists retaliated with satires and caricatures. In 1749, matters had reached such a pass that no Salon was held. But the Salon of 1750 produced critiques and reprisals as before. The amateur had won, and the Academy almost confessed "le declin des peintres," of which La Font had sometimes spoken so freely.

6. *Reflection of Academic Dispute in England.*

Up to this point of the narrative, no reference has been made to the fortunes of taste in England. But taste in England from the Renaissance until the end of the eighteenth century, was always a tardy repetition of that in France. All the transactions of the Renaissance, the early Italian influence, the rise and fall of classicism, took in England the same course they had previously taken in France. Today historians and critics of art can read the essentially English character of the Renaissance in England, but that character was an unconscious, if inevitable, modification. English taste in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries desired nothing so much as to resemble the magnificence and refinement of the French court.

There was a premature Renaissance in the time of Cardinal Wolsey, who, like Charles VIII and Francis I in France, had

established a colony of Italian artists in England. Its work is still seen in his palace at Hampton Court. At a later date there came occasional second-hand influences, usually from Protestant Flanders, leaving more permanent and extensive results in the Jacobean architecture of the seventeenth century. It was at that date that the Flemish "pattern-books," containing engravings of the Renaissance Orders and ornaments, were imported into England, and the new architecture made its first important appearance in England before an inquisitive, but appreciative people as a book-ridden art. The purer classical Renaissance of architecture in England was introduced by a designer of masques, Inigo Jones, a fervent student of Palladio and the first of English artists to travel in Italy for purposes of study. Inigo Jones' work was carried on by Sir Christopher Wren. The Renaissance of painting was introduced by Rubens and Van Dyck, who had lived for a time in London. The Renaissance in sculpture was introduced more indirectly by Bernini. Throughout literary influences were strong.

A contemporary of Wren wrote as follows: "Towards the end of King James I's reign, and in the Beginning of his Son's, Taste in Architecture made a bold Step from Italy to England at once, and scarce staid a Moment to visit France by the way. From the most profound Ignorance in Architecture, the most consummate Night of Knowledge, Inigo Jones started up, a Prodigy of Art, and vied even with his Master Palladio himself. From so glorious an Outset, there was not any Excellency that we might not have hoped to obtain; Britain had a reasonable Prospect to rival Italy, and foil every Nation in Europe beside. . . . Wren was the next Genius that arose, to awake the Spirit of Science, and kindle

in his Country a love for that Science which had been so long neglected. . . ." [11]

Wren was born in 1632. He had had the education suitable to an English gentleman in the seventeenth century and had specialized in mathematics, mechanics and astronomy. He was admitted to Wadham College, Oxford at the age of fourteen, elected to a fellowship at All Souls' College at twenty-one, and to the Savilian Professorship of Astronomy at twenty-eight. Meanwhile he cultivated a peculiarly mechanical and experimental frame of mind, and when the Royal Society was founded, he took his place among its original members. Shortly after the Fire of London he was knighted, and he was elected regularly to a seat in Parliament. Wren was therefore an amateur, and a gentleman, but he had been thoroughly schooled in the regular classical curriculum, based on geometry and mathematics. He was well read in Vitruvius and Palladio; and with this the education of England's greatest Renaissance architect must be regarded as complete. He never traveled in Italy, but he spent six months in Paris at the time Bernini was being entertained by the French court. He watched the building operations at the Louvre, "where no less than a thousand hands are constantly employed in the works," he wrote, ". . . which altogether made a School of Architecture, the best probably, at this day in Europe."

Wren's opinions of architecture have been preserved by his son and published in the *Parentalia.* He was a supreme classicist, devoted to his Roman Orders and his geometry. Speaking of the different sorts of beauty, he said, "But always the true test is natural or geometrical Beauty." He conceived of no nature apart from geometry; and outside the

provisions of classicism he allowed no liberties. "An architect ought to be jealous of novelties, in which fancy blinds the judgment; but the glory of that which is good of itself is eternal." Such was the training and purpose of the builder of St. Paul's Cathedral, over fifty churches in London, Chelsea Hospital, Kensington Palace, Greenwich Hospital, additions to Hampton Court, and numerous public works and private houses in the provinces.

John Evelyn is a good example of the English amateur during the seventeenth century. He was born in 1620. He was educated at Oxford and destined for the law. During the Civil Wars he retired from active life. In 1643 he began his Grand Tour of the Netherlands, France and Italy. From the Restoration onwards he enjoyed unbroken court favor. He was one of the promoters of the Royal Society. He was a personal friend of Wren, and he introduced Grinling Gibbons to the notice of Charles II. Among other works he translated Fréart's *Parallel* and *Perfection of Painting* into English. Evelyn was therefore well acquainted with the cultured life of England at his time, and his opinions must have been above reproach. He died in 1706, about twenty years before Wren.

Evelyn's education and culture had evidently bred him to the crudest naturalism in fine art. He saw no merit in a picture but "the life and accurate finishing." He expected a good picture to deceive him into the belief that it was real. "So deep and well-studied are all the figures," he wrote of one picture, "that it would require more judgment than I confess I had, to determine whether they were flat or embossed." Or again, speaking of Cardinal Richelieu's Citronière: "And at the end of it is the Arch of Constantine,

painted on a wall in oil, as large as the real one in Rome, so well done, that even a man skilled in painting, may mistake it for stone and sculpture. The sky and hills, which seem to be between the arches, are so natural, that swallows and other birds, thinking to fly through, have dashed themselves against the wall. I was infinitely taken with this agreeable cheat." Evelyn's opinions on architecture may be gathered from the following: "The ancient Greek and Roman Architectures answer all the Perfections required in a faultless and accomplished Building; such as for many Ages were so renowned and reputed by the universal suffrages of the civilized World, and would doubtless have still subsisted, and made good their Claim, and what is recorded of them, had not the Goths, Vandals and other barbarous Nations, subverted and demolished them, together with that glorious Empire, where those stately and pompous Monuments stood; introducing in their stead, a certain fantastical and licentious Manner of Building, which we have since called Modern or Gothick. Congestions of heavy, dark, melancholy, and monkish Piles, without any just proportion, Use or Beauty, compared with the truly ancient; so as when we meet with the greatest Industry, and expensive Carving, full of Fret and lamentable imagery; sparing neither of Pains or Cost; a judicious Spectator is rather distracted or quite confounded, than touched with that Admiration, which results from the true and just Symmetry, regular Proportion, Union and Disposition; and from the great and noble Manner in which the august and glorious Fabricks of the Ancients are executed." [12]

In 1768, over a hundred years after the founding of the Academy in France, the Royal Academy of Arts was founded in London. Sir Joshua Reynolds, the painter, was its first

president. It was placed under the immediate protection of the sovereign, and its affairs were directed by forty academicians of the highest rank in their several professions of painting, sculpture and architecture. It was a modification of its French predecessor, and it became the stronghold of classicism and the principal school for students of art in England. A series of prizes, of which the Gold Medal was the most valuable, was instituted annually, or in alternate years, to provide for the travel of students in France and Italy.

Sir Joshua Reynolds' *Discourses*, which were delivered to Academy students at the annual prize-givings, and a copy of which still accompanies every presentation of the Gold Medal, is the authentic statement of academic doctrine as then taught in England. Reynolds was a great painter, but an indifferent orator; and his *Discourses*, solemn and earnest though they were, read now like a wordy paraphrase of Lomazzo or Junius. Reynolds prescribed a vigorous and thorough classicism. Always jealous of novelties, he desired nothing so much as to regulate the caprices of genius. Good taste, he said, can be defined and cultivated by any man of patience, and there is no limit to "knowledge" in fine art. He enjoined the study of the antique and the old masters, and would marvel at Gainsborough, his contemporary, who had succeeded so well without an academic education and without travel in Italy. "I would chiefly recommend, that an implicit obedience to the Rules of Art, as established by the practice of the great Masters, should be exacted from the young students. That those models, which have passed through the approbation of ages, should be considered by them as perfect and infallible guides; as subjects for their imitation, not their criticism." Reynolds preferred grand

subject matter for pictures; and though he admired Hogarth, Teniers and Watteau, he wished that they might have dedicated their art to higher ends. Hence the noble Poussin, Raphael, and Michelangelo were his models of correctness.

Reynolds was prejudiced against color, though he was very conscious of color-composition; and his own pictures are not wanting in that respect. He would rather have "the purest and most correct outline" than "the brightest tint . . . or the gloss of stuffs." Color is only a superficial elegance; "It is weak and unworthy of regard, when the work aspires to grandeur and sublimity." Hence he cannot rate the Venetian as high as other schools of painting, and he constantly refers to the bad draughtsmanship of Titian. And if once or twice he advises the observation of the individual peculiarities of the sitter, Reynolds is more usually an idealist in art. The Great Style, in whose cause he is so eloquent, avoids the deformed, the peculiar and the common. "The whole beauty and grandeur of the art consists, in my opinion, in being able to get above all singular forms, local customs, particularities, and details of every kind." The Great Style is superior to the characteristic style, which certain painters, Dürer and Rembrandt, have most unfortunately affected. Reynolds was indeed the complete academician.

A more important work, though ridiculed in its time, was Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty*. Hogarth died a few years before the foundation of the Royal Academy, but anticipated much of that liberal criticism, which was to be directed against it. In 1745, he had painted a portrait of himself, and in a corner of that portrait had drawn a palette bearing a serpentine curve and the legend: "The Line of Beauty." In the same year he published some engravings of his pictures

and the frontispiece displayed the same curious hieroglyphic and the same curious legend. Much discussion ensued, and, in an unpropitious moment, the painter resolved to explain himself in writing. The *Analysis of Beauty* appeared in 1753, "written with a view of fixing the fluctuating Ideas of Taste," and it transpired that Hogarth's curve was none other than "the figure, pyramidal, serpent-like, and multiplied by one, two, three," once attributed to Michelangelo, "in which precept, in mine opinion," writes Hogarth, "the whole mysterie of the arte consisteth." He quotes from Lomazzo and Du Fresnoy, and measures the respective functions and usefulness of Fitness, Variety, Uniformity, Simplicity, Intricacy, Quantity. Evidently Hogarth went about the world looking for flamboyant shapes everywhere. The human figure is beautiful, he says, not in the proportions of its parts, but in "the more pleasing turns, and intertwistings of the lines, which compose its external form."

But, in the midst of these more questionable speculations, Hogarth strongly supports the doctrines of color and realism. He has little use for the professors of proportion, whom he sarcastically calls "Nature-menders." "I have heard a blacksmith harangue like an anatomist, or sculptor, on the beauty of a boxer's figure, tho' not perhaps in the same terms; and firmly I believe, that one of our common proficients in the athletic art, would be able to instruct and direct the best sculptor living . . . in what would give the statue of an English boxer, a much better proportion, as a character, than is seen, even in the group of antique boxers . . . so much admired to this day." "Water-men too, are of a distinct cast, or character whose legs are no less remarkable for their smallness. . . . There is scarcely a waterman that rows upon the

Thames, whose figure doth not confirm this observation. Therefore were I to paint the character of Charon, I would thus distinguish his make from that of a common man's; and, in spite of the word low, venture to give him a broad pair of shoulders, and spindle shanks, whether I had the authority of an antique statue, or basso-relievo, for it or not." Had Hogarth been known more for his defense of realism and less for his mysterious curve, his literary work might have reflected more honor upon his name.

The quotations given sufficiently show that controversies, which agitated France from the time of Roger de Piles, also agitated England. French influences were always strong; and it is significant that the writings of Roger de Piles and of subsequent French amateurs were often translated into English a few years after their publication in France. The architects sat at the feet of Palladio, and a man like Lord Burlington, who made himself responsible for the preservation of good taste in England, believed that it was his chief business in life to educate his countrymen in the precepts of the Italian architect.

Sir William Chambers, the last of the great Palladians in England, published his *Treatise of Civil Architecture* in 1759. Augustan Rome, he wrote, was the eternal home of architecture. The Grecians effected many improvements in the art, but never brought it to its utmost degree of excellence. "Since the Grecian structures are neither the most considerable, most varied, nor most perfect, it follows that our knowledge ought not to be collected from them, but from some purer, more abundant source; which, in whatever relates to the ornamental part of the art, can be no other than the Roman antiquities yet remaining in Italy, France or else-

where — vestiges of buildings erected in the politest ages, by the wealthiest, most splendid, and most powerful people of the world." And these remains "excite at this day the astonishment and admiration of every judicious beholder; in spite of all that length of time, wars, party rage, barbarism, casual events, superstition, and avarice, have done to destroy them." "The Orders of Architecture are the basis upon which the whole part of the art is chiefly built, and towards which the attention of the artist must ever be directed, even where no orders are introduced. In them originate most of the forms used in decoration; they regulate most of the proportions; and to their combination, multiplied, varied and arranged in a thousand different ways, architecture is indebted for its most splendid productions."

Chapter VI

THE EMERGENCE OF ROMANTICISM

1. Diderot.
2. Neo-Platonism.
3. Lessing and Winckelmann.

Chapter VI

THE EMERGENCE OF ROMANTICISM

1. *Diderot.*

The Academy in France enjoyed the protection of the king and in the midst of the criticism, which assailed it on every side, was able to set up a censorship of criticism directly affecting its own members. The worst forms of sensationalism and abuse were thereby prevented. The *Mercure*, conscious of its semi-official position, was particularly careful, and, though it sometimes expressed a doubt of the critique which only praised, it remained until a few years before the Revolution, a very paragon of propriety. Even men of the standing of Count Caylus, who contributed to it, observed more than ordinary caution.

The Correspondence critiques, which were intended to circumvent the Academy's censorship, were written by hand and privately circulated. The first of them was Raynal's *Nouvelles Littéraires* in 1748. Raynal was quickly followed by Grimm and Bachaumont. In 1759, Grimm invited Diderot, as a contribution to his Correspondence, to write an account of the Salon of that year, and one of the greatest literary figures of his time accordingly entered the lists of art-criticism.

Denis Diderot was born in 1713. He was educated in a Jesuit school, but escaped from its control and hated the Catholic Church to the end of his days. He was a typical impersonation of the growing revolutionary spirit, and spent

his life in a constant toil of revolt against authority and privilege. He was among the first of the literary "originals" of Paris, self-conscious in his genius and in the unconventionality of his manners. His great work, the compilation of the *Encyclopédie*, was suppressed as an instrument of freethought, and only continued secretly or with the eventual connivance of a distracted government. The *Encyclopédie* was suppressed in the same year as the first of his *Salons* was written.

Diderot's earlier *Salons* were unequal, but they grew in their grasp of the problem. In his later *Salons*, the theme of criticism had taken possession of his mind and he was evidently regarding art criticism as a definite "kind" of literature, requiring special gifts and special experiences and enjoying a status far above the journalism of La Font de St. Yenne. As Correspondence critiques, the *Salons* were written for a limited circle of readers and called for every frankness of thought and expression. Diderot refused to allow their publication in his own life, preferring not to take active part in the warfare of contemporary amateurs, most of whom he heartily despised. The *Salons* were only published a few years before the Revolution, and even in those fiery times, long after the deaths of their author and of the painters he had criticized, men were surprised and shocked by his plain speaking. But Diderot had said what he felt, impetuously sometimes, and had bent the whole of his great intellectual equipment to the task.

Apart from his accomplishment as a critic, Diderot's method was new. He always consulted the opinions of artists, troubled himself to understand their technical difficulties and directed his criticism, therefore, not so much towards

the artist as towards his own reader. For Diderot, and for critics after him the function of criticism was not the correction of the artist, but the enlightenment of the public. The change of attitude was due more to modesty than to a preconceived policy. Diderot claimed to be no connoisseur, but an observer of ordinary, educated intelligence, a typical member of the great art-public. He cultivated the acquaintance of Chardin, Falconet, La Tour and Cochin, who were all his guides and to whose most casual utterances he listened with respect. Indeed it was Falconet's opinion that Diderot's success as a critic resulted from his willingness as a listener and a learner at the feet of his artist friends. All the *Salons* have an air of being conversations held with artists in the actual exhibition gallery.

Like La Font, Diderot complained bitterly of the decadence of art, the poverty and insipidness of the Salons. When his particular heroes, Greuze and Chardin, ceased to exhibit he could find no more talent in all France. He was appalled by the stupidity and arrogance of the average amateur, "la maudite race que celle des amateurs," by the rapaciousness and duplicity of art-dealers, and by the resulting discouragement and persecution of the artist. He almost excused the charlatanism of artists, disappointed at the tardy recognition of their art and desperate to attract attention. He wrote: "Recall the studies and the knowledge that a good painter requires and you will feel how difficult it is to be a good judge of painting. Yet all the world believes itself competent to judge, and almost all the world is wrong. Walk around the Salon and overhear the diversity of judgments uttered, and then be convinced that here, as in literature, success — a great success — is assured to that happy mediocrity which

puts spectator and artist on a common level." There is but a little portion of the public who meditates, reflects and thinks, he said, who are capable of valuing what is true, good and useful.

Diderot made a resolute attempt to solve the vexed question of the critic's office and responsibilities. He regarded a work of art from two points of view, first its technique and second its "idea." The criticism of technique he frankly surrendered to the artist, but the criticism of the "idea" he always claimed as the proper domain of the amateur, but of a properly qualified amateur. No man, who has not practiced an art may judge its technique, but the artist, preoccupied with workmanship, may sometimes be a poor judge of ideas. The division between technique and idea became a characteristic of aesthetic theory in the nineteenth century. Diderot neither united, nor attempted to unite, the two divisions in one mental process. Hence he could not have conceived of a work of art as a single organism, in which form and content, — to use the modern phraseology, — were dependent parts of a whole and unthinkable as separate from the whole. He spoke of "ensemble," a word which he did much to make popular, but he inherited nevertheless the academic principle of dividing the operations of the artist into arbitrary components, — Invention, Composition, Symbolism, Clarity, Originality, History, Expression, and so forth; — and he had a very decided tendency to judge the components, one by one, thus making his final evaluation by their addition, much after the manner of Roger de Piles' famous "Balance."

Diderot's relation to the old academic ideas retained some odd contradictions and compromises; and, like all men of a transitional age, he can be cited in the interests both of retro-

grade and progressive opinions. Lessing remarked of him, that he gave himself more trouble to gather than to dispel the clouds of controversy, and he was, as elsewhere in his literary career, notoriously hasty in his conclusions. He was imbued with the old moral, pedagogic idea of fine art. Boucher's sensuality disgusted him and prompted him in one of his diatribes against luxury. Greuze's sentimental moralism affected him deeply, for which reason no doubt Greuze was his favorite painter. "The noblest subject" was a very serious problem in his aesthetics, and he would have agreed with the pronouncement of Ruskin, whom he so often resembles, that "the greatest picture is that which conveys to the mind of the spectator the greatest number of the greatest ideas." He held fast to the old ideas of imitation and verisimilitude and argued that the fairest way to judge a work of art was to compare it with its original in nature. His conception of painting was literary, and his method of describing a painting was to describe its subject matter. "Ut pictura poesis erit," was a favorite motto. His conception of landscape was topographical; he would identify a landscape with the scene it represented and guide his readers in an imaginary peregrination through it, as if upon an actual tour of a piece of country. His conception of historical painting or genre was illustrative, and he would on occasions digress into a complete novelette around the incidents a painting represented.[1] But at the same time he was perfectly aware that literary description, however full or sympathetic, was no substitute and could not translate the true effect of the original picture.

So far, perhaps unconsciously, he had accepted academic ideas. But he admired the artist, who had never suffered himself to come under academic control, even the self-educated

artist, the "autodidacte." In the tradition of Roger de Piles, he admired bright color; and for him color always embodied the life and soul of painting. He would call the color of academic painters: "froid, plat, faible, égal, monotone, lourd, épais, fade, sec, raide, blafard, gris, grisâtre, jaune, jaunâtre," and so forth. His vocabulary in these matters was extensive and varied. Prophetic of impressionism, he spoke of the "papillotage" of color.

He was for ever carping at academic adherence to the antique. He would allow that "a work of man is sometimes more admirable than a work of God"; or that the most select model of the life school cannot compare with an antique Apollo. But he maintained that the conventional reconstructions of academic art never produced the living ideal, the "premier modèle." The academic ideal was a sterile mannerism; worse than laziness, "because laziness at least is natural to man, and mannerism is never natural"; and worse than exact imitation, which at least has the character of truth; — "the exact imitation of nature will make an art that is poor and mean, but never false." The academic antique is a double plagiarism, the copy of a copy, and the reverse of the true method of antiquity herself. Antiquity, he said, had no antique to copy. The ancient artist in his selection of the good from a number of models, was guided by no artificial standards. "It was by ceaseless observation, consummate experience, by comparison with nature, by an exquisite tact, by a taste, an instinct, by a sort of inspiration granted only to rare genius, perhaps by the design, natural to an idolater, of raising man above his condition and of impressing upon him the character of divinity, a character, exclusive of all the servitude of our mean, poor and miserable life" — it was by all

these things that the Greeks selected and synthesized their ideal forms.

It was therefore possible for Diderot to subscribe to an ideal nature that was none of the beautiful nature, — the nature of "le froid bon sens" and of "pesante raison" of academicism, — and yet at the same time to sympathize with that realism, which in his heart of hearts he more genuinely desired. He spoke constantly of character and individuality both in nature and in man. He poured scorn on a painter, who had at his command only two or three types of heads, "qui roulent dans la sienne et qu'il fourre partout," or only one set of possible poses, one type of foot, one hand, one arm, one leg. "Ici, je reconnais l'esclave de l'antique." Similarly, he poured scorn on a painter of battle-pieces, who had never seen a battle, or a painter of seascapes, who had never seen the sea. As a man of letters, Diderot quarried his materials from his observation of nature and his experience of life, and he expected the painter to do likewise. The academic principle of heroic types all on one pattern, made no contact with his liberal philosophy. "Never have two singers sung the same air in the same way. . . . Never since the world began have two lovers said, I love thee, in the same way." Subtle distinctions he demanded in art as in literature, above all in the portrayal of human character, of "physiognomie." He admired Richardson, the English novelist, just as he admired Greuze and Chardin, because they were all portrayers of human character. He admired the Dutch painters, especially Teniers, Wouwermans, and Berghem. "Go to Chartreux, and there you will see the real attitudes of devotion and repentance. . . . Go to the wine-shop and you will see the true gestures of an angry man. Frequent public places, observe

what passes in the streets, in gardens, in markets, in houses, and you will thus learn what are the real gestures of men in real life. . . . And then you will be ashamed of your insipid professor's teaching and you will be ashamed of imitating your insipid model." [2]

Diderot recognized and valued the individuality of the artist. He could see the artist's milieu reflected in his work. Character, temperament, nationality, the artist's place in world-history and world-geography have all their several influences. Diderot repeated the earlier thought of Dubos and anticipated the historical speculations of Hegel and Taine. He was inclined to approve therefore of Watteau's unbroken residence in Paris, of Vernet's preference for the sea and Loutherbourg's expeditions into the country. With an insight, remarkable in its time, he realized the debasement of the prevailing Rococo style and the empty luxury which made it fashionable. Rather than the artificiality of the academic taste, he would have preferred a Rousseauesque return to nature. In savage nature at least was a milieu worthy of a man, and a cure for an art sodden with conventions. Diderot was the first to express that hackneyed truism "art is life," but a truism, like every other, needing a discoverer of courage and independent thought.

Diderot was fascinated by the aspect of wild, uncultivated scenery, and by "the sweet melancholy (la douce mélancholie)" of ruins and solitude. The accidents and asymmetry of nature he preferred to the corrected rulings of classic art. "There is more poetry, more of the accidental, I do not say in a thatched cottage, but in a single tree which has suffered the buffets of the years and seasons, than in all the façade of a palace. A palace must be in ruins to be an object of inter-

est." By analogy, there is more life in a sketch than in a finished painting. The picturesque is more pleasing than the geometrical, and no wise painter will draw with compass and ruler. "The Vitruvian system of measures," he wrote, "seems to have been invented only for monotony and for the suffocation of genius." [3] Like Dubos, Diderot theorized upon the properties of imagination. Rules he would have, but not academic rules, for rules do not fully account for the works of creative genius. "In painting, as in music, there are rules of composition, there are chords and discords, the modulations are linked together at pleasure, and you may produce, as you wish, the effects of the rarest and liveliest harmonies. You will then have done very much. But those compositions, terrible or sensuous, which at the same moment that they charm the ear, carry love or terror to the depths of your heart, dissolve your senses and purge your very souls, there is something in that that no rules of yours can achieve."

Diderot always felt the antithesis between imagination and reason, the one creative, the other analytic. "Genius creates beauty," he wrote, "criticism detects the faults." He had some notion that the philosophic mentality was opposed to poetry and the arts and that logical reflection destroys the creative power. The words: "imagination, âme, esprit, cœur, chaleur, enthousiasme, vigeur, verve, transport, élan, extase, fureur, passion, fougue." are scattered freely through his pages. He related the sublime to great power and terror. "Oh poets!" he exclaimed, "ever speak of eternity, of infinity, of immensity, of time and space, of divinity, of death, of ghosts, of Hell, of darkened skies, deep seas, dense forests, of thunder and lightning rending the clouds. Soyez ténébreux. . . ."

Diderot understood all the highest flights of genius, the

suffering and travail of romantic mysticism. The artist's inspiration is the breath of the Divine, "le souffle divin." "The presence of God pervades the earth's surface, the sea's depths and the vast circle of heaven; from Him man and beast, flocks and herds draw the subtle element of life; from Him all things proceed and to Him return, and death claims them not."

2. *Neo-Platonism.*

Classicism was a philosophy of causes, romanticism a philosophy of values; classicism reasoned, romanticism imagined. Classicism stood for an ideal beauty, romanticism for a real beauty; classicism for beautiful nature, romanticism for every mood and aspect of nature; classicism for tyranny, romanticism for the free expression of individuality.

Mathematics was the starting point of academic art. Its theorization, exactitude, absence of exceptions, its formality were the very symbols of classic law. The Academy belonged to the age of the great deductive philosophers, Descartes and Newton, for whom mathematics had been the ideal knowledge and the prototype of all physical and metaphysical enquiry. The Unities of drama, the Orders of Vitruvius, the Tables of Precepts had all been philosophies of deduction. But romanticism started from observation, romantic science from experiment. Romanticism did not care to theorize about ideals or to "préciser les passions." It observed realities and analyzed character. Its world was a world of living men and women of every age and nationality, not a world of pseudo-divinities of Roman descent. It prescribed no laws and regulations, but expected rather the lawlessness and indi-

viduality of genius. It asked for no abstract of line and draughtsmanship, but watched the forms and colors of nature. It preferred asymmetry and the "picturesque" to the regularity of academic geometers.

Romanticism insisted upon the absolute antithesis of reason and imagination. To explain a point of art was never known to excite an aesthetic emotion, any more than the old scholastic proofs of the existence of God had made devout believers. To excogitate a train of thought immediately abolished that instantaneous and spontaneous element in it, which was of the very stuff of the spirit. Art should be felt, not judged. Orders destroyed architecture, precepts destroyed painting, unities destroyed drama. The romantics cried out continually against obedience to academic codes and against the imitation of academic models. Genius, they said, is above prescription and above criticism. The Renaissance had regarded criticism neither as irrelevant nor obstructive to artistic activity. The tradition of amateur criticism, before Diderot, had regarded and justified criticism as a help and correction to the artist. But the romantics believed criticism to belong exclusively to the province of reason, and therefore despised it. The notorious inability of critics to agree among themselves, their mutual jealousy and contempt of one another, their failure to give a permanently defensible definition of good taste, all was proof of their foolishness and pedantry. Criticism, to have value, must itself become imaginative and passionate, and rise superior to mere judgment. "I believe sincerely," wrote a romantic critic in later years, "that the best critique is amusing and poetic, not cold and algebraic, like the critique, which under a pretext of full explanation, has

neither love nor hate and is despoiled of all temperament. The best account of a picture would be a sonnet or an elegy." [4]

The romantics therefore conceived of an art of no intellectual content, an art whose element was the pure spirit of man. The old academic idea that a rational process, such as drawing, was the basis of art, was abhorrent to them. The romantics looked on all the arts as one, and they were not interested, as the Renaissance scholars had been, to define the respective values and functions of the arts. They no longer asked, Is painting superior to sculpture? But, What is art? The level of argument was raised from kinds to principles. The romantics tended to the modern principle of dividing the arts by their techniques. Painting was the art of paint, architecture the art of building, and so forth; but whatever the medium the artist had chosen to express himself, there remained always that common denominator of the spirit, called Art. In course of time, the romantics learned to sweep away the subject matter of art, and created at least the conception of pure Form. Any subject, they said, can become a work of art; no work of man is useless, if it be art. The "noblest subjects" controversies of the Academy sank into insignificance. "There are, in poetry, neither good nor bad subjects," wrote Victor Hugo, "but only good and bad poets. Everything is a subject, amenable to art; everything has the right to be cited in poetry. Let us enquire into your motive for taking a subject, whether it be sad or glad, horrible or pleasant, sombre or bright, strange or simple. Let us examine how you have worked, rather than on what you have worked and why." [5]

Classicism had believed reason to be the endowment of

Providence, the supreme gift, which distinguished man from brute creation. Romanticism believed the imagination to be a higher and holier faculty of man, the very highway to a spiritual world, which reason had failed to enter in. Romanticism revived, — or generated sponstaneously, — the philosophy of Neo-Platonism. The Platonic studies in the early Renaissance had been lighted by sudden flashes of aesthetic mysticism. Such flashes may be found, for instance, in one or two of the *Sonnets* of Michelangelo, who had been a member of the Platonic circle of Lorenzo de Medici. Du Fresnoy in the Maytime of the Academy, had written of the sacredness of poetry and painting and of the fires which the artist stole from heaven. The study of late classical writers, for instance Quintilian, and the discovery of the text of Longinus, slowly revealed to the European mind an interpretation of fine art which had been forgotten for fifteen hundred years.

Joseph Joubert was a distant acquaintance of Diderot, a man of nervous and introspective temperament, and steeped in Plato. He believed himself to be a classical reactionary; he spoke always of order and repressing the passions. "One must not separate the mind from the soul," he used to say. But he would add that poets have more good sense than philosophers, and in their quest of beauty see more truths than philosophers in their quest of truth. Poetic talent comes to the mind from the impotence of reason. Mere intellect is not enough for poetry; poetry is the gift of heaven and comes, like a dream, from the soul. Far from relegating the arts to the class of useful superfluities, they must be numbered among the most precious and important benefits of human society. "Let us regard the arts as a sort of language apart,"

he wrote, "as a unique means of communication between ourselves and the inhabitants of some superior world." The place of poetry is above the earth, "she is a near neighbor of heaven (voisine du ciel)."

"Plato taught," wrote Joubert, "that all created things are only products of a world, which exists in the mind of God, and which is called the Idea. The idea is to the image what cause is to effect. So, claimed this philosopher, all things being only a copy of the idea, and the image only a copy of things, and words in their turn only an expression of the image, the proudest of poets can only make in his poems the copy of a copy of a copy, and, in consequence, something infinitely imperfect, because infinitely removed and infinitely different from the truth. Plato would have condemned poetry, and he wrote against her reproaches worthy of a poet and worthy of himself. But I wish to defend her, and accepting his doctrine, I turn it round in favour of that poetry he proscribed, and crown his philosophy as follows: I say, with all respect to Plato, that everything in this world of ours is perishable and defective, except the forms which are the expression of the idea. Then what does the poet do? With the help of a certain light, he purges and empties material forms and gives us to see the universe such as it exists in the mind of God himself. He extracts from things their heavenly essence. His painting is not the copy of a copy, but a cast of the archetype, a hollow cast, if I may so say, which is easy to carry, easy to remember and can be lodged in the depths of the soul, for the soul's enjoyment in its moments of leisure."

Joseph Joubert was the beginning. Writers of the Revolutionary period and the nineteenth century constantly used the language of ancient mysticism. They were passionate,

highly wrought men and women, thinkers of great thoughts and builders of mighty spiritual empires. The humor and satire of the eighteenth century had left them, and they were wrapt in seriousness and melancholy. There was an immediate deepening of aesthetic values. Art was happily absolved from the common accusation of being a pastime or luxury, a notion for which the Renaissance was largely responsible. The experiences of art became a mode of self-beatification, the artist the priest of an almost religious cult; and aesthetic controversy became as violent, fanatical and as important as theological controversy in the past. Hence the romantics would charge the previous generation of artists with shallowness. They called eighteenth-century taste "coquetterie," its art, "fardé, moucheté, poudré, une littérature à paniers, à pompons et à falbalas." They were convinced of the decadence of the world about them and cast back pathetic glances to Greece and the Middle Ages, when men were beauty-lovers, nature-lovers, and enjoyed the fruits of piety and freedom. The collapse of the glittering monarchy of France had removed the last prop of their confidence in the old classicism and in the intellectual tyrannies for which it stood.

Fastidious minds, like Joubert's who still clung apprehensively to the dying classicism, foresaw the danger of that unachieved emotionalism, now called sentimentality, to which the romantics were heedlessly exposing themselves. Joubert at once perceived the superficiality of Madame de Staël and looked upon her as "a fatal and pernicious being." "She took the fevers of the soul for its endowments," he wrote of her *Corinne*, "intoxication for a power, and our aberrations for a progress. The passions became in her eyes a species of dignity and glory." For the veriest amateur could now gratify

himself with the sensations of spiritual profundity and identify his artistic excitements with mystical ecstasies; the free-thinking rationalist by the affectation of high art, approved himself to the world as a man of soul; and the novel doctrine was gradually spread that the lover of beauty has need of no other religion. But already in the time of Joubert, no power on earth could have held back the gathering floods of the new romantic aesthetics.

3. *Lessing and Winckelmann.*

The weakness and final dissolution of the Ancien Régime turned eyes and hearts to those more distant times before its universal rule had been established. Men probed deeper into the classic idea or rejected it altogether; those who had probed into it discovered Greece, those who rejected it discovered the Middle Ages. The growing conception of nationality and the consequent decline of the Latin tradition of the Renaissance discredited the reputation of France as the sole arbiter of good taste in Europe. Germany and England, long tributary to the French Academy, asserted their independence and were early to possess themselves of the new fields of Grecian and mediaeval romance. Mediaevalism, especially in England, must be given over to a special chapter. But it will be convenient at this point to describe the Neo-Classic Revival, as it came to be called, and illustrate through it some of the aesthetic opinions and tendencies already described in general terms in the foregoing paragraphs.

Some reference was made in the previous chapter to Count Caylus and to his career as an archaeologist. He was perhaps the first man boldly to realize what the Academy had only vaguely conjectured, that Augustan Rome was a derivative,

and an inferior derivative, politically of the Republican Age and artistically of Greece. Cato not Caesar, Scipio not Augustus were recognized to be the great statesmen; Homer not Virgil, Demosthenes not Cicero, Sophocles not Seneca, the great authors of ancient times. In France Caylus' teaching caused some dissatisfaction with the contemporary Rococo style and prepared for a violent reaction of taste. Meanwhile the Greek mainland began to attract archaeologists, and excavations were organized in such intervals of peace as the Turkish government could secure in its afflicted provinces. A series of enterprising English architects had traveled in Asia Minor and Greece, such as Wood and Dawkins, Stuart and Revett. Le Roy, the Grand Prix winner of 1750, spent his studentship in Greece. Numerous *Voyages Pittoresques* in Greece and in the Levant were published. Ancient Greek sites in Italy and Sicily were drawn into the circuit of the Grand Tour. Hubert Robert and Piranesi made reproductions of the Greek temples at Paestum, only a few miles from Naples, which three centuries of Vitruvian architects had absolutely ignored. Excavations in Herculaneum and Pompeii were yielding startling results and modifying many of the grand ideas of ancient Roman civilization which the Renaissance had once conceived. But the progress of neoclassicism was very slow; and Goethe, an enthusiastic student of Vitruvius and Palladio, during his Italian tour, still found the ruins of Paestum repugnant to his sense of classic form.[6] The full Neo-Classic Revival was reserved to the patience and learning of German archaeology.[7]

The first great German archaeologist, Lessing, was sometimes an exponent of the older classicism and sometimes an exponent of a transitional aesthetics containing both classic

and romantic elements. Nationalism, rather than a consciousness of his own position in history, caused his first revolt against French academic ideas. Lessing loathed French drama and aspired to found a living, national drama in Germany. His temperament was as passionate and as inconstant as that of any later romantic; but with the obstinacy of a French writer defending the academic poets, he would take his stand on a work like Aristotle's *Poetics* and maintain that he had discovered laws of drama as incontrovertible as Euclid. He talked magnificently of truth, but at the same time he gave himself out to be an idealist. His adoration of the ideal beauty of the human body had weird consequences and caused many a German painter to forswear landscape and every kind of art but the delineation of the ideal human body. But his extreme idealism in painting and sculpture did not prevent his presentation of character and realism in his dramatic productions, and he wrote the first "Burgerliche Trauerspielen" as they were called, in German literature. He had no particular love of color and thought that drawing was a sufficient representation of form. He believed that the art of his day had unwisely extended the scope of its subjects. He granted poetry a wider range than painting, inasmuch as it could handle accidents without danger, but painting he always restricted to universals and ideals.

When writing his famous essay, the *Laocoön*, Lessing evidently held unshaken the old conviction of the French amateur that the end of fine art was pleasure. He considered that there were three sources of pleasure in a work of art, be it painting or sculpture, poetry or drama; the first is the beauty of the subject represented, the second is the accuracy of the representation, and the third is the technical skill of

the artist. In other words, Lessing believed a work of art to be the exact and skilful representation of a beautiful subject, and the beauty of the work to be identified with the beauty of the subject. The real problem of the *Laocoön* was the discrepancy between Virgil's version and the Rhodian sculptor's version of the myth. Since there had been one myth, there should have been one version for both poet and sculptor; the poem and the statue should have differed only in so far as the spoken word and a marble carving differ, the "story" in either work should have been identical. In the poet's version, the serpents kill both the father and the sons, they coil themselves twice round the bodies and necks of the victims and their heads tower up into the sky; the father is made to shriek in pain, and he is fully clothed. In the sculptor's version, one son appears to escape, the coils of the snakes are more simple, the heads of the snakes are low, the father moans rather than shrieks, and all the figures are nude. Had Lessing lived fifty years later and followed the philosophical developments in the interval, the Laocoön riddle might have been more easily solved.

But Lessing originated the idea of technique in fine art, and made a step in the direction of the idea of pure art form, one and indivisible, manifesting itself indifferently in any technique, and in any subject. One art, he said, differs from another in its technique, one art is not superior to another, one subject is not more worthy to be represented than another. Furthermore, Lessing advanced the theory, which is now no longer seriously challenged, that Roman art, especially Roman architecture and sculpture, was a coarsened imitation of Greek. By reference to the literary sources, he tried to restore the *lacunae* in the history of Greek art, and he es-

tablished a method of exact and literary archaeology, which the writers of the Renaissance, for all their classical learning, had never realized. Lessing's language was rhetorical and he was a master of polemic. He claimed much of his criticism to be intuitive, and he waged a tireless war against that type of antiquarian pedantry which would use its brains rather than its feelings, and which would minutely collect the fragments of things rather than perceive their spirit.

Winckelmann was the contemporary of Lessing; but while Lessing conducted his investigations and argued his cause in Germany, Winckelmann took up his residence in Rome, nearer the home of the art he loved. Like Lessing, he also was a figure of transition, and his great book, *The History of Ancient Art*, published in 1764, is a strange tangle of classic theories and romantic emotions.

Winckelmann assumed that art imitates nature, but modifies the imitation in conformity to an ideal. The loftiest beauty is therefore characterized by an absence of individuality. "Beauties as great as any that art has produced can be found singly in nature, but in the entire figure, nature must give place to art." The ideal form, he said, was composed of soft and flowing lines, of harmonious rhythms and subtle curves. Grace and grandeur were never found apart in the maturest phases of art. Hence he admired the Apollo Belvedere and the Bacchus and Hermaphrodite types, and he referred to the suppression of violence and passion in the Laocoön group, whose sculptor "must have belonged to the fairest period of art."

But this serene ideal was no product of rule. Winckelmann at times had spoken of a theory of proportions, which he substantiated by the authority of Plato and Pythagoras, and

which he believed the ancients had used. He quoted with approval the painter Mengs' system of proportion, and assured his readers that it was the antique method. But he believed rather that scientific knowledge was not alone sufficient for ideal beauty, because "soul and feeling more than intellect (der Geist und das Gefühl mehr als der Kopf)" are necessary to the creation of beauty; and he referred somewhat scornfully to the attempts so often made to subject the proportions of the human body to the rules of musical harmony. Art indeed does not belong to the world of sense and reason; art elevates man above sense and reason, and "transports the soul into that sweet dream of rapture (in einen süssen Traum der Entzückung), in which human happiness — the end of all religions, whether well or ill understood — consists." "The highest beauty is in God; and our idea of human beauty advances towards perfection in proportion as it becomes harmonized in our thoughts with that highest Existence, which in our conception of unity and indivisibility we distinguish from matter."

The modern scholar may sometimes reproach an archaeologist who never set foot in Greece, and justly call his "Greek" Graeco-Roman. Winckelmann's examples were taken from Italy, often from Rome and Pompeii, and except for some gems and vases, all the reproductions in his *Monumenti Antichi Inediti* belong to a late style. His magnificent ideal was almost immediately overthrown by the advance of romanticism. A generation afterwards, Goethe, who always counted himself a follower of Winckelmann, was writing as if he could afford to ignore the heat of a passing century's disputes, and was asserting hotly that there was no ideal. "The perfectly characteristic alone deserves to be called beautiful;

without character there is no beauty. (Das Vollkommen Characteristische nur verdient schön genannt zu werden; ohne Charakter giebt es keine Schönheit.)"

But Winckelmann had an immediate following among painters and sculptors. He became the center of the artists' colony in Rome. The painter Mengs adopted his teachings. Winckelmann proclaimed him a German Raphael, and declared that "his art has reached the highest point of excellence to which the genius of man has ever risen." Mengs is forgotten today, but his contemporaries believed he had been sent into the world to restore the arts. He gloried in international fame, and when he died, just after the outbreak of the French Revolution, he was buried beside Raphael in the Pantheon in Rome. He left a confused parcel of writings, which were published in several languages, explaining the romantic Platonism, which guided his most inspired paintings.

Together with the great Mengs, the artists Canova, Flaxman, Chantrey, Thorvaldsen, Bosio, David were all disciples, direct or indirect, of the German archaeologist.

Chapter VII

THE PHILOSOPHY OF ROMANTICISM

1. The Problem of Intuitive Beauty.
2. The Philosophers of Romanticism.
3. Philosophy versus Poetry.
4. The Ideal and the Real.
5. The Discovery of Pure Form.

Chapter VII

THE PHILOSOPHY OF ROMANTICISM

1. *The Problem of Intuitive Beauty.*

It will be the object of the present chapter to show how philosophy first became conscious of art and how the conception of beauty was used to solve a purely philosophical problem. In the first encounter between philosophy and art, at the opening of the Romantic Movement, the main issue was Reason. Romanticism discredited reason, and thus destroyed the very substance, as well as the process, of the older traditional philosophy. But romanticism was to justify itself in a new philosophy, the philosophy of Beauty, and to discover heights and depths of the human spirit that the older philosophy had hardly dared to dream of.

Mediaeval philosophy had been a bye-product of logic. Its text was the *Logic* of Aristotle, and all its problems were logical problems. It had never concerned itself to examine the validity of its logic. It had therefore believed implicity that the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, the freedom of the human will and all the many articles of the Christian creed were truths capable of a deliberate logical proof. And for three centuries the Schoolmen of Christian Europe were not dismayed at their periodic failure to justify the Christian universe by the premises and deductions of Aristotle's logic.

The revival of Platonism at the Renaissance displaced Aristotle, but did not discredit the logic of the Schoolmen. Sir

Francis Bacon, no great lover of scholastic philosophy, inspired as he was by the New Learning and writing with all the enthusiasm of discovery, assured his awakening world that its many doubts would soon be laid permanently to rest, as soon as the powers of reason should be properly applied. The entire sequence of the "classical" schools of philosophy from Descartes to Leibnitz held one conviction in common, that "conceptions" in logical form are alone the raw materials of philosophy and that the passions of man are merely obscure, confused and somewhat debased acts of thought. Reason might learn theoretically to doubt every principle of thought and every fact of experience, but reason theoretically was still the method of approach to eternal truth. Spinoza, intoxicated with mysticism and committed to a belief in a purely intuitive knowledge, was still confident that the love of God could be explained by a geometrical system of definitions, axioms and theorems and that the human passions could be juggled like the terms of a syllogism.

In Germany the same type of philosophy prevailed; and when Alexander Baumgarten, in 1750, announced a theory of fine art as a serious philosophical problem, and used, for the first time, the word "aesthetic" in an artistic connection, his thoughts and methods were rigidly logical. His choice of the word "aesthetic" disclosed some consciousness in his mind of the intuitive nature of beauty, yet he was content with the vague definition of beauty as "perfection apprehended through the senses." He was ignorant of any emotional significance in beauty, and aesthetic science for him was nothing more dignified than a parallel or parody of understanding in the province of "obscure knowledge." It is no wonder that, in such a world of thought, contemporary academicians had

sat in solemn conference to lay down tables of precepts for the direction of artists.

But some question of the universal rule of the ancient logic was already at hand. In 1690, John Locke, the English philosopher, had published his *Essay concerning Human Understanding*. "Were it fit to trouble thee with the history of this Essay," he wrote in the introductory Epistle, "I should tell thee that five or six friends meeting at my chamber, and discoursing on a subject remote from this, found themselves quickly at a stand, by the difficulties that arose on every side. After we had awhile puzzled ourselves, without coming any nearer a resolution of those doubts which perplexed us, it came into my thoughts that we took a wrong course; and that, before we set ourselves upon enquiries of that nature, it was necessary to examine our own abilities, and see what objects our understandings were, or were not, fitted to deal with."

The problem of understanding, its attributes and limits, as enunciated by Locke, was new — so new, indeed, that the greater part of a century was to pass before its significance was realized. The history of English philosophy from Locke to Hume was no more and no less than a criticism and a rethinking of Locke's great *Essay*. True to the style of the time, the new problem clothed itself in discussions on the ideas of Substance and Cause; but the discussions raised more difficulties than solutions, and the learned world was almost persuaded that, if philosophy is indeed the mother of the sciences, she is the least profitable of them all.

The philosophical movements, both in England and on the Continent, were gathered up by Immanuel Kant, the German philosopher. Like Locke, he set himself to solve the

problem of understanding, without which there can be no philosophy. In 1781, he published his *Critique of Pure Reason.* "Philosophy is weary of its failures," he wrote in the Preface, "and at present, as all the old methods seem to have been tried in vain, there reigns nought but indifference — the mother of chaos and night in the scientific world, but at the same time the source of, or at least the prelude to, the recreation of a science which has fallen into confusion, obscurity and disuse, from ill-directed effort. . . . For this indifference is, in fact, a call to reason, again to undertake the most laborious of all tasks, that of self-examination, and to establish a tribunal, which may secure it in its well-grounded claims. . . . This tribunal is nothing less than the Critical Investigation of Pure Reason."

To all appearances, Kant's solution of the problem of knowledge was clear and simple. He divided his universe, so to speak, into two planes, the physical and the metaphysical. The physical plane is the world of the senses, the world of time and space, the world of phenomena and relativity; the metaphysical plane is the world beyond the senses, the world of the thing-in-itself, the absolute, the Noumenon. Knowledge belongs only to the physical world; knowledge does not rise to an understanding of the metaphysical world. Briefly, things seen are knowable; things not seen are unknowable. Within the prescribed limits of the physical world, Kant then drew up his conceptions of time and space, his categories of thought, substance, cause and effect, and so forth; finally he invested natural science with the legislation of the physical world, a trust which has been held to this day. But no mental legislation would he apply to the metaphysical world. The old Schoolmen, who tried to prove the existence of God,

failed, he said, because, like deaf men discussing music, they were misusing organs and misapplying thoughts in a world where such organs and thoughts were inoperative. Providence gives man sensibility and understanding for his use in life, but not to satisfy his curiosity in things outside normal experience. And this, in layman's language, was the lesson of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason.*

There have been philosophers more satisfying than Kant, but none as necessary. Plato or Hegel were finer minds; yet it were almost possible to write a history of philosophy and mention neither. Kant's philosophy contains a suggestion of all philosophy, past, present and future. But it was not final. Kant himself called it a "method" — "not an opinion to be held, but a work to be done," and he soon felt that a further elaboration and development was necessary. A second *Critique* was published accordingly, the *Critique of Practical Reason.*

For it is not in human nature to remain long content with negatives. Kant was at some pains to deny the negativity and scepticism implicit in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, yet his philosophy absolutely withheld from the mind a knowledge of those ultimate things of the spirit, for which it craved. The second *Critique* sought bravely to dispose of the difficulty. For there he lodged the unknowable, metaphysical world in the world of freedom and the moral law; and he argued that the great philosophical principles, the existence of God and immortality of the soul, even though they were beyond the range of understanding and, by their very nature, incapable of proof, were yet inevitably true as deductions of a higher principle of morality.

But one difficulty stirred up a hive of others. A system of

thought, which had once appeared to be so cleanly cut and incisive, concealed an interminable series of new problems. Kant had posited a physical world, which alone was knowable, and a metaphysical, which was unknowable, but which conveniently asserted itself as a principle of morality. Between the two worlds no manifest relationship could be established, unless some new philosophy, heretofore unimagined, could point a way. A third *Critique*, the *Critique of Judgment*, was published in 1790 and argued that the necessary relationship was provided by the idea of Beauty.

Kant's contemporaries, especially his sympathizers, always considered his last *Critique* the most important of the three. But it is by far the most difficult of philosophical treatises, confused and rambling, both in style and matter. "Kant is usually very clear," wrote Schopenhauer; "but he has a rare talent of turning a thought this way and that way, and expressing each way in a multitude of other ways, until out of it all there grows a book." The third *Critique*, repeats the history of the first two; it reveals new and ever new problems. The solutions are so revolutionary that Kant himself has hardly realized their full significance. The occasional mentions of poetry, painting and architecture are often lacking in appreciation. The discussion on the Sublime, which fills page after page of the work, is elaborate and indecisive. The discussions on tragic *catharsis*, on "disinterested pleasure," on aesthetic "play," and on numerous other questions do not lessen the confusion and even seem at times to have been introduced for no better reason than to give the work that exhaustiveness necessary to a philosophical treatise.

Nevertheless, Kant had proved to the satisfaction of his contemporaries, that the old logical philosophy was crude and

unproductive. Human understanding had a certain discoverable definable limit, and the metaphysical world lay outside that limit. But Kant was himself too much a descendant of the very philosophy he had discredited, to confess or to suspect the mysticism inherent in his thought; and he was the unwitting sanction of the romantics, who revolted against the ancient rule of reason, and who desired to believe that the true knowledge of the spiritual world was granted to a faculty of the mind, hitherto ignored or despised, the faculty of imagination. Unsympathetic as Kant would have been towards romanticism, he was, ironically, its immediate and most influential prophet. The idea of beauty, once enunciated by Kant, became the supreme solvent of every intellectual and moral difficulty.

2. *The Philosophers of Romanticism.*

Even to Hegel, the one thinker who stood out against the tide of irrational romanticism, the voice of beauty spoke the sacred language of the metaphysical world. "Truth is Idea as Idea," he wrote, "but there is no physical or material existence in truth; thought contemplates therein nothing but the universal Idea. But the Idea must manifest itself and realize itself in the physical world. Truth also as such has existence. But when it is physical existence it is immediately recognized by consciousness, and the concept remains immediately at one with the physical appearance, the Idea is not only true but beautiful. In this way beauty may be defined as the physical appearance of the Idea (als das sinnliche Scheinen der Idee)." [1] "Art is truly the return of man to himself, a descent into his own soul's depths, by which process art unfolds within our common humanity a new holy of holies, in

other words, unfolds the depths and heights of the human soul, the universal shared of all men in joy and suffering, in endeavour, action and destiny." [2] "In human art, we are not dealing merely with playthings, however pleasant or useful they may be, but with the liberation of the human spirit from the substance and forms of finite condition." [3]

Hegel had accepted Kant's preliminary thesis, that philosophy must begin with a theory of knowledge. But in the teeth of Kant's delimitation, he contended that the understanding was a faculty which could be adapted to a knowledge of the metaphysical world, because that world was itself the idea of understanding. Hegel reared up a grand structure, dedicated to a spiritualized understanding, no longer the organ of knowledge, but itself knowledge, the only true knowledge. If, therefore, the Idea is logical and rational, so must its physical manifestations be also. Hence Hegel could speak of a science of art. The content of a work of art, he said, is definable; the theme of a poem or picture can be summarized and demonstrated in words. Every work of art must have been thought out and must contain an element of reasoning (eine Vernunftigkeit). The artist is seldom a philosopher, it is true; "but only fools are of opinion that the genuine artist does not in the least know what his hands and senses are about." [4] And yet even Hegel must sometimes qualify his intellectual rigor and commit himself to a state of mind more congenial to the romanticism of his contemporaries. "It is impossible," he writes, "for the understanding (Verstand) alone to lay hold of beauty. The understanding remains rooted in the finite, that is, in the incomplete and untrue abstraction. Beauty is, on the contrary, essentially infinite and free." [5]

Hegel lived and taught about a generation after Kant. The cult of romanticism, against which he made his strong but lonely protest, was already the order of the day. There was a distinct mystical consciousness abroad and a presentiment that artistic inspiration was of the same nature as religious experience. There was, for instance, the doctrine of aesthetic irony. According to Friedrich Schlegel, the universe is an empty appearance, at which the Ego, the one true reality can smile, standing aloof, like a creative artist or God, from creatures of his own making which he need not take seriously. Art is therefore a parody of the metaphysical world, "a transcendental farce." This entertaining doctrine was taken up by a number of thinkers, Tieck, Novalis, Solger, and others. But it was a philosophy incapable of descending to the plane of criticism and everyday usefulness. Kant too had been wrapt in the heights and his descent into the arts had been unmeaning and reactionary. Hegel had not lost sight of the arts and had even displayed the abilities of a critic; but his philosophy was unacceptable in its time. The ironists were not taken seriously, and Hegel, among others, poked fun at them. There was, therefore, room for a coherent affirmation of romanticism by a philosopher of recognized importance, who was not also blind to the common needs of art. That philosopher was Schopenhauer.

Schopenhauer was a professed disciple of Kant, but he lived long enough after Kant to realize the pitfalls in the way of his great master's philosophy. For him, as for Kant, the metaphysical world was above and beyond normal human comprehension, but the sense of beauty had given humanity the key to it. Beauty is therefore irrational and must be perceived in an object prior to any of the intellectual reactions

which that object may have upon the mind. "If a man," writes Schopenhauer, "ceases to consider the where, the when, the why and the whither of things, and looks simply and solely at the what; if further he does not allow abstract thought, the concepts of the understanding, to take possession of his consciousness, but gives the whole power of his mind to perception (Anschauung), sinks himself entirely in this, and lets his whole consciousness be filled with the quiet contemplation of the natural object actually present, whether a landscape, a tree, a mountain, a building, or whatever it may be; in as much as he loses himself in this object, forgets even his own individuality, his will, and only continues to exist as the pure subject, the clear mirror of the object, . . . then he knows the Idea, the eternal form; he is a pure, will-less, painless, timeless subject of knowledge." "We may therefore define art," he writes again, "as the way of contemplating things, independent of the principle of understanding, in opposition to the way of contemplating things which proceeds in accordance with that principle, and which is the method of experience and science." Genius is merely the gift of this kind of contemplation; and genius, as is often observed, he says, has a natural horror of science and reasoning. Imitators must therefore miss the inner life of a work of art, proceeding as they do, not from the Idea, but from second-hand concepts.

The sublime, on which Kant's aesthetics had more than once run aground, has no dangers for Schopenhauer. The sublime, like the beautiful, is the contemplation of the Idea; but whereas in the beautiful there is no effort, the sublime is a deliberate act of will, "a conscious and forcible breaking away from the relations of the object to the will, which we

recognize as unfavorable, by a free and conscious transcending of the will and the knowledge related to it." Hence the desolate, the tragic and the stormy are fit objects of the sublime, because the will must transcend their initial unpleasantness. Tragedy, moreover, appeals to Schopenhauer's pessimism, and tragic *catharsis* is easily solved as an insight into the veritable reality of the Idea.

Schopenhauer has a vague notion of the relative merits of the arts. At one place, he puts tragedy in the highest office; at another place, the representation of the human body — "No evil can touch him who looks on human beauty; he feels himself at one with himself and with the world," — at another place, music, — "Music expresses in a perfectly universal language, in a homogeneous material, mere tones, and with the greatest determinateness and truth, the inner nature, the in-itself of the world (das innere Wesen, das An-sich der Welt)...." Architecture appears not to be high in thc scale of worthiness; but, he says, "the great merit of the architect consists in achieving and attaining the pure aesthetic ends, in spite, of their subordination to other ends which are foreign to them." Yet, more usually, Schopenhauer declares for the belief of the romantics that the spiritual value of an art, depends neither in its content, subject matter, nor technique. "If the poet," he says, "is always the universal man, then all that has ever moved a human heart, all that human nature in any situation has ever produced from itself, all that dwells and broods in any human breast, all this is his theme and his material.... Therefore the poet may as well sing of voluptuousness as of mysticism, write comedies or tragedies, represent the sublime or the common mind, — according to his humour or vocation. And no one has the

right to prescribe to the poet what he ought to be, noble and sublime, moral, pious, Christian, one thing or another, still less to reproach him because he is one thing and not another. He is the mirror of mankind, and brings to its consciousness what it feels and does."

3. *Philosophy versus Poetry.*

The old logic had perished by its own hand. The artist and poet were now superior to the philosopher, and the philosopher had been glad to prove them so. Among contemporary poets there was a movement of self-assertion, in celebration of the triumph of art and poetry over philosophy, of imagination over understanding. Goethe represented the archetypal poet of romanticism, a man of the imagination, affecting to despise the understanding and its works. As a young man of twenty-four years, in his essay on Strassburg Cathedral, he wrote disdainfully of the architects of the Renaissance: — "Had you felt more than you measured (Hättest du mehr gefühlt als gemessen), had the spirit of the masses of masonry, at which you gazed, come over you, . . . then you would have created designs necessary and true, and a living beauty would have flowed out of them to you." In later years, Goethe is said to have been ashamed of this essay; but the ideas in it remained with him, if moderated and matured. He often used to express his contempt of a dilettantism that criticized, reasoned and annotated without insight or inspiration, and he would insist that it was possible to have taste without philosophy. "I hate everything that merely instructs me," he said, "without increasing or indirectly arousing my activity." "My friends held me incompetent in philosophical discussion. But I, as an artist, considered this a

little matter. Indeed, I prefer that the principle by which I work should be hidden from me." "I have never thought much about thinking (Ich habe nie über das Denken gedacht)."

The drama of *Faust* typified the weariness and disillusion of pure intellectualism. "I cannot help laughing at the aestheticians," said Goethe to Eckermann on one occasion, "who torment themselves in trying, by some abstract words, to reduce to a conception that inexpressible thing to which we give the name of beauty. Beauty is a primeval phenomenon, which itself never makes its appearance, but the reflection of which is visible in a thousand different utterances of the creative mind, and is as various as nature herself." "As if I could tell what 'idea' I meant to embody in my *Faust*! I am rather of the opinion that the more incommensurable and the more incomprehensible to the intellect the poetic production is, so much the better is it." "Poets produce their best works, as women do pretty children, without thinking about it, or knowing how it is done."

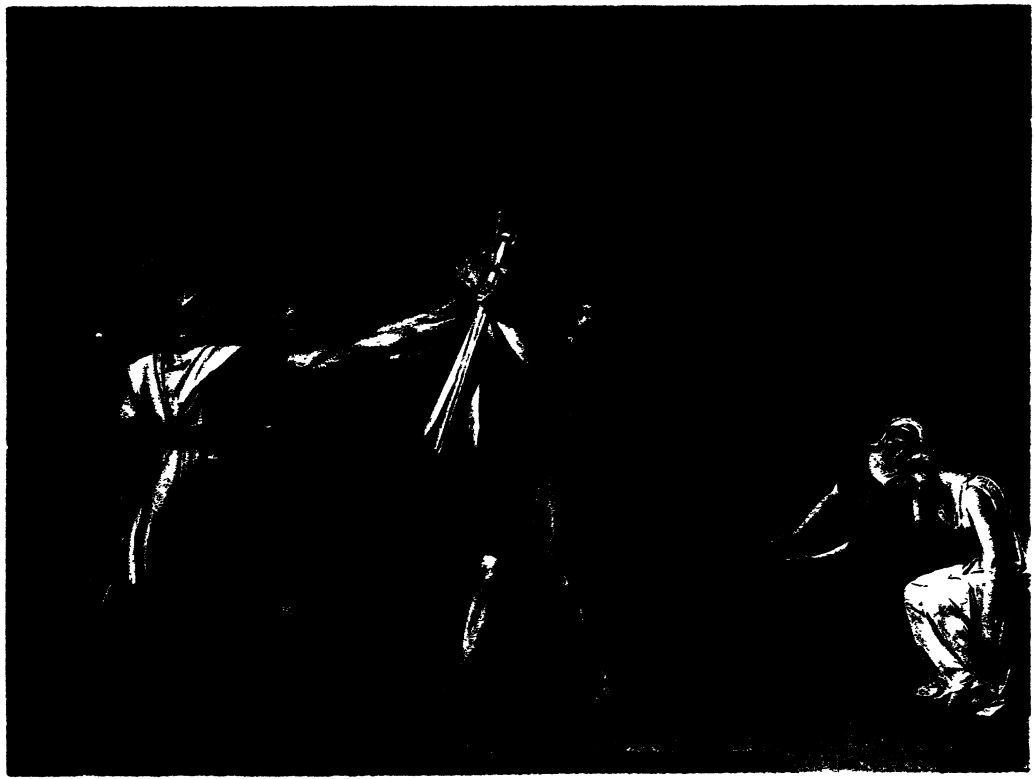
Their contemporaries used often to contrast Goethe and Schiller, Goethe the man of imagination and Schiller of understanding. Schiller himself felt the contrast keenly and was seemingly overpowered at times by the richer and more abundant genius of Goethe; and he would reproach himself for his undeniable talent for intellectual speculations. Yet he was a true romantic. He put his trust in his poetry rather than in his philosophy, and discovered to himself in things physical the symbols of a spiritual world beyond the reach of logical thought. He was fond of speaking, as Kant had done, of the "play" between imagination and the spirit in artistic creation. "In my earlier years," he wrote in a letter to Goethe,

"the poetic mind generally got the better of me when I ought to have philosophised, and my philosophic mind when I wished to poetise. Even now it frequently enough happens that imagination intrudes upon my abstractions, and cold reason upon my poetical productions." [6] "But still I am no less fully conscious of the infinite difference between life and reasoning (zwischen dem Leben und dem Räsonnement), and cannot, in such melancholy moments, help perceiving a want in my own nature. This much, however, is certain — the poet is the only true man, and the best philosopher is but a caricature in comparison with him." [7]

4. *The Ideal and the Real.*

While the philosophers and poets of romantic Germany were thus engaged with generalities, they did not neglect the special problems that the older classicism had left them, and it was not long before they had to choose between the two irrepressibles, idealism and realism in art. The last chapter discussed to some extent the progress of realism and the conception of character in art, and indicated the tendency of romanticism towards realism. The idealist speculations of Winckelmann had indirectly introduced the topic into Germany. But it was in 1797 that the dormant fires of controversy flared up in earnest. In that year, Ludwig Hirt, an art historian and a follower of the recent advances in archaeology, published an Essay, *Über das Kunstschöne*, and spoke of fine art as based ultimately on the real, the individual and the characteristic. The poet Goethe resolutely proclaimed his preference for "characteristic" beauty, and the cause of realism was at once assured of a full measure of attention.

The philosophic Schiller found the controversy much to



THE OATH OF THE HORATII, BY JACQUES LOUIS DAVID

his liking. He defined a work of art as the descent of the ideal into the physical plane, and artistic inspiration as the instantaneous vision of that ideal in its characteristic, physical object. "The imagination continually strives," he wrote, "after intuitions, that is after complete and concrete representations, and is incessantly employed in exhibiting the universal in a single instance (das Allgemeine in einem einzelnen Falle), confining it to space and time, . . . and giving the abstract a corporeity." And "when we have exhibited that universal in a single instance, we take from fancy the fetters that the understanding had imposed upon it, and give it the power to demonstrate itself creatively." Hence a true work of art, said Schiller, subtly expresses both a characteristic ideal and an ideal characteristic. "Totality of expression is a thing demanded of every poetic work, for it must possess character or it is nothing. The perfect poet, however, gives expression to what is common to all mankind."

Hegel, the reactionary, leaned uncertainly towards idealism in the fine arts, but regarded a work of art as "the characterisation of ideal beauty." "In art," he said, "the Ideal itself is manifested as living individuality." But Hegel knew well enough that the classical method of averages was not idealization; "the idealised figures of the Greeks are true characterisation . . . the universality of their ideal conception does not exclude the characteristic determination which belongs to each of them." Hegel was a liberal enough critic to admire the Dutch *genre* and Murillo's Beggar Boy pictures.[8] Schelling had much the same point of view as Hegel. He sought to strike a just balance between the rival claims of the ideal and the characteristic. Hence, he said, "in the most perfect and godlike forms of beauty, not only must there be

every fulness of form of which human nature is capable, but this fulness must be of such a kind that we could imagine it in the world; the essence strives to realise itself in the real, — without limitation, the limitless could not appear."

Schopenhauer had given the philosophy of romanticism its most popular affirmation, and in Schopenhauer also the controversy between idealism and realism in art came to its most satisfactory settlement. Beauty, he wrote, is a perception prior to logical elaboration; therefore the artist may not borrow or select a number of beauties in order to combine them in his own work, for to do so would imply the use of his understanding. Furthermore any real object is a sufficient interpretation of the metaphysical Idea and requires no more idealization. "It is obvious that the man of genius produces the works of poetic art by means of an anticipation of what is characteristic, just as he produces the works of plastic and pictorial art by means of a prophetic anticipation of the beautiful." "As the chemist obtains solid precipitates by combining perfectly clear and transparent liquids, the poet understands how to precipitate, as it were, the concrete, the individual, the perceptible idea, out of the abstract and transparent universality of the concepts by the manner in which he combines them."

Romanticism was a mystical philosophy and was thus committed to a metaphysical Ideal. But upon the physical plane, that is upon the plane of artistic expression, it was consistent and plausible in its faith in the real, the individual and the characteristic.

5. *The Discovery of Pure Form.*

The philosophy of romanticism justified to man the "hypo-

static" identity and validity of the sacred triad, beauty, truth and goodness.[9] It had found in human thought and action a single principle, a principle above reason and irrelevant to reason. It had found the same principle operative in fine art, and it had thus given a new sense to an old motto, sometimes attributed to Michelangelo: "There is but one art." The conception of the one art as the expression of one incomprehensible ideal for ever removed that troublesome opposition between the so-called imitative arts, like sculpture and painting, and the so-called non-imitative arts, like architecture or music. It solved the venerable problem of tragic *catharsis*. It solved the equally venerable problem of the ideal and real. Whatever the subject matter of a representation, whatever the technical medium, all art excites one passion and embodies one truth. "For surely whatever seizes the imagination," wrote Schlegel, "and powerfully impresses the mind, may claim kindred with that supreme organization we call the poetical; and whether our thoughts be awakened, and our hearts touched by the simple representation of outward forms, by the melody of verse or the greater charm of music, is not the moving principle the same?" The old connoisseurs of the Renaissance, who used to compare architecture to music and discussed the rivalry of painting and sculpture, had hardly risen to such heights as this. The Renaissance had never quite removed fine art from the taint of practicality;[10] but Romanticism had raised it up to the plane of pure contemplation, far above the fret of everyday life and identified it with the deepest passions possible to human nature.

Even today while the world is awakening from so many of its dearest romantic dreams, the sublime doctrine of the one

art is still accepted. There has been within the last thirty years a distinct return to rational philosophy, especially among the Latin nations of Europe, and it is a return that seems to be of hardier stuff than the revivals to which the nineteenth century gave birth. The Roman Catholic Church has rediscovered the old scholastic philosophy and found the logic of St. Thomas Aquinas a refreshing corrective in this age of wayward impulses. And the world of art has been shaken to its foundations by the aesthetics of Croce.

More will have to be said about Croce elsewhere, but a passing mention of him here, as conclusion to a Chapter on the philosophers of romanticism, will not be out of place. There is nothing very novel in Croce's basic theory of intuition, except in the thoroughness and success with which it is applied. The quotations from Schopenhauer, given above, contain recognizable "Croceanisms." But Croce's great importance is his Hegelian rationality, and his philosophy is an effective farewell to the extreme imaginative license of the nineteenth century. And yet, for all his rationality, Croce still clings unquestioningly to the romantic doctrine of art as essentially one, an activity of the spirit not beholden to reason or morals, a "science" of pure contemplation. It would not be hard to call Croce the last of the philosophers of romanticism.

Chapter VIII

ROMANTIC PAINTING IN FRANCE

1. David and his Pupils.
2. Delacroix.
3. Ingres.
4. Les Artistes Officiels.
5. The New Realism.
6. The Barbizonists.
7. The Impressionists.
8. The Post-Impressionists.



THE CORONATION OF NAPOLEON, BY JACQUES LOUIS DAVID

Chapter VIII

ROMANTIC PAINTING IN FRANCE

1. *David and His Pupils.*

At first sight the history of French painting in the nineteenth century seems complex and incoherent, but its details fall into line the moment that it is considered as the termination of the old academic controversies over realism and color. In the course of the nineteenth century, the rout of academicism, begun by De Piles, Dubos and Diderot, was completed, and the new schools of realism and color remained masters of the field. But before the main issues of realism and color could be taken over from the stage in which Diderot had left them, there occurred the neo-classic and Napoleonic phases of painting, when the issues were temporarily obscured. To that phase belong the careers of David and his pupils.

Jacques Louis David was born in 1748. He was a grandnephew of Boucher, whose art however was never to his taste. The generous Boucher, appreciating David's genius, advised him to study under Vien, a painter of some distinction, who had come under the influence of the neo-classic teaching of Count Caylus. Vien and David proved kindred spirits, and the pupil did his master credit. In 1775, David was awarded the Academy's Grand Prix, and in the same year, Vien was appointed director of the School at Rome. Vien and David accordingly continued their happy association abroad. The Rome of that time was reacting vigorously to the neo-classicism of Winckelmann; the great Mengs was full of years

and honors; Canova, the sculptor, was a young man in the first flush of success; Quatremère de Quincy, the bigoted archaeologist was then resident in Rome. Ten years before during his studentship in Rome, Benjamin West, President to be of the Royal Academy, had been converted to neo-classicism and was soon busy reclaiming the artists of the English-speaking world.[1] Vien and David were like returned exiles to the city.

David's first mature picture, the "Oath of the Horatii," was exhibited in Paris in 1784. It illustrated his principles and made his name. It was bought by Louis XVI. The public was delighted; but the Academy was unmoved. On his return to Paris, David was immediately beseiged by pupils; his became the most popular and fanatical of the ateliers. The Academy procrastinated and refused to elect him to the professorship he undoubtedly deserved. A quarrel was impending and was hastened by an accident.

David's favorite pupil, Germain Drouais, only twenty-one years of age, won the Grand Prix. David had lavished on him all the favors of his affection and generosity, and now, delighted with his success, accompanied him to Rome. But there the youth died. Even the Academy paid a ready tribute to an artist whose brilliant life had been so suddenly cut off. But public sympathy, ever unreasonable and ever responsive to a tragedy, was enlisted wholly on the side of David. The Revolution followed, but Drouais' death was not forgotten. The Academy continued to operate, and two more of David's pupils, in successive years, won the Grand Prix.

The Revolution was David's opportunity. He felt himself a man born to a mission. He placed himself and his art at the service of regenerated France and projected his famous series

of Republican pictures. His neo-classic taste was flattering to the new Catos and Scipios of his nation. In 1792, he was elected member of the Convention, and voted resolutely for the execution of the King, his one-time patron. He then demanded and obtained the dissolution of the Academy, that "feudal" Academy, as he called it, — "inutile, ridicule, méprisée, degradée jusqu'au plus coupable avilissement, créée pour la servitude, école de flatterie, de servilité, d'abjection, prolongeante les espérances insensées du despotisme. . . ." The School at Rome was dissolved automatically. David's vengeance was complete.

David resolved on absolute power. The surviving artists of the Academy, like Greuze, were charitably forgotten, or like Regnault, conformed at last to the neo-classic vogue. Prud'hon alone, that quaint but gifted survival of the age of Madame Pompadour, could afford to cling to the academic tradition. David called him contemptuously a second Boucher, but was reassured that Prud'hon was a provincial born and bred, that he was merely a designer of articles of luxury and that his classical ambitions, far from aspiring to the heroic, rose no higher than the conventional Cupids and Zephyrs of the boudoir.

Following the Terror in 1794, the Institut was founded. In 1803, it was reconstructed by decree of Napoleon. Fine arts was one of its four classes. It was intended to replace the old Academy, but made no direct provision for education. It exercised its authority over students by its awards of prizes, notably, by its award of the Grand Prix. Naturally this authority was confounded with that of the all-puissant David. The School at Rome was re-founded in 1801 and at once subserved the same authority.

On his elevation to power, Napoleon was inclined to honor David. Evidently he divined in David a second Le Brun, well qualified to illustrate the glory of his Empire. David was distant, but eventually made one of those grand gestures with which he had not long since sent his king to the guillotine, and submitted. He roused himself to paint Napoleonic scenes and tried to conjure up in them the old fiery pride of his Republican days. Professionally he reached the apogee of his career; but his more daring admirers were afraid that his fine classic independence had been sacrificed. Napoleon commissioned him to paint the Coronation of 1803, and on it David labored three years. The crowded ceremony was depicted in minute detail; the workmanship was more than magnificent, but hardly neo-classic. "Anecdotal painting (la peinture anecdotique)" was not to the taste of an idealist, who scorned the paraphernalia of reality, and would have preferred to paint the Pope, the Emperor and his court heroically naked in the style of a Grecian bas-relief. In 1810, David was commissioned to paint the "Distribution of the Eagles." It was his last great picture. His fortunes collapsed with his Emperor's. Louis XVIII pressed him to remain in France, and offered him his royal protection, but David went into voluntary exile at Brussels. For the remaining years of his life, he reverted to classic themes, but never won back his old position.

David's art was a curious combination of classic and romantic elements. His temperament was romantic; he painted, as it was said, "in the style of a Jacobin Club orator." He was devoted to histrionics, in his art, as in his life. He loathed the trifling sentimentality of Fragonard, Greuze, Boucher, Prud'hon, the latter-day academicians of the "Style Pompadour."

His technical accomplishment recalled Poussin and Le Brun. The Napoleonic phase of his career was uncongenial to him, but it was the first chapter in the long history of nineteenth century historical and illustrative painting in France. David left behind him a taste for the dramatic and emotional, a taste for the classic, and a taste for pure illustration, a mixed legacy to be divided among quarrelsome heirs.

David's own pupils held fast to the neo-classicism of their beloved master. The extremists among them, shut their eyes to any art, which they believed to be later than Pericles. Pericles, they said, was another Louis XIV, a corrupter of pure art. They preached a reform of manners and were to be seen parading the gardens of the Luxembourg in Greek costume. They went by the name of Primitives. Yet such follies pointed to the coming of an artist like Ingres, who would take up his stand on behalf of the neo-classic doctrines, less theatrically but with as much vigor.

David's historical and illustrative work was the occasion of an outcrop of painters, whose subjects were chiefly military, and who welcomed the example of their great teacher to paint the incidents of real life, in real locations and costumes, while apparently obeying neo-classic laws. Upon his exile, David's atelier passed under the direction of one such painter, Antoine Jean Gros. Gros was the son of a miniaturist, from whom he may have inherited his gifts of observation and patient detail. He became a pupil of David in the first years of the Revolution. Those years were not of the happiest and he was often in terrible straits. With David's ready help, which never failed his confessed disciples, Gros made his way to Italy in order to complete his studies. But at Genoa he was turned aside by an exhibition of the works

of Rubens, and, perhaps against his better judgment, he recognized his true master. In Genoa accordingly, he stayed, excusing his lack of enterprise by his lack of money. In Genoa too, he made the acquaintance of Josephine, who introduced him to Napoleon. Napoleon determined to make use of him and appointed him Inspecteur aux Revues, a post which enabled him to follow the army in its Italian campaign and observe it continually. In 1801, he returned to Paris to devote himself to painting the scenes of war and misery he had so often seen. In 1804, he was commissioned to paint an incident of the Egyptian campaign, Napoleon's visit to the stricken soldiers in the pest-house at Jaffa. Gros' quick perception appreciated the opportunity of horror and realism, and he scored a sensation. Visitors to the Salon hung crowns and palms on the picture, verses were recited and banquets were spread in his honor. Second only to David, his proud master, he was acclaimed the greatest painter of the day.

After the fall of Napoleon and the exile of David, the guardianship of the neo-classic taste, no enviable position, devolved naturally on Gros. Conscious of his artistic responsibilities, uneasy of political complications, and under the direct reprimand of David, Gros forsook his military subjects, and, with them, his *métier*. For a time he served Louis XVIII and was covered with decorations. He was made member of the Institut, professor of the Ecole des Beaux Arts, officer of the Legion of Honour, and baron. The times were indeed bewildering to an artist, careless of his political leanings, who loved his work as much as he loved success. But Gros' star had deserted him. He had turned back bravely to the classic themes of David's earlier style, but they only called forth the sarcastic comments of the critics. The avid

public was already taking the measure of new champions and impatiently expecting a second clash of arms. Gros became a prey to disappointment and injured dignity, and died at last, it was said, by his own hand.

Gros' realism made ready the way for the work of Géricault. In the Salon of 1812, Géricault had exhibited his "Officier de Chasseurs à Cheval," a military subject, like those that Gros had already made the vogue and of the same vigorous execution. The picture had attracted and puzzled David himself. "Where has this come from?" the great man had asked, "it is a touch I do not recognise." Géricault was then twenty years of age and a pupil of the academic painter Guérin, whom he used constantly to exasperate by professing his admiration for Rubens. Géricault studied in Italy during the last years of Napoleon's régime, and returned to Paris in 1818. Public opinion had just been shocked by the loss of the transport-ship Medusa, a tragedy on a par with the Titanic of more recent memory. Géricault projected a colossal canvas, representing a party of its survivors, tortured by exposure and thirst, on a storm-tossed raft at sea. He omitted no detail. He sought out the ship's carpenter who had built the original raft. Two survivors posed as his models. From a near-by mortuary, he bought dead bodies. And in this atmosphere of autopsy, he painted his scene of horror. Such calculating accuracy had never before been seen in French art.

Depressed by the criticism which his masterpiece aroused, Géricault retired for two years to England, where his "Raft" was exhibited with more success. But a sense of misery seemed to settle upon him, and his choice of subjects was not calculated to relieve his mind. One exercise in horror was

followed by others, and he now painted pictures like his "Mad Woman" or his "Paralytic." He gave way at last to extravagance and excess and died in Paris in 1824, at the early age of thirty-three years.

The critic who admired Gros could not long withhold his admiration from Géricault. But Gros was ostensibly a loyal classicist, and Géricault a novelty no analysis could place. Both were further removed from David than they well knew, and both had been powerfully drawn to Rubens, the old thorn in the flesh of the academic tradition. A revival of the realist and colorist controversies, which had disturbed the peace of the Academy in the past was imminent, and in the terms of those controversies, a familiar ground, the semi-conscious variance of David, Gros and Géricault would perhaps become defined.

2. *Delacroix.*

The death of Géricault left the conduct of the reaction against neo-classicism in the hands a new leader Eugène Delacroix. Delacroix had been nourished in the spirit of revolt from his childhood. His family belonged to the violent faction of the Revolution. He was an emotional youth, prone to ardent friendships of the antique pattern, yet afflicted with loneliness and all the nameless soul-stirrings of romanticism. His education was thorough and he grew up a man of wide culture and accomplishment. Together with Géricault, he studied painting in the atelier of Guérin. He also availed himself of the picture galleries of the Louvre, which the Convention had thrown open to the public, and it was therefore not necessary for him to travel to Genoa, as Gros had done, to see a collection of Rubens.

Delacroix' first Salon picture was his "Dante and Virgil in Hell," exhibited in 1822, a theme of obvious romantic suggestion. It was greeted by some critics with a grudging applause, by others with insults and laughter. Guérin, his master, was infuriated. Delécluse, the critic-in-chief of the Davidian party, dubbed it "une véritable tartouillarde." Gros, more sympathetic, at once perceived its Rubenist antecedents and admired it impartially. But the world of criticism was aware of a presence it could not trifle with, and Delacroix was alternately observed with hope and consternation. It remained his fate throughout his life to raise up storms with every picture he exposed. They were the epic days of journalistic art-criticism, the words Classic and Romantic were already party tags, and earnest men devoted their very souls to controversy and bitterness.

For the Salon of 1824, Delacroix had painted the "Massacre of Scio," an incident from the recent Greek War of Independence. The picture was called "savage, delirious, drunken, barbarous." The Director of the Beaux Arts solemnly advised the painter to submit himself to a course of drawing from the antique. "It had become the abomination of painting," wrote Delacroix, "I was refused water and salt; mais j'étais enchanté de moi-même!" Constable, the English landscape painter, had exhibited for the first time at the Salon of that year. So moved was Delacroix with seeing Constable's work that, so goes the story, the "Massacre" was withdrawn for some days and retouched. "Admirable man," he wrote of Constable, "he is one of England's glories. . . . He and Turner are the true reformers. Our school has greatly benefited by their example." Delacroix' association with England dated from that moment, the world of Shakespeare

and Byron was revealed to him, and he became one of the agents of all those aspects of English life and thought which were to avert so strong an influence in the romanticism of Continental Europe.

Delacroix persevered. He traveled in Morocco and was captivated by the dazzling lights and colors of "oriental" scenery and "oriental" types. Following the lead of Gros' "Jaffa," he painted a series of oriental subjects. Delacroix never traveled in Italy, on principle, so it was rumored, lest the classic masters should corrupt his taste and his originality. In the later years of his life, he was employed on ambitious mural decorations, in the Chambre des Deputés, the Hôtel de Ville and the Louvre. To the end he carried on his desperate war with criticism.

The *Journal* of Delacroix, kept at irregular intervals between 1823 and the year of his death 1863, has preserved an intimate record of his work, thoughts and travels. He reveals himself a man self-absorbed, loving fame, but without vanity. He makes occasional moral asides and philosophical reflections, which increase in length and frequency with the advance of years. He dabbles in literary questions and is fond of drawing parallels between the arts. He is well-informed in the musical and dramatic affairs of the day, and accustomed to the companionship of a host of contemporary celebrities in every walk of life. It is not without justification therefore that he makes the exacting demands of universality and omniscience on his ideal artist. The later entries in the *Journal* are fuller and more regular, and there are continual complaints of fatigue and sickness.

The sentences of Delacroix are embellished with romanticisms. He is all "verve, vigueur, force, véhémence, chaleur,



DANTE AND VIRGIL IN HELL, BY EUGENE DELACROIX

enthousiasme, éclat, imagination." He makes repeated invocations to his soul. The quest of the Great Style, "le style épique," is the passion of his life. Dante was his familiar. He expressly listens to music for the "great passions (les grandes passions)" it inspires in him. "Nourris-toi," he says, "des grandes et sévères idées qui nourrissent l'âme." Ennuie, hypochondria, mystical reverie, solitude, and the drunken fevers of creative energy have all their several parts to play in a full and complex life.

The idea of decadence has become set in his mind. Academies, schools, critics, eclectics, aesthetes, amateurs are all decadents. His few references to the Institut are not relieved by their impartiality. He reveres the antique with all his heart, but is alive to the folly of archaeological revivals and academic styles. The imitation of a form does not and cannot penetrate the spirit of a model. Every student is wise to copy the antique and the masters; but a time must come in his life when he must say irrevocably: "Enough of models; j'ai assez de ces modèles: je regarde à present en moi et autour de moi." The process of imitation and the processes of imagination, the supreme principle of artistic creation, are mutually exclusive operations of the mind. Imitation does not permit the necessary licenses, "les licences pittoresques," practised by the greatest artists. And for that reason, he adds, cautiously admitting the blasphemy, "it will be discovered one day that Rembrandt was a greater painter than Raphael"; Raphael is too regular, and his elegance degenerates into mannerism. The irregularity of an ancient ruin has more charm and naturalness than the mannered reconstructions of an academic master.

The rendering of life is the artist's highest office, continues

Delacroix, "d'animer, de faire vivre, de rendre la vie!" But the artist's soul is above a mere photography. "Nature," he used to say, "is a dictionary, containing the words that go into the composition of a sentence or a story; it is no composition in itself." "A realistic poetry," he says, "could one conceive of that monstrosity, is a contradiction in terms." Realism is the last resort of the novelty-monger, straining to revive the blasé taste of a degenerate public. "Until my voyage in Morocco," he says, "I too loved realism, ignorantly believing it to be the way of truth," but later he learned that "the first of principles is the necessity of sacrifice." Too much research has led the age into decay; the loss of antique simplicity is the corruption of taste. Naturalistic detail, "l'inquiétude des détails," distracts the eye and belittles the chances of the grand passion, for pictorial comprehension is essentially instantaneous, unlike music or literature, whose comprehension is successive. "Rubens is a remarkable example of the abuse of details." Therefore nature must have her beauties plainly indicated by selection and emphasis. In that sense only is beauty an idealized truth, "le beau est le vrai idéalisé." Observe first that which strikes eye and mind; observe the characters of things. Delacroix anticipates at all points the abbreviated and unfinished technique of impressionism.

An early entry in the *Journal* reads: "The first and most important thing in painting is line and contour. If the painting is firm and its forms well defined, (ferme et terminée,) the rest may be neglected." But after the critical tour in Morocco, Delacroix begins his infinite preoccupation with color. As is evident from daily entries, the "Massacre of Scio" was painted head by head, figure by figure; but later

entries upon the progress of a picture are more interested in color masses, simultaneously developed over the whole field of the canvas. There are notes and observations on the properties of tones, shadows, transparency, reflections, juxtaposition, on opposition and value, on multiplicity and division. Clearly Delacroix was revolving in his mind the impressionist principles of complementary colors and divisionism. He says in more than one place: "The enemy of painting is the colour grey." Rubens never used a black; "il n'y met surtout pas de noir." "There are no shadows properly speaking, there are only reflections." Here, as always, the point in question is referred to the unimpeachable authority of Rubens, — of Rubens the greatest of colorists, admirable even in his faults, "Gloire à cet Homère de la peinture!"

As time passes technical preoccupations confuse and deepen the simpler earlier opinions of Delacroix. A picture becomes the opportunity for experiments in color, to such an extent that the exact function of "subject" and "interest" of the picture become matters of considerable doubt in his mind. At one point he says: "Painting has not always need of subjects (la peinture n'a pas toujours besoin d'un sujet)." The element of illustration tends to become secondary, although it is still evident that certain subjects of "sublime" import continued to recommend themselves to him and guide his choice of titles throughout life. The modern principle of pictorial design was borne upon him, coupled with the principle that delectation is the sole end and aim of art — "not to imitate nature, but to strike the imagination." In a very early entry, he had quoted Madame de Staël to the effect that painting, like music or architecture, is sometimes above thought, "au-dessus de la pensée," and gains from "vague-

ness." The last entry of the *Journal* reads as follows: "The first merit of a picture is to be an entertainment to the eye (une fête pour l'œil) that is not to say that a picture is without reason. It is like beautiful verses; — all the reason in the world will not prevent their being bad verses, if they grate on the ear. One speaks of having an ear for verse thus every eye is not capable of detecting the finesse of paintings. Many eyes are deranged or inert, they see the object, but not its exquisiteness."

Delacroix was the great painter of French romanticism and he expressed, often for the first time, thoughts still current in the modern world. He succeeded in eliminating pure line drawing from his work and turned towards color as the principal expressive element in pictorial design. He was born to quarrel with the classical indifference to color and to break absolutely with the old academic philosophy. His devotion to Rubens, his avoidance of the antique, his permission of personal tastes and licenses, were all in the tradition of revolt begun years before by Roger de Piles. He still had the moral sense to value high themes for his subject-matter and to rise above the commonplaces of later realist painters, but his self-confessed idealism bore very little resembance to the academic idealism of David or, more remotely, of Poussin. His art was the immediate point of departure of the realism of Courbet and of the color theories of the Barbizonists, and finally of impressionism.

But Delacroix's victory over the academic painters, especially over all painters of the neo-classic school of David and Gros, was by no means decisive. Neo-classicism found a new champion in Ingres, an artist of gifts as great in their own way as Delacroix', and in the end the revolt of Delacroix be-

came more of an extremist agitation than a movement in which the majority of painters could participate.

3. *Ingres.*

The neo-classicists despised Delacroix, but were alarmed by defections and desertions within their own ranks. Conscious of their want of leadership, they conjured fortune for some figure-head, and Ingres was fortune's answer. Ingres was one of David's pupils and the Grand Prix winner of 1801. He had spent many years in Rome, quietly studying while the critics and the public of Paris raged. He had been employed by Napoleon but was content to remain in comparative obscurity. Delacroix alone seems to have been sensible of his unusal merits at this early time. But he gradually established his name, and in 1825 was elected member of the Institut. In the Salon of 1827, he exhibited his "Apotheosis of Homer," a work which ingenuously but convincingly reasserted the forgotten principles of David. It was acclaimed the work of mature genius, and the partisans of Delacroix professed their victory only half-assured. Ingres was immediately thrust into a position of authority and became the rallying point of the declining neo-classic cause. But, unlike Delacroix, his was not the fiber to thrive upon the noisy turbulence of Paris art. He was a man of pettish temper. It is related of him that, meeting Delacroix at a social gathering, he had exclaimed: "Drawing, sir, is the probity of art," and had left without another word. Half disgusted, half frightened by criticism, he determined to reside in the classic peace and quiet of the Rome he had known of old. He returned to Paris only after the lapse of years, when he was persuaded that his influence was making headway against his detractors and that he would

receive at last the recognition he felt to be his due. He died in Paris in 1867, having outlived his life-long rival, Delacroix, by four years.

Ingres was the absolute complement of Delacroix, a reversion to the old academic principles of line-drawing and the ideal. His color was pale and lifeless, his figures were abstracted from antiques, polished in the style of David, but wanting in David's emotionalism. Both the sentiment and the technique of Delacroix were detestable and incomprehensible to him. His temperament was classically cold and he could not fall in line with the new tendencies of the age. He played a reactionary rôle, and tempered the pride and over confidence of Delacroix' adherents.

4. *Les Artistes Officiels.*

But Ingres' pupils were weak and ineffective, and extreme classicism had no competent support once his own presence was removed. For a time there had been going on an effort at reconciliation, and surviving academicians, like Couture, Delaroche, Chasseriau, tired of the wastefulness and indignity of past quarrels, had been effecting a mild eclecticism, with obligations to both Ingres and Delacroix. France in the mid-nineteenth century was in a prosperous condition, and national pride was running high. Officialdom was in power, inclined to ostentation, and there were commissions in plenty for the able and conservative craftsman. Mural decoration in public buildings was a perfect opportunity for orthodox talent, and numbers of the leading painters were constantly employed in that field.

The new eclecticism found its natural protector in Louis XVIII. That benevolent monarch revived the old name of

Academy for each of the existing classes of the Institut, and the Académie des Beaux Arts, as reconstituted by him, became thenceforth the repository and asylum of orthodox doctrine. The Revolution, which had deposed and then restored the monarchy reflected itself in the alternate warfare and peace-making of contemporary aesthetics. In politics and in art, a stolid middle class now emerged, neither Republican nor reactionary, but reposing under the benign protection of a monarch of the people's choice, ruling a state eminently conservative and eminently conventional.

Nineteenth century orthodoxy was wide enough and deep enough to cover many shades of opinion. The age was an age of emancipation. Science, mechanical invention, travel, colonization, commerce and scholarship combined towards the intellectual and physical expansion of Europe. Already Gros and Delacroix had discovered themes for pictures no academician of the eighteenth century had dreamed of, and it seemed as if all the riches of world history and world geography were now laid at the feet of the artist. Nineteenth century academic painting was a *mêlée* of talents, styles and subjects, but distinguished throughout by an illustrative, documentary, anecdotal mood. It might well be compared to a fancy-dress ball, where costumes of every date and climate, and some of pure imagination, mixed in happy confusion, and yet where certain strict proprieties were imposed. Never was the artist himself so fortunate as now, or so free to follow his own devices. His education was encouraged as never before; schools, museums and prizes were placed at his disposal; and through life, he was assured of the patronage of a prosperous, if prosaic, public. A visit to the Luxembourg or Tate Gallery today will show the best of his capacity.

"The theatre is an eye," wrote Victor Hugo, and he might have been writing of academic paintings at that time; "all that exists in the world, in history, in life, in man, can and should be reflected there, but touched by the magic wand of art. Art thumbs the pages of the centuries and of nature, questions the chronicles, studies to reproduce events in their reality; . . . art restores the mutilations of the annalist, divines his omissions, makes good his *lacunae* with imagination true to past time . . . plays with the wires on which Providence has hung the human marionette, clothes all things in a form at once poetic and natural, and gives all things that spirit of truth, of relief and illusion, that prestige of reality, which impassions spectator and poet. . . . The end of art is almost divine, for it raises history from the dead and creates true poetry." [2] "The poet may go whither he will, and do as pleases him; such is his law. He may believe in one God, or in many gods, or in none; . . . he may write in prose or verse, carve in marble, cast in bronze, set foot in this century or that land; he may be of the north or south, east or west, ancient or modern, his muse the Muse or his muse a fairy; he may wear toga or tunic, as he will. C'est à merveille. The poet is free." [3]

5. *The New Realism.*

But even so wise and happy a condition of the arts could not pacify the elements of discontent. Radical minorities continually thrust themselves forward, noisy and desperate, and armed with all the strength of corporate consciousness; and the collisions of conservative and radical interests make the remaining history of the nineteenth century a history of agitation and unrest.

It had been the misfortune of Delacroix to be admired and defended by certain disreputable sections of Parisian society, the type of "Bohemian" humanity which ever since popular imagination has associated with advanced movements in the arts. In the declining years of his life, Delacroix had found his Ruskin in Charles Baudelaire, who with an almost hysterical eloquence had championed his sentimental mysticism and color philosophy. Baudelaire's critiques are still among the finest expositions of the romantic spirit. But Baudelaire in the eyes of the public was an eccentric; he had composed verses on dead bodies and putrefaction, and his private life would not bear examination.

But if the orthodox in France were antagonized by the class of defendant the chances of history had thrust on Delacroix, they were now to stand by impotently and watch the corruption of his teachings by Gustave Courbet, a painter whom they believed to be a vulgar peasant, ignorant, coarse and aggressively egotistical. Courbet made no effort to disabuse his critics. His gifts however were undeniable, and he became the apostle of a new school of realism. Not content with Delacroix' doctrine of nature as the painter's dictionary, Courbet reverted to the earlier advice of Diderot, which appealed more readily to his rough and candid mind, and painted the world as he saw it; and the more common and mediocre that world might be, the better pleased he seemed. The "Enterrement à Ornans," in many ways his masterpiece, is a direct transcription of human incident, a scene of humble simplicity, of peasantry and the soil. Courbet set himself up as the uncompromising illustrator of "l'art humanitaire, l'art laique, l'art de la nature naturelle." Allegory and myth for him were only arts of pantomime. "If you want me to

paint a goddess, show me one!" "The basis of realism," he said, "is the negation of the ideal and all that the ideal means. By that negation alone can man attain the full deliverance of his reason, of the individual and at last of democracy." Courbet justified the art of painters of such differing temperaments as Manet, Millet, Bonnat, Bastien-Lepage. He bore some affinity to the method of the Pre-Raphaelites in England. Flaubert, Zola, Dumas fils were his counterpart in literature. The great Hugo himself had given realism his blessing, and might well have been numbered with this Pléiade of nineteenth-century realists: "It is time to say now, and say it boldly, that all things in nature are in art. . . ." "The poet may take no counsel except from nature and from truth, and from his own inspiration, which is itself a nature and a truth. . . ." "If the poet must choose his subjects, and he ought to choose his subjects, let him not choose the beautiful, but the characteristic." [4] Auguste Rodin was the counterpart in sculpture, "The beautiful in art is simply the characteristic," he said, apropos of his "Vieille Héaulmière"; "character is the intense truth of any sight or scene of nature; . . . everything in nature is beautiful in the eyes of the true artist." [5]

6. *The Barbizonists.*

While Courbet was insulting the critics and carrying the philosophy of realism to extremes, the philosophy of color was being more gently advanced by a group of landscape painters known as the Barbizonists. They took their name from a little village on the outskirts of the Forest of Fontainebleau. In 1836, Théodore Rousseau had retired there to

console himself for his repeated rejections at the Salon. With him were soon associated Corot and Millet. Rousseau was the acknowledged leader of the school. He was a rebel born, a truant in his boyhood, a communist in his maturity, nourished always in a hatred of his nation's government and of the Academy. Settled at last in Barbizon, he applied himself to the new problems of color, of color values and "dissociation," and to the problems of depth and relief as expressible by color. He was over-conscientious; many of his pictures, sometimes after the labor of years, were left unfinished and were salvaged or stolen by his friends, anxious for their preservation. But his efforts were not understood, and he came to be known in Paris as the "Grand Refusé." The recognition, which came to him after the Revolution of 1848, could hardly atone for the long years of poverty, disappointment and domestic misfortune, and Rousseau will ever be the type of the painter acclaimed by an apologetic and fawning public when it was too late.

The Barbizonists were evidently successors to Delacroix and through Delacroix to Constable, the English painter. They were realists of a kind, though averse to the ungentleness and crudity of Courbet. Their inspiration was always nature. "Art declined from the moment that the artist ceased to lean on nature," said Millet; "cleverness then took nature's place and decay set in." They studied particularly the effects of light and atmosphere and habitually worked in the open air, "l'air, ce modèle de l'infini." Their colors were bright and luminous. But they sometimes lacked organized "ensemble"; — Rousseau, it was always said, painted his picture first and then put in the sky. But their very insuffi-

ciency was the point of departure of the impressionists, in whom the whole century's groping in realism and color at last reached its consummation.

7. The Impressionists.

While Rousseau and his companions were thus painting the landscape round Barbizon, Paris was inflamed by a new outbreak of radicalism, struck by Edouard Manet. He had been the pupil of Couture, the academic painter. Courbet the realist, was at his height, when Manet was thrust upon an unkindly world with nothing but his own great gifts and the maledictions of a disappointed teacher. Manet's chosen old Masters were Titian, Rembrandt and Velasquez, and under their direct influence he patiently worked out a technique of realism, modified by certain simplifications of his own. He attempted, as it was said, to represent the spontaneity of natural vision by abbreviation, and invented the method of painting with half-closed eyes. But his outlines were clear and definite in comparison with the later painters who adopted his technique. His colors were of the brightest, but he adhered with some persistence to the old necessities of line and shadow; and he is the last considerable painter of the modern school whose pictures can be fairly photographed.

It is difficult nowadays to appreciate the novelty of Manet's workmanship. Yet his pictures were abused, as it was now the custom to abuse every departure from convention. His nudes were unnecessarily provocative; they suggested not nudes but nakedness. His subjects moreover were the subjects of a man of the world who sometimes showed his too intimate acquaintance with the doubtful byeways of a modern city.

Claude Monet, a friend of Manet's, has usually been accredited with the name Impressionism and with the first formulation of its principles. In 1863, at the Salon des Refusés he had exhibited a landscape entitled "Impression," and the name stuck to all the pictures of its style. Impressionism was persecuted from the first, but made its inevitable measure of success. Artists of the greatest genius, like Cézanne and Renoir, were gathered into it. In one decade it seemed that impressionism, had become the synonym of progressive art in France.

Manet, Monet and their brethren may have been extreme, but they were not original. The purpose of their art was to realize a philosophy which had been long coming. Impressionism can be read between the lines of Delacroix, Baudelaire and even of Diderot and De Piles. Its peculiar tenets were implied — negatively — in the old academic system of Poussin and Le Brun. The incidents of two long centuries, the covert resistance of Mignard, the constant pressure of the Venetian and Flemish schools, the bickering of the pamphleteers, the opposition of David, Gros and Géricault, were all preludes to a single theme.

Primarily, impressionism was a philosophy of realism. The only law of art, said the impressionists, is to copy nature. For that reason, impressionism was also a philosophy of color. A line is an illusion, or at best an arbitrary convention of the artist, thanks to which he specifies the separation of colors. Pure line does not exist in nature; a line is the meeting of two colours. Hence line must not be indicated in a painting. Color alone exists in nature, and therefore color alone must be indicated in a painting. The art of painting may be defined as the exact observation of natural colors.

Color pigments mixed upon the palette lose their purity and brilliance. Mixed tones must therefore be composed of separate strokes of primary colors. The spectator's eye will combine the separate strokes of color and form the actual tone of which the object appears to be composed. The brightness, which would have been lost on the palette, is restored, and the resultant mass of strokes of separated colours will give the eye an effect of the vibration, "grouillement" of natural light. This simple principle is the law of the dissociation of tones, "la dissociation des tons," or "le procédé de la tache." Finally, the colors of nature never stand still; they scintillate and change from moment to moment. No man steps into the same light twice. Objects of nature are not in themselves real except in so far as they appear to be momentary association of color. In theory, therefore, the impressionists paints instants, and his appointed art is the representation of the fleeting moods and atmospheres of nature.

The premises of impressionism were simple and scientific. But the corollaries contained some latent difficulties. Impressionism was found to be beyond the comprehension of the amateur, and consequently the amateur could never be seduced from the protection of the academies. Impressionist pictures, in their renunciation of line, seemed badly drawn. Their subject matter was sometimes unrecognizable, except to the spectator who was willing to stand off at inconvenient distances. Occasionally the subject matter, when recognizable, suggested revolting associations. It was easy, but useless, to justify this art upon its principles; an art so justified could not be popular; and it was as useless for the thirsty artist to disdain the grapes of popularity. Impressionism in the hands of the initiated became a long experiment in tech-

nicalities. Delight in color absorbed the painter's energies and interest. Impressionism, it was said, was a philosophy of realism; but the painter was soon to be seen selecting his objects, not because they were real, and therefore worthy problems for his skill, but because they presented to his eye some interesting color scheme. Realism was forgotten in the everlasting search for color and lost at last before the newer idols of decoration and design. This too the amateurs could never understand.

Impressionist portraiture began as a bold display of character painting. Thus far the impressionist painter sought out and copied certain objects of nature, namely men and women, which his realism enjoined that he should seek out. Many impressionist painters, appropriate to the more advanced sentiments of their time, cultivated a regular art of the demimonde, which represented their most solemn answer to the old idealism of the Academy. A great painter, like Degas, for example, devoted his life to pictures of ballet-dancers and women at their toilette.

But throughout this realism, the pictorial opportunity transgressed more and more upon the painter's province. The painter modified an object if it was not in harmony with his conception of the picture, and there was allowed to creep in the license to distort, which played havoc with the strict principles of original impressionism and further antagonized the already unfriendly understanding of the public. The apotogists of impressionism began to interlard their appreciations with such words as "pure design, rhythm, balance, counterpoint, organization, pattern, architectonic mass, decoration, pure art value, significant form, plastic form, tactile form," and so forth, and evolved that picturesque phraseol-

ogy, with which the readers of modern periodicals of art must be familiar. The title of the picture was invariably passed over, and its possible moral effect was regarded as irrelevant. Théophile Gautier, that "magician of letters," had not long since enunciated his creed of art for art's sake, "l'art pour l'art," and proved his point in contemporary estimation by the exquisite qualities of his writing. The Color of the painter, like the Word of Gautier, became the vehicle of art; its form and context determined all its beauty. The following passage, descriptive of Renoir, taken from a writer, whose authority has been much used in this chapter, will point to some extent the road the philosophy of art was now beginning to take: "In his third and recent manner, he is more capricious and disconcerting in his mixed subtilty and naïveté, in his apparent ignorance and real science. This fantastic soul emancipates itself from every dogma, combines at once four or five processes in one picture and is amused to confound them thus. His drawing weakens, he only occupies himself with colour; he dares discordant harmonies, he dares unlooked for combinations, plays with reflections, seeks the harmonies of oriental carpets, makes his pictures look like woollen fleeces, like agate, glass or silk by turns. He is adorable and he is irritating. His last landscapes of Cannes and Antibes are less real views than harmonies, musical pieces of most singular shades." [6] Whistler was entirely within his rights when he began to give his pictures such titles as "Nocturne in Black and Gold," "Symphony in White," "Arrangement in Grey and Black," and so forth.

8. *The Post-Impressionists.*

At this point it will be instructive to summarize the result-

ing romantic creed, as represented by the impressionist school of painting, and to compare it with the classic creed at the close of Chapter III. Here again, the tabular form will be convenient:

1. Romanticism finds morality irrelevant and even obstructive to fine art. Romantic art is not the less art for representing debased or anti-social subject matter. For beauty is to be judged apart from moral considerations. And the romantic artist himself need not, and usually does not, aspire to a virtuous and improving life.

2. Romantic art abhors mathematical processes, proportions and averages and regularities. It encourages the independence and individuality of genius, exalts imagination above reason, passion above knowledge.

Romantic art uses nature, that is, real and characteristic nature, and if necessary, out-characterizes the characteristic. But its value consists not only in what it represents, but also in the technical interest and design of the representation.

Romantic painting exalts color above line, for color depends upon the direct observation of real nature.

3. Romanticism knows no law but the genuis of the artist.

After the centuries of tribulation it would seem that the old philosophy of the Academy had given place to the new philosophy of impressionism. Every tenet and article of faith once held by the Academy had been reversed. But the romantic impressionist philosophy, so long in process of formation, dissolved in the very hour of its completion. The impressionists' abhorrence of the old Academy was such, that, because classic art had been static in its aim, their art must be dynamic. They looked upon themselves as the painters of

a glorious transition and denied any finality in their efforts. Most authorities are agreed that Cézanne came with the crest of the wave, but that impressionism was already breaking before his finest pictures were painted. Realism, as a philosophy of life, was undergoing change, and the closing years of the nineteenth century were years of dissatisfaction in every phase of European thought. The twentieth century was to see the progressive dematerialization of scientific ideas, and the arts were designed for like trials. The invention of the photograph, simple as it was, completed the discomfiture of realism. Romanticism found a purely mechanical device entirely alien to its spirit. Leonardo or Dürer might have made photography a possible substitute for painting; but no impressionist could have done so. Impressionism thus forsook the realism, which had been its origin and apology, and immediately divided itself into a number of schools, for whom pure pictorial design was all important.

It is not necessary for this book to describe the several schools into which impressionism was divided. The literature, explaining their origins and claims, is extensive and easily accessible. They have been given the generic name of Post-Impressionist, and they have risen and fallen in startling succession. It was the high noonday of the artistic individuality; the artist chose to paint according to his inclination, and all unity of purpose deserted him. There was Pointillism and Synthesism, Cubism and Futurism, Fauvism and Surrealism, and many others. Some schools even reverted to a pseudo-classic aesthetics of line geometry.

But the post-impressionist schools were still romantic in that they were schools of imagination and passion and of an aggressive individuality. And from the later impressionists

they took the conception of pure design, presuming, as the most philosophic of the romantics had done before them, to justify their art on metaphysical grounds. Hence the massive patterns of Gauguin, the abstractions of Matisse, the geometry of Picasso, the dynamism of Marinetti, all have this thing in common, the subject matter is refined away and pure design remains. Literary meaning, sentiment, anecdote, history, morals, religion, all the principles that inspired the great schools of painting in the past, all have gone. Thus post-impressionist painters sought to lay hold of their divinity, the pure beauty of absolute Form.

Chapter IX

NINETEENTH CENTURY REVIVALS

1. Mediaevalism in France and Germany.
2. Mediaevalism in England.
3. The Battle of Styles.
4. Ruskin.
5. The Arts and Crafts Movement.
6. L'Art Nouveau.

Chapter IX

NINETEENTH CENTURY REVIVALS

1. *Mediaevalism in France and Germany.*

Chapter VI closed with some remarks on Lessing, Winckelmann and the developments in Greek archaeology they had effected. The earlier teaching of Count Caylus was then still alive in the memory of archaeologists. Hence any intelligent man at the end of the eighteenth century would have considered the future both of Greek archaeology and of architecture rosy indeed, and considerable headway had already been made at that time against such academic prejudice as still clung to the traditions of the Roman Renaissance, when opposition to all these fair hopes was encountered from a wholly unexpected quarter.

The extreme romantics were not satisfied to see one type of classicism exchanged for another. The Greek, as it seemed to them, was as cold as the Roman, and could be made into a system as regular, as correct and as pernicious. There was no place in it for the new national feeling that was growing up around them, nor for the intense enthusiasm and mystery they believed to be a necessary part of artistic experience. They denounced the "fetters of genius" and all the rules and precepts of their classical brethren, and they saw no guarantee that Greek architecture would not be hedged about with rules and precepts of its own. They denounced the elaborate Latin tradition of the Renaissance, which had once held Europe in bondage, and instead, they substituted and

encouraged their own national traditions. They denounced the idealism which had been an integral part of classic doctrine, and they demanded that art should no longer pretend to surpass or improve upon the forms of nature, as the Renaissance had always believed it should do, but should humbly accept nature's manifest superiority to the works of man.

It seemed to them that the old mediaeval architecture, — Gothic, as it had been called in derision, — alone satisfied their wants. For here was an art contrary to all classic regulations, a vernacular art, a memorial of national history, and as various and capricious in its forms as nature herself. To the architects of the Renaissance, a mediaeval cathedral was a disorderly mass of detail without meaning or proportion, incomparably inferior to the unity and elegance of Roman work. They used to contrast Gothic redundance of ornament with classic austerity, Gothic roughness with classic finish, Gothic frailty with classic solidity, Gothic "bizzarria" with classic grace, above all Gothic irregularity with classic regularity. The romantics acknowledged all the contrasts which the classicists saw fit to make, but found those very qualities once so offensive to correct classic taste, grateful to their own.

Throughout Europe mediaevalist and nationalist revivals took place. Nationalism was a kind of realism, in which national characters and idiosyncrasies, long repressed by the universal Latin tradition, could at last find their proper expression. The Renaissance and all its glories was held to be a lapse in the smooth course of the history of Christendom, to be mended and forgotten. In Germany, the revolt against French fashions, begun by Lessing, was fed by the renewed

study of German history and antiquities. The final overthrow of Napoleon with the help of German arms seemed to revive the ambitions, which Frederick the Great of Prussia had first dreamed of. The German people became aware of a destiny never once realized in all the centuries of the Holy Roman Empire, when they had supplied Europe with mercenary troops to fight in every cause and interest but their own. A man like Frederick von Schlegel sometimes laughed at patriotism, but none of his countrymen became so deeply absorbed in the traditions of his national past. He reverted blindly to the days before the Reformation, when he believed Germany had been an entity of culture and art. In honor bound, he was a fervent Catholic, as so many of the romantics after him; — for Catholicism was evidently the faith and stimulus of the old cathedral builders. In Schlegel's time there must have been considerable antiquarian activity in progress. German scholarship had already worked over the records of the mediaeval guild system, freemasonry and craftsmanship, and anticipated the doctrine which William Morris later attempted to put into practice in England. Goethe, in the letters he wrote during his tour of the Rhine in 1814, shows every consideration for his antiquarian friends, and congratulates the public bodies and associations engaged in the building of local museums, libraries and schools of art. His tone is philanthropic and socialistic. He visited Cologne Cathedral, and, in his account of its proposed completion, according to the original mediaeval plans which had been found, he is already aware of archaeological and ecclesiological difficulties. Goethe's impression of Cologne does not excite the ecstacies of his earlier experience at Strassburg; his appreciation displays the dignity of age, and he sees

Cologne as a worthy heritage of the past, peculiarly German.

For a Romantic the naturalness of Gothic architecture was a convincing argument of its beauty; and the resemblance of the Gothic nave to an avenue of trees may have been more than a pretty fabrication. A classic architect of the eighteenth century in Italy had called Gothic "the art of wild nature (della Natura silvestre)" and his own classic "the art of beautiful nature (della bella Natura)." [1] Goethe had compared Strassburg "to a lofty, far-spreading tree of God (gleich einem hocherhabenen, weitverbreiteten Baume Gottes)," [2] and the same notion is common to the Germans of his date who wrote on German architecture. "The Gothic pillars in the interior," wrote Schlegel of Cologne "have very fittingly been likened to a mighty avenue. . . . And if the exterior, with its countless towers and pinnacles, appears at a distance not unlike a forest, the whole prodigious structure, on closer inspection, seems to be some magnificent natural crystallisation. It is a wonder-work of art; and the inconceivable abundance of its decorations vie with the inexhaustible profusion of nature." [3]

In France there had been a taste for "exotisme" since the time of Louis XV, when the "Chinoiserie" were first imported. The jaded senses of the court were refreshed by these fancies of the Far East. Then painters, like Fragonard or Greuze, were very charmingly sentimental and their works presaged the more serious convulsions of a later time. Melancholia was fashionable under Louis XV. Rousseau had preached a return to nature, and "English gardens," whose "naturalness" contrasted favourably with the rigid geometry of the formal garden, were planted at Verseilles. With the English garden came also the taste for artificial ruins.

Meanwhile France had had her mediaevalist archivists and antiquarians. In 1725, Montfaucon, publishing his *Monuments de la Monarchie française*, had begged his reader's indulgence for "les siècles si barbares, dont le gout et le génie si grossiers sont un spectacle assez divertissant." In 1796, the Musée des Monuments Français was founded. Specimens of mediaeval architecture and sculpture were exhibited. Alexandre Lenoir, the first of the great scholar-curators, had collected them, often enough from the very hands of the stone-breaker and lime-burner. Many of his attributions were incorrect, and some he forged if he thought they were indispensable to the renown of his collection. But the Musée attracted considerable attention. The great Michelet is there supposed to have discovered to himself his vocation for history. In course of time a generation of archaeologists of the first rank appeared, Guizot, Prévost, Merimée, Didron, Montalambert, and above all Viollet-le-Duc. In 1854, Viollet-le-Duc published the first volume of his *Dictionnaire de l'Architecture française du XI au XVI Siècle*, for the guidance of modern architects and for the discomfiture of "pagans." The protection and restoration of mediaeval buildings was undertaken by various public and private bodies, all suddenly awakened to the reckless vandalism that had been going on for nearly three centuries. The problem of restoration was soon keen, and the ignorance of the restoring archaeologists a common topic of protest.[4]

Literary influences in a literary age were very strong. In 1802 appeared Chateaubriand's *Génie du Christianisme*, and the doors of the mediaeval cathedral, as it was then said, were opened again. Even Germans, like Goethe and Frederick von Schlegel, had admirers in France. The poetry of Byron and

the novels of Sir Walter Scott were translated into French and were perhaps read more in that language than in English. Victor Hugo was an epoch in himself.

The first fruit of mediaevalism was a Gothic world-that-never-was, "la mode moyenajeuse, le gothique troubadour," as it was called. Gothic houses, manors, castles, public buildings appeared in various parts of the country. The Southern Romanesque style was revived and received much favor in the eyes of church architects. The École des Beaux Arts preserved its dignity and its traditions and discouraged as far as possible the most extraordinary excesses of the new taste. Viollet-le-Duc was commanded by Napoleon III to reorganize the Beaux Arts on mediaevalist lines, but the students rebelled and for the few lectures he gave he had to be protected by the police.

Nor was the new Gothic alone among the numerous revivalist styles then competing for the prize of popularity. The old classic constitution of France was very tough, and the work of a new school of architects, practicing in a style, which they called néo-Grec, was much easier for it to digest.[5] And so the fever of mediaevalism in France gradually worked itself out, leaving its patient a little pock-marked in places, but older and wiser for a trying experience.

2. *Mediaevalism in England.*

It has sometimes hurt the artistic conscience of the English people that their one original creative movement in the fine arts, coincident with their greatest commercial prosperity and national power, should now be remembered as a failure, and that as soon as they threw off their allegiance to the Academy in France, they should have committed follies, of

which they were too soon to be ashamed. Yet, as the purpose of this book is to observe and not to judge, it will always desire to respect any idea which has deeply moved the human mind, and, knowing well the changeability of taste, it will try never to speak in disparagement of a style of art, which in years to come may have its genuine admirers. The Gothic Revival in Europe had its principal source and flourished most luxuriantly in England, and it must be considered as worthy of the reader's regard and sympathy as that original Gothic, to which his attention was drawn in the First Chapter.

The priority of the Gothic Revival in England has at least been conceded by most Continental authorities. Often enough English influences, themselves perhaps a misunderstanding of some classic precedent, have unintentionally inspired romantic ideas in Germany or France. Reference has already been made to the English garden. An obvious literary analogy is Shakespeare; and the irregularity of this poet, which if it was not the result of ignorance or carelessness was certainly not self-consciously romantic or premeditated, was soon admired abroad as a high principle of literary composition. In the Preface to his *Dictionnaire*, Viollet-le-Duc paid a generous tribute to the English pioneers of the revival.

Writers on the Gothic Revival in England have been very fond of hunting out instances of pure mediaeval survivals in the very midst of the academic period. Inigo Jones, Wren, Hawksmoor, Vanbrugh, Kent, the masters of Palladianism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, are all proved to have practiced in mediaeval styles. English antiquarians of that period studied the styles with more sympathy, if less imagination, than their brethren in France. English poets

from Milton to Gray were susceptible to romantic melancholy, to the picturesque, to ruins and to the scenery of mountainous country. There existed a definite group of "grave-yard poets," who exploited an almost Victorian sentimentality. In the latter half of the eighteenth century mediaevalists were less isolated and rare. The story of mediaeval romance and chivalry awakened a demure interest among the leisured and learned, and the type of man, who in France was playing with the "Chinoiserie," in England was building his ivy-mantled towers and sham "follies."

Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford, son of Sir Robert Walpole, has always been considered as the real originator of the Gothic Revival. Certainly his social position and literary abilities were the best advertisements the earlier years of the Revival could have had. Under his benign sympathy, Gothic became something more than the fad of a few scattered poets and country gentlemen. His romance, now very much forgotten, *The Castle of Otranto, a Gothic Story*, was popular from the first. It was one of those works which seems to exhaust its field and to render every successor an imitator. The type of antiquarian sentiment it was meant to convey is still familiar from the novels of Scott, who indeed praised it generously. Walpole's wealth had already enabled him to realize his castle, and for many years he had been renovating his country seat at Strawberry Hill. Dabblers in mediaevalism from the four quarters of England came to gape at this curiosity. Its chimney pieces were copied from tomb canopies and its vaults were built of papier-mâché, and any Gothic amateur of today is disgusted or amused by its trivialities; Walpole himself was not entirely convinced that it was successful. But Strawberry Hill was a sensation in its day.

Walpole died in 1797, and in that year the eccentric William Beckford began to build his "convent in ruins" at Fonthill. Wyatt, now notorious, but then admired for his restorations of mediaeval buildings, was appointed its architect. Beckford despised Strawberry Hill, and called it "a Gothic mouse-trap." Beckford was a very wealthy man and would allow no obstacle to come between him and his dreams. A certain amount of artistic discretion had come with the lapse of years. But he was foolhardy and impatient, and, if Fonthill was admitted to be more successful as an architectural design than Strawberry Hill, its materials were even less substantial. Its ruin began with the collapse of the great tower, which had been the crown of its composition, and not a trace of the building now remains.

In proportion as the appeal of Gothic architecture increased, it became a source of danger to men, whose artistic and religious convictions it seemed to contradict, and a taste, which might have been endured as mere curiosity, began to excite very serious apprehensions. There was the great body of the old classicists of Palladian sympathies, there were also the neo-classicists of Greek sympathies, and both were soon to be antagonized by the Gothic Revival. But there was also a body of narrow conservatives, which was neutral to the romantic spirit and which condemned a novelty simply because it was a novelty. Protestants all over the country habitually associated mediaeval art with the mediaeval church, and anxiously examined the new Gothic for the most ambiguous signs of religious treason. Then the very name of Gothic was embarrassing even to the revivalists. It was evidently a term of reproach, coming from a source sufficiently old and sufficiently illustrious to be of consequence, and its sense

could only be reversed by long acceptance of the implied challenge.[6] Therefore even to men incapable of appreciating — or disliking — a romantic sentiment, Gothic art was hedged about with prejudice, and there was need of a steady propaganda, more serious than the fancies of Walpole and Beckford if there was ever to be any intelligent enquiry into the pretentions of the new style.

The revivalists therefore began to assume serious airs and take upon themselves heavy spiritual responsibilities. Gothic, they said, involved men's religion, philosophy and attitude to life. They soon found it necessary to make a special study of history, particularly of church history and architectural history. The theory was gaining ground that historical knowledge was somehow the clue to an understanding of all great human problems. In 1839, two Cambridge undergraduates founded the Cambridge Camden Society and set about reviving forgotten points of church architecture and ritual. In 1841, they began the publication of a monthly magazine called the *Ecclesiologist*. In 1843, they published the *Rationale* of Durandus, a mediaeval work on church symbolism, which at once became the textbook of ecclesiology. In these early years of their activity they were looked upon as propagators of an insidious kind of antiquarianism, and then they were violently attacked as Papists. The Oxford Movement was already in progress, and the spirit of controversy pervaded the air. In 1845, the same year that Newman went over to the Roman Catholic Church, the authorities at Cambridge were forced to dissolve the Camden Society. But by the simple expedient of changing its name, the Society obeyed the authorities and circumvented the crisis; and the Ecclesiological Society, as it was now called, calmly continued to

publish the *Ecclesiologist* and with it all the original arguments of the older Camdenians.

Simultaneously a mass of patient research was accomplished by students of architecture. The earlier literature of the revival, written in the generation of Walpole and Beckford, was well nigh useless. The works of Batty Langley, who, in his ignorance, had tried to "improve" upon Gothic architecture by fitting it to a system of rules and proportions, were now hopelessly out of date, and speedily replaced by more authentic materials. Britton, Rickman, the Pugins, the Brandons, in emulation of the fifteenth century architects of Florence and Rome, carefully measured and drew the old Gothic monuments; and a movement, which had ostensibly been conceived in a spirit of liberty, was subject to a new legislation, as archaeological and as despotic as any the old Vitruvians had known.

An intricate science of styles, — Saxon, Norman, Lancet, Early English, Decorated, Perpendicular, Tudor, — was developed, and the ability to identify a style was the test of architectural knowledge. It became possible to speak of a building as belonging to "the early days of Late Middle Pointed." Then certain styles were thought to be more beautiful than others. For a long time Perpendicular was the favorite style. It was the only purely national style, since it was very unlike the flamboyant, which had flourished simultaneously in France. Then Decorated succeeded to the place of honor, especially for the architecture of churches. It was the style described in the *Rationale* of Durandus and corresponded to the supposed zenith of mediaeval art. In Ruskin's time the Venetian and Lombard styles of Gothic were imported, and the appeal of the exotic was added to that of

beauty; and latterly there was a whole flood of styles of as many periods as nationalities, imported by architects like Street, Bentley, Norman Shaw, Nesfield, Burges, Waterhouse and others.

The new knowledge armed the ecclesiologists and architects of the Revival with the resolution to restore the crumbling monuments of the past and a number of enthusiasts threw themselves into this difficult and dangerous work. Perhaps of all the domestic quarrels of the revivalists that of restoration was the fiercest. The Camden Society had once advised the wholesale demolition of churches and their rebuilding in their favorite Decorated style, and at one of the Society's annual meetings this drastic measure had been seriously proposed in the case of Peterborough Cathedral. A recent writer has amused himself with the estimate that Cromwell in all his Puritan glory destroyed less of England's mediaeval relics than the members of that devoted, but misguided body of men. But every wave of restoration was closely followed by an acknowledgment of failure, and not one of the great restorers, from Wyatt to Gilbert Scott, seems to have escaped the censure of his successors. The Battle of the Restorers is in itself a chapter as interesting and inconclusive as any in the history of taste; it is alive to this day, but the thankless work of restoration is carried on under the equivocal and unassuming name of Protection.

But the Gothic revival had now progressed a long way beyond the faddy romanticism of Walpole and Beckford. The forms of Gothic, as every revivalist was convinced, presupposed deep aesthetic values and embodied a social and religious purpose. A new sense of morality was slowly infused into aesthetics in imitation of the legendary holiness of the

Middle Ages. The revivalists practiced, and expected also of their workmen, the observance of a high moral sincerity and a pious attachment to their work. They attacked with the fury of fanatics all the "shams" of their brethren a generation before them, who, they said, had been too easily satisfied with surface appearances and effects and had heeded not the inner inspiration of genuine architecture. They compared the art of man with the art of God and explained the eternal beauty of nature by the laws which they now wished to use in the execution of their humbler copies. From such considerations arose the ethics of Pugin, Ruskin and William Morris.

3. *The Battle of Styles.*

Meanwhile the Neo-Classic Revival had gone on its way; but, like the Gothic, it was not entirely free from domestic trouble. The well-argued simplicity of the more orthodox Greek doctrine, as taught in the mid-nineteenth century by men like Cockerell and Donaldson, was confused by all manner of innovations. Neo-classicism was strong in a theoretical obedience to Greek ideals, which it did not observe in practice. Indeed the neo-classicists were as preoccupied with styles as the Gothic revivalists. The architecture and decoration of the brothers Adam were recognized for an individual charm, but they had never been truly Greek and they had therefore set a dangerous precedent. Then men like Charles Barry introduced styles derived from the Italian Renaissance. But the stylists Greek or Gothic, were well exercised in controversy and prepared for all the chances of a great moral and aesthetic war.

The Battle of the Styles, which in the beginning of the nineteenth century might have been a simple academic diver-

sion, was therefore complicated and intensified by domestic feud, until towards the second half of the century it had become a bitter and disorderly warfare, generally conducted by individuals, each professing dogmatically a creed of his own. It had once been possible for an architect to practice in any or all of the rival styles. Wyatt, Nash, Wilkins arbitrarily designed in classic or Gothic to suit the whims of their clients. But the time of Pugin could hardly brook this promiscuous apostasy, and the later stages of the battle, in accordance with the moral sincerity of Victorian aesthetics, was remarkable for its religious earnestness and intolerance. It might be noted in passing that the French at this moment were in the throes of the impressionist movement; and there, as in England, the modern critic is astonished, not so much by the objectives, as by the passion of the controversialists.

In 1834, the old Palace of Westminster, the ancient seat of Parliament, was burned down. A Parliamentary Committee was at once appointed and set about its rebuilding. The terms of an open competition were drawn up, and it was stipulated that the new building should be either "Gothic or Elizabethan." There were ninety-seven competitors and the Commissioners chose the design of Charles Barry from among them. As in many architectural competitions, there was some murmuring when the result was made known, and the Commissioners therefore resolved to hold an exhibition of all the designs submitted. The exhibition justified their selection of Barry, but it gave the public a unique opportunity to rediscuss the whole vexed question of style in architecture. A man of the reputation and scholarship of Britton protested that the words "Gothic or Elizabethan" had been too indefinite. Evidently Barry's own preference had been for Perpen-

dicular, and his preference was perfectly satisfactory, seeing that Perpendicular was a truly national style and also the style of King's College Chapel at Cambridge, which many people at that moment thought was the most perfect building in the world. Then a gentleman by the name of Hamilton addressed a series of open letters to the Earl of Elgin, protesting against the use of Gothic of any kind or period. For Hamilton, classic architecture was the only proper expression of intellectual refinement and ideal beauty, with which the fancies of the mediaeval builder were not fit to be compared. The colonnaded temples of Greece and Rome were the noblest achievements of human invention, while the monuments of the Middle Ages could only be associated with gloom, barbarity, superstition and all the evils of priestcraft. Hamilton's letters developed into essays, and the whole armament of learning and literary ability was drawn up to prove that the adoption of Gothic for a building which civilized men should use would be a public calamity of the first magnitude. Unfortunately the new Houses of Parliament were already in course of construction, but the like of Hamilton's remonstrances were often to be heard in the future.[7]

For a time it was thought possible for Gothic, as the religious style, to monopolize ecclesiastical architecture, and for classic, as the pagan style, to monopolize secular architecture. But the development of secular Gothic by Gilbert Scott made this compromise ineffective. In 1857, another open competition, conducted by the Government, this time for offices in Whitehall, brought matters to a head. Gilbert Scott submitted Gothic designs, "confessedly French and Italian with a dash of Flemish"; but the assessors, in Scott's own words, "knew amazingly little about their subject," and Scott's

Gothic design did not succeed. The decision of Lord Palmerston, then Prime Minister, to consult a non-competitor pacified neither the architectural profession nor the public, and in the ensuing tumult Gilbert Scott was appointed architect. Parliamentary debates, deputations, intrigues and mutual exasperation delayed, but did not make any impression on Palmerston's obstinacy. Gilbert Scott is even said to have produced a Byzantine design, which he hoped might not vex his own conscience and might impose upon Palmerston's. But the Government offices in Whitehall were at last built by Gilbert Scott in the style of the Italian Renaissance, and the disappointed architect consoled himself by erecting his Gothic palace at another time and place as the hotel of a railway terminus.

No sooner had the competition for the Government offices been settled, than the architectural profession joined issue over the election of a president to the Royal Institute of British Architects, a body of growing authority and importance. The original president, for some twenty-five years from the foundation of the Institute, had been its patron, the Earl de Grey. Cockerell, who had now retired from active practice, was persuaded to act in his place for a few months, while the two factions energetically canvassed their members. Beresford Hope, a Gothicist, was defeated by Tite, a classicist, by so small a majority that at the next election he was permitted to succeed unopposed, as a formal recognition of the balance of the parties. Thenceforth the champions of both the Gothic and the classic styles made the Institute their headquarters, and the Institute's *Journal* might supply sufficient materials for the prolongation of this extraordinary story.

4. *Ruskin.*

Great crises produce great leaders, and the Battle of Styles produced John Ruskin. His reputation has now fallen on evil days, but he was undoubtedly a man of the calibre of Alberti, Le Brun, Winckelmann, or any leader of aesthetic thought in the past. He was born in 1819 and died in 1900, and his life therefore covers the full nineteenth century. He was brought up in a strict Protestant home, by parents who somewhat isolated him from the usual environment of childhood, but who were liberal enough to appreciate his many gifts. Even in his Oxford days he did not escape from their protection. He grew up ingenuous and introspective; but an education which might have pampered or impaired a less vigorous mind proved very beneficial to him. His Protestantism for many years prevented him from understanding the Gothic Revival, antagonized him towards the Catholic Pugin, with whom he should have shared a true community of interest, and prejudiced him generally against some very innocent productions of art. Hence Ruskin appeared on the stage of criticism as the apostle of nature, and his later adoration of Gothic art was a conclusion of that apostleship which he himself had not foreseen.

Ruskin had always traveled; his "watchfulness" of nature he had cultivated from his earliest youth, and he learned the lore of pictures with the diligence of a connoisseur. From the early age of thirteen he had been touched by the power of Turner, and his first great essay was a defense of that painter against the misunderstanding and stupidity of the critics. *Modern Painters* was issued in 1843, and the English literary public, already nourished on polemics, was served perhaps with the tastiest morsel in its memory.

Ruskin's aesthetics makes a clear distinction between content and form, or, in his own words, between thought and language. Thought is everything; language is valuable only in so far as it is the adequate expression of thought. Ruskin is therefore provided with an ethical premise with which to revive the old academic question of the noblest thought, or the noblest subjects, of art. "The greatest picture is that which conveys to the mind of the spectator the greatest number of the greatest ideas." And because, "Nature's worst is better than the artist's best," the noblest subject is nature. Turner alone achieves the full measure of this nobility; he gave to the world "exactly the highest and most consummate truth that had ever been seen in landscape"; yet the critics of the day had foolishly called him "a madman for obtaining the least acknowledgeable resemblance to nature." [8]

The twin theory of the noblest subject and of truth to nature justified to Ruskin the most diverse artistic ideas. The movements on the Continent, in the direction of the new aesthetics of color and realism, found more than one parallel in his writings; and he had much in common with critics like Baudelaire, but with the addition of a certain moral depth, which it would never have been in the nature of Baudelaire to feel. Ruskin finds in Turner the widest possible octave of color, purest white for the highest lights and lamp-black for the darkest hollows; and Ruskin is satisfied that the octave is wider even than Rubens', that prince of colorists. Ruskin finds in Turner the perfect observance of characteristic nature; every twig, every leaf, has its true significance portrayed. Yet, not accurate imitation, but "the effect of imitation," "the ingenious speaking concerning smoke," constitutes the wonder of Turner's art. "Abundant, beyond the

power of the mind to comprehend, there is yet not one atom in the whole extent and mass [of a landscape of Turner], which does not suggest more than it represents. . . . No form is made out, and yet no form is unknown." Lastly Ruskin finds in Turner a sublime sense of composition and decorative form. To the mediocre painter composition means choosing, and choosing is presumption; but, if Turner alters a view to create a harmony, he alters in an abject conformity to the truth.[9]

Such was the background, before which Ruskin set his architectural ideals. Already in 1837 he had anonymously published a series of magazine articles entitled: *The Poetry of Architecture*, which amounted to an exposition of Puginism — though that he might not then have cared to admit. In 1847 he published, under his own name, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*. The book was written, as he said in later life: "to show that certain right states of temper and moral feeling were the magic powers by which all good architecture has been produced." The Seven Lamps, to guide architecture in its mission to man, were: — the Lamp of Sacrifice, on the costliness, physical and spiritual, of architectural effort; the Lamp of Truth, on the right use of materials and craftsmanship; the Lamp of Power, on the management of line and mass, of composition and design, of light and shade; the Lamp of Beauty, on the beauty of nature, as represented by architecture and architectural ornament; the Lamp of Life, on the organic quality of architecture, its variety and inequalities, its deliberate accidents and picturesqueness, and its lack of the purely mechanical or regular; the Lamp of Memory, on architecture as a document of past history; the Lamp of Obedience, on the necessity for a traditional style. The Seven

Lamps illuminated all the doctrines of the later Gothic Revival, its ethical resolutions, its association with the idea of design, its attachment to the forms of nature, its sense of history and tradition, its abhorrence of the Renaissance and of all the various derivatives of the classic styles. Even the Greek of the Periclean Age was hardly pure enough to survive the test. But in Venice and Pisa were still to be seen examples of the pure style, albeit unappreciated in a wanton and materialistic age. Ruskin's preference for the Italian forms of Gothic architecture almost wrecked the nationalism that distinguished most of the schools of the revival.

The Stones of Venice, published in 1851, the year of the Great Exhibition, showed no essential change in Ruskin's opinions. His preference for the Italian styles was perhaps more pronounced, and his language more positive. But the last years of his life were years of disillusion. The early confidence had now become a tone of disgust and pessimism. The Oxford Museum, his dearest scheme, which he had intended to be a permanent example of his conception of a perfect architecture, was never finished. He was annoyed by the resistance of his many opponents, towards whom he bore himself with increasing intolerance. He could not understand the newer tendencies in the arts, such as the painting of Whistler, of which he himself had been the unknowing apologist. His later writings were soured by the sense of frustration and bad temper. Today he is remembered, — and ridiculed, — for his rhetorical flourishes, his extreme virtuousness and his mediaevalism; but, if these were eliminated, there would remain over many things, which would put the modern professor of architecture under very heavy obligations to him.

5. *The Arts and Crafts Movement.*

Ruskin's pessimism was due to deep-rooted causes. Pessimism is the natural concomitant of a revival, and indeed of any doctrine which casts back longing glances at some Golden Age of the past. Traits of pessimism are to be noted in most romantic thinkers. Both the Neo-Classic and Gothic Revivals had begun in a spirit of joyousness and conviction. Architects, like Cockerell or Gilbert Scott, believed absolutely in the justice of their particular cause and also in the success of their work. But towards the end of the nineteenth century, a feeling of unnameable desolation seemed to descend upon the revivalists of every school, and there was eventually a violent revulsion against the very idea of revivalism.

No cry was raised against the affection for nature, which every revivalist was anxious to cultivate. No cry was raised against the nationalism of so many of the revivalist styles. But the world of art was sick of styles as styles. It was realized that the main issue was not between any particular style, Palladian, neo-classic, Gothic, Italianate, for each one was, in its essentials, the outgrowth of a single archaeological style which could comprehend them all. Hence a writer, like James Ferguson, would insist upon the archaeological mentality, common to all revivalism, and would declare that any style, however honorable its antecedents, if conceived in a spirit of imitation, defeated its own ends. "It is perhaps not too much to say," he wrote, "that no perfectly truthful architectural building has been erected in Europe since the Reformation." [10] Evidently the old revivalism was at the point of collapse.

In the previous Chapter, impressionism was described as an extreme form of romanticism in painting. Impressionism no

sooner arrived at its completion than it fell to pieces. Like impressionism, revivalism is seen to rise to a state of completion and fall to pieces. But, if out of impressionism a series of survival doctrines remained, so also out of revivalism a series of survival doctrines remained, as various and as clamorous as those of post-impressionism. Thus, in proportion as the debris of revivalism was cleared away, a residue appeared, to which has recently been given the general name of Functionalism.

Functionalism indeed was a scientific analysis of the phenomenon of style. As its name indicates, it held that style was the result of function, and not the arbitrary creation of an artist. The Gothic style, for instance, was the result of a certain environment, of certain available materials and methods of craftsmanship. Gothic architecture therefore was an art, not of original designing and not governed by any theoretical aesthetics, but was produced by the necessary conditions of time and place. Given those conditions, Gothic architecture could not have developed otherwise. Hence, to quote James Ferguson again, the only criterion of good architecture is good building. Construction must determine form; ornament is justified only as an emphasis upon construction; materials must be used for the purpose for which they are fitted. "In the confusion of ideas and of styles which now prevails," wrote Ferguson, "it is satisfactory to be able to contemplate, in the Crystal Palace at Sydenham, at least — one great building carried out wholly on the principles of Gothic or of any true style of art." [11]

Apostles and converts of functionalism were readily found. Pugin, Ruskin and William Morris, Gothic revivalists as they

were, acknowledged the structural character of so much Gothic art, deprecated its more immediate appeal to sentiment, and were almost prepared to attribute their devotion to the Middle Ages to the transparent honesty of mediaeval craftsmanship. They were even constrained to see the functional doctrines illustrated in the purest periods of Greek art, before the Hellenistic and Graeco-Roman corruption had set in.

Functionalism appealed strongly to the moralism of the Victorians, who, with perfect consistence, argued that art like life should be true and sincere, and avoid that evil, inherent in all revivalist styles, the evil of a superficial effect. Functionalism again appeared to be proved by the recent advances in biology, by the theory namely that the forms of animals and plants were determined by the parts they had to play in the struggle for existence.

The response to the new doctrines was seen in an increased interest in materials and construction. It became the first principle of architectural design that the elevation of a building should clearly express the plan, that all sham decorative effects and expedients should be eradicated. Then the seasonable discovery was made that painting pictures was not necessarily the only business of an artist, but that carving, cabinet-making, bookbinding, printing, illumination, metalworking, mosaic, glass, pottery, encaustic, and in fact any honest creative manual work were equally honorable occupations and equally arts. Contrary to the opinion indirectly fostered by the traditions of the Renaissance and the academies, "applied art" was no less worthy of the artist's attention than the fine art of painting. And the functionalists, looking back to

Gothic times, saw not painting, much of which had since perished, but examples and relics of those very crafts which were now to absorb them. The Arts and Crafts Movement, under the leadership of William Morris, was a first fruit of functionalism.

The new Houses of Parliament had already been a regular school of crafts, of which masonry and stone-carving was by no means the most important. The Exhibition of 1851, inaugurated by Prince Albert, had stimulated the crafts. The Albert Memorial was designed expressly as a field for the display of craftsmanship. The Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, was founded to contain copyable examples of good craftsmanship of every period, and over its portals was inscribed the motto: "The excellence of every art must consist in the complete accomplishment of its purpose." A race of artists was bred, who did not consult measured drawings and documents as the old academicians had done, but who practiced their hand at a variety of materials. An architect, like Butterfield, gave his workmen every opportunity for craftsmanship by using stones of different colors, tiles, iron-work, carving, glass, all in one building. A sculptor, like Alfred Gilbert, emulated the early "orefici" of Florence, and worked with equal skill in marble, bronze, iron, aluminum, silver, gold, ivory and precious stones. Ancient forgotten crafts were revived; painters experimented with fresco and mural decoration; carvers went hunting abroad for unusual and exotic stones and woods; architects became interested in the varieties of brick, and talked increasingly of the new era then dawning when steel and concrete would become the glory of their art. The word "texture" was added to the jargon of the drafting-room and atelier.

6. *L'Art Nouveau.*

The twentieth century opened on a weary world, long admonished in revivalism, but habituated to the archaeological mentality. The more desperate artists, discontented with the past, but sceptical of the future, agitated for changes even more radical than the Arts and Crafts Movement had affected, and their agitations produced at last the cult of modernism. Like the Arts and Crafts Movement, this also had its origins in England, although it is now more generally known by its French name, "L'Art Nouveau." The Pre-Raphaelites had shown some traces of modernism; their precedents were Gothic, but their deliberate inventiveness had given birth to types of decoration, which could not, strictly speaking, be described as Gothic at all. Gilbert borrowed from them very freely and also from the most ornate phases of the Baroque, and evolved a certain curvilinear mannerism that belonged to no known style of the past. Aubrey Beardsley devised a meticulous black-and-white illustration entirely his own. The architect, Phillip Webb, built some houses of scholarly and traditional design, but acknowledging no strict archaeological precedents. About 1890, a new school of minor arts, akin to the Arts and Crafts Movement, was growing up in Glasgow. Art students of the time christened it the "Spook School."

Many of these artists and schools were popular on the Continent, where they regularly exhibited their works. In those days a prominent center of the arts was Vienna, and it was there that a new group of artists, the so-called Secessionists, used to foregather. From the Secessionists the new art passed to Paris, where it was at once taken up and given the name, by which it is now known "L'Art Nouveau." In 1896,

the first Arts and Crafts Exhibition was held in Paris and visitors from all over the world came to inspect the creations of "L'Art Nouveau." Periodicals were started, like the famous *Deutsche Kunst und Dekorazion*, devoted to "L'Art Nouveau"; modernist books, drawings, photographs poured from the press. Critics and experts used all the means of communication in the modern civilized world to educate the public and explain the new ideals of studio art. By a tacit agreement, Paris adopted the new style in the minor arts and articles of luxury, while the Northern peoples of Germany, Scandinavia, Holland and Denmark, adopted the new style in their national architectures. Berlin and Stockholm became the chief theaters of architectural activity. Everywhere the vogue of originality flourished. "L'Art Nouveau" tapped all the sources of inspiration hitherto unworked, such as out-of-the-way objects of nature, the revelations of modern microscopy, archaic Greek sculpture, Japanese wood-cuts, peasant arts and crafts, negro sculpture. Gradually it flowed back into England whence it had first sprung forth.

Chapter X

THE ARTIST

1. The Emergence of the Artist.
2. The Ideas of Genius and Originality.
3. Romantic Individuality.
4. Abnormal Genius.
5. The Philosophy of Expression.

Chapter X

THE ARTIST

1. *The Emergence of the Artist.*

The preceding chapters of this book have discussed certain artistic ideas, which, as it seemed to the writer, have been responsible for the developments and changes of taste. The present chapter must discuss the artist and define if possible, his personality, his social position and his responsibility in the world; for the artist is himself, so to speak, an idea which suffers with the mutability of his art.

The Middle Ages made little provision for the individual and less for the individual artist. The mediaeval cathedrals were built by craftsmen, who cared not to assert their names; and, if their names have occasionally survived, they revive no very vivid memories or associations. The craftsman's social position was that of a peasant. He owned no land and therefore claimed no rank in the feudal scale. His pay was never higher than an artisan's or tradesman's. Except for a few churchmen, he was a mechanic practicing a "servile" art. By common repute, he was often jealous and wicked, descended from Cain and tainted with Cain's guilt. He was allowed no liberties in his work. The guild tradition understood a strict coöperation between divers interests and trades, and the craftsman was apparently content to sink his individuality and ambition beneath a routine of effort that a modern artist's self-consciousness would never have tolerated. The controlling mind was not the craftsman's, but the employer's

or benefactor's. Craftsmanship was sometimes honored by a mention in romance and poetry, but craftsmen very seldom, and then never by name. Dante made mention of the painters Cimabue and Giotto, and the illuminators Oderisi and Franco; but he was in advance of his time, and his commentators were surprised that he should have deigned thus to immortalize "men of unknown name and low occupation." [1]

But with the Renaissance, the artist emerged from lowliness. Men and women became suddenly interested in humanity and in themselves. Scholars of the time were called Humanists and their studies Humanism. Contemporary historians changed their style and began to take stock of human character. The arts of biography and autobiography were invented. Portraiture became a "kind." The artist was subject to a change, himself became a humanist and was promoted to that high privilege of individuality, which he soon learned to treasure more than his skill.

The artist was now known by name. Vasari evidently began his *Lives* at that moment in the history of art, when artists were conscious enough of their responsibilities and ambitious enough of personal recognition to sign their works. Vasari once remarked that he had often examined mediaeval monuments for some memorial of authorship or date of execution, and that he had marveled at the indifference to glory shown by artists of that period.[2] In the earliest sections of his *Lives*, Vasari often quoted signatory inscriptions, as if their rarity had made them notable. Compare the spirit of this mediaeval anonymity with Vasari's own anxiety to collect personal details and anecdotes of the artists in his story.

The artist was now a man of some social consequence. There were few who, rising to fame as artists, did not also

rise to honorable positions in the world, and the honored ones were an example to their still struggling brethren. Magistracies and knighthoods were awarded to artists in the fifteenth century. The specter of the unsuccessful artist appeared. Men of noble blood stooped to the practice of the arts, especially of architecture, which has ever since been very much of a gentleman's profession. Alberti is the pattern of the gentleman architect, to whom every one of his professional brethren in subsequent ages has desired to liken himself. Apparently he refused to work for any but aristocratic clients. "Architecture loses of its dignity," he wrote, "by being done for mean persons." [3] Michelangelo claimed noble blood. It is said that his father believed the fine arts to be an unworthy occupation for any son of his ancient family; Michelangelo disagreed, but his high valuation of an artist's mission was not greater than his family pride. "I am no shopkeeper painter or sculptor," he exclaimed, during one of his quarrels with recalcitrant clients. "I beg that none may be set in authority over me in matters touching my art." [4] Even the Pope was careful not to cross the great artist's temper. Benvenuto Cellini always made a record of his association with persons of quality, he traveled in state, and was satisfied with nothing less than absolute obsequiousness from his admirers. Raphael at the height of his fame lived more like a prince than a painter, and was always attended by a retinue of servants and pupils. Leo X is said to have wished to make him a cardinal. Titian, Fontana, Bernini, Borromini were all but noblemen. North of the Alps the same conditions existed. Rubens was appointed ambassador at half the courts of Europe. Van Dyck was every inch a courtier. The French painters of the Academy attended court. Portraits of men

like Le Brun, Claude Perrault, J. H. Mansart, the Coypels, represent them bewigged and beruffled like any man of fashion.

2. *The Ideas of Genius and Originality.*

The artist was the instrument of the new aesthetic consciousness, and his sudden distinction was due to his acceptance as that instrument. He was at once marked out as having special gifts. Men spoke darkly of his genius and discussed the cognate problems of plagiarism and originality. Vasari was conversant with the idea of genius and believed, as a matter of course, that any great ability in the arts was a rare and special endowment of Providence, which no amount of human teaching and effort could otherwise supply. So he would sometimes write of a minor artist: "For however much he was impelled to exertion by a firm will and an eager desire for knowledge, by as much as he was impeded by the want of natural genius and readiness of hand."[5] The idea of genius was unknown to the Middle Ages; but it has now so much become a part and parcel of the very idea of artistic creation that its novelty at the Renaissance is always overlooked. "Out of a thousand peasants I can make as many noblemen, but only God can make an artist," is a remark that has been variously attributed to every despot in Europe since the Renaissance, and is often quoted to this day in recognition of the high principle it is meant to illustrate.

Vasari was also conversant with the peculiar mental operations of genius, namely expression and inspiration. He remarks, in one place, that Fra Angelico never retouched a painting, believing the first touch to be the true expression of the will of God.[6] Or, in another place, he writes: "Now it

sometimes happens that in the treatment of certain difficult subjects, the painter will throw off the first sketch of his work, as if moved by an inspiration (un certo furore), thus producing a good and bold commencement; but this promise is then found to remain unfulfilled at the completion, and the effect attributable to that first fire is seen to have disappeared. And this occurs most commonly, because, in finishing his work, the artist sometimes considers the separate parts rather than the whole of that which he has in hand, and thus suffering his spirit to become cold, he loses the force of his powers." [7] More than once Vasari speaks of "the life, power and feeling (vivacità, fierezza ed affetto)," contained in a drawing, but lost in a finished picture. Cellini, in his *Autobiography*, has made out that his admirers called him "una persona di maraviglioso ingegno." He speaks of his great absorption in his work, and, from time to time, describes the labor of his inspirations.[8] In the same way he used to flatter his clients by attributing their skilful connoisseurship to inborn talent.

This idea of inspiration, which appears to have flourished in the sixteenth century, was a source of some embarrassment to later aesthetic writers of the Renaissance. Lomazzo, as was mentioned before, was uncertain in his attitude to "the fury of Apollo and the Muses." Du Fresnoy was half afraid that his classical precepts might lie heavy upon the free activity of an artist's fancy, but hoped that the highest expressions of genius and "art" might be indistinguishable. The Academy always maintained that genius is no "violent fire and blind force," but rationally directed industry.

In the matter of originality the Renaissance was at variance with itself. The tight traditions of the mediaeval guilds

persisted, and every artist's studio became a potential guild in itself. It was customary for an artist of great fame to collect about him a corps of pupils deliberately aping his manner, just as, in the Middle Ages a certain manner might have been prescribed by a guild. A family might practice an art in collaboration and for more than one generation, for instance, the della Robbias, the Pollaiuoli, the San Galli; or two artists would agree to work in collaboration, for instance Fra Bartolomeo and Albertinelli, Andrea del Sarto and Francia Bigio, Polidoro and Maturino. Raphael's various manners of painting were the results of influences, under which he allowed himself successively to come. Nor was his imitativeness blamed. When finally he reached his third and maturest manner, it was not his independence of style, but his improved knowledge of the antique, that was praised. The well-known episode during Dürer's visit to Venice, when he sued an engraver for counterfeiting his signature, was no case of plagiarism; for Dürer was justly proud of his more honest imitators. In Italy until recently there were still some belated souls who counted themselves among the scholars of the decorator Tiepolo.

The French painters of the Academy deliberately imitated the antique or some chosen master like Raphael. There was a remarkable, and desirable, resemblance between the works of certain painters, for instance Poussin and Le Brun. Rubens sold three grades of pictures, those executed entirely by himself, those executed by his pupils after his designs and retouched by himself, and those executed entirely by his pupils, but in his manner. Van Dyck's earliest pictures are not easily distinguishable from those of Rubens, his master. In England, the academic Reynolds was expatiating very sceptically

upon enthusiasm and originality. The only enthusiasm he would allow was the enthusiasm for the correct, and the only originality was the originality of a mind already steeped in the knowledge of classic principles. "The purpose of this discourse," he said in one of his *Discourses* at The Royal Academy, "and indeed of most of my other discourses, is to caution you against that false opinion, but too prevalent among artists, of the imaginary powers of native genius, and sufficiency in great works." He was ever at pains to discountenance "the false and vulgar opinion, that rules are the fetters of genius." [9]

Yet at the same time, there was also some hankering after liberty. Leonardo will always be a type of the independent artist of the Renaissance. "One painter should never imitate another," he said, "because then he cannot be called the child of Nature, but the grandchild." Painting declines, he said again, if the painter takes the works of others as his standard, as did every painter since the fall of Rome; but Giotto and Masaccio showed "how those who took as their standard anything other than nature, the supreme guide of all the masters, were wearying themselves in vain." [10] Cellini blatantly aspired to the reputation of originality and declared that he executed designs "in quite a different style from that of any other artist (molto diversa da tutti quelli che per insino allora avevano fatto tal cosa)." [11] Vasari was very liberally disposed towards "variety (varietà)," not only in the representations of nature, but in the artist's style, and he more rarely approves of works of pure imagination, "fantasie, capricci, bizzarrie, grottesche." Castiglione, probably quoting some passage in Cicero, avers that there are as many kinds of oratory as orators and therefore as many arts as artists. "As painters," he

says, "Leonardo da Vinci, Mantegna, Raphael, Michelangelo, Giorgione are very excellent, yet they are all unlike in their work; so that no one of them seems to lack anything in his own manner, since each is known as most perfect in his style (perche si conosce ciascun nel suo stil essere perfettisimo)." [12] The principle of the competition among artists, a unique innovation of the Renaissance, was a deliberate recognition of the artist's newly-won individuality.[13]

But although opinions were then divided as to the degree to which the artist should plagiarize or should strike out upon some independent line of his own, the Renaissance was agreed that originality was no virtue in itself. The artist was original if, like Leonardo, he painted with greater truth, or if, like Raphael, he painted with a more profound knowledge of the antique than did other painters. A painter, like Tintoretto, who flung all subordination to the winds, was a most dangerous example, and his work, however much it compelled admiration, was a matter for serious misgivings. Vasari was convinced that half Tintoretto's bursts of exertion were pure bravado, to be condemned because they were done "by haphazard and without design (a caso e senza disegno)."

The idea of originality for its own sake became possible in proportion as the authority of the Academy declined. The earliest writer to advocate any degree of originality for its own sake was Franciscus Junius. He wrote: "I do not studie to induce any man to such an unadvised and temerary licentiousness, as useth to sollicite and to corrupt many brave and lively wits; but I doe hold that free and forward spirits are not to be restrained within the compasse of a narrow cariere, that wee must rather give our invention the full raines . . . seeing that the forwardnesse of this same most generous Art

is weakened and broke when a man goeth about to contain it within the limits and bounds of a straight running place. . . . But as there is an easie remedie for ranknesse, so there is no labour can overcome barrennesse." [14]

The artists were not slow to apply to themselves the doctrine of "chacun à son goût," and as the Academy declined, the more moderate academicians were disposed to allow a certain liberty to acknowledged talent, provided that the owner of that talent had first submitted to the full rigors of academic training and was properly acquainted with those laws with which he wished occasionally to dispense. "Only great genius is above rules," wrote Roger de Piles, "and knows when to make an ingenious use of license." [15] Even Reynolds in one of his later *Discourses* was heard to say: "It is certainly true, that a work may justly claim the character of Genius, though full of errors; and it is equally true, that it may be faultless, and yet not exhibit the least spark of Genius." [16] So revolutionary an admission from the foremost of English academicians was not altogether without significance. Like other movements of taste in the late eighteenth century, this of the artist's freedom and originality received very creditable encouragement from England.

3. *Romantic Individuality.*

The Renaissance had discovered the artist. He had become a man claiming a certain spiritual ownership of his work and was personally honored among his fellow men. His art was recognized as something rare and wonderful, something by whose practice he could be raised to the topmost ranks of the social and intellectual scale. But with the advance of romanticism he was advanced to yet more dizzy heights.

Romanticism appeared to deepen and enlarge the purpose of art, and gave the artist a pretention to new rights and new prerogatives. Art became analogous to a religious cult and the artist to its priest. An artistic career became a spiritual progress, the artist's work a spiritual autobiography, and each artistic inspiration an atonement and a salvation. The artist of the Renaissance had sometimes been egotistical, the academician had sometimes been proud, but the romantic belonged to a hierarchy, whose singular ordination exalted him above ordinary humanity and possessed him of a calling at once unique, incorruptible and isolated.

The Germans of the "Sturm und Drang" were men very self-consciously preoccupied with their artistic and spiritual development by the agency of fine art. Goethe devoted his life to fine art and to self-culture. He was always sensible of his own necessary originality and of the autobiographical nature of his work. His letters during his second visit to Rome show him in all the throes of self-formation; and that period of his life was one of his greatest literary productiveness, versatility and happiness. The world was his theater, providing infinite material for his art, and he would purposely court experiences, more particularly if they promised him an element of the tragic, for the sake of the knowledge they might give. In that world, he was a pilgrim, living — according to modern phraseology — a full life. He despised his audiences, whose natural obtuseness prevented them from participating in his divine transports; and doubtless he was the originator of that type of aesthetic philanthropy that desires to socialize the appreciation of the arts and "to educate the public."

Hegel was the great reactionary in the Romantic Move-

ment, and did not take kindly to the soaring freedom of his romantic contemporaries. His recognition of the independence of genius is therefore the more remarkable. He believed that fine art was a necessity to man, if man should ever "discover himself." He likened the mind to a house divided against itself, and only liberated from strife by the sense of beauty. He spoke of the artist as a man of a deep knowledge of life, as having "experienced many things and lived abundantly (viel durchgemacht und durchgelebt)." "The awakening of every kind of emotion in us," he said, "the drawing of our soul through every content of life, the realization of all the movements of the soul life . . . this is pre-eminently regarded as the peculiar and transcendent power of artistic creation." So life and the knowledge of life inspires an artist to work, and Hegel would call works of art "reduplications (Verdoppelungen)" of the artist. "Thus the artist asserts his claim to the substance and embodiment of his creation, as a part of his own spiritual substance." He defined originality as the identity of the artist's free personality with "the objective construction of his creation." He carefully distinguished true originality from "mannerism (Eigenthümlichkeit)" or "caprice (Willkür)." "True originality," he said, "will be evident throughout by this and by this alone, that the artist's work has the appearance of being the unique creation of one individual mind which does not go about picking up scraps around it and then making thereof a patchwork, but permits the material of that work, in complete accordance with the unity most congenial to its own substance, to bind itself together in a whole, all parts of which are strictly related, as truly stamped with one mint as the founder's cast." [17]

Hegel raised the artist and his work to sublime heights, but

his doctrine was dangerous to less powerful and less responsible minds. The artist was inflated by a consciousness of his peculiarity and was detached from his fellow creatures. Extreme individuality, the "Eigenthümlichkeit," which Hegel had so carefully rejected, did not have long to wait for philosophers to approve it seriously for its own sake. Schleiermacher made it an integral part of his philosophy. The Schlegels wrote of individuality in art in much the same style as contemporary politicians were then declaiming upon the Rights of Man. Individuality colored the entire progress of German philosophy in the nineteenth century and concluded so variously as in the Superman of Nietzsche and in the "self-expression" psychology of more modern times. It explained the convention of the eccentric artist and dignified all his abnormalities both as a man and as a worker. Today, every novelist is a student of human nature, a spectator in this theater of mortals, whose follies are the raw material of his art. The belief has got about that things alike are dull, that men and women are interesting for their differences, that the value of personality is immeasurably increased by an occasional oddity. And the artist, who was the natural missionary of that belief had every need to live up to it himself.[18]

4. *Abnormal Genius.*

The abnormality of genius was once considered an infirmity, the more unfortunate the more conspicuous was its possessor. Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo have been represented as the early precursors of the age of genius; for it is known that they lived unhappily, that they were never satisfied with their work and ever aspired to some nameless ideal. Yet their contemporaries do not seem to have suspected

that soul-torment which romantic biographers have been pleased to read into the mystery of the one and the "terribilità" of the other. Michelangelo's principal contemporary biographers, Vasari and Condivi, are anxious to absolve him from the charge of solitary habits, bad temper and pride, and to prove him generous, lovable and modest. Correggio and Salvator Rosa are also accredited with the qualities of genius; for both are said to have been strange and gloomy men. Vasari's *Lives* are full of anecdote and gossip, but nowhere does Vasari suggest that abnormality distinguished the Renaissance artists above other men; generally he was reproachful of any such abnormality as he mentioned. Vasari's statistics merely show that some queer Italians adorned the Renaissance, and that some of them were artists.

But now compare a *Life* from Vasari with the life say of a French impressionist. Nothing may be divined from the works, say of Piero di Cosimo or Sodoma, to warrant a belief in any abnormality in them. Yet it is written of Piero di Cosimo, for instance, that he was fond of solitary meditation, that he would never allow his rooms to be swept, that he often painted dragons and monstrosities, that he lived on eggs, which he boiled fifty at a time and kept in storage, that he was terrified of noises, especially thunder, that he had a phobia of physicians, that finally he died lonely and demented; or of Sodoma, that he gloried in the nickname of "Il Mattaccio," that he "worked in fits and starts (lavoro a capricci)," that he dressed pompously, that he was made a knight by Leo X, that he went in for horse-racing, that he kept a menagerie of horses, donkeys, monkeys, cats, chickens, badgers, tortoises, doves, that he was deserted by his wife after one year of matrimony, and that he died in extreme

proverty.[19] But the works, say of Monet, Cézanne, Pissarro, are the works of men remarkable for abnormality, and who were artists because of their abnormality.

The type of the mad genius may be said to have begun with Diderot. His reaction to the classicism of his time has already been described. In his life as in his thought he exemplified the revolutionary spirit. He was the first of the literary Bohemians of Paris, picturesque and loquacious, versatile and inexhaustible, his manners unconventional and his appearance unkempt. He has always been an example of the modern hungry, toiling, tempestuous, suffering artist. He even played with the notion that the artist is a law unto himself, and justifies a morality of his own making. He is the dismay of literary critics, who look for clear-cut definitions and the delight of psychologists, who try to interpret his behavior.

In deference to Diderot the French have been fruitful in the production of genius; and it is doubtful if there was an eminent man of letters or an artist in France during the nineteenth century, who did not belong to the type. It has since been a popular assumption that to be an artist, especially a musician or an actor, is also to be a freak, and to this day the lapses of genius are expected, humored and envied. The architect, possibly because of his continual association with the practical sanities of life, has adhered generally to his earlier gentlemanly tradition; though it were possible to cite some of the Gothic revivalists who strained that tradition almost to breaking point.

The artist of the late nineteenth century belonged to a race apart, claiming to dictate in matters of taste, fretting under the misappreciation of a public which grossly refused to accept his dictation. His struggle for recognition has now

become a commonplace, for his education and success depends more and more on his own efforts; he learns his own style, accepts teachers on sufferance, and loses no chance of maligning the vested interests of the academies, art schools, professional criticism and the great bourgeoisie.

Recently there have been biographies of artists written in the form of novels or plays. Puccini's opera, *La Bohéme*, is a good example in a more elaborate medium. Zola's *Œuvre* describes the feverish and somewhat unpleasant careers of his painter contemporaries in Paris. Merejkowski's *Fore-runner*, a life of Leonardo, has proved a great favorite; its facts may be correct, but its imagination is obviously in the romantic vein. Somerset Maughan's *Moon and Sixpence* is an attempt to glorify a unique man and a fantastic life. There is Franz Werfel's novel, translated into English a few years ago, describing the agony of the ten impotent years of Verdi's life; it is a terrific book, probably true both in fact and imagination. The poet Heine has provided inexhaustible materials for a certain type of biography. Among plays, there is Ibsen's *Master Builder*, Bernard Shaw's *Doctor's Dilemma* and Clemence Dane's *Will Shakespeare*. In a more popular style, there are the stories of *Trilby*, the *Constant Nymph*, and many others. Lastly there is William J. Locke's novel, *The Beloved Vagabond*.

Since the first publication of the *Beloved Vagabond*, just over twenty years ago, it has been reprinted twenty-nine times; and it may therefore be assumed to represent with fair accuracy what the English novel-reading public conceives the artist-genius to be. The hero is one Paragot. He is a winner of the Grand Prix de Rome in architecture, — though that detail of his life does not transpire till the story is well

begun. He has long black hair, a long black beard, and long black finger nails. He wears fantastic clothes; he has no idea of method or respectability, but lives his desultory, haphazard life as well he may. He prefers all the sinks of sin to the conventional shams of bourgeois society. He is the possessor of an ill-assorted, but competent knowledge of the classics, both ancient and modern. He is an addict to absinthe, the traditional vice of Continental Bohemianism. From time to time he is a wayward wanderer over the length and breadth of Europe, leading bears in Warsaw, fraternizing with criminals in Prague, carpentering coffins in Verona, fiddling in Aix-les-Bains. Evidently he is well traveled both geographically and psychologically, and knows all the ways and doings of men. Whenever he settles, as sometimes he does, he reigns a self-appointed monarch, over ragged companies of his artistic kindred, who gather round him fascinated by his fitful eloquence. He cultivates a sort of casual cosmopolitanism, which is orientated inevitably towards the cafés and studios of Paris. He suffers from alternate spasms of divine despair and creative inspiration. He has been disappointed in love; but the affair provides for him the requisite background of mystery. And withal he prosecutes an arduous spiritual pilgrimage to the Inner Shrine.

A less entertaining, but more authentic record of a modern artist's life is given in the recently published *Letters* of Van Gogh to his brother. In those letters can be read, sometimes distorted by disappointment and despondency, all the ideas, already familiar from the letters of Goethe, the same contentious individuality and selfrealization and the same curious objectivity in the face of the world. "I feel in me a power which I must develop," so writes Van Gogh in one place, "a

fire that I may not quench, but must keep ablaze, though I do not know to what result it will lead me, and I should not wonder if my end were a gloomy one." A typical extract from one of the letters may be given verbatim:

"Dear Brother,

"Since I wrote to you yesterday, I could not shake off an anxious and restless feeling, and last night it kept me out of sleep.

"It is — shall I be able to go on or not — in short that is the reason of my worrying. . . .

"O, Theo, the work brings its troubles and cares, but what is it in comparison to the misery of a life without activity.

"So let us not lose courage but comfort each other, instead of distressing or disheartening one another. . . .

"That about which I wrote to you (and about which you wrote too, our thoughts have met again), the meagreness or what is called depression, is the first thing to be conquered, that it may not become a chronic disease. . . .

"I have been thinking of the ways and means to conquer it, but see no other help than to renew my energy and also my physical strength, for I am afraid it goes the wrong way. I absolutely need some money and must repair both my health and my painting box, otherwise I am afraid things will come to light afterwards that would be more difficult to redress. It is now in the beginning — the last drawings (which I have done) are even less meagre, here and there, than before.

"If it might be, Theo, that I could find in some way, some help or sympathy, I think it would soon enough redress itself.

"Taking a rest is out of the question, but I think it would be a good thing to find distraction in change of subject and style. After these figure studies (which I am now doing), I

feel the need of looking, at the sea, the bronzed potato foliage, the stubble fields, or ploughed earth. In order to save time, I have not spared myself, pinched on everything if I could only work on, but now I am absolutely drained. I can draw no more bills on my personal needs, on that side no drop can be pressed out, there is malady and depression.

"Well, after all I hope to keep courage, whatever may happen, and I hope that perhaps a certain frenzy and rage of work may carry me through, as a boat is sometimes thundered by a wave over a cliff or sand-bank, and can profit by a thunderstorm to save itself from wrecking. But such manoeuvres do not always succeed, and it would be desirable to avoid the spot by tacking a little. After all, if I fail what is lost in me, I don't care so much after all. But in general, one tries to let one's life bear fruit, instead of letting it wither, and at times one feels that one has in fact also a life of one's own, which is not indifferent to the way it is treated."

After some five hundred closely-printed pages, written in the same tenor, it is tempting to refer to Van Gogh a remark which he himself made about a contemporary novelist: "Well, I do not know what to think of him. He seems to be a product of his time, in reality more passive than active, notwithstanding his activity." [20]

Towards the end of his life, Van Gogh came under the influence of the impressionists and settled at Arles in the south of France to study the sunny landscapes that abounded there. In those days Paul Gauguin used to stay with him. Gauguin had begun to paint when middle-aged. He had been a stockbroker. But he also came under the influence of the impressionists, retired from business and was separated from his wife. Romantic biographers have been blithe over this

prosaic business man, suddenly possessed as by a devil, deserting his career and family to devote his life to art. He lived a turbulent life, and, like every artist of his type, suffered the usual round of disappointments and privations. Van Gogh invited him to Arles, and, while he was staying there he realized that Van Gogh was rapidly going insane. One evening Van Gogh made a murderous attack on him, the climax of a series of scenes. The attack failed, but Van Gogh's mind completely broke down. The next morning Van Gogh cut off his ear in a fit of madness and presented it to a woman who lived near by. He was removed to an asylum not long afterwards.[21]

Tired of civilization, Gauguin sailed for the South Seas. He was once again in Paris, where a moderate legacy enabled him to live in temporary luxury, to defray the expenses of his exhibitions, and to display his vices with impunity. August Strindberg, the Swedish dramatist, addressed to Gauguin the following panegyric of his individuality: "You always seem to me to be fortified especially by the hatred of others, your personality delights in the antipathy it arouses, anxious as it is to keep its own integrity. And perhaps that is a good thing, for the moment you were approved and admired and had supporters, they would classify you, put you in your place and give your art a name, which, five years later, the younger generation would be using as a tag for designating a superannuated art, an art they would do anything to render still more out of date. . . . (Gauguin is not formed in the pattern of any other painter). He is Gauguin the savage, who hates a whimpering civilization, a sort of Titan, who, jealous of the Creator, makes in his leisure hours his own little creation, the child who takes his toys to pieces so as to make others

from them, who abjures and defies, preferring to see the heavens red rather than blue with the crowd." [22]

5. *The Philosophy of Expression.*

In the foregoing stories the reader may observe and judge the *reductio ad absurdum* of that doctrine of individuality once taught with such high eloquence by Hegel. Yet in this present age of confirmed individuality, it is perhaps comforting to find another great philosopher, who bears a remote kinship to the said Hegel, who can cherish the gift of individuality while avoiding its extravagances. That philosopher is Croce.

A brief reference has already been made to Croce and to the occasional romanticism of his thought. Croce has every sympathy for the affections and passions of the artist for his inspirations, his "heroic fury" and the "agony" of his creative moments; but that does not disquiet the steady rationality of Croce's philosophy. Croce has called his philosophy the philosophy of Expression and he might have called it also the philosophy of Individuality. The knowledge and understanding of the Spirit, that is self-knowledge and the fulfilment of the individual life, is fundamentally the end of his *Estetica, Logica, Pratica* and *Historia.* Hence he speaks of "the intrinsic law of the Spirit, which consists in always preserving or in continually attaining to full possession of itself." The individual in its struggle for unity and self-knowledge, "reflects at every moment the whole cosmos"; the universal mission of man is the discovery of his proper cosmic self and his vocation is the development of his own individual life. Hence Croce evolves his doctrine of "Becoming (divenire, svolgimento, evoluzione)" and can at last interpret the true sense

of Hegel's old synthesis of Being and Not-Being. "Man does not seek a God external to himself and almost a despot, who commands and benefits him capriciously; nor does he aspire to an immortality of insipid ease; but he seeks for that God which he has in himself, and aspires to that activity, which is both life and death." Hence it is that: "a work of art does not seem to possess a value, save from its lyrical character and from the imprint of the artist's personality. . . . For reality is nothing but becoming, possibility that passes into actuality, desire that becomes action, from which desire springs forth again unsatiated. The artist who represents it ingeniously produces the lyric for this very reason. . . . The feeling that the true artist portrays is that of things, *lacrymae rerum*. . . . The characteristic that Schelling and Schopenhauer noted in music, of reproducing, not indeed the ideas, but the ideal rhythm of the universe, and of objectifying the will itself, belongs equally to all the other forms of art, because it is the essence of art, or of pure intuition." Thus art belongs to the mystery of the artist's infinite evolution and is, so to speak, his very self, his "personal intonation (intonazione personale)." [23]

Chapter XI

CONCLUSION

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The foregoing ten chapters of this History were intended to show the origin and development of standards of taste now existing in the European world. The First Chapter described the apparent absence of an aesthetic consciousness in the Middle Ages, when either an intolerant ascetism condemned the arts outright or a crude taste admired such things as "living" sculpture and gold-and-glittering ornaments. The Second Chapter described the Renaissance in Italy and interpreted it, not merely as the accidental rebirth of ancient Roman culture, but as the predestined rebirth of the aesthetic consciousness. The Third Chapter described how that rediscovered aesthetic consciousness was reduced to a set of fixed principles called classicism; and the Fourth Chapter described the establishment of the Academy in France, the great guardian to be of the classic doctrine in Europe.

Classicism was reasoned and logical, a moral system, an ideal and a legislative code. The great teachers of classicism allowed that art should be enjoyed, but that it should at the same time convey a moral lesson to mankind, and they only admitted the value of those things in art to which their inflexible reasoning could be applied. They found excellent material in ancient history, and ancient history became accordingly the subject matter of their Great Style. They believed in an ideal, a kind of Platonic ideal, which they drew from nature, and they were guided in their selection

and employment of the ideal by their mathematical studies and by the constant example of the antique. They deliberately imposed the ideal upon their artistic theory and practice, and they empowered an Academy to maintain its goodness and purity. They believed that the ideal could be sufficiently well expressed by line, and that color, a phenomenon which no mathematical laws appeared to govern, was an undignified and comparatively useless accessory. And they fitted their architectural designs to a meticulous system of proportions, the Orders of Vitruvius.

But the classical doctrine was insecure, and even in its most exclusive academic stronghold complaint and mutiny inevitably broke out. Characteristic, real nature, said the enemies of the Academy, contained more of interest and beauty than the idealized nature of classicism. The classic doctrine, in its dependence upon the authority of ancient Rome, was not elastic enough to include the cultures of ancient Greece and the Middle Ages, and both those cultures began to exert their peculiar appeal, in spite of all the scorn and stricture of the orthodox academicians.

The Fifth and Sixth Chapters therefore described the inroads upon classicism made by amateur criticism and scientific archaeology, and the beginning of that romantic disintegration that was finally to destroy the classic position. The Seventh Chapter described how the philosophers of Germany evolved a new metaphysics of beauty to solve a problem with which the old classical logic had wrestled in vain; and art was immediately invested with semi-divine pretensions, an art more sublime and marvellous than any that the academicians had dared to conceive. The old ideal was deposed, realism was established; the charms of color

could no longer be denied, and the picturesque was substituted for the well regulated symmetries of classic compositions. Sentiment, imagination and enthusiasm were put in the place of cold, academic reasoning as the creative principles in fine art.

Finally, the Eighth Chapter described the precursors and heroes of impressionist painting; the Ninth Chapter described the mediaeval revivals of the nineteenth century, the Battle of Styles, modern functionalism and "L'Art Nouveau"; the Tenth described the personality of the artist himself as representing and reflecting the artistic practices of his time.

In so complex and personal a study as taste, it has sometimes been hard for me to avoid controversial issues. But up to this point I have had no other desire than to write impartially. What has been presented to the reader is, I believe, an honest rendering of accessible information, and although the variety and abundance of the sources and the need for a plan of work forced me into some selectiveness, I have not avoided apposite material with any ulterior motive.

I know that it is the traditional privilege of writers on art-criticism to read a moral into their story. At the same time I do not now intend to adulterate what purports to be a history with the insertion of theories and conclusions. Even had no plan of work been necessary, some consequence in the vagaries of taste would have appeared sooner or later in a study such as this has been. For there is a kind of destiny in taste — a cycle, as it were, — which no man controls and in which some deeper historical significance might be sought. In the Appendix to this book I have attempted to detect and to interpret such a cycle.

Meanwhile therefore I shall not have undertaken more than to describe the antecedents of our modern ideas of taste. I have not wanted to make an attack on any phase of art or on any critic with whom I may not be in sympathy. I cannot apologize if a necessary coldness and objectivity of approach has seemed to rob the arts of a value. Spinoza once said: "A passion ceases to be a passion, so soon as I am given a clear and distinct idea of it." But no man should be so weak as to lose faith in a thing just because he knows how it came to be and knows also that it will not endure for ever.

Art indeed is no eternal birthright of man. The aesthetic consciousness emerges, lasts for a time, and may easily vanish again. Taste changes with the generations, and no one taste is more worthy or abiding than another. But even if the most unquestioning and passionate idea of taste has only a fleeting value for the generation of men which happens to have been born into it, that idea of taste will always remain a sign in history and a means of understanding the past. For myself, I feel that the months of study I have given to this work have made me appreciate my own time better. The present-day moral and intellectual ferment is more clearly illustrated for me, and I am the better prepared and expectant of the great events I know the future holds.

Finis

APPENDIX

THE CYCLE OF ANTIQUITY

1. A Suggested Method of Analogy.
2. Earliest Greek Evaluation of Art.
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APPENDIX

THE CYCLE OF ANTIQUITY

1. *A Suggested Method of Analogy.*

As was suggested in the Conclusion above, there ought to be some discoverable meaning in the revolutions of taste. But to attempt an interpretation would be a most difficult proceeding. For by so doing, we could only interpret one taste in the terms of another and set up a vicious circle. Yet other cycles of taste have existed in history, one of which, the cycle of ancient Greece and Rome, has been recorded in some detail. Our interpretation therefore might very well take the form of an analogy.

It is the purpose of this Appendix to follow the cycle of taste in ancient Greece and Rome and indicate in it such parallels as will bear comparison with the cycle of taste that the foregoing chapters have described. The course proposed is speculative, but it may provide the interpretation we seek, and, in any case, the material collected in the process will not lie entirely outside the proper province of a History of Taste.

2. *Earliest Greek Evaluation of Art.*

The world of Hellenic antiquity opens with a state of affairs, social, economic and religious, not unlike the Dark and Middle Ages of Europe. In literature and the arts the aesthetic consciousness did not then exist. The Greek knew not that he was an artist, till his arts were well past their prime. The Parthenon and the Propylaea were already built,

and had become the accustomed sights of Athens, before it was dimly born upon the Athenians that they were "works of art."

Prior to the fourth century, there is no evidence that works of art were admired, except for their costliness and magnitude. In sculpture and painting the first quality demanded was livingness and realism. The *Iliad* describes the siege of Troy, but speaks no word of Trojan architecture. Troy is famed only for "her brass and gold, the common theme of every tongue." The typical palace of the *Odyssey* beams with brass and gold, electrum and ivory. The palace of the Phaeacian king, for example, shone like the sun or moon. Bronze were its walls, golden its doors, silver its doorposts, its furniture adorned with richest woven fabric. In the *Iliad*, descriptions of armor are numerous, as befits an epic of war. But this armor too is golden, silver-studded, brazen-clasped, star-spangled. On the great shield of Achilles, a complete mythic encyclopaedia was inlaid in gold and silver and brass, and the scenes represented are described as if they existed and lived most really.[1] Hesiod's *Shield of Heracles* contains the same gold-and-glitter. Enamel, ivory, electrum, gold and various sculptured monsters of unspeakable frightfulness and compelling realism compose its ornaments.[2] The lyric poets delight themselves with golden bracelets, silver goblets, ivory trinkets and purple robes. Pindar has his golden palaces and shining porticos; his very flowers are golden; the bay-wreaths of his victors at the games are golden; in his Isles of the Blessed are golden trees.

Such must have been the average appreciation of art during the archaic age of Greek culture. The Periclean age might however have introduced something more sophisticated. But

there is nothing to prove that the mighty works of architecture, sculpture and painting, which the Greeks then executed, were at all synchronous with revolutions in aesthetic ideas. Herodotus, the fifth-century historian, was an exact contemporary of Pericles. He traveled the then known world and must have been fully conversant with the culture of his time. He is said to have read his *History* publicly at the Panathenaic festival of 445 B.C., — at the very time the Parthenon was being built. But never in that *History* does he attain to anything more subtle than the following: "Below in the same precinct, is a second temple, in which is a sitting figure of Zeus, all of gold. Before the figure stands a large golden table, and the throne whereon it sits, and the base whereon the throne is placed, are likewise of gold. The Chaldeans told me that all the gold together was eight hundred talents in weight. Outside the temple are two altars, one of solid gold, on which it is lawful to offer sucklings; the other is a common altar, but of great size, on which the full-grown animals are sacrificed. It is also on the altar that the Chaldeans burn frankincense, which is offered to the amount of a thousand talents in weight every year at the festival of the God. In the time of Cyrus there was likewise in this temple the figure of a man, twelve cubits high, entirely of solid gold . . ." and so forth.[3] And that is a fair sample of Herodotus.

The Funeral Oration of Pericles in Thucydides' *History* is often seized upon by modern scholars as an epitome of the Greek aesthetic consciousness at its height. But it appears to be impregnated with puritanism, the ascetic resistance to fine art, which played so important a rôle in Greece. Hence the culture of Athens is a subject for apologies, and there is a sig-

nificant denial of the Spartan reproach that the Athenians were sapping their manhood by their intellectual diversions. "We are lovers of beauty," Pericles is made to say, "but of beauty only in her frugal forms (φιλοκαλοῦμεν μετ' εὐτελείας), and we cultivate the mind without the loss of manliness." How far it is possible to understand these words as a reference to the beauty of art is hard to decide. More probably this "beauty in her frugal forms" is a repetition of the beauty of moral character, which was later to obsess Plato. It is also hard to decide how far the words "κατασκευαῖς εὐπρεπέσιν" which translators generally render as "elegant homes," should refer to contemporary architecture. More probably the words had the same intention of fitness and usefulness that mediaeval architecture had. And the meaning of the word "monuments (σημεῖα)," which, Pericles is made to say, "will make us the wonder of this and of succeeding ages," must be judged from the remainder of Thucydides' *History*. For as often as there is an occasion to praise Athens and her works, there is never a mention of her artistic achievements. Her empire, her victories, her freedom are her monuments. Once the Acropolis is described, but without a hint of architecture. Pericles, when computing the sinews of war, adds that the gold plates of the Athena Parthenos might be used as a last resource. He blandly assumes that they could be restored afterwards, and he shows no solicitude for their immortal sculptor, whose very name he cares not to mention. The *History* takes note of cities for the strength of their defenses and for the wealth they contain. Such cities are razed to the ground, but there is never so much as a word of regret, except for the loss of brave souls and material property. The burn-

ing of a temple or the mutilation of a statue only call forth diatribes on sacrilege. Thucydides had many an opportunity for an aesthetic parenthesis. The continuity of his narrative is interrupted to tell a myth, to observe some ancient rite, or to digress upon the horrors of plague and revolution. But he stops short of fine art.[4]

At the same time that the values of art as art were ignored, the ever present ascetic tradition was making difficult the cultivation even of the most hesitating appreciations. The very quality, which appears to have made art attractive in mediaeval and archaic times, namely the gold-and-glitter, offended the age-old philosophic horror of the riches and covetousness of the world, and the early moralists unconditionally condemned the very material of art, while that art was yet young, powerless and unjustifiable. It would have been impossible to cherish fine art in a state like Sparta, which despised every occupation but that of arms, and which only admitted poets for their teachings and musicians for their martial airs. The city's squalor was proverbial; but the Spartan was well content to have it so, and deemed that, among other advantages, the visits of foreigners would be discouraged thereby. The temples and houses were of the meanest, and timber was, by law, wrought with no tool but the axe to prevent unnecessary extravagance. It would have been equally impossible to cherish fine art in a state like Athens in the time, say, of Solon, the great lawgiver, who despised the luxury of Croesus and accused the poet Thespis of telling lies.[5] The Athenian philosophers busied themselves with exhortations to moral improvement and only permitted the existence of the arts as object-lessons. Many of the philoso-

phers were fabled to have descended into Hades and there seen the soul of Homer eternally tortured for the wicked poems he composed upon the Gods.[6]

The aesthetic consciousness made its first hesitating progress during the great era of drama. Examples of the old gold-and-glitter may be found in Aeschylus, for instance the *Persians,* which harps on the gold treasures of Persia. Sophocles speaks of nothing but the dread holiness of images and sanctuaries. In Euripides there is the same gold-and-glitter; but there does appear at times a definite artistic sensibility. Euripides often uses similes, which refer to the arts, and he mentions architectural technical terms. Once he makes a chorus walk round a temple and name the scenes represented in the sculptures; but he is admittedly not overgenerous with his aesthetic information.[7]

In the same generation as Euripides, Socrates sees in painting and sculpture convenient themes for philosophical discussion. But his art-criticism is not more congenial to the modern art-lover than is the gold-and-glitter of archaic times. Yet tradition has it that Socrates was a trained sculptor and the wisest of the Athenians, — qualifications excellently befitting an aesthetician. The theory implied in Socrates is the theory of Imitation, the theory that the figures of the painter and sculptor are renderings of living originals and that the artistic excellence of such figures is to be judged by their truth to life. The theory understands nothing in the arts, which is now ennobled by the name of Fine Art. A statue, for instance, is beautiful only in the accurate portrayal of a beautiful model. The grandeur of the Athena Parthenos is the grandeur of Athena herself, and not the grandeur of the art which bodies her forth.

Hence in Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, Socrates is made to argue quite innocently that the Gods must be greater artists than men, because they have made images which do really live, have senses and serve a useful purpose. He talks to his artist acquaintances about "representation (εἰκασία)" and about "the life-like appearance of statues which wins the minds of all beholders." The architecture of the *Memorabilia* makes no great advance on the "elegant homes" of Thucydides before mentioned; there is no word of the beauty of marble colonnades and porticos. And throughout there runs the under-current of morality, which regularly identifies the beautiful with the useful.[8]

Plato saw no other end in art than imitation, and he founded his celebrated antipathy to works of art on the score of their being copies, and therefore, according to his philosophy, three times removed from reality. He used on more than one occasion the simile of the mirror in referring to poetry, sculpture and painting. The only true justification of a work of art, if it be not hounded out of the state altogether, was that it should teach. Hence he would expurgate all poetry, and serve up only the moral plums for the education diet of his chosen guardians. Painting, carving, architecture and "workmanship of all kinds" are involved in his censorship.[9]

Finally, there is Aristotle's textbook on imitation, the *Poetics*. His chief topic is tragedy, but he draws his instances from all the arts. "The poet, being an imitator, just like the painter or any other maker of likenesses," he says, "must of necessity always represent things in one of three ways, either as they were or are, or as they are said or thought to be or to have been, or as they ought to be." Even music, as he proves

elsewhere, is a type of imitation. "Anger and mildness, courage and modesty, and their contraries, as well as other dispositions of the mind, are most naturally imitated by music and poetry; which is proved by experience, for when we hear these our very soul is altered; and he who is affected either in joy or grief by the imitation of any objects is in nearly the same situation as if he was affected by the objects themselves; thus if any person is pleased with seeing a statue of any one on no other account but its beauty, it is evident that the sight of the original from whence it was taken would also be pleasing. . . ." [10]

It is curious with what persistence the mimetic idea of art survived in later times, even when more refined alternatives of artistic appreciation were firmly established. Stories of statues coming to life, and not merely appearing to live, were common. The myth of Pygmalion and Galatea is first told by Ovid, but may well be a type of story of an earlier popularity. More than one love-sick Grecian youth lost his heart to the statue of Aphrodite at Cnidos, and desired to be locked up in the temple at night with the object of his passion. Hence it was related of certain statues by Daedalus, the mythic sculptor and aviator, that they had to be tied up to prevent their running away. Writers like Aelian and Pliny tell anecdotes, all gathered from earlier Greek sources, illustrative of this selfsame demand for alsolute realism.[11]

If literary records are to be trusted, it is evident that the archaic and fifth-century Greek possessed no knowledge of fine art in the modern sense. Even subsequent to that time, this Greek ignorance continued in a manner which had perplexed and disappointed modern students of antiquity. The truth is that Greek art in its earlier epochs was co-terminous

with the life and religion of the people. Greek pictures and statues represented Gods, heroes and men; Greek buildings supplied practical needs and perhaps embodied chosen traditional symbols. To these things the Greek dedicated his most precious possessions, his riches and his gold-and-glitter. The Greek philosophers who did not denounce the arts outright, excused them as useful and popular agents of good morals. But beyond the simplicity of such immediate ends, early Greek art had no self-conscious motives or ideals. A Greek artist, a contemporary of Pheidias, is said to have thus expressed his praises of Attica, his native land: "I behold the Acropolis, there is the symbol of the great trident in the Erechtheion; I see Eleusis, I am initiated into the sacred mysteries; I see Leocorion and the Theseion. To describe all is beyond my power, for Attica the chosen residence of the Gods, and the possession of heroes its progenitors." [12] It is perfectly in keeping with early Greek sentiment that the speaker of these lines should make no mention of the architectural beauties, which his survey would necessarily have included. Attica to him was worthy for its myths and not for the glory of its artistic handiworks. "All the statues and everything else on the Acropolis at Athens are votive offerings," said Pausanias in much the same spirit some centuries after.[13] The highest panegyric accorded to Pheidias by his contemporaries was not that he had created works of art, but that he had enriched the received religion of the state. All his labors for the Athenians were set at nought, once he had been convicted of impiety, and all his genius as an artist did not protect from an obscure and shameful death.

Here then, in remoter antiquity, was an unfamiliar type of mind at work, a type which had its counterpart in the Middle

Ages, a type which modern man can hardly understand in its depths. The least he can do is to acknowledge its existence, and acknowledge also the long and laborious history of the aesthetic consciousness from non-existence to the high complexity which it ultimately reached both in later antiquity and in his own modern times.

3. *The Hellenistic Renaissance.*

The aesthetic consciousness dawned soon after the Peloponnesian War, and the two aesthetic quantities, art and beauty, began their fusion. Plato's deliberate asceticism proves the existence of certain tastes, faintly realized, but of sufficient potentiality to be considered dangerous. The art of oratory indeed was very fully developed in his day, as he himself shows in his attacks upon it; and his mind was fully exercised by the problem of the inspired unwisdom of the poets. In the *Laws* and finally in the *Critias* the ascetic intolerance temporarily yields, and an altogether new Plato seems to reveal himself. But still art and beauty remain very distinct; and it is always possible for Plato to speak of art without mentioning beauty, and of beauty without mentioning art.[14] In this respect, Plato is not unlike St. Thomas Aquinas.

The Renaissance of antiquity evidently began with Alexander the Great. Aristotle had bequeathed to his royal pupil the novel doctrine that art could not only be pleasant, but was to be justified by its pleasantness. Aristotle initiated all the ideas of cultured leisure and literary diversion, and for the first time abstracted art from its traditional admixture of religion and pedagogy. The faint notion of connoisseurship is not absent from Aristotle's writings.[15] Aristotle's successor in philosophy, Theophrastus, even satires the connoisseur and his conceits.[16]

In the course of his marches, Alexander must have taken a true scholar's interest in the sights he saw, though policy must have actuated much of his curiosity. He undertook the perilous march to the Oasis of Ammon to ascertain his pedigree, but he never visited the Egyptian Thebes, a safer and more interesting adventure. He would regularly celebrate sacrifices, hold games and festivals and propitiate local deities. His promotion of voyages of discovery of genuine scientific and geographical purposes must have been a sign of inclinations, which would react fruitfully upon his artistic tastes. The historian Arrian, often refers to Alexander as "being seized with a desire to visit" something or some place (ἐπὶ τούτοις δέ πόθος λαμβάνει αὐτὸν ἐλθεῖν). He restored Troy and proposed to restore the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. He paid his respects to the tombs of Sardanapalus and Cyrus. With magnanimous catholicity he adopted useful ideas for incorporation in his great imperial schemes. Hence from the vast dispositions of the Egyptian temples and Persian palaces, he adopted the conception of the town-plan, unknown to the Greeks; and the mentality of the age was ready to welcome it in the embellishment of the expanding Hellenistic cities.

Thenceforth all the phenomena of a Renaissance were exhibited. There was already in existence a literature on architecture; but this appears to have been technical, — perhaps on the lines of the mediaeval recipe books. But now a new type of art literature was brought forth. The Sophists began to lecture on art, and many of them, who by their profession had become wealthy, were munificent patrons. In the full Hellenistic age, the dilettante, the collector, the antiquarian made their appearance. Men like Duris of Samos, Polycrates of Samos, Dionysius of Syracuse, Attalus III of

Pergamon, the Seleucid Antiochus, the Ptolemies of Egypt, Cleopatra herself, cultivated the same kind of tastes as did the Popes and autocrats of fifteenth century Italy. It was soon possible for Polybius, the historian, to write that the whole world had been opened up to the curious traveler and sightseer.[17] Pausanias and Strabo compiled guide-books, garnished with references to fine art. Athenaeus has testified to the atmosphere of that Alexandrian age to its learned confabulations and its passion for the elegancies of life.

4. *Republican Rome.*

Early Rome conceded no honors to Sparta in the austerity of her moral ideal. Agriculture, war and politics occupied the Roman mind to the exclusion of more refined and passive entertainments. When culture came, Rome owed that culture to Greece, but acknowledged her debt with reluctance. To primary prejudices was added a contempt of the manners and language of a conquered people.

Rome first tasted Greek art at the conquest of Sicily during the second Punic War. Marcellus captured and sacked Syracuse, and triumphed in Rome with a plentiful booty of Greek statuary, pictures and plate. The Roman puritans were filled with apprehension, and even Greek writers sagaciously dated the decline of Rome from the aesthetic indiscretions of Marcellus. In these days flourished Cato the Elder, a very incarnation of old Roman virtues. He was made Censor of public morals. He stopped all building operations with a heavy hand, and prevailed upon the Senate to annul contracts already made for the repairing of temples and public edifices. He prided himself upon the fact that he had no statue erected to him, saying that he preferred that it should be asked why

he had not a statue than why he had one. He declaimed against the least suspicion of luxury, and proposed that the law passed after the battle of Cannae, that no woman should wear gold ornaments or embroidered clothes, should never be repealed. He destroyed or sold any articles of luxury he happened to inherit. He was alarmed at the arrival of Athenian philosophers in Rome and especially at their immediate popularity among the Roman youth. He declared that Socrates was a prating, seditious fellow, and that as soon as the Romans should imbibe the culture of Greece they would lose the empire of the world. Yet, it is said, towards the end of his illustrious career, Cato visited Athens and set himself to study the Greek language.[18]

Cato remained a grim example to the Romans. The conquest of Greece was marked by destruction and robbery, and the first Roman generals in Greece were proud of their vandalism, "seeing that works of art never taught any man virtue." [19] Marius accused Sulla of corrupting his soldiers in voluptuous foreign lands; "for there it was that an army of the Roman people first learned to indulge in women and drink, to admire statues, paintings and chased vases, to steal them from private houses and public places, to pillage shrines and to desecrate everything." [20]

Cicero affected the puritan in public; though in private he cultivated many a polite taste. He said his ancestors gave the name "inert" to the arts (inertes artes), because they were good for nothing. Even his own particular professions, literature and oratory, he classed with history, geography, statuary, painting, architecture, beautiful scenery and sport, as the less serious matters of life. He built himself a half dozen country villas, but sneered at others for doing so. He praised

Pompey for not turning aside from duty for the delights and luxuries of the Greek cities; "as for the statues and pictures and other embellishments, which other men think worthy to carry off, Pompey did not think them worthy even of a visit from him." He publicly arraigned Verres, ex-praetor of Sicily, who had while there used his authority to rob the Sicilians of their art treasures. He spoke as if he disdained the arts and the contemptible "Graeculi," who cherished them, and he pretended not to be too well acquainted with the names of the famous old masters of Grecian antiquity. His most serious charge against Verres was not vandalism or covetousness, but sacrilege.[21]

But the disease of fine art had eaten into the healthy flesh of Rome. Occasionally an Emperor, like Augustus, would institute a purge of contemporary morals and try to restrict the invasion of luxuries. Historians, like Livy and Tacitus, were convinced of the degeneracy of Roman civilization and blamed rhetoric, poetry, drama and the arts. Seneca and the Stoics fought a losing battle on the perpetual theme of the vanity of riches. "In olden days thatch covered the homes of freemen; but servitude now dwelleth under marble and gold. . . . May we not live in a house without the help of the stone-carver, and clothe ourselves without commerce with the Chinese?" [22]

5. *Hellenistic Rome.*

As their Republican asceticism and their arrogance as the conquerors of Greece were modified, the Romans became culturally, a part of the Hellenistic Renaissance. The type of the old soldier who had burned Corinth and sacked Athens was now displaced by the polished master who attended the

lectures of the Sophists, and prided himself on his knowledge of Greek. Paulus Aemilius, for instance, on his return to Rome, was so bold as to have his own sons educated, "not only in those arts then taught in Rome, but also in the genteeler arts of Greece" — including grammar, rhetoric, sculpture and painting.[23] Every wealthy Roman collected Greek works of art, Corinthian bronzes, Murrhine cups, Coan silks, Sicyonian paintings. Even the great Julius Caesar, in the midst of puritanic reflections, was an enthusiastic connoisseur of gems, carvings and "old masters (opera antiqua)." [24]

Whatever he may have given himself out to be to the audiences of his oratory, the Cicero of the private letters and essays was the complete dilettante. He built a number of villas, where he retired from time to time to live a life of ease and refinement. His letters to his brother Quintus in Britain reveal a real knowledge and appreciation of architecture. He had very distinct conceptions of artistic style and individuality, of art-history and even of a theory of functionalism. He respected the expert, to whose advice he would always listen. He employed agents in Greece to buy works of art for him, and he was even afraid that his love of art might become a matter of ridicule. "My purse is long enough," he wrote to his friend Atticus, "and this is my little weakness (genus hoc est voluptatis meae)." [25]

Cicero's prosecution of Verres has been mentioned. He attacked Verres on that occasion for faults which he himself possessed in milder measure. Verres' usual method of collecting antiques, according to Cicero, was to confiscate the property of the owner of any such antique as he coveted, on a trumped-up charge. Thus Cicero declaims: "Verres himself calls it his passion; his friends call it his madness; the Sicilians

call it his rapine; what I call it I know not; . . . but I say that in all Sicily, in all that wealthy and ancient province, there was no silver vessel, no Corinthian or Delian plate, no jewel or pearl, no gold or ivory, no statue of marble or brass, no picture painted or embroidered, that he did not seek out, inspect, and that if he fancied it, he did not carry away." Verres was evidently a type, normal in his tastes rather than in his methods of satisfying them. Cicero's speeches against him reveal a mentality, which in the next generation was to be the order of the day, and no longer seriously handicapped if its proceedings were within the law. Cicero himself, enumerating the generals who had conquered Sicily and Greece, proudly said: "We see the whole city of Rome, the temples of the Gods, and all parts of Italy, adorned with their gifts, and with memorials of them." [26]

And so through the long series of the Emperors the story goes on of magnificent architecture, greedy connoisseurship and the cultural plunder of Greece. Today in writers like Vitruvius, the two Plinys, Statius, Quintilian, modern readers can find a taste not very unlike that of their Georgian and Victorian ancestors, the same intellectual smugness and philanthropy, and the same unquestioned belief prevailing that the form of art is the proper food of the spirit.

6. Nature.

Finally, the cycle of the aesthetic consciousness may be traced in nature.

The early Greek thought little of nature as nature. Nature was only the accessory of the human story. For man was the center of the world, and nature his friend or foe according to the mood of her seasons. Never was nature at that time

the object of detached contemplation such as she was afterwards to become for the romantics.

Homer speaks often of woodlands, flowers, temple-groves, pastures, meadows, streams and the sea; but a fertile soil, a good crop, well-nourished cattle are more necessary to him. Always is the honey as sweet as the blossom. Hence Homeric similes are full of nature. But they were evidently selected without premeditation by a poet, who had no artificial literary precedents and who composed for a people living by agriculture and the sea. The delectable Isles of the Blessed are where life is easiest for man:

"No snow is there, nor storm, nor rain, but ever more the Ocean sends the cooling breezes of the shrill West Wind," [27]

and the countryside is praised for the good things it yields:

"The fruit never perishes nor fails in winter or in summer, but lasts throughout the year; and ever does the West Wind quicken the fruits to life and ripen them. . . ." [28]

The great nature poem of this remote age, Hesiod's *Works* and *Days*, is a collection of agricultural maxims. The Homeric Hymns and the Lyrics are invocations of the springtime. The serene and the benevolent are their themes, flowers, garlands, song-birds, sunrise, peace and plenty. If horrors are to be described, they are described as horrors, never as incitements to the pleasures of melancholy.

Similarly Aeschylus blesses Athens in the following words:

> I will have nor storm nor flood
> Scathe her vines and olive-bowers;
> No scorching wind shall blind the bud
> In the waking-time of flowers;

By my grace all airs that blow
Their appointed bounds shall know.
No distemper blast her clime
With perpetual barrenness;
Flocks and herds in yeaning time
Pan shall with twain offspring bless;
And Earth's wonted wealth God-sealed,
All its riches yield.[29]

But in Euripides, and even more in Aristophanes, new valuations begin to be made. The very titles of Aristophanes' plays, *Frogs, Clouds, Wasps, Birds*, are evidences of a changed interest. Yet at that time, it was still possible for Plato to be writing: "Trees and fields cannot teach me anything; but men in the city can." [30]

In Menander come at last the self-conscious praises of solitude and the country life. But Greece was then under the heel of Alexander, and the Renaissance well launched. Aristotle and the Peripatetics were setting up an abstract conception of nature and the cosmos. The following is Aristotle's own apology for natural history: "For if some members of the animal kingdom have no graces to charm the sense, yet even these, by disclosing to the intellectual perception the art that designed them, give immense pleasure to all who can trace the links of causation, and who are inclined to philosophy. Indeed it would be strange if mimic representations of them were attractive because they disclose the mimetic skill of the painter or sculptor, and the original reality were not more interesting, to all at any rate who have eyes to discern the reason that presided over their formation. . . . There is something of the marvellous in all natural things . . . for each and all will reveal to us something natural and beauti-

ful." [31] It would be hard to imagine a springtime poet of the sixth century versifying such a thought as this of Aristotle's.

In the third and fourth centuries, the Hellenistic architects were laying out parks and gardens. Philosophers habitually taught their pupils in gardens. Poets began to compose pastoral idylls and to play at being shepherds. And it was this state of affairs which the conquering Romans inherited and adopted. Catullus, Lucretius, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Statius, were all poets of nature. Landscape painting was a flourishing art in the Augustan age. Roman generals retired to the languid pleasures of the country life and built expensive villas on the soil their hardy fathers tilled. Tiberius loved his Capri, Nero the gardens and wooded groves of his Golden House, Hadrian his Tivoli, Diocletian his Spalato. Philosophers, who had lost the traditional nature religion of early Rome, were gravely elaborating a nature pantheism.

Greek authors under Roman rule cultivated the most flowery traditions of Alexandrian pastoral poetry, and all the characteristics of romanticism were generated by them. They learned to admire, not fruitful fields, but rugged, barren scenery, untouched by the hand of man. They were apt and skilful at descriptive writing and warned one another against the mere display of word-spinning.[32] Finally Plotinus, the last of the greater Pagan philosophers, preached the doctrines of nature's majesty and the mystical contemplation of nature's beauty. He said: "We cannot but recognize from what we observe in this universe that a principle of order prevails throughout entire existence; the minutest of things are tributary to the vast total; the marvellous art shown not merely in the mightiest works and sublimest members of the All, but even amid such littleness as one would think Providence must

disdain; the varied workmanship of wonder in any and every animal form; the world of vegetation too; the grace of fruits and even leaves; the lavishness, the delicacy, the diversity of exquisite bloom; and all this not issuing once, and then dying out, but made ever and ever anew as the Transcendent Beings move variously over this earth." [33]

7. Classicism and Romanticism.

Greek art in her archaic and middle period was a classical art. The whole mentality of the age, whenever it expressed itself, whether in politics, philosophy or literature, was consistently rational. Philosophers studied mathematics and attempted by logical methods to understand the mystery of things. Pythagoras built up his whole system on a theory of Number. Plato and his generation relied upon Reason as the means of all philosophic knowledge. In theories of morality, virtue was compared to reason and vice to unreason.

Art and Science were then not distinguished. One word "τέχνη" sufficed for both. All the arts were subject to laws of mathematical inflexibility. Polycleitos, the sculptor, is supposed to have subscribed to a mathematical theory of proportions for the human figure. He modeled a statue to embody his conception of the perfect Canon of proportion. Xenophon's *Oeconomica* has remarks upon the excellencies of invariable order. "Even pots and pans, arranged in order" says one passage, "are fair and graceful." [34] To Aristotle art is a certain logical faculty of mind using its powers to practical effect. He applies the word "wisdom (σοφία)" to all arts, including as he says, sculpture. Speaking of the beautiful and the good in general he says: "They are mistaken who affirm that the mathematical sciences teach nothing of beauty

and goodness. . . . The main elements of beauty are order, symmetry and definite limitation, and these are the very properties to which the mathematical sciences draw attention, (τοῦ δὲ καλοῦ μέγιστα εἴδη τάξις καὶ συμμετρία καὶ τὸ ὡρισμένον, ἃ μάλιστα δεικνύουσιν αἱ μαθηματικαὶ ἐπιστῆμαι)." [35]

Greek buildings seem to have been constructed according to some mathematical formula. There was a regular literature of architecture, which appears to have been essentially a literature on measurement.[36] The architectural "refinement" would not have been difficult to an architect well trained in that literature. The Orders of Vitruvius in Roman times inherited the same conditions.

Classicism suppressed the individuality of the artist. Tradition was all-powerful and novelty for its own sake an outrage. Plato congratulates the Egyptians on the unalterable traditions of their arts, which he believed to have been first designed by the Gods for the edification of mankind. The following curious passage in Plato is evidence of the possibility of several artists engaging successively upon one work, oblivious of their individualities: "Suppose that someone had a mind to paint a figure in the most beautiful manner in the hope that his work instead of losing would always improve as time went on — do you not see that, being a mortal, unless he leaves someone to succeed him, who will correct the flaws which time causes and who will be able to add what is left imperfect through the defect of the artist and who will brighten up and improve the texture, all his great labour will last but a short while." [37] Aristotle believed that the artist should obliterate all traces of himself in his work.[38] It was noted above how innocently Thucydides made Pericles suppose that, if the gold plates of the Athena Parthenos were

destroyed, they could be replaced at a future date. Contrast these with a passage in Pliny the Elder, writing at another time, when such sentiments had passed away. "Another curious fact and worthy of record is that the latest works of artists and pictures left unfinished at their death are more admired than any of their finished paintings. . . . The reason is that in these we see traces of the drawing and the original conception of the artists, while sorrow for the hand that perished at its work beguiles us into the bestowal of praise." Pliny records that the picture, which Apelles left unfinished at his death, no one dared touch again.[39]

The breaking down of traditionalism and the emergence of the individual artist occurred from the fifth century onwards. It was marked surely enough by the gradual disappearance thereafter of the classical spirit in the arts. The first sign was the acknowledgment of the artist's personality and a betterment of his intellectual and social condition. In archaic antiquity the artist was not even known by name. Herodotus and Xenophon begin to mention artists. Plato and Aristotle refer more frequently to artists and their works. Evidently the artist's status in society was low at first. It is very appropriate that the god, Hephaestos, was a despised cripple and was more than once insulted at the court of Zeus. By a superb irony, mythology married him to Aphrodite, who appears not to have been a respectful or obedient wife. The mythic Daedalus on the other hand seems to have been somewhat of a courtier. Xenophon held the "mechanical" arts in poor repute. "Men engaged in them," he says, "must ever be both bad friends and feeble defenders of their country." He troubled himself little with those skilful in carpentry, metallurgy, painting and sculpture, but he was always anxious to

meet a "gentleman (καλός τε κἀγαθός)." [40] Yet Socrates, into whose mouth Xenophon puts these opinions, is said to have been a sculptor in his youth. The sculptor Pheidias, Socrates' older contemporary, was among the chosen friends of Pericles and could have been no mean character in the social scale. It is strange that the actor in Athens was generally considered a respectable person, — dramatists and orators were often actors, — for this profession has been despised the world over. In Rome the actors were the most depraved of her citizens.

So soon as the artist's condition improved, both the artist and his art attained to the rank of respectability. Many painters became wealthy men. Parrhasios was noted for his extravagance and used to call himself the "Luxurious." [41] Zeuxis amassed a fortune.[42] Apelles was a kind of Titian, a friend of princes and a confidant of kings. He had the daring to censure Alexander the Great's *faux pas* in art-criticism. Alexander favored him by giving him his mistress.[43] Lysippus was Alexander's sculptor by appointment who alone was permitted to carve the royal likeness.[44] Then the arts were practiced as social accomplishments by the leisured amateur. Painting was taught to free-born youth in Greece as a part of a liberal education. In Rome in the time of the Emperors painting was cultivated in high social circles. A dumb boy of good birth, the grandson of a consul, was taught painting by the special consent of Augustus. Turpilius, a Roman knight in Pliny the Elder's life-time, used to paint.[45] Vitruvius presents the picture of the Roman architect in full-blown professional status. Cicero appears to have been on good, if imperious, terms with his architects.

There seemed also to be a delight in anecdotes about the eccentric artist. Zeuxis, the painter, would wear his name

woven in golden letters on the hem of his garments when he attended the festival at Olympia.[46] Parrhasios was known for his easy-going good nature, and is said to have sung as he worked. He used to write epigrams on his own pictures.[47] Dinocrates, the architect, obtained the notice of Alexander by his appearance and apparel. He was tall and handsome, and, after the example of Heracles, bore a lion skin, a wreath of poplar and a club.[48] Hippodamos, another architect, affected flowing locks and expensive ornaments, and was jealous of his reputation for universal learning.[49] Nicias, the painter, was so absorbed in his work that he would forget his food.[50] Protogenes continued to paint undismayed during the siege of Rhodes. He once took seven years over one picture.[51] Apollodorus was so severe a critic of himself that, unable to attain his ideal, he would destroy the labors of days. People used to call him the Madman.[52] Pasiteles, the Roman sculptor, was nearly killed in an adventure with a lion, which he was modeling from the life.[53] Famulus treated his art with such seriousness that he only worked a few hours a day and then always wore a toga;[54] a story reminiscent of the French littératur, who never wrote his native language except in his dress clothes. Ovid complains that poets in his time were thought to be mad.[55]

The emergence of the individual was marked furthermore by an interest in individuality. Men came to see themselves and their kind as objects of curiosity. Hence the discovery of the "character" in art. The old drama, with its heroic characters, by Aristotle's definition concerned "universals," but the later drama concerned "particulars," that is, individual men. Euripides gave slaves important parts in his tragedies, — a concession to human nature, which Aeschylus would

not have dreamed of. The rise of the art of comedy was symptomatic. Comedy, according to Aristotle, is imitation of men worse than the average.[56] In the third century A.D. Plotinus writing, when comedy was worn threadbare, said: "We are censuring a drama because the persons are not all heroes, but include a servant, a rustic and some scurrilous clown; yet take away the low characters and the power of the drama is gone; these are part and parcel of it." [57] Theophrastus declared himself to be a student of "human nature (τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην φύσιν)." [58] Strabo, a philosopher, a successor of Theophrastus as head of the Peripatetic School, wrote a treatise on Human Nature, now lost.[59] The biography and the novel were inventions of this time.

In sculpture and painting human interests were represented by a school of realists. There were even in Graeco-Roman times sculptures of cripples, such as the Aesop, from whose misshapen form the disease can be diagnosed today. Contrast this Aesop with the sculptures of the fifth century B.C., at the time when nothing but the traditional ideal was allowed — when, for example, Alcamenes executed his Hephaestos at Athens, and "the lameness of the god was so tactfully suggested that it was patent without amounting to deformity."[60] Pliny's *Natural History* mentions a whole school of genre painting. Hence a certain Peiraecus painted barbers' shops, cobblers' stalls, asses, eatables and so forth. He was called "Ῥυπαρογράφος, a painter of odds and ends." Studius painted fishermen, fowlers, hunters, vintages, and other subjects of "vivacity and humour." [61] Roman portrait sculpture of this date is remarkable for its characterization.

The artist, now an individualist, and representing individualities, would next seek to infuse his work with an individual

style. In the last centuries of antiquity therefore, there arrives much discussion of the topics of novelty and originality. The classicism of the past, with its rigid ideals, is renounced. No longer was imitation the end and aim of fine art, but instead "Imagination, (φαντασία) a wiser and subtler artist," preached by the philosopher Philostratus.[62] Artists at last "expressed themselves" in true romantic vein; they avoided the mildest hint of plagiarism as a virulent disease. In literature, rhetoricians were already propounding the virtues of originality before the Christian era. The continual literary disputes at Alexandria, were substantially pretensions to originality and denials of plagiarism on the part of the disputants. It was then the fashion to strike out on new lines and hit off sudden effects. Longinus, an author probably of the third century A.D., appears to have been up to date in everything except that he loathed "all these undignified faults in literature . . . the craving for intellectual novelties, over which our generation goes wild." [63] Lucian wrote a dialogue on originality in the fine arts, discussing its merits and demerits.[64] In rhetoric, says Quintilian, "the young should be daring and inventive, and rejoice in their inventions . . . exuberance is easily remedied, but barrenness is incurable." [65] Martial satirizes poetical plagiarism.[66]

In painting and sculpture, the pirit of individuality was manifest in Zeuxis, who, it is said, when he had established his supremacy, seldom painted the usual myths, but was always intent on novelty. "He would hit upon some extravagant or strange design, and then use it to show his mastery of his art." [67] Lysippus, on one occasion, ambitious to invent an original piece of earthenware, "brought a number of cups of every imaginable shape, and, borrowing a bit from each,

made one goblet of a design of his own." [68] Lysippus claimed to be no man's pupil. Originally a coppersmith, he was encouraged and patronized by a painter, whose dictum was: "Follow no artist but nature." Lysippus believed himself to differ from older artists in that they represented men as they were, and he as they appeared to be.[69] Apelles used to say that he surpassed his contemporaries in one point, namely in knowing when to stay his hand; his pupil, Protogenes, was noted for his over-industry and anxious elaboration. One of Apelles' pictures of Aphrodite was especially celebrated because only the head was finished, the remainder being left rough.[70] Evidently Apelles was a kind of impressionist. Athenaeus wrote in one place: "Since novelty has a very great effect in heightening pleasure, we must not despise it, but rather pay great attention to it. . . . For many things contribute some amount of pleasure, when the material which is admired by human nature is properly employed; and this seems to be the case with gold and silver, and with most things which are pleasing to the eye and also rare, and with all things which are elaborated to a high degree of perfection by manual arts and skill." [71] Cicero, comparing the individualities of artists wrote: "There is only one art of sculpture, in which Myron, Polycleitus and Lysippus were eminent; they are all unlike each other, and yet are their works so excellent that you would not wish any one of them to be other than he is. . . . Zeuxis, Aglaophon, Apelles are most unlike, though in none is there a perceptible absence of any requisite of his art." [72] Pliny writes of the originality and inspired workmanship of painters and sculptors.[73]

The controversies about genius, such as exercised the wits of the learned in the eighteenth century, were much to the

fore. Longinus is familiar with the conception of genius and knows well that no human teaching can produce it. He knows also that the works of genius are not always above faults; yet those very faults are more worthy of admiration than the dull orthodoxy of the lesser artist. "I am aware," he writes, "that genius is not perfect, for invariable accuracy is often petty; but in the sublime, as in great fortunes, there must be something overlooked." [74] There were also the freedom controversies, that self-expression is untrammeled by artificial restraint, that the Muse is most happily entertained and most bounteous when genius is unvexed. "Poetry enjoys unrestricted freedom," writes Lucian; "the poet's fancy is her only law." [75] "If rules can make an orator," asks Cicero, "who may not be an orator; who cannot learn rules with more or less ease?" [76] Quintilian used to say: "The life-blood of the imagination must not be dried up by mere study." [77] Finally Plotinus evolved a whole philosophy in defense of the irrational. He supposed that his philosophy was firmly founded on the rational mysticism of Plato. Not reason, as in Plato, but Un-reason was to Plotinus the true principle for the comprehension of philosophic truth, of beauty and of fine art.

Romantic art-appreciation was the order of the day, and there is often met that kind of hysterical adoration of works of art which was popular at the end of the nineteenth century. Lucian goes into silent ecstasies over architecture and feminine beauty.[78] There is plenty of "passion (πάθος)" in Longinus. Statius, the Latin poet, rhapsodizes marvelously over the marble villas where his friends entertained him.[79]

The disintegration of classicism in antiquity therefore follows a course parallel to that of the Renaissance in Europe.

All the phenomena of romanticism are present in the Graeco-Roman era. Realism takes the place of idealism, romantic ecstasy the place of mathematical precision, and original genius the place of collective, traditional effort. And without laying too great a stress on the parallel, one might even discover in antiquity the traces of a color controversy, not unlike the color controversy that once disturbed the calm and dignity of the Academy in France. There was an old legend that the first pictures were lines drawn around shadows on a wall, and that the spaces between the lines were sometimes filled in with color. In archaic times, only four colors were known; but the interest in color grew, and new colors were added to the stock. In later antiquity a full and complex palette was used and was moreover the subject of some discussion. Pliny the Elder is the main authority for the history of color in antiquity, but there are occasional references in unexpected places. The following passage from Dionysius Halicarnassus is curious and to the point: "The earliest paintings were executed in simple colours and without contrasts; they were however correct in drawing and very pleasing. Paintings of a later date were less correct in drawing, but more elaborated, more varied in their light and shades, and depending for their effects on the multitude of their colours." [80]

It is pathetic, but inevitable that the romanticism of the Graeco-Roman era should end in pessimism. The artist was free indeed, and his arts exalted to all but a divine office. Yet there seemed to be a regretful longing for the rigid past. The artist would fain go back and attempt to express his melancholy memories in revivals of by-gone styles. Hence came the so-called "archaistic" schools of the Graeco-Roman sculptors,

and the deliberate imitation of the conventionalities which the archaic sculptor carved in all ignorance and innocence of heart. But a spirit of disillusion was abroad. Longinus speaks of "the world-wide barrenness of literature that pervades our life." [81] Porphyry, comparing an archaic status to a contemporary one, writes: "the archaic one though simply executed was considered divine, but the modern might be a wonder of elaborate workmanship though it gives less conviction as a representation of the deity it portrays." [82] "What are we to say," asks Cicero, "if an old picture of a few colours delights some men more than a highly finished one?" [83] Petronius, the dilettante of Nero's court, was hopeless of the decay of fine art. "The greed of money, the glint of gold and silver," he said, "are more admired than the beautiful works of Apelles and Pheidias." [84] Pliny was always harping on the decay of fine art. "In the past," he declared, "when artists used only four colours, painting was greater; but now, when India herself contributes the ooze of her rivers and the blood of dragons and elephants, no famous picture is ever painted." [85]

8. *Conclusion.*

If the evidence is correct and the selection of the facts without undue prejudice, it would appear that the ancient cycle like the modern, the pagan like the Christian, have had a parallel aesthetic history. Beliefs, tastes, ideas of art, standards of criticism, which grew up in the one can be detected also in the other. In both cycles, the history of taste, at bottom, was the rise and fall of classicism. The emergence of the aesthetic consciousness, its crystallization and its dissolution recurred regularly and fatefully. The mediaeval gold-and-glitter is read in Homer and Herodotus, monastic

asceticism in the early law-givers and philosophers, signs of a transition in Plato, a classic Renaissance in Aristotle and in his Hellenistic successors, and finally a romantic decline in the authors of the late Graeco-Roman age. At this hour we live in a latter-day world not unlike that of Lucian, Philostratus, Athenaeus and Plotinus; and seemingly a few generations hence — if the parallel remains effective — another artistic culture, together with the civilization it has illustrated, will have run their appointed course. Such is the interpretation of the cycle of taste as it seems to me.

And if the reader, who has followed me so far, thinks that I see too much and too uncertainly, then perhaps my work may still have entertained him as a simple exercise in historical research in a hitherto neglected field.

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Several anthologies have been compiled by Esther Singleton, which are full of readable and popular romanticism, e.g., *Turrets, Towers and Temples*, 1899; *Romantic Castles and Palaces*, 1901; *Great Buildings of the World as Seen and Described by Famous Writers*, and so forth.

Chapter X

There is no history of the social position and individuality of the artist. The mediaeval guild-system has been well worked by a number of authorities, but it is still a topic of argument. My own views of the mediaeval craftsmen have been taken from G. G. Coulton's *Art and the Reforma-*

tion. Martin S. Brigg's *The Architect in History* is full of useful information, but, as I suspect, a little biassed in some of its conclusions.

Appendix

I know of no sources of information on the artistic opinions of the ancients except the ancient classics themselves. Compilations of passages and quotations are too few, but the following may be mentioned:

H. Stuart Jones, *Ancient Writers on Greek Sculpture*, 1895.

Adolphe Reinach, *Receuil Milliet, Textes grece et latins relatifs à l'Histoire de la Peinture ancienne*, 1921.

I. A. Overbeck's well-known *Die Antiken Schriftquellen* is designed for the archaeologist and mostly misses the points here in question.

NOTES

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PREFACE

1. A. Bougot, *Essai sur la Critique d'Art*, Paris (Hachette).
2. André Fontaine, *Les Doctrines d'Art en France*, Paris (Renouard), 1909.
3. Pierre Petroz, *L'Art et la Critique en France depuis 1822*, Paris (Germer Baillière), 1875.
4. S. Rocheblave, *L,Art et le Goût en France de 1600 à 1900*, Paris (Colin), 1923.
5. Francisco Leopoldo Cicognara,*Catalogo ragionato dei Libri d'Arte e d'Antichità*, Pisa, 1821.
6. Paolo d'Ancona and Fernanda Wittgens. *Antologia della moderna Critica d'Arte*, Milan (Cogliati), 1927.
7. Albert Dresdner, *Die Kunstkritik, Ihre Geschichte und Theorie*, Munich (Bruckmann), 1915.
8. Since this work has gone to press, I have noticed a series of articles in this fall's *Studio*, entitled *The Kaleidoscope of Taste*, by Tancred Borenius. Among histories of literary taste may be mentioned George Saintsbury's *History of Criticism and Literary Taste in Europe*; and E. E. Kellett's *Fashion in Literature*, 1931.

CHAPTER I

1. Matthew, XXIV, 1-2; Mark, XIII, 1-2; Luke, XXI, 5-6.
2. St. Augustine, *Confessions*, IV, 13; X, 13; X, 50; and *On Psalms*, LXV, 5.
3. St. Gregory, *Letters*, xiii and cv.
4. St. Francis, *Colloquy*, iii; and *Testament*.
5. For instance, Durandus of Mende: *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*.
6. *The Ruined City*, should be found in any good Anglo-Saxon verse-book. The translation here is by C. B. Tinker.
7. Matthew Paris, *Chronicles*, III, p. 115, Bohn's edition, 1854.
8. Marco Polo, *Travels*, II, lxxvii, Col. Henry Yule's translation, 1871.

9. Odoric of Pordenone, *Travels*, 18; 37, Col. Henry Yule's translation, Hakluyt Society's edition, 1913.
10. In the Decrees of the Second Council of Nicaea.
11. W. R. Lethaby, *Architecture as Structural Geometry*, in *The Builder*, 1929.
12. For instance, Chaucer's *Hous of Fame*.
13. Dante, *Purgatorio*, XXVIII.
14. St. Francis, *Little Flowers*, viii, T. W. Arnold's translation, 1915.

Chapter II

1. Vasari, *Lives: Brunelleschi.* Mrs. Foster's translation, 1850.
2. T. L. Donaldson, *Some Particulars relating to Manuscripts of Vitruvius preserved in various European Libraries*, in the *Transactions of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, 1835-36.
3. Lionello Venturi, *Per il nome di "Arte,"* in *La Cultura*, 1929, p. 385.
4. Croce, *Aesthetic*, II, iii.
5. Petrarch, *De Remediis*, I, 41.
6. Baldassare Castiglione, *Courtier*, I, 38.
7. Vasari, *Lives: Ghiberti; Raphael; Titian.*
8. *Ibid: Giorgione.*
9. Michelangelo's Letter to Benedetto Varchi, 1549, in Robert W. Cardan, *Michelangelo*, 1913.
   Benedetto Varchi, *Due Lezzioni*, Florence, 1549.
10. Francisco de Hollanda, *Four Dialogues on Painting*, A. F. G. Bell's translation, 1928, Dialogue II.
11. Baldassare Castiglione, *Courtier*, I, 49-53.
12. Lodovico Dolce, *Dialogo della Pittura*, Venice, 1557.
13. Vasari, *Lives: Jacoppo di Casentino.*
14. Goethe, *Travels in Italy*, letter of January 1788, Bohn's edition, 1885.

Chapter III

1. Vasari, *Lives: Michelangelo.*
2. Francisco de Hollanda, *Four Dialogues on Painting*, A. F. G. Bell's translation, 1928, Dialogues I and III.
3. Michelangelo, *Sonnet*, XI.
4. As Michelangelo is said to have done to the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius on the Capitol, Rome.
5. Vasari, *Lives: Stefano.*

6. Boccaccio, *Decameron*, VI, 5.
7. Alberti, *Treatise on Painting*, III.
8. Leonardo da Vinci, *Treatise on Painting*, Rigaud's edition, CXXIV; CCCL; CCCLI; Original Italian edition 53; 275; 276; McCurdy's edition, p. 159.
   Milizia: *Memorie: Leonardo da Vinci*, has something on this.
9. Vasari, *Lives: Piero della Francesca; Bernazzone; Monsignori; Girolamo.*
10. Leonardo da Vinci, *Treatise on Painting.* Rigaud's edition, VII; CXXXVII; CXXXIX. Original Italian edition, 173; 97; 98.
11. Alberti, *Treatise on Painting*, II; *Architecture*, IX, vii.
12. Luca Pacciolo, *De Divina Proportione*, Venice, 1509.
13. Lomazzo, *Trattato dell 'Arte pittura*, I, i.
14. Vasari, *Lives*, Proemio to Part III.
15. Alberti, *Treatise on Painting*, II.
16. Vasari, *On Technique*, L. S. Maclehose's translation, 1907.
17. Federigo Zucchero, *L'Idea de 'Pittori, Scultori et Architetti*, Turin, 1607.
18. Lionello Venturi, *Per il nome di "Arte,"* in *La Cultura*, 1929, p. 385.
19. Alberti, *Treatise on Statues*, John Evelyn's translation, 1664.
20. Milizia, *Memorie: Vignola.*
21. Sebastiano Serlio, *Architecture*, Robert Peakes's edition, 1611, III, iv, fol. 21.

Chapter IV

1. Hilaire Pader, *Traicté de la Proportion par Jean Pol Lomazzo, traduit d'Italien en Francois*, 1549. Introduction.
2. All these references to Poussin are from André Fontaine: *Les Doctrines d'Art en France*, I.
3. Count Caylus, *Discours . . . au sujet du portrait de Du Fresnoy*, in the *Procès verbaux de l'Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture*, A. de Montaiglon's edition, 1885, VI, p. 222.
4. Fréart de Chambray, *Idée de la Perfection de la Peinture*, John Evelyn's translation, 1668, p. 3.

Chapter V

1. Charles Perrault, *Le Siècle de Louis le Grand*, 1687.

2. André Fontaine, *Conférences inédites de l'Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture*, Pt. I.
3. An apology is due to the reader for my casual use of the word Realism, especially in such close conjunction with the mention of Leibnitz. In the history of painting, realism properly applies to a movement of the nineteenth century in France, begun by Courbet, and so called, as is usually believed, by Champfleury. Realism, in the sense in which I have used it here, has a distant connection with that movement, as I hope to prove. Realism is, however, a more convenient word than characteristicism, and a more accurate word than naturalism. I do not intend this realism to have any philosophical meaning.
4. Fermel'huis, *Éloge funèbre de Monsieur Coysevox Sculpteur*, 1721.
5. Antoine Coypel, *Discours prononcez dans les Conférences de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, 1721.
6. André Fontaine, *Les Doctrines d'Art en France*, p. 182.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 211.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 223; 226-27.
9. Croce, *Aesthetic*, II, iii, has some remarks on the "je ne sais quoi." From my own reading, the earliest mention of it by a French author occurs in Montaigne's *Journal* of his travels in Italy, 1580. The passage in question, from his entry on Padua, runs as follows: "Il y a beaucoup de rares sculptures de marbre & de bronse. Il y regarda de bon œil le visage du Cardinal Bembo, qui montre la douceur de ses mœurs, & je ne sçay quoy de la jantillesse de son esprit."
10. Antoine Coypel, *Discours prononcez dans les Conférences de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, 1721.
11. Christopher Wren, *Parentalia*, 1750, pp. 269-70.
12. John Evelyn, *Diary*, entries dated 27, Feb.; 1, March; 4, Nov., 1644. Christopher Wren, *Parentalia*, 1750, pp. 307-8.

Chapter VI

1. For instance, the description of Greuze's "Jeune Fille qui pleure son oiseau mort," in the *Salon* of 1765; *Œuvres*, edition Assézat, 1876, Vol. X, p. 343.
2. Diderot, *Essai sur la Peinture*, I.
3. *Ibid.*, VI.

4. Baudelaire, *Curiosités esthetiques: Salon of 1846*, I.
5. Victor Hugo, *Orientales*, Preface.
6. Goethe, *Italian Letters*, letter dated 23, March, 1787.
7. A. Michaelis, *A Century of Archaelogical Discoveries*, 1908.

Chapter VII

1. Hegel, *Aesthetic*, I, i.
2. *Ibid.*, II, III, iii, (3, C, γ).
3. *Ibid.*, Conclusion to the whole work.
4. *Ibid.*, I, II, C.
5. *Ibid.*, I, i.
6. Goethe-Schiller, *Correspondence*, Schiller to Goethe, 31, August, 1794.
7. *Ibid.*, *Schiller to Goethe*, 7, January, 1795.
8. Hegel, *Aesthetic*, I, iii, A.
9. Sometimes known as Baumgarten's triad. I am not sure whether it was Baumgarten who first associated beauty, truth and goodness in this way. At any rate the association has a late eighteenth century feel about it.
10. A curious confirmation of this comes in Christophorus Landinus, *Disputationes Camaldulenses*, wherein a discussion takes place on the active and contemplative life, and wherein art, in so far as it is mentioned at all, falls into the active life.
11. As Croce partly admits himself, *Aesthetic*, II, x.

Chapter VIII

1. An account of the English influences in the Neo-Classic Revival in France is given by Jean Locquin: *Compte-rendu analytique du Congrès d'Histoire de l'Art*, 1921, Paris, Les Presses universitaires de France, pp. 107-8.
2. Victor Hugo, *Cromwell*, Preface.
3. Victor Hugo, *Orientales*, Preface.
4. Victor Hugo, *Cromwell*, Preface.
5. Auguste Rodin, *Art*, Paul Gsell's edition, 1912, II.
6. Camille Mauclair, *Les États de la Peinture française*, P. G. Konody's translation, 1903, VII.

CHAPTER IX

1. Milizia, *Memorie*, Conclusion.
2. Goethe, *Von deutscher Baukunst*, 1773.
3. F. von Schlegel, *Grundzüge der gothischen Baukunst*, 1805.
4. Marcel Aubert, *Le Romantisme et le Moyen Age*, in *Le Romantisme et l'Art*, Paris (Laurens), 1928.
5. The néo-grec architecture in France has waited too long for its proper recognition. The literary authority on the movement is the *Revue générale de l'Architecture et des Travaux publics*, edition César Daly, especially vols. 1850 and later.
6. The Italians of the Renaissance always called Gothic "German (la maniera tedesca)." Vasari attributed the style to the Goths in his treatise *On Technique*, and Raphael constantly referred to the Goths and their architectural barbarities in his letter to Leo X on the antiquities of Rome. (See under Vitruviana in our Bibliography to Chapters II and III.) These are the earliest known uses of the word.
7. W. R. Hamilton: *Letters to the Earl of Elgin on the New Houses of Parliament*, 1836-37.
8. Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, I, 1, 2; IV, x.
9. *Ibid.*, II, ii, 2; II, ii, 5; VIII, iv.
10. James Fergusson, *History of the Modern Styles of Architecture*, 1902, p. 3.
11. James Fergusson, *A History of Architecture*, 1893, I, p. 48.

CHAPTER X

1. G. G. Coulton, *Art and the Reformation*, 1928, V & XI.
2. Vasari, *Lives: Lapo.*
3. Alberti, *Architecture*, Leoni's edition, 1726, IX, xi.
4. Michelangelo, Letters to Lionardo Buonarroti, May 1548, and to Clement VII, 1524, in Robert W. Cardan: *Michelangelo*, 1913.
5. Vasari, *Lives: Daniello Ricciarelli.*
6. *Ibid.*, *Fra Angelico.*
7. *Ibid.*, *Jacopo Palma.*
8. Cellini, *Autobiography*, I, lvi; I, xcii, etc.
9. Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses*, VI.
10. Leonardo da Vinci, *Treatise on Painting*, Rigaud's edition CCCLIV; original Italian edition, 24; and *Notebooks*, McCurdy's edition, 1923, p. 164.

11. Cellini, *Autobiography*, I, xli.
12. Baldassari Castiglione, *Courtier*, I, 37.
13. Artistic rivalry was, of course, not unknown in the Middle Ages, and many stories are told of the jealousies among mediaeval masons. But this was very different from the organized competitions of the Renaissance, for instance, the competition for the Baptistry doors in Florence in 1401.
14. Franciscus Junius, *The Painting of the Ancients*, 1638, III, i.
15. Roger de Piles, *Abrégé*, I, xxii. De Piles often speaks of genius, e.g. in the *Abrégé*, especially in the early part of the work.
16. Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses*, XI.
17. Hegel, *Aesthetic*, I, iii, C.
18. Croce, *Pratica*, I, ii, 7; has remarks on "Eigenthümlichkeit."
19. Vasari, *Lives: Piero di Cosimo; Sodoma.*
20. Van Gogh, *Letters to his Brother*, English translation, 1927, II, pp. 242; 303; 247.
21. Paul Gauguin, *Intimate Journals*, English translation, 1923, pp. 12-14.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.
23. Croce, *Pratica*, I, ii, 6; I, ii, 3-6, etc.

NOTES

Appendix

1. *Iliad*, XVI, 130; XVIII, 288; 368; 478, etc.
   Odyssey, IV, 71; VII, 86; XI, 15; 609.
2. Hesiod, *Shield*, 139, etc.
3. Herodotus, I, 183.
4. Thucydides, II, 13-15; 38-41.
5. Plutarch, *Solon*, 29; Diogenes Laertius, I, 59.
6. Diogenes Laertius, VIII, 21; cf. IX, 1; 18.
7. Euripides, *Hecuba*, 560; 807; *Ion*, 184, etc.
8. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, I, iv, 3; III, x, 1-6.
9. Plato, *Republic*, III, 387, etc.; X, 603, etc.
10. Aristotle, *Poetics*, XXV (1460 b); *Politics*, VIII, 5 (1340 a).
11. Pliny, *Natural History*, XXXV, 65.
12. Strabo, IX, i, 16.

13. Pausanias, V, 21.
14. But this strengthens the suspicion that the *Critias* is not a work of Plato. *Critias*, 115-16; *Laws*, VI, 761; cf. *Republic*, II, 373.
15. Aristotle, *Ethics*, X, 9 (1181 a); *Politics*, VIII, 3 (1338 a).
16. Theophrastus, *Characters*, 5; 24.
17. Polybius, IV, 40.
18. Plutarch, *Cato Major*, 4, etc.
19. Sallust, *Jugurtha*, LXXXV, 32-33.
20. Sallust, *Catiline*, XI, 6.
21. Cicero, *Pro Sex. Roscio*, 46; *Pro Lege Manilia*, 14; *De Finibus*, II, 33-34; *In Verrem*, V, 32, etc.
22. Seneca, *Letters*, 90.
23. Plutarch, *Paulus Aemilius*, 6.
24. Suetonius, *Julius Caesar*, 47; 56.
25. Cicero, *In Verrem*, II, 51; *De Oratore*, III, 46; *Academica*, II, 20; *Brutus*, 18; *Ad Atticum*, I, 8-9; *Ad Quintum Fratrem*, III, 1.
26. Cicero, *In Verrem*, II, 21.
27. *Odyssey*, IV, 566. But if this, as is sometimes supposed, is a later interpolation, then Homer is left with a yet more meager store of passages appreciative of nature.
28. *Ibid.*, VII, 112; cf. IV, 602.
29. Aeschylus, *Eumenides*, 938, G. M. Cookson's translation.
30. Plato, *Phaedrus*, 230.
31. Aristotle, *De Partibus Animalium*, I, 5 (645 a).
32. Aelian, III, 1; cf. Plutarch, *Titus Quintus Flaminius*, 3; Lucian, *De Historia Conscribenda*, 57.
33. Plotinus, II, ix, 18; III, ii, 13; III, viii, 2; IV, iii, 9, etc.
34. Xenophon, *Oeconomica*, VIII, 19-20.
35. Aristotle, *Ethics*, VI, 7 (1141 a); *Metaphysics*, III (1078 a).
36. This lost literature is mentioned in Vitruvius, Preface to Book VII.
37. Plato, *Laws*, VI, 769.
38. Aristotle, *Poetica*, XXIV (1460 a).
39. Pliny, *Natural History*, XXXV, 92; 145.
40. Xenophon, *Oeconomica*, IV, 3; VI.
41. Pliny, *Natural History*, XXXV, 71.
42. *Ibid.*, XXXV, 62.
43. *Ibid.*, XXXV, 85-87.
44. *Ibid.*, XXXIV, 63; VII, 125.
45. *Ibid.*, XXXV, 77; 19-21.

46. *Ibid.*, XXXV, 62.
47. *Ibid.*, XXXV, 71; *Aelian*, IX, 11.
48. Vitruvius, II, Preface.
49. Aristotle, *Politics*, II, 8 (1267 b).
50. Aelian, III, 31.
51. Pliny, *Natural History*, XXXV, 105; *Aelian*, XII, 41.
52. Pliny, *Natural History*, XXXIV, 81.
53. *Ibid.*, XXXVI, 40.
54. *Ibid.*, XXXV, 120.
55. Ovid, *Ex Ponto*, I, v, 31.
56. Aristotle, *Poetics*, XVII (1455 b); II (1448 a).
57. Plotinus, III, ii, 11.
58. Theophrastus, *Characters*, Preface.
59. Diogenes Laertius, V, 59; cf. VII, 4.
60. Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, I, 30.
61. Pliny, *Natural History*, XXXV, 112; 116-17.
62. Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii*, VI, 19; cf. II, 22.
    Longinus, 15.
63. Longinus, 5.
64. Lucian, *Zeuxis seu Antiochus*; cf. *Prometheus*.
65. Quintilian, II, iv, 6.
66. Martial, I, 52; 53, etc.
67. Lucian, *Zeuxis seu Antiochus*, 3.
68. Athenaeus, XI, 28.
69. Pliny, *Natural History*, XXXIV, 61; 65.
70. *Ibid.*, XXXV, 80; 92.
71. Athenaeus, XII, 64.
72. Cicero, *De Oratore*, III, 7.
73. Pliny, *Natural History*, XXXV, 75; 106.
74. Longinus, 2; 33.
75. Lucian, *De Historia Conscribenda*, 8.
76. Cicero, *De Oratore*, II, 57; cf. I, 32.
77. Quintilian, I, Preface, 24-26.
78. Lucian, *De Domo; Imagines; Pro Imaginibus*.
79. Statius, *Silvae*, II, ii, 36. There are a number of poems by Statius on architecture.
80. Dionysius Halicarnassus, *De Isaeo*; the Greek runs as follows:
    εἰσὶ δὴ τινες ἀρχαῖαι γραφαὶ, χρώμασι μὲν εἰργασμέναι ἁπλῶς, καὶ οὐδεμίαν ἐν τοῖς μίγμασιν ἔχουσαι ποικιλίαν, ἀκριβεῖς δὲ ταῖς

γραμμαῖς, καὶ πολὺ τὸ χάριεν ἐν ταύταις ἔχουσαι · αἱ δὲ μετ' ἐκείνας, εὔγραμμοι μὲν ἧττον, ἐξειργασμέναι δὲ μᾶλλον, σκιᾷ τε καὶ ψωτὶ ποικιλλόμεναι, καὶ ἐν τῷ πλήθει τῶν μιγμάτων τὴν ἰσχὺν ἔχουσαι.

81. Longinus, 44.
82. Porphyry, *De Abstinentia.*
83. Cicero, *Orator ad Brutum*, 50.
84. Petronius, *Satyricon*, 88.
85. Pliny, *Natural History*, XXXV, 50.

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