

devotion;—more than all, does every form and feature of the modern English style express fickleness, low cunning, hollow affectation, simulation, servility, and thought-flying hurry. What! are these then our national characters? No, but they are the characters of the *many*, in every nation; and we are as yet the only nation that have a style of the many. I appeal to all who have ever returned to our shores, after a long absence, to say whether they could shut their eyes to the hateful expression that met them in every building;—whether they could at first walk our streets without being disgusted, and, if of a sensitive temperament, almost sickened, by the intensely marked character of the architecture.

But where, it will be asked, is the architecture of the few, the thinking, the truth-seeking? There is none; it is swallowed up, and mostly indistinguishable from the mass; for, observe, though a majority, or an independent body, cannot build without expressing their true character, (however they may cheat or simulate in any thing else, they can never give a false expression,) it is otherwise with a *minority*. With all their efforts to express themselves truly; inexpertness in the language, want of technical culture, want of union, an eye deadened by long use to the ugliness of the prevalent expression,—all these causes may conspire to render their most earnest endeavours unavailing to free themselves from the influence of the general corruption, which will thus often overrun and falsify the expression of their works. *To obviate this, is now the office of true architecture.* The general taste can never improve. Pure taste can never again prevail; but it can *fight*. Ever in the minority, it nevertheless need never be extinct. It can only exist, indeed, by fighting every inch. This is its glorious destiny, to wage a perpetual war against falsehood; perpetual, because it ought never to yield or relax, yet can never hope to conquer; glorious, if maintaining its ground, from that very hopelessness,—for is it not more glorious for a minority to stand their ground against overwhelming numbers, without hope of respite or victory, than,

as in ancient and mediæval times, to have twice routed the sleeping enemy by surprise, and after each occasion to have been themselves fairly routed in their turn?

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Among the few, then, that enlist on the side of Truth, and resolutely engage in this perpetual conflict against false, against popular, against national taste, it must ever be borne in mind, first, that *there is no substitute for thought*. All the ponderous tomes of examples, specimens, &c. from Adams and Stuart downwards, have been intended, or received, for this purpose; and, *as such*, are not only totally worthless, but extremely prejudicial; though invaluable as materials for analysis, free criticism, and search into principles,—for which purposes they have never yet been used.

Nothing can increase the value of a design, which does not increase the labour of the designer, (by designer I do not mean draughtsman.) *Every reference to precedent should do this, and will do so with every true artist.* But the false artist refers to precedent, to save himself trouble; that is, to cheat his employers, by diminishing the value of his work, without diminishing its apparent value.

II. Novelty-hunting, and the false use of precedent, are the Scylla and Charybdis between which, the many, and the architects of the many, are for ever destined to be wrecked. It is possible, however, to fall into both at once.*

That nothing is beautiful which is without motive, most of the thinking will admit; yet it is necessary to add, that *novelty* and *antiquity* are no admissible motives. But though

* Thus at present (as *nothing* can be real) even our novelty is only sham novelty,—a copy of a copy,—masons' whims or blunders, raked out from the corners of Italy.

age affords no reason whatever for the adoption of any thing; it gives every reason for its *examination* and *study*.

III. We cannot too strongly instil into the reader, that, while *novelty* is in itself neither a beauty nor a fault, but totally immaterial,—*novelty sought for its own sake* is the destruction of art. The end of art is truth. The instant it proposes any other aim, (be it *novelty*, or to 'catch the spirit' of a particular time or place, *i. e.* *mimicry*, or any other fancy,) it ceases to be art; and what is not art, is not architecture. Aim at catching the spirit of *all* true architecture, not that of any one style,—still less, of a notoriously *false* style.

IV. If, as we have also endeavoured to instil, the main distinction between artists is, that some strive to put as much thought as possible into a given work, and others to do that work with as little thought as possible,—then, if one of these principles be art, it follows that the other is not merely its absence, but its opposite;—not a mere negation, but an active principle, for which, finding no name used, I would propose the term *anti-art*.*

A very small portion of *anti-art* peeping out, is enough to destroy all our pleasure in a work of art. Witness the pots and cowlis that finish the sky-line of most of our piles of architecture. A foreigner would think this nation bankrupt,

* Here is the simplest instance I can find, which will display the two principles. The reader knows the old established way of cutting the stones of an arch in rusticated masonry, each stone presenting a five-sided face: well, two other modes have lately been adopted, each making the faces of the stones four-sided. In one, the voussoirs are alternately long and short, like battlements; in the other, their extrados is cut to a regular curve. Persons of taste, however, prefer the old method, but without knowing why. Now I will tell you why. Just sketch the three on paper, and you will perceive that the old is by far the most troublesome to design, yet gives the least work to the mason, having fewest oblique joints. Thought is expended to save manual labour. But in both the new modes, manual labour is saved at the expense of the manual. The first is *art*, the others *anti-art*.

to judge by the innumerable public buildings standing unfinished, covered with these hideous make-shifts.

V. The highest beauty is fitness. Therefore, when you see a thing highly beautiful, *beware of copying it* till after mature study; for the more beautiful (*i. e.* the fitter) it may be in its situation, the less likely to be fit (*i. e.* beautiful) in any other.*

Those who wonder why architects often condemn what other persons of good taste admire, seem to forget that the latter cannot distinguish what belongs to the designer, from what belongs to the theory of his art as he found it, and which not only the true artist learns, but even the most ignorant *falls into*, as we inevitably fall into the habits of those around us. But the eye of an architect has acquired the power of instantly separating these two parts of the design, setting aside the one as a mere matter of routine, but singling out and fixing itself on whatever is the *designer's own*. Now, if we perceive that all the beauty,—all the truth, in the building, belongs to the former portion;—that whatever belongs to the designer, whatever is new,—is false,—is adopted either for novelty, or to save thought, or for affectation, or for anti-art; we condemn the work, and justly: for what avails it to have been correct as far as rules and precedent would apply, if *wherever* he has acted for himself he has sinned? What avails it to have repeated truly the 990 words for which he could find authority, if the 10 which he was obliged to add are *all* false? It is these ten *alone* that show whether he is an artist or not; and these things, though small, and escaping the casual glance of the public, glare to our eyes as huge blots, totally defacing the routine beauty; though that may form the major portion of the work, and may cause the uninformed to regard it as *pleasing on the whole*.

* It seems wonderful that English builders cannot perceive, that if a design be beautiful, (*i. e.* fit), standing on the ground, *therefore* it must be unfit and monstrous when hoisted aloft over a gaping void;—or that if a form be beautiful at the foot of a building, it *must*, for that very reason, be hideous at the top, and *vice versa*.

Beware of mistaking this *on the whole*, for *as a whole*. Sir Joshua Reynolds observes, that "the totally ignorant beholder, like the ignorant artist, cannot comprehend a whole, nor even what it means." When such speak of the effect *as a whole*, they mean *on the whole*. The effect to them is pleasing, if it contain a majority of pleasing parts.

Such are now the most influential judges of art. By a singular inconsistency, those who constantly profess to be *no judges*, are really the style-formers. They say, 'We know nothing of the art, but we know what pleases us.' But what does this assume? Plainly, that the art is intended to *please them*. This is the grand art-destroying error. No true art is, or ever was, meant to please the many, but to teach them when to be pleased.

In limiting, we fear, the number of true artists, it must be remembered that one may be a true artist without being a master, or any thing like one. The difference is this: most buildings are so transparent, that we look at their front, and see through to the back of the designer's mind. According to the proportions we see of *thought-spending* or *thought-saving* spirit, so we admire or condemn; and when we can discern no self-sparing, no anti-art, we pronounce the work *purely elegant*; but not necessarily *masterly*. The work of a master is equally or even more transparent; but though the eye pierce deeper, and perhaps find more faults, it cannot reach the bottom. Admire as much as we may, we perceive that there is more beyond, left unadmired.

The few principles which we have endeavoured to elicit or explain in this volume, have been arranged in an upward progression, from narrow and particular, to wider and more general ones. We first tried to distinguish the different grades of beauty in building, and assign them their true relative ranks. Thus colour, whose laws of harmony are purely physical, came before uniformity, which appears sometimes addressed to the sense, and sometimes to the mind. Beauty of outline, being wholly addressed to the mind, though per-

haps to its lowest faculties, came next, and was traced to the union of unity and variety, which union is to be effected in two ways,—by gradation, and by contrast. Proceeding then from unmeaning beauty to that which is distinguishable into classes, we showed that its two opposite characters—*grandeur* and *elegance*—depended on the comparative prevalence of these two principles—contrast and gradation. According to the relative proportions of these, we divided all possible forms into five classes, and insisted on the observance of the natural disposition and subordination of these classes one to another, as practised in all the pure and admired styles. This we regard as the most important principle in mere *geometric design*, apart from constructive and other fitness.

We then considered the two cognate qualities of *sublimity* and *picturesqueness*, referring the former chiefly to,—1, the prevalence of contrast, and rarity or absence of gradation; 2, the expression of mechanical power in the construction; 3, the principle by painters called *breadth*, *i. e.* the collection of every thing or quality into great unbroken accumulations; 4, a quality we called *depth*, the reverse of flatness or shallowness. On the difficult subject of picturesqueness, we simply gave the notions of Ruskin, that it arises from the same qualities that would be sublime in the subject itself, attaching themselves not to its essence, but to some *accident*, as light and shade, colour, situation, state of decay, &c.

We next considered how nature should be imitated, with generalization, *i. e.* by taking all possible objects that have the character we want to give, extracting all that they have in common, and rejecting what is peculiar to each. We insisted on the same method as necessary in the imitation of masters, styles, and manners; and endeavoured to distinguish between true and false imitation or copyism. Another kind of false imitation, *viz. deception*, was then considered; the grievous error of regarding it as an object of art, the total destruction thereby fallen on popular art, and the great caution necessary for the thoughtful who would escape this defilement. Con-

needed with this we endeavour to enforce *constructive truth* or the non-disguise of the real statical principles of the construction; and lastly (a principle hitherto totally neglected by the moderns), *constructive unity*, or the consistent adherence to one statical method throughout a building.*

* It may, to some, appear strange that I have said nothing of a principle so much mentioned in every mouth, as *Simplicity*. Simplicity (whatever meanings it may have in other subjects) has in art only one meaning, which is, the exact opposite of *Affectation*. Sir Joshua Reynolds observed, that it was hardly possible to define these two most subtle antagonist spirits. Like air or light, thin, ethereal, ubiquitous and inevitable, they still seem to laugh at theory, and elude the grasp of words. May we not then conclude, that Simplicity is wrongly called a *principle* of art, being rather its highest *object*,—not one of its means, but of its ends?

Correct expression in building is rare and difficult, poetry yet more rare, but Simplicity is the rarest and most difficult quality of all. There is great danger in confounding it with other things called by the same name, which leads to affecting those things as means of art, (which they are not,) and thus induces the exact reverse of Simplicity, *viz.* Affectation. Engineers are peculiarly liable to these mistakes, and should be told that *whatever affects Simplicity has it not*.

The most disgusting of all affectation is the attempt to appear artless. But artlessness is the perfection of art; for the aim of true art is not to *appear*, but to *be*, artless.

We could hardly enumerate the absurd or art-ruining principles that have been taken and used for simplicity. The most harmless have been, 1, *Geometric Simplicity*; 2, *Plainness*, or absence of ornament. These, indeed, are sometimes merits, but are not Simplicity. If they were, the west portico of Drury Lane Theatre would be finer than the Parthenon; and Somerset House, before it was covered with tinkers' pots, must have been finer than if the architect had allowed it real chimneys.

But Simplicity has also been sought by,—3, *Rudeness*, or absence of thought for the spectator; 4, *Barbarism*, or neglect of general experience, acting as if no previous art were known; and 5, *Anti-art*, (see note, p. 254,) mistaken for artlessness, the perfection of art.

Of barbarism, there is one mark very liable to pass for Simplicity. This is the *unprepared transition from one member to another* (as in the Gothickesque 'discontinuous impost'). It is essentially the mark of a savage. In all civilized architecture there are only two instances of it, *viz.*

The two short reviews of the 'pure styles' afford the reader particular instances and modifications of these principles; and perhaps of some higher ones.

Pure architecture, then, may be regarded as consisting in the the springing of the Doric shaft from the stylobate, and that of the triglyph from the tænia (which, however, has some preparation in the sub-triglyph). *Such things can be allowed in no other style.* Remember, that the highest order of poetry admits of expressions that would be barbarous in any other writing. Unprepared transition from ground to wall, from wall to roof, can be perpetrated only by savages. Even London plasterers know this; but not knowing that what is beautiful when true, ceases to be beautiful when false,—they stick on a sham plinth overhanging the 'area,'—and as the progress of all popular art is from truth to falsehood, then from true falsehood to sham falsehood, &c.; this plasterers' art is (incredible as it may seem) *copied in granite*, (see the pedestal to George IV. in Trafalgar Square.)

Simplicity seems to me to require (among other principles) a sort of utilitarianism, like that of the Gothicists, but totally different from that of modern engineers. For instance, Salisbury cathedral is one of the most distinguished buildings in the world, for true simplicity. Its buttresses (which, as far as I can learn, are the *oldest in existence*, perhaps the first ever built) are surpassed in beauty by none, equalled by few. Now, so strictly utilitarian are they, that I doubt whether you can find a single moulding or cutting which does not either economize material, increase their mechanical efficiency, or their durability (by throwing off the wet). They are pieces of excellent *engineering*, then. Let us compare them with modern engineering. A modern engineer would have made them, doubtless, plainer, and (what is nearly the same thing) geometrically simpler,—much simpler in form. But *this would not have been making simpler buttresses*. It would only have been making *ruder* ones; less durable, less efficient for the same mass, more massive for the same mechanical effect, and uglier because containing less thought. I regard the Salisbury buttress (if it be original) as the most artistic feature invented since the time of Dorus,—its designer lavished upon it all the thought he could, in order to save material and manual labour; just the reverse of the principle of most modern architects and engineers, who would have saved themselves a vast deal of trouble, at the expense of the material or labour of others, and at the expense of beauty; for beauty is entirely proportional to the amount of *thought* left in the stone.

combination of constructive and decorative TRUTH in their widest sense, or of constructive and decorative UNITY.

This union was anciently sought by all nations,—attained by the Greeks alone,—dissolved by the Roman introduction of the arch,—gradually lost by the increasing admixture of that constructive principle,—RESTORED by its total adoption, to the exclusion of all other apparent construction,—and a second time lost by the increase of tensile construction and the indiscriminate mixture of all constructive methods.

Since this second degradation of the art, however, many great artists have lived, especially in Italy, a country which has never attained a system of constructive unity. For, except the pseudo-Greek buildings of the empire, and the pseudo-Gothic pile of Milan cathedral, with a few other exotic importations, it has never seen a building possessing even the appearance of constructive unity. Such a country is that in which we might look for the development of a style suitable to the *mixed* construction practised for the last three centuries; and, accordingly, in that country, such a style did, after many ages of unsuccessful efforts, at length appear, under the constellation of artists that adorned the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The system then developed was a *new* one, though composed of classic details. It affords more scope for variety in general arrangement than either of the pure systems,—certainly more than any impure ones; and it possesses a pliancy that may be bent to all the purposes probably that can ever be required in buildings of mixed construction. As long as such construction prevails, we may safely predict the continued prevalence of this architecture among the thinking.

But the two pure systems, perhaps it will be said, are things too good ever to be entirely given up. If so, far more are they too good to be abused and caricatured. If they are worth copying at all, they are worth copying completely; and this can never be done but by copying their *construction* as well as their decoration. If modern habits or means will not permit this, they will not permit the old style. Count the

cost, therefore. If you want to imitate the archless style, your building must be archless, or a huge lie. If you imitate the beamless style, it must be beamless; and every unvaulted building, ancient or modern, that apes this style, is a motiveless and unmeaning sham.

Not less preposterous than the attempt to revive *dead styles*, is the requirement to invent, for ordinary buildings, a *new* one. As long as we have no new style in construction, we *can* have none in architecture; but if we call the mixed construction a new kind, we *have* a new style adapted to it,—a modern, a living style; the growth of modern circumstances and of the existing modes of construction:—*new*, moreover, inasmuch as we are only on the threshold of its possible combinations and varieties, far more inexhaustible than those of either of the pure systems. In this country particularly, the beauties of the modern architecture are hardly known, nor can it be said to have ever had a fair trial, or indeed any trial in more than one or two classes of buildings.* It would be ridiculous self-conceit in an architect, to pretend wilfully to go back and try to solve anew that which has been already solved, and only by the succession of a long line of great artists. He can never hope to overtake them with such a start in their favour; while by commencing from the point they reached, the poorest talents may advance beyond them.

But while no inventive architect would *wish* for a new style, convinced that there is far more scope for variety and new combination in one already enriched with the accumulated genius of three centuries; it is certain that, in another point of view, a new style is indispensable. There *is* a class of

* What are called classic churches, for instance, are, for the most part, mere anti-art, no more Classic than they are Chinese. Wren had no opportunity of erecting a handsome parish church. His pupils fell either into littleness or Borominian corruption; and since their time, there have only been hole-in-the-wall preaching rooms,—sham temples,—and now pseudo-Gothic barns, copies of copies by mediæval village masons. England does not possess a modern church in the modern style.

buildings tending towards a new style of construction,—becoming less mixed in this respect,—and approaching a consistent use of *tensile* covering to the exclusion of every other. To this third system of constructive unity, there is no old style adapted. None was invented for it. It is a new thing, and its treatment must be new,—new, because subject to old principles; and to be effected only by a patient search into those old principles. Let us not mistake what we have to do. It is that which has been done only twice before; in the time of Dorus, and in the thirteenth century. We must carefully attend to the modes by which it was effected on both those occasions. On the first it was done most perfectly. There was the least to do. There was no lumber of a rotten system to sweep away. There was falsehood indeed to rectify, but it was only decorative, not constructive, and probably unbacked by prejudices and precedent. The second purification was less complete, but more like, in circumstances, to that now required. Its grand impediments were prejudices in favour of old but useless forms, and against an useful member (the buttress), under the notion that it was unarchitectural. So is it now. The method of tying buildings together, (said Wren,) instead of giving the arches, &c., sufficient butment, is contrary to the principles of sound architecture. Yes, contrary to the only two systems of architecture known to him or to us, but not therefore contrary to all possible systems. A Greek would have condemned thus the method of wedging stones together by lateral pressure; and after this method was introduced and used in all buildings, it was fifteen centuries before architects could be brought to admit the appearance of this lateral pressure. For a still longer period has *tension* been a principle of building, and yet not of architecture; much longer has the *tie* been struggling for admission, and been refused. As nothing was effected towards the development of the second system till the arch-covering became universal,—till a building became *beamless*; so can no advance toward the

third be expected till this constructive principle become universal, in the widest covering and in the narrowest,—till a building be erected both *without lintel* and *without butment*.

If the retaining of useless entablatures after their office was superseded by the arch, was a falsehood and a hindrance necessary to be swept away before any progress could be effected,—have we not a perfect parallel in the retaining of useless buttresses after their duty has been superseded by the tie?

There is, among other art-destroying fallacies, a notion now prevalent, that architectural styles spring up of themselves, and that if we wait long enough, in process of time a new one may grow up, we know not how. A new railway is more likely to grow up. Decorative *manners*, *fashions*, are not to be confounded with a new style, still less with a new system, such as the two, the only two, that possess constructive and decorative unity. Yet even a new fashion does not come unsought,—without search after *novelty*. Far less can an architectural system arise but by an earnest and rightly directed search after *truth*. For five thousand years have all the nations beyond the radius of Greek influence sought a true system of beam architecture, and *never* found it. For fifteen centuries did Europeans use the arch, and seek a system of arch architecture, before they found it. For a much longer time have Arabs, Turks, Chinese, sought the same, and *never* attained it. For twenty centuries did the Italians practise mixed construction, and seek a system thereof, before they attained it. Let us not deceive ourselves: a style never grew of itself; it never will. It *must* be sought, and sought the right way. We may blunder on in a wrong path for ever, and get no nearer the goal.

A new style requires the generalized imitation of nature and of *many* previous styles; and a new system requires, in addition to this (as Professor Whewell has remarked), the binding of all together by a new *principle of unity*, clearly understood, agreed upon, and kept constantly in view. Con-

structive statics affords three such principles, — the DEPRESSILE, the COMPRESSILE, and the TENSILE methods, — the *beam* — the *arch* — the *truss*; of which the two former have been made the bases of past systems: the third is ours, to be used in the same manner.

Such I believe to be the problem Truth propounds to the architects of the present time; but its solution will be found utterly hopeless, as long as we indulge any hankering after *novelty for its own sake*; any mean disposition to follow instead of correcting *popular taste*; and above all, let none dare attempt it till we have engraved on our compasses a hacknied sentence, but one which I suspect to contain nearly the whole theory of art, — SEEK NOT TO SEEM WHAT YOU WOULD BE, BUT TO BE WHAT YOU WOULD SEEM.

THE END.

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