

## THE OBJECTIVITY OF BEAUTY

From

JOHN RUSKIN

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by

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Any system of esthetics offering a solution to the sources of beauty demands more than passing interest, and John Ruskin's theory set forth in the first two volumes of Modern Painters, published in 1843 and 1846, received its share of attention during its century. Since that time it has been greatly discredited, and perhaps Henry Ladd in the introduction of his book, The Victorian Morality of Art, published in 1932, has expressed the present general opinion of Ruskin's esthetic system when he wrote: "Ruskin's theory of art is at best a monster -- no expatiation upon its virtues, manifold as they are can make it matter of fact or common sense". (1) And we might say here that Ruskin in his desire for comprehensiveness has in many places the defect of over-emphasis. Yet in spite of this defect no system containing enough truth to help us formulate a clear idea of esthetic pleasure is monstrous.

Ruskin's idea of the objectivity of beauty is indeed one that is given little place today in art, music, or literature. It is a serious affair that art, music, and literature have been all too much corroded in our times, for instead of influencing their patrons for good as they should, they have too often been the source of evil. Only when the arts flourish hand in hand with beauty are they beneficial, and when this

1. Henry Ladd, The Victorian Morality of Art, 2.

beauty is denied they cease to fulfill their end.

Now if there is no norm of beauty then the supporters of one opinion have as much right to their ideas as the supporters of another, but if there is a norm then that norm is to be followed at all times and by all who are true artists. And if the present divergent schools of thought on the question had little or no influence no heed would need be given them as they would be quite harmless. The fact is, however, that these groups, all of which make beauty subjective, have a wide following and their subjectivism has a far-reaching arm. Alfred Noyes attests to the influence of such a group in literature in his recently published book, the Edge of the Abyss.

Art expresses life and the ideas of the living, acting man, and as art does and thinks so often does man do and think, and subjectivism in art which begins with the few easily spreads itself to the many. Ideas expressed in literature often become the ideas that guide whole nations, and if these ideas preach a laissez-faire doctrine in thought and morals, this laissez-faire doctrine soon becomes the rule of whole groups of people; and if whatever pleases is the valid norm of art, whatever pleases can as easily be the valid norm of life.

If life is only a matter of how one regards it, one may regard dishonesty, greed, and lust as most pleasureable and

be right in doing so. If moral freedom brings pleasure with one or another sort of sin, and if pleasures of this sort are desirable, so too is the moral freedom that brings them since it is but a means to an end considered good. And there is a real connection between the freedom in the ideas of pleasure from art and the ideas of pleasure in life, since art helps to feed life. It would be wrong to say that morality in the life of a people can always be measured accurately by morality in their art, but it is not wrong to say that immorality in art can do much to increase immorality in mankind.

Since this be true, as it is, we should welcome a system that proposes a system as to the constituents of aesthetic pleasure, a system which purports to give us a scale which will gauge beauty. Such a system we believe Ruskin held, and we think too that were this system applied to art, music, and literature, much that is gross and ugly could be sifted away with the result that much grossness and ugliness in life might be turned to the truly good and beautiful.

In the development of this work we will have occasion to mention what various critics think concerning the value of Ruskin's work. It is impossible even to attempt to give a thorough idea of all that has been written concerning him. We will therefore offer only such criticisms that seem necessary for the development of this work.

The influence of art on life has already been pointed out,

and it has been asserted that Ruskin's system is a logical one to use in determining what is worthwhile in painting, music, and literature.

We intend to show only that Ruskin's system is applicable to literature, and will consider in particular its application to two literary forms, the novel and the poem. We have chosen these forms not because we believe that painting and music no longer exert a considerable influence on life, but because we feel that the influence exerted by reading is greater. It is a fact that more attention is given to literature in the educational processes than to painting and music. It would seem too that in later life there is more danger of harm being done through a lack of appreciative powers in literature than in other arts.

The reading of outstanding novels and of poetry is begun when the student is at an early age. All too often this reading is too cursory, and because of this the student fails to acquire a taste for better reading. We feel that the superficiality of the reading and study of the works considered is the chief cause for the want of a greater liking for literature in all too many. We feel too that this superficiality in reading is due largely to the failure to apply to the works read any plan that would bring about a better understanding of them and their beauty. We propose to show that Ruskin's theory is applicable to the novel and poem and not only acts as a test in judging them, but is as well a plan capable of

helping the student to make an interesting and thorough analysis of the works read.

Perhaps at no time has there been so great a number of utterly worthless and even harmful books presented to the reading public as in our own age. Because there has not been a sufficient training in the judging of books many of these books have received wide acceptance. We hear it said that they are representative of real life, and that the characters depicted in them are to be found among the people of every town and village. This may be all too true, but real harm is done when the reader fails to recognize that such realities and characters are only moral deformities. Even though they are actual beings, they are not beautiful; no more good can come from the constant reading of books having such characters than could come from a constant contemplation of physical deformities. While it may be true that there are entirely vicious people who delight in reading such books, we like to think that many read them through ignorance and only because their training in reading has not been sufficiently comprehensive to make them appreciative of the truly worthwhile.

Since it is true that there are today numberless worthless books being sold and read, there is evident need of a system such as Ruskin's for the criticism and judging of books.

In presenting the system Ruskin's life is first traced through its earlier years to the time when he completed the

first two volumes of Modern Painters. As Ruskin published these volumes while still a young man and lived to be an old man, there is much of his interesting life that is not treated for interesting though his later years were they had no influence upon Ruskin as the author of these first two volumes. In the treatment of his life we will point out these events and influences which we believe to be important in his development.

Following the consideration of his early life, there will be in the fourth chapter a study of the sources from which Ruskin acquired his notions concerning esthetics. Besides concerning these influences, the similarity between Ruskin and other writers on esthetics will be given some space.

Chapter five treats of Ruskin's esthetic theory in general and chapter six gives an outline of his whole system. A detailed study of his theory of beauty is begun in the seventh chapter which concerns itself with the theoretic faculty. In the following chapter the imaginative faculty is explained. Chapter nine contains Ruskin's views on landscape and includes some of his notions of the weaknesses of the art of his times. The material for this chapter is taken from the third volume of Modern Painters and is included in this work because it is felt that it gives ideas which will make easier the application of the theoretic and imaginative theories..

Many causes have been responsible for the criticism of

Ruskin's theory, and several of these causes are mentioned in chapter ten. In chapter eleven is a plan of his theory of beauty to be used in the analysis of the novels and poems considered. This plan is not a short one and may be criticized for its complexity, but any plan of so complex a theory as Ruskin's must itself be complex. We will point out after the application of the plan that its complexity is rather an advantage than a disadvantage.

The analysis of three novels, The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Return of the Native, by Thomas Hardy, and Windswept by Mary Ellen Chase is in chapter twelve. The Scarlet Letter and The Return of the Native were chosen for analysis because they are commonly read in high schools and colleges. Windswept was chosen because it is a modern novel and a recent best-seller. In the analysis of these novels quotations are given to portray each of the qualities pointed out. These quotations are, of course, but a few of the many that might be given in each instance. It was deemed better to offer a few quotations showing each quality rather than merely to point out the existence of the quality lest the latter method seem to arbitrary.

Chapter thirteen contains the application of the plan to Tennyson's The Lady of Shalott. This poem as the first two of the above-mentioned novels is commonly read in schools. The method of analysis here is quite different from that employed in the analysis of the novels but is equally as thorough;

and is, we believe, a method that can be used in the analysis of any poem according to Ruskin's plan.

It is well to note here that the three novels and the poem chosen for analysis are assumed to possess beauty. The purpose of the analysis is not, therefore, to attempt to prove their beauty, but to show that Ruskin's theory is a working system and one capable of pointing out beauty where it exists. It follows, of course, that the absence of beauty would be detected if it did not exist in a work submitted to a test by this theory.

When we use the phrase, "the objectivity of beauty", we understand that beauty is in the object and not in the mind. Beauty itself is intuitively grasped, but this intuitive grasping of the beauty of any object does not at all tell us why the object is beautiful. Before we can assert the reasons for the beauty of the object it is necessary to test it for certain qualities. We hold that the qualities proposed by Ruskin are best fitted to determine the beauty of any given object.

We do not infer that this system can in any way give beauty, but we do assert that it can augment and cultivate the taste for the beautiful. This is one of the purposes of education - to cultivate the taste for the beautiful. It is for this purpose that the best works in literature are offered to the student that he may acquire a taste for the best in literature early in life and continue to cultivate it

always. When education fails to give this taste for literature it has failed to a certain degree.

In considering Ruskin's theory we have recognized it as the work of an art critic rather than that of a philosopher; nor do we make any claims, as Ruskin himself never made any, that he is a philosopher. This view is generally recognized and Father Callahan writing of Ruskin says: "Perhaps it is hardly fair to treat the doctrines of Ruskin from the strict philosophic standpoint",...., Ruskin was "preeminently an art critic". (2)

Art in the general English interpretation of the word refers to painting, and it was in this sense that Ruskin considered the term. This is perhaps one of the reasons why his theory has not won wider acceptance. Not only did he confine himself to the consideration of painting but he confined himself primarily to the consideration and defense of one man, Turner.

Our endeavor is to show that his theory is as applicable to literature as to art. The theory is objective from the point of view of its application to definite works, and, as has already been pointed out, we believe that it can offset much of the harm that has been done by subjectivity in judgment.

Lastly it should be noted that we are interested mainly

2. L. Callahan, O.P. A Theory of Aesthetics, 108.

in the passive phase of beauty, that is, beauty as it is to be found in the finished work, and not in the active phase, or, beauty in the work in the making. It is for this reason that greater attention is given to the application of the notions considered in the theoretic faculty rather than those in the imaginative.

## CHAPTER TWO

### BIOGRAPHICAL

W.G. Collingwood tells us that the influences in Ruskin's life were Scottish. "He was born in London, but his family were Scottish. He was brought up in Surry, but the friends and teachers and the standards and influences of his early life were chiefly Scottish.....the religious so conspicuous in him is a heritage from Scotland." (1) John James Ruskin, his father, was born in Edinburgh. In 1806, after graduating from Edinburgh high school, he left for London where he began work for Gordon, Murphy & Co. Such was his industry and efficiency, that he attracted the attention of Peter Domecq, the owner of large Spanish vineyards. Mr. Domecq was at that time at the Gordon, Murphy offices learning the commercial part of his business in London, which was the center of the sherry trade.

In 1809 he set up a London branch of his firm and offered partnership to the elder Ruskin together with a Mr. Telford, who supplied most of the capital of the establishment. It was to the business capacity of Ruskin that the firm owed the great development that came to it. He had, however, other interests which were to influence his son more directly. He loved art and took great delight not only in the study and in the admiration of it, but also did a certain amount of work in water colors. While he was still a young man Ruskin's father had traveled extensively through Scotland and Spain and

1. W.G. Collingwood, The Life of John Ruskin, I, 3.

developed definite views of the beauties of the architecture and scenery of these places.

Ruskin's mother, Margaret Cox, married John James Ruskin in 1818, after an engagement of nine years. There was little of the romantic in the courtship, for, as Ruskin wrote in his autobiography, Praeterita, his father wooed his mother "with the same kind of serenity and decision with which he afterwards chose his clerks". (2) Mrs. Ruskin was a woman of remarkably strong character. In 1800 her mother sent her to Edinburgh to keep house for her uncle, John Ruskin, who was later to become her father-in-law. Mrs. Ruskin's widowed mother had earned a comfortable living for herself and her daughters by keeping the old King's Head Inn at Croydon market place. The two girls received the best education that Croydon day school offered. After she had come to her uncle's at Edinburgh, Margaret felt that her education was hardly sufficient for her life among her new associates, and at the age of twenty-nine under the direction of John James Ruskin's friend and teacher, Dr. Thomas Brown, she began the serious study to make herself a match in mental culture for her future husband. She did so well that she became read and informed above the average person. This training had more than one result upon John Ruskin's life, for not only did it strengthen further her already strong will

2. John Ruskin, Praeterita I, 156.

and give her a greater stock of information with which to train him but in one sense it narrowed her and her family. This latter effect was due to her pride which made her unwilling to seek the company of those she considered her social superiors, and because her strictness of life made it difficult for her equals to approach her and so she came to live only for her husband and son.

When John Ruskin, who was to be the only child of his parents, was born in 1819, his parents had very definite notions concerning his training. Perhaps no English writer has ever been subjected to such a strict surveillance as was Ruskin. Both parents were ambitious for him but it was his mother who made the decisions. Ruskin says that his father "had the exceedingly bad habit of yielding to my mother in large things and taking his own way in little things". (3)

Mrs. Ruskin's disciplinary technique early developed in John a great spirit of serenity. Whenever he cried whether because of some childish disappointment or because he tumbled on the stairs or met some other similar accident he was soundly whipped.

Ruskin says of his earliest period: "My mother's general principles of first treatment were to guard me with steady watchfulness from all avoidable pain or danger, and, for the rest, she let me amuse myself as I liked provided I was neither fretful or troublesome. But the law was that I should find my

<sup>WV</sup>  
3. *ibid.* I, 17.

own amusements. No toys of any kind were allowed". (4) Indeed during his earliest years he amused himself largely with a bunch of keys which were permitted to him. Later a cart and a ball were given to him and when six he received some wooden blocks. These were all the toys of Ruskin's childhood. Other toys came to the house but Ruskin did not use them. His mother's sister married to a Croydon baker once brought a remarkably fine Punch and Judy. This was, of course, displayed during her visit but once the visit ended Ruskin's mother told him that it would not be right that he should have them and he never saw them again.

Because of the absence of toys, uskin early developed his powers of observation gazing with intentness on the patterns of the carpets, bedspreads and his mother's dresses and again at the scenes from the various windows. In the garden where he was allowed <sup>W</sup><sub>A</sub> to wander about he was forbidden to touch anything far less to eat any berries or fruit.

This training was given to develop his will and to make him independent. Of the latter spirit he writes; "By the time I was seven years old, I was getting too independent mentally, even of my mother and my father, and having no one else to depend upon, began to lead a very small, perky, contented, Cock-Robinson-Crusoe sort of a life, in the central point which, it appeared to me I occupied in the universe.

4. *ibid.* I, 10.

This is partly the fault of father's modesty; and partly of his pride. He had so much more confidence in my mother's judgment in such matters than in his own, that he never ventured to help her much less to cross her, in the product of my education....and, on the whole I have nothing to animate in a childish way but myself, but nests of ants which the garden-er would never leave undisturbed for me, and a friendly bird or two". (5)

The evenings in the Ruskin home were always the same as Ruskin tells us: "In summer time we were all in the garden as long as the day lasted; tea under the white heart cherry tree; or in the winter or in rough weather, at six o'clock in the drawing room - I having my cup of milk and slice of bread and butter in a little recess with a table in front of it wholly sacred to me; and in which I remained in the evening as an idol in an niche, while my mother knitted and my father read to her and to me as far as I chose to listen". (6) It was here that he heard his father read among others Byron, Cervantes, Scott, Shakespeare, Pope, Spenser, Goldsmith, Addison and Johnson. Much of what he heard was beyond his comprehension but much remained in his mind.

The young Ruskin began to read and write when he was four and at five he was a book worm. When he was six he began to imitate books he read and began to write himself; even at this

5. *ibid.* I, 33, 34.

6. *ibid.* I, 37.

early age he made ambitious plans for his work. His first work was called "Harry and Lucy Concluded or Early Lessons". It was to be in four volumes and he laboriously completed three. Hence from the start his plan was always to be broader than the work actually done and his interest was to grow less after his first feat. This was very likely due then and later to his great powers of observation and imagination, powers in themselves remarkable and which enabled him to do such thorough work as long as these powers were not diverted. His ability to observe so much and so well brought about these diversions easily.

In 1827 a young cousin of Ruskin's died at Perth of water on the brain. She had been brilliant too and Ruskin's parents at once decided to have his schooling done at home. They felt as Collingwood tells us that a school might be harmful for fear of the excitement of competitive study. (7)

His mother therefore put him through his Latin grammar using Adam's Manual which his father had used at Edinburgh. When he was ten he was put for Latin under the direction of Dr. Andrews who had distinguished himself as a humanity student at the University of Glasgow. Later he undertook the study of Greek also under Dr. Andrews. In 1831 a Mr. Runciman became

7. W.C. Collingwood, The Life of John Ruskin, I, 33.

his drawing master. In the same year Mr. Rowbotham began lessons with him in French grammar and Euclid.

Before any of the above-mentioned instruction had been started Ruskin's mother had begun a reading of the Bible with him. We can best hear of it in his own words. "As soon as I began to read (at five) my mother began a course in Bible work with me which never ceased until I went to Oxford. She read alternate verses with me, watching at first, every intonation of my voice, and correcting the false ones..... it might have been beyond me altogether; that she did not care about; but she made sure that as soon as I got hold of it at all, I should get hold of it by the right end. In this way she began with the first verses of the Genesis and went straight through to the last verse of the Apocalypse; and then began at the Genesis the next day.....But it is only with deliberate effort that I can recall the long morning hours of toil as regular as sunrise, by which year after year, my mother forced me to learn these paraphrases and chapters..... allowing not so much as one syllable to be missed or misplaced, while every sentence was required to be said over and over again till she was satisfied with the accent of it". (8)

Another influence that entered into Ruskin's life when he was but a child and continued all through it was the periodic tours taken by his parents. It was his father's custom to spend

8. John Ruskin, Praeterita, I, 53, 54, 55.

a portion of each summer in visiting different parts of England in the interest of the wine business. Mrs. Ruskin always accompanied her husband on these trips and Ruskin was taken regularly beginning in 1823. While it is true that these trips were taken for business purposes they were far more than that. The family traveled by private carriage taking along a driver and Ruskin's nurse. They proceeded leisurely, traveling forty or fifty miles a day, usually completing the day's journey in time for a four o'clock dinner. Mr. Ruskin called on all possible customers. More important for John's development they visited ruins, castles, parks, art galleries, caves, lakes and mountains. These visits were never hurriedly made but rather they took sufficient time to seek local information, to look up books of reference and to note down the results of their inquiries. While still a child Ruskin followed his father's habit of keeping a journal of these trips. Before he wrote the first volume of Modern Painters at twenty-three Ruskin had taken fourteen of these extensive summer tours.

Before this time, to these tours were added five trips to the continent, the first made in 1825 when Ruskin was six years of age. On these trips the family spent several weeks in Paris. Here they visited Mr. Domecq and were there for the festivities which followed the coronation of Charles X. From Paris they went to Brussels and lastly visited Waterloo which greatly impressed the young Ruskin.

The later trips to the continent brought them to Switzerland, Germany and Italy as well as to the south of France. At the time of the second trip Ruskin was fourteen and in this and later trips took an active interest in the art of the countries visited. These trips as the English tours were leisurely and methodically made and stores of information were gathered concerning any place, person or thing of interest.

It is natural to ask what companions young John had during his early years and adolescence. In Praeterita after listing what he calls the main blessings of his childhood Ruskin next lists the dominant calamities and places first in the list that he had nothing to love. Let us note his own explanation. "My parents were- in a sort- visible powers of nature to me, no more loved than the sun and the moon; only I should have been annoyed and puzzled if either of them had gone out; (How much, now, when both are darkened !) - still less did I love God; not that I had any quarrel with Him or fear of Him; but simply found what people told me was his service, disagreeable; and what people told me was his book, not entertaining. I had no companions to quarrel with, neither nobody to assist, and nobody to thank. Not a servant was ever allowed to do anything for me, but what it was their duty to do; and why should I have been grateful to the cook for cooking or the gardener, for gardening, - when the one dared not to give me a baked potato without asking leave, and

the other would not leave my ants' nests alone because they made the walks untidy ? The evil consequence of all this was not, however, what might perhaps have been expected, that I grew up selfish or unaffectionate; but that when affection did come it came with violence utterly rampant and unmanageable, at least for me, who never before had anything to manage". (9)

His earliest young companions were his Scottish cousins residing at Perth. Ruskin saw these on the summer tours. His favorite among these was his cousin Jessie whose death when John was eight deeply impressed him. In 1829, the following year his father's sister, Jesse Richardson, died leaving a large family. Her daughter, Mary, came to Herne Hill, Sulwick, where the Ruskins had moved from the city in 1823, to make her home with them. She was a girl of even disposition and was to be John's future companion at home and on the tours.

Still later when John was under Dr. Andrews' tutelage his daughters called at Herne Hill. "Mrs. Ruskin, who let none but pretty girls come to her house, welcomed the doctor's daughters; one, who wrote verses in John's notebook and sang Tambourgi still lives in Bedford Park; the other lives in Mr. Coventry Patmore's Angel in the House. When Mr. Ruskin, thirty years later, wrote of that doubtfully received poem it was "the sweetest analysis we possess of

9. *ibid.* I, 44, 45.

quiet modern domestic feeling", few of his readers could have known all the grounds of his appreciation or suspected the weight of meaning in his words". (10)

The only boy whose friendship he enjoyed was Richard Fall of whom Collingwood writes. "The lack of companions was made up to him in the friendship of Richard Fall, the son of a neighbor on "the Hill", - a boy without affection or morbidity of disposition, whose complimentary character suited him well. An affectionate comradeship sprang up between the two lads and lasted until in middle life they drifted apart, not quarreling but each going on his own course to his own destiny". (11) Ruskin himself tells of this friendship in Præterita. His father approving of the Fall's manner of life wrote to Mr. Fall suggesting that the two boys might pursue their tasks and recreations together when Richard was at home from school. Of the working out of this arrangement and of Richard, Ruskin says: "As I had been promoted by that time (1832) to the possession of a study, all to myself, while Richard had only his own room, the course which things fell into was that usually when Richard was at home, he came up past the seven gates about ten in the morning; did what lessons he had to do at the same table,

10. W.G. Collingwood, The Life of John Ruskin, I, 40.

11. *ibid.* I, 49, 50.

with me, occasionally helping me a little with mine; and then we went together for afternoon walks with Dash, Gypsy, or whatever dog chanced to be dominant.....Richard Hall was entirely good-humored, sensible, and practical but had no particular taste; a distaste, if anything, for my style both of art and poetry.....and though with pleasant cordiality in daily companionship took rather the position of putting up with me, than of a pride in his privilege of acquaintance with a rising young author. He was never unkind or sarcastic; but laughed me inexorably out of writing bad English for rhyme's sake, or demonstrable nonsense either in prose or rhyme". (12)

Other friendships were formed in 1836 when Mr. Domecq brought his four young daughters, the eldest just having married, to visit the Ruskins. John was greatly attracted to the oldest of the visiting girls, Adele Clotilde, then fifteen years old. He wrote a story, Leoni, A Legend of Italy, to read to her. It was a story filled with tales of robbers and adventure and true lovers. The note of passion was too real for a girl of fifteen and Adele only laughed at it. In 1838 Adele came with her sisters to Chelmsford where they studied English. Again Ruskin saw her and seemed truly in love with her. In the following year her father died and Adele became engaged to Baron Duquesne, a young and handsome noble. Ruskin on hearing of the marriage arrangements was

12. John Ruskin, Præterita, I, 174, 175.

deeply disappointed and wrote a long poem Farewell.

"The grief my words were weak to tell,  
And thine unable to console".

Two years before the visit of the Domecqs' Ruskin had ceased his home tutoring. His father felt a change desirable as he was getting older and preparing for Oxford. Hence it was that he entered the day school of Reverend Thomas Dale in Grove Lane, Peckham. The Reverend Mr. Dale had done some literary work and was afterwards canon of St. Paul's. There was no love between John and his new teacher for on one of their first meetings the teacher referred to Dr. Adam's Latin Grammar which John had hitherto used as "that Scotch thing".

Ruskin studied with him less than two years although he did attend his lectures at Kings College in 1836.

In January 1837 he went into residence at Christ's Church, Oxford. When Ruskin entered Oxford his mother left Herne Hill and took rooms near him. Every day of his stay there he had tea with her in the evening. His father joined them for the week-end. Mrs. Ruskin lived near John chiefly because she wanted to watch over his health carefully.

When Ruskin entered Oxford a new impetus was just being given to the study of physical science and he was fortunate in gaining for his friends those most interested in this work. "To Mr. (now Sir) Henry Acland and Dr. Buckland who took notice of a young geologist, and made him useful in

drawing diagrams for lectures, he owed his first encouragement in science. To Sir Charles Newton now famous as our leading authority on classical archeology, and at that time an undergraduate antiquary of Christ's Church, young Ruskin owed sympathy in his artistic tastes. So that, by the best of fortune, no side of his nature was left undeveloped, and he began his career as the junior comrade of the best men in each walk of life". (13)

Rev. Walter Browne was Ruskin's college tutor and Rev. Osborne Gordon, famous for his scholarship, was his private tutor.

Oxford presented no great intellectual obstacles for Ruskin to overcome for his habits of study and an extremely good memory made reading always easy for him. He had not the training that made him interested in the nicar points of classical scholarship but his very vivid interest in the subjects he read made up for this deficiency.

It was perhaps unfortunate that his chief interest during his Oxford years was poetry, unfortunate since he was soon to discover that this was not a chief interest in his life. For three years he entered poems in the contest for the Newdigate prize and finally won the coveted prize with his poem, Salsette and Elephante.

13. W.G. Collingwood, The Life of John Ruskin, I, 95.

In May 1840 he was obliged to leave his studies as it seemed evident that he was threatened with consumption. After periods of travel and rest on the Continent and in England he resumed studies at Herne Hill with the Rev. Osborne Gordon and took his bachelor of arts degree at Oxford in May 1842.

Mention has already been made of Ruskin's drawing lessons from Mr. Runciman. He progressed quickly under him and by the time of his second trip to the Continent in 1835 he spent much time sketching in the great galleries.

So well did Ruskin work in 1835 that his father felt that he should have further instruction and arranged with Copley Fielding to give the customary course of six lessons in water-color. Of these lessons Ruskin writes: "I know not whether Papa or I most enjoyed the six hours in Newman Street; my father's intense delight in Fielding's work making it a real pleasure to the painter that he should stay chatting while I had my lesson.....and thus the proposed six lessons in Newman Street ran on into perhaps eight or nine during which Copley Fielding taught me to work color smoothly in successive tints.....with these instructions, I succeeded in copying a drawing which Fielding made before me.....so much to my own satisfaction that I put my work up over my bed-room chimney piece the last thing at night and woke to its contemplation in the morning with a rapture mixed of self-complacency

and the sense of a new faculty.....in a little while, however, I found that this first great step did not mean consistent progress at the same pace. I saw that my washes, however careful or multitudinous, did not in the end look as smooth as Fielding's.....with still greater discouragement I perceived the Fielding processes to be inapplicable to the Alps..... the water-color drawing was abandoned.....the pencil outline returned with resolute energy". (14)

Ruskin's next art lessons were with Harding in 1842 and of these he wrote: "I find my first lessons from Harding were also at this time; very delightful for what they were worth, though I saw well enough his shortcomings. But it was lovely to see him draw in his own way and up to a certain point his knowledge of tree form was true, and entirely won for himself with an honest original perception. Also, he was a violent hater of the old Dutch school, and I imagined the first who told me that they were "sots, gamblers, and debauchees, delighting in the realities of the ale-house more than in its pictures". All which was awakening and beneficial to no small extent".

One of the remarkable things about Modern Painters was that Ruskin published his first volume while yet a very young

14. John Ruskin, Praeterita, I, 276, 277.

15. *ibid.* II, 85, 86.

man. But this volume was by no means his first published writing. While still a boy he had become interested in minerals, and often worked at the study of the collection of minerals at the British Museum. He was never short of pocket money, therefore he had a fair collection of his own and this he increased constantly by picking up specimens on his various trips. Collingwood says, "He took the greatest pains over his catalogue and wrote elaborate accounts of the various minerals in a shorthand he invented out of Greek letters and crystal forms". (16)

When he was fifteen he made the acquaintance of Mr. J.C. Loudon, editor of Loudon's Magazine of Natural History, and in the March 1834 issue he wrote an essay trying to explain the causes and to get at the secrets of the structure of the crags of Lauterbrunnen and the peaks of Savoy.

About this same time he became acquainted with the publishers who were to do much of his work for many years, the Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co. His Croydon cousin, Charles, was working in their office at this time and spoke to Mr. Thomas Pringle, editor of the publishers' annual Friendship's Offering, of his young cousin, John Ruskin.

Mr. Pringle called at Herne Hill where he was welcomed as a fellow Scotsman and soon he offered young John the chance of writing two sketches concerning his last tour.

16. W.G. Collingwood, The Life of John Ruskin, I, 56.

So it was that these two, Saltzberg and Fragments from a  
etrical Journal, were published in the 1935 Christmas  
issue of Friendship's Offering. It was in Friendship's  
Offering and The London Monthly Miscellany that he published  
the poems that he wrote to Adele Domecq.

While at Oxford perhaps at the invitation of Mr. Loudon  
he started to write The Poetry of Architecture; or The  
Architecture of the Nations of Europe considered in its  
associations with Natural Scenery and National Character.  
While this work is scarcely known today it was a beginning of  
the ideas which were later developed in the Seven Lamps of  
Architecture. When published however they were well accepted  
and of them Collingwood writes; "They are bright and amusing,  
full of pretty description and shrewd thoughts. They parade  
a good deal of classical learning and traveled experience;  
so much so that no doubt the readers of the magazine took  
their author for some dilettante don at Oxford; and the  
editor did not wish the illusion to be dispelled so John Rus-  
kin had to chose a nom de plume. He called himself Kata Phusin  
("according to nature"), for he had begun to read some  
Aristotle after his Smalls. No phrase could have better  
expressed his point of view, that some common sense extended  
by experience and confirmed by the appeal to the matters of  
fact rather than to any authority or tradition, or committee

of taste, or abstract principles." (17)

The Kata Phusin papers attracted some favorable notice for when, at the end of 1838 there was a question of the best site for the proposed Scott Memorial at Edinburgh a writer in the Architecture Magazine suggested that as Kata Phusin was an authority in such matters his design and choice of site should be solicited and considered.

This briefly gives us an idea of the literary apprenticeship of the author of Modern Painters. Before closing this chapter we may consider the description of Ruskin from his biography by Frederic Harrison: "With much nervous energy and a lively temper, the young John was delicate, and his parents behaved as if his life could only be saved by unremitting care. The family records are perpetually interrupted by illness. At eight he had a serious attack of fever in Scotland. At sixteen he was in great danger for some days with pleurisy and had to be taken away from Mr. Dale's school. At twenty-one he was attacked with spitting of blood, and had to be removed from Oxford for a whole year and a half. But he was no permanent invalid; in health, a very good walker, full of activity and high spirits, whose eyes and pen seldom ceased night and day. But he learned no bovish games, never

17. *ibid.* I, 83, 84.

attempted to dance, and after repeated efforts at a riding school could not be taught to sit a horse". (18)

18. Frederic Harrison, John Ruskin, 16, 17.

## CHAPTER THREE

### ESTIMATES

In the last chapter we considered the facts of Ruskin's life to the time of his writing the first volume of Modern Painters. From the account of his early life it is easy to trace in the environment and in the characters of his early associates many of the traits, some helpful, others harmful, which are evident in Ruskin, the man.

There was in Ruskin's parents a great deal of native shrewdness. John James Ruskin's business career is a manifestation of this. It was his fidelity to work and his apparent ability that won him so early in life a partnership in the firm in which he was to make his fortune. Had the elder Ruskin achieved no other success than that in business he would be worthy of our admiration, yet we perhaps admire him more for the soundness of his artistic taste and for the constant encouragement he was able to give his son. Ruskin testifies several times in his autobiography, Praeterita, concerning the esteem in which the judgement of his father was held by those whose educational advantages had been far superior to his.

The intellectual development of Mrs. Ruskin was a tribute to her character as it was due mainly to her own efforts begun only after all her formal schooling was completed.

The student of Ruskin, however, cannot but wonder if he would not have been happier and perhaps even more successful had his parents been less ambitious. It is indeed true

that their ambitions were all for him but it seems that in their always constant desire for his most correct training they failed to show an understanding of the development of the child. They kept him from school fearing that the excitement of competition would be harmful to his mind and yet in his training at home they offered him nothing for his occupation that would bring relaxation to the mind. During these early years too he had no way of knowing how other children felt and thought concerning all that was interesting to him.

No amount of attention on the part of adults can make up completely for the want of companions of one's own age and Ruskin while still a boy came more and more to rely on his own observations and judgements. All this was permitted to be part of Ruskin's life that he might develop self-confidence and independence. Of the failure of his training to produce these qualities Ruskin writes: "But the ceaseless authority exerted over my youth left me, when cast out at last into the world, unable for some time to do more than drift with its vortices". (1 )

Ruskin's great activity of mind at times impeded his work. Left to himself as he was in his youthful mental activity he early formed the habit of giving his interest whole heartedly to a subject, and then abruptly losing that interest, and of diverting the same intense interest to quite a different subject. It was for this reason that he often lost interest

1 . John Ruskin, Praeterita, I, 46.

in or changed the plan of work he undertook. The very first writing that he did, Harry and Lucy, was never completed. It was this habit too that was later to cause so many contradictions in his theories. It is because of this same habit that the latter volumes of Modern Painters are so different in perspective than the first volumes. It was the same habit again that caused him to be carried away in later controversies on economic and social problems to such an extent that his invective often showed more feeling than reason.

Perhaps no child of his century was given such an opportunity to cultivate his powers of observation as Ruskin. From his earliest days he had to rely upon observation for his amusement and the annual tours with his parents gave him untold opportunities for cultivating this faculty. Writing of the tour of 1830 Collingwood in referring to the diary of this trip gives us a typical sketch of the thoroughness with which these tours were made. "We read how they "set off from London at seven o'clock on Tuesday morning, eighteenth of May," and thence forward we are spared no detail: the furniture of the inns, the bills of fare; when they got out of the carriage and walked; how they lost their luggage; what they thought of colleges and chapels, music and day races at Oxford, of Shakespeare's tomb, and the pin factory at Birmingham; we have a complete guide book to Blenheim and Warwick Castle, to Haddon and Chatsworth and the full itinerary

of Derbyshire. "Matlock Bath", we read, "is a most delightful place;" but after an enthusiastic description of High Tor, John reacts into bathos with a minute description of how they wetted their shoes in a puddle. The cavern with a Bengal light was fairyland to him, and among the minerals he was quite at home.....The dominant note of the tour is, however, an ecstatic delight in the mountain scenery.....They did not seem to know what it was to be bored. The whole tour was a triumphal progress, or a march of conquest." (2 )

Summer after summer was spent in the same methodical way with young John studying thoroughly everything of interest in the numerous places that the family visited. There can be little doubt that these trips offered him advantages that few others possessed. That he made good use of all he observed to further his knowledge of geology and art, his later works leave no doubt.

Another practice of his youth which left its mark upon him was his course in Bible reading under the tutelage of his mother. This perhaps more than any other influence in his life made Ruskin always a moralist. Professor Elton says of him that "Ruskin was always a preacher; he is, indeed, the last great preacher whom the English-speaking nations have found. He would be great in a different way -- he would persuade, or revolt the judgement in a different way; he would not be Ruskin

2 . W.G. Collingwood, The Life of John Ruskin, I, 43, 44, 46.

if he were not concerned, first and foremost, with pointing out the ways of salvation. And he is a preacher with a measure of religious doctrine -- sometimes more, sometimes very little, but always some -- in his mind, and therefore on his lips. It is his ethical passion if anything which binds all his activities together; to this in the end they are all subordinate. It is the spring of his best and rarest utterance; and also of his principal weakness which may be defined as a propensity, borne along by spiritual fervor, and on the wings of his own eloquence to take premature and illegitimate short cuts to some conclusion which could only be reached, if at all, by a long circuit of reasoning". (31)

There can be no doubt, as has already been said that the lack of normal companionship had an unfavorable effect on Ruskin's life. It was this that gave him sense of futility that he so frequently experienced in his later life and brought about the sense of loneliness that was to cause him such unhappiness. That he thought often of his relations with his fellow-men it is evident from a paragraph in which he writes: "In blaming myself, as I have often done, and may have occasion to do again, for my want of affection to other people, I must also express continually more and more wonder that ever anybody had any affection for me. I thought they might as

3. Oliver Elton, A Survey of English Literature III, 219.

well have got fond of a camera lucida, or an ivory footrule; all my faculty was merely in showing that such and such things were so; I was no orator, no actor, no painter, but in a minute and generally invisible manner; I couldn't bear being interrupted in anything I was about." (4)

Such were the influences and such the man who wrote Modern Painters. While consideration will be given later to his theory of beauty and to its acceptance, we may pause here to give place briefly to what has been said of Modern Painters by a few of the many who have criticized it. The criticisms offered here are general and concern the work as a whole and its influence rather than the validity of the theory itself. Oliver Elton in his Survey of English Literature tells us that from the Bible comes the best of Ruskin's language and cadence and that the Bible is never far off in his magic melodies. Concerning Ruskin's style he is of the opinion that "his position as a master of words is impregnable; his position as a thinker and critic, though a high one, is much more equivocal". (5) "The effect is spontaneous; there is not the laborious inlaying of words, which is practiced by writers like Pater, beautifully enough, yet with the result of delaying the ease and marsh<sup>c</sup> of the sentence". (6)

4. John Ruskin, Præterita, II, 288.

5. Oliver Elton, A Survey of English Literature, III, 218.

6. *ibid.* III, 237.

Professor Winchester writing of Modern Painters points out that to Ruskin "beauty is not merely a delightful but a holy thing, ---- a revelation of the nature of the Infinite, gracious as his love, awful as his law. This is the secret of the strange power of much of his writing. It is suffused with an emotion hardly before found in English prose..... it is not easy indeed, to overestimate the services of Ruskin to English art,.....But the chief value of Ruskin's writings throughout this period of his life --- as, indeed, through all his life --- is ethical. Like all great literature, it is concerned with those broad truths of human nature on which the laws both of art and morals are based. Thus, whatever his theme, before he is through with it he is sure to turn out a moralist. Nothing he has done is of more importance than this constant emphasis of the relation between conduct and artistic feeling, and the consequent duty of cultivating good taste". ( 7 )

Quite a different view of Ruskin's work is expressed by Professor Henry Ladd: "Ruskin's theory of art is at best a monster -- no expatiation upon its virtues, manifold as they are can make it matter of fact to common sense". ( 8 )

Hugh Walker after praising the style of Ruskin says of Modern Painters that Ruskin's "criticism of art is essentially

7. G.T. Winchester, An Old Castle, 277, 278, 279.

8. Henry Ladd, The Victorian Morality of Art, 2.

unsystematic.....It is where he is most systematic that he is most perverse, and that he falls into the most glaring blunders. Where he follows his own fine taste and feeling, he is usually right; where he is supporting a theory or formulating a definition he is capable of being egregiously wrong..... Notwithstanding all his perversities and inconsistencies, the permanent worth of Ruskin's work is immense. His very success makes it difficult to rate sufficiently high the daring originality of his art-criticism". (9)

Lastly we may listen briefly to the criticism of Professor Routh who writes that "Modern Painters corrected or rather counterbalanced the narrowing tendencies of mid-Victorian rationalism. Ruskin was resisting, perhaps unconsciously, the limitations of systematized and logical thought. He was no enemy of science for its own sake; on the contrary, he was a painstaking student of crystallography and botany; but he must have realized that physicists, mathematicians, and, of course, economic and social thinkers, were imposing mental habits, methods of reasoning and stereotyped phraseologies which were very convenient for the conveyance of their theories, but were otherwise inadequate to satisfy the whole man. They preferred the formula to the image. Reality might be infinitely complex and elusive, but they tried to catch it in artificially simplified concepts and laws". (10)

9 . Hugh Walker, The Literature of the Victorian Era, 1011, 1016

10 . H.V. Routh, Toward the twentieth Century, 160, 161.

Thus for the events in the life of Ruskin and the influences of his earlier years have been noted that we may have a realization of the background of the author whose work we are about to consider. There have been presented as well several general criticisms of the value of Modern Painters. It is now time to give attention to the work itself with the theories it sets forth.

CHAPTER FOUR  
INFLUENCES AND SIMILARITIES

Before considering Ruskin's theory of beauty, we shall briefly consider the theories of beauty before Ruskin and his relation to them. Ruskin is almost unique in his position, for besides Sir Joshua Reynolds he was the only creative artist who had ventured to put forth an esthetic theory in any way developed; the others who had done so from Plato and Aristotle to his time had been philosophers, but it seems safe to say that Ruskin was fully aware of most of the theories. To believe this, however, is to call into doubt a statement that Ladd makes in writing of the specific sources of Modern Painters: "In the University he acquired a little formal philosophy from an indifferent reading of Aristotle's Ethics and from Locke's monumental Essay". (1) Such a statement can only give the reader the impression that Ruskin was indifferent to philosophy, or, at least, to Aristotle and Locke. Ladd does not give the sources on which he bases this remark, but statements of Ruskin himself and of two of his biographers contradict it.

In Praeterita, Ruskin, in speaking of the final examinations he took at Oxford, says: "I only went up for a pass, and still wrote Latin so badly that there was a chance of my not passing; but the examiners forgave it because the divinity, philosophy, and mathematics were all above the average". (2)

1. H. Ladd, The Victorian Morality of Art, 2, 36.

2. John Ruskin, Praeterita, II, 89.

Collingwood, writing of the philosophy that Ruskin had at Oxford, tells us: "The philosophy meant the usual Logic from Aldrich, with Bacon and Locke, Aristotle and Plato, analyzed into a rather thin abstract. But Ruskin, with all his thoroughness in all matters of general interest, took in the teaching of his books and inwardly digested it. Modern Painters, even in the literary style is imbued with Locke; Aristotle is his reader and antagonist alternately, throughout the earlier part of art criticism, and Plato, his guide and philosopher ever after". (3) Another biographer, E.T. Cook, speaks highly of Ruskin's knowledge of the classical authors in general, and makes mention of Ruskin's remarkable ability in quoting apt passages from them. (4) All this is sufficient to make us hesitate in accepting the "indifferent reading" of which Ladd writes.

Just how much knowledge Ruskin had of the notions of the formalists, empiricists and eclecticists, is not so clear although Collingwood says that he had read Dugald Stewart and the rest of his school. (5) It is well here to give the ideas behind each of these groups for they have a place in the evolution of esthetics immediately previous to Ruskin himself.

3. W.G. Collingwood, The Life and Works of John Ruskin, I, 114.

4. E.T. Cook, The Life of Ruskin, I, 63n.

5. W.G. Collingwood, The Life and Works of John Ruskin, I, 114.

Hogarth, a formalist, published in 1753 his Analysis of Beauty. Avoiding any metaphysical issues he assumes that the end of art is to please by enticing the eye of the beholder to delight; this delight was to be achieved by unity and variety; lines and spirals are beautiful, the spirals are far more than the straight line, and hence a picture with a greater number of curves would surpass in beauty one with a lesser number, supposing the skill of the artist as great in the painting of one as the other. The latter characteristic is stressed by Ruskin; "That all forms of acknowledged beauty are composed exclusively of curves will, I believe, be at once allowed". (6)

David Hume with his A Treatise on Human Nature in 1733 became the source of the material of the empiricists. For Hume beauty was neither an ideal nor an objective proportion, but a manner of feeling towards something, or more briefly, an experience. His definition was "beauty is such an order of construction of parts as either by primary constitution of our nature, by custom, or by caprice is fitted to give pleasure and satisfaction to the soul". (7) Ruskin naturally opposes the idea that beauty is not objective and interestingly opposed the idea that beauty arises from custom. He says: "Custom has a two-fold operation: the one to deaden the frequency and the force of repeated impressions, the other to

6. John Ruskin, Modern Painters, II, 273.

7. David Hume, A Treatise on Human Nature, II, 1, 8.

endear the familiar object to the affections.....but however far this operation may be carried, its utmost effect is but the deadening and approximating the sensations of beauty and ugliness. It never mixes or crosses, nor in any way alters them; it has not the slightest connection with nor power over our nature. By tasting two wines alternately, we may deaden our perception of their flavor; nay, we may even do more than can ever be done in the case of sight, we may confound the two flavors together. But it will hardly be allowed therefore that custom is the cause of either flavor". (8)

Sir Joshua Reynolds dipped into both formalism and empiricism to form his theory and became the first of the eclectic school. Reynold's views are contained in his Discourses. In 1763 when the Royal Academy of Arts was founded in London under the patronage of George III, Reynolds was elected its president, a position he held with the exception of one month in 1790, until his death in 1792. During all these years he prepared and offered to the members of the Academy discourses on his ideas of art and its study. Reynolds is best known for his introduction and defense of the "grand style" which was to represent things better than they are and was produced by leaving aside all particularities and retaining only the general ideas. He showed that art could at once be true and imaginative, and to awaken the imagination was, he held, the true end of art. The imagination and not reason is the seat

8. John Ruskin, Modern Painters, II, 254, 255.

of truth in art, said Reynolds. Thus we see that, in considering the impression upon the imagination to be the important part of art, he leaned more towards empiricism than towards formalism.

Ruskin opposed Reynolds in his introduction to the Second Edition of Modern Painters. His opposition is based on his following of nature. As H.Ladd says: "A reverence for truth - what really is - seemed to Ruskin the great artistic necessity". (9) Ruskin himself says: "The true idea of landscape is precisely the same as that of the human form; it is the expression of the specific - not the individual, but the specific - characters of every object, in their perfection; there is an ideal form of every herb, flower and tree: it is that form to which every individual of the species has a tendency to arrive free from the influence of accident and disease. Every landscape painter should know the specific characters of every object he has to represent, rock, flower, or cloud; and in his highest ideal work, all their distinctions will be perfectly expressed, broadly or delicately, slightly or completely, according to the nature of the subject, and the degree of attention which is to be drawn to the particular object by the part it plays in the composition. Where the sublime is aimed, such distinctions will be indicated with severe simplicity, as the muscular markings in a colossal statue where beauty is the object, they must be expressed with

9. H. Ladd, The Victorian Morality of Art, 2, 31.

the utmost refinement of which the hand is capable". (10)  
Here he is reiterating what he had said about animals in his discussion on Truth: "The qualities and properties which characterize man or any other animal as a species, are the perfection of his or its form of mind, almost all individual differences issuing from imperfections; hence a truth of species is the more valuable to art, because it must always be a beauty, while the truth of individuals is commonly, in some sort or way, a defect". (11)

Ruskin's theology has a direct bearing on this view of nature which allows no tampering with nature beyond the specific ideal and this fundamentally because it bore "the Signature of God", as mathematics was for Galileo the script in which God wrote on nature. But his sacred view of nature did not demand a slavish imitation by the artist. It is generally thought otherwise. A scholastic, Father Callahan, says of Ruskin in this connection: "Ruskin declares that there is not a single object in nature which to the right perceiving mind does not present an incalculably greater number of beautiful parts". (12) Father Callahan disagrees with Ruskin because as he says: "everything in nature is beautiful if we consider it solely with regard to its specific type, or its

10. John Ruskin, Modern Painters, Preface to the Second Edition 20

11. *ibid.* II, 142.

12. L. Callahan, O.P., A Theory of Esthetic, 75.

abstract nature; for this nature is the ideal to which the individual should conform, and as such is the expression of the wisdom of the Divine artist". (13) From the quotations given above from Ruskin I believe that Ruskin agrees rather with Father Callahan than with the ideas attributed to him. But it does not seem that Ruskin would allow the leniency that Jacques Maritain gives: "In nature, for instance, there certainly is a perfect type (whether we know it or not) of the proportions of the male and female body, because the natural end of the human organism is a thing fixed and invariably determined. But the beauty of a work of art not being the beauty of the object represented, Painting and Sculpture are in no way bound to the determination and imitation of any particular type". (14)

Ruskin's insistence on the natural can be accounted for perhaps by what Waldstein says of him: "He is primarily a lover and minute observer of nature and a moral preacher". (15) These two traits tended to make him form a theory of esthetic of nature before that of art. But to probe the workings of the Divine Mind and obtain a notion of the ideas which God wished to clothe in material form are extremely difficult. M. De Wulf has said from a consideration of the factors: "The

13. *ibid.* 75.

14. Jacques Maritain, Art and Scholasticism, 170.

15. C. Waldstein, The work of John Ruskin, 27.

constitutive theories of a general esthetic must be based on the study of artistic beauty" and he quotes M. Ber son in support: "It seems more in conformity with the rules of sound method first to study the beautiful in those works which have been produced <sup>^</sup>conscious effort, and then to descend by an imperceptible transition from art to nature, which after its own fashion is an artist". (16) Ruskin's esthetic of nature produced such accretions as the "Theological Attributes" in his theory of art and affected his view of nature in art.

Ruskin's method itself in analyzing the ideas of beauty in art was inductive. In judging a picture he asked himself: "What special feature or characteristic of this picture gives me the esthetic pleasure which I feel?" By making this inquiry before thousands of pictures, Ruskin was able to note that what is meant by esthetic pleasure is, after all, an exceedingly complex thing.

There is first the pleasure which comes from our perception of the skill of the artist. This is of the same nature as the pleasure we take in watching an athletic contest, a great actor, or an exhibition of sleight of hand. Our pleasure is in the artist, not in his creation. Ruskin cautions the painter against "taking upon himself to modify God's work at his pleasure, casting the shadow of himself on all he sees". (17)

16. L. Callahan, O.P., A Theory of Esthetic, 17.

17. John Ruskin, Modern Painters, Preface to the Second Edition ;

There is next our own pleasure in actively appraising the work. We recognize our sympathy with the artist and our own skill in estimating his work. This pleasure is in ourselves, not in the artist or in his work primarily. In describing this set of esthetic ideas, Ruskin has been so extremely vague and ambiguous that it is difficult to arrive at any other conclusion than that he considers them of little importance.

There is a large number of esthetic responses to a work of art which we discover on introspection to be due to association of the ideas suggested by the art object with other and intensely emotional memories and experiences of our past or present. These Ruskin calls ideas of association. He distinguishes rational and accidental association, and denies the effect of the former which is a conscious connection between a thing and the affairs of men while the great use of the unconscious or accidental association "is not to add beauty to material things, but to add force to the conscience..... Reason has no effect upon it what-so-ever. And there is probably no opinion which is formed by any of us, in matters of taste which is not in some degree influenced by the unconscious association of this kind". (18)

Ruskin did not develop this aspect beyond making the distinction and putting particular stress upon our moral associations with objects of beauty. From the brevity of his

18. *ibid.* II, 259, 258.

consideration compared with the importance that he seems to lay on the accidental associations he leaves the impression that this matter would be treated fully elsewhere. Perhaps the change in the method of criticism after the second volume of Modern Painters is the reason for the dropping of the completion of this important ground work.

After all these things have been given their due weight, there remains a large number of esthetic pleasures derived from the picture itself as cause. Before cataloguing these, Ruskin calls attention to the fact that esthetic pleasure may not be caused, but increased or decreased by certain qualities in the beholder or in the artist. The beholder will increase his pleasure in proportion as he possesses (1) power of observation, (2) sensibility, (3) morality --- i.e., desire to know the truth --- and (4) reasoning power --- i.e., to analyze his pleasure. The artist will increase the power of the art object to cause pleasure if he is also "moral" --- i.e., sticks close to the objective truth of his matter, painting not the subjective which appeals to him alone, but the objective, which appeals to all men. All of these influences in Ruskin's mind are different aspects of Truth; and accordingly he designates these causes of (increased) esthetic pleasure as "Ideas of Truth". It is noticeable that Ideas of Truth alone will not give esthetic pleasure; they increase that which is otherwise there.

We now come to Ideas of Beauty strictly so called. There is no reason to think that Ruskin at this point departed from his inductive method and began to reason on a priori grounds. His definition of beauty is that of a man looking at a scene or picture. "Any material object which gives us pleasure in the simple contemplation of its outward qualities, I call in some way, or in some degree, beautiful." (19)

This definition reminds one of the definition of St. Thomas: "Pulchra enim dicuntur quae visa placent". (20) Indeed a Scholastic Philosopher, Father Callahan, says favorably of Ruskin in regard to his definition of beauty: "Ruskin is quite insistent in assuring us first of all that beauty is an objective reality, and as it is found in nature is the expression of the creating spirit of the universe. At the same time he is careful not to minimize the role of the subject in establishing the totality of the esthetic fact, for he sees in psychical activity an essential element in the experience of the beautiful..... This doctrine as to the nature of beauty is in substantial agreement with the principles of St. Thomas Aquinas". (21)

In the subjective aspect of beauty Ruskin stresses the role of the eyes and ears as the immediate receptors of beauty but makes the distinction of their perception by calling it

19. *ibid.* I, 100.

20. *Sum. Theol.* I a, q.5., art. IV., ad 1m.

21. L. Callahan, O.P., A Theory of Esthetic, 28, 29.

"aesthesis" from that perception of the higher moral faculty by calling it "theoria". It is in the last faculty that our perception of beauty essentially rests. This faculty grasps its object intuitively. This aspect is mentioned by Father Callahan as follows: "Esthetic knowledge is spontaneous, intuitive, in a manner perfect. This feature has been noted by several philosophers, by Ruskin, for example, who requires that the beautiful give pleasure "in the simple contemplation of its outward qualities without direct or definite exertion of the intellect". (22)

By making the moral faculties the ultimate receptor of the beautiful Ruskin in the last analysis acknowledges the "Kalokagathia" of the Greeks and thereby makes the good and the beautiful the same.

The above definition of beauty can, I believe, be called Ruskin's effective definition. In what may be called his objective definition he gives five fundamental characteristics or "attributes" for typical beauty and the "happy fulfillment of function" for vital beauty. These are also comparable to the three characteristics or elements of St. Thomas' objective definition of beauty. There is no doubt that the reduction of Ruskin's characteristics into the Thomistic elements is difficult because they tend to overlap in some cases, but in others the reduction is obviously simple. Unity and symmetry definitely belong to St. Thomas' proportion

22. *ibid.* 41.

for Theistic proportion would directly include symmetry and is the efficient cause of unity and hence included under proportion by St. Thomas. Infinity presents difficulties but I believe would come under proportion in light of what Baudelaire says of space which is synonymous with Ruskin's idea of infinity: "Music gives the idea of space. So does every art more or less; for the arts are number and number is a translation of space". (23) Purity or light and the "happy fulfillment of function" would come under an aspect of St. Thomas' clarity and moderation and repose, since they both have regard to completion, would be aspects of integrity. However these last four qualities cannot be resolved completely. Purity, for example, in Ruskin's mind belongs also to integrity.

The names given to the attributes of typical beauty might lead one to believe that he arrived at them a priori from a theological basis. However, we find that the inductive method is used by Ruskin as a proof that they cause beauty. To take infinity as an example he says of it in regard to children: "One, however, of these child instincts, I believe, that few forget; the emotion, namely, caused by all open ground, or lines of any spacious kind against the sky, behind which there might be conceived the sea.....I am certain that the modification of it, which belongs to our after years, is common to all, the love, namely, of light distance appearing above a comparatively dark horizon. This I have tested too frequently to be mistaken,

23. Jacques Maritain, Art and Scholasticism, 185.

by offering to indifferent spectators forms of equal abstract beauty in half tint, relieved, the one against the dark sky, the other against a bright distance. The preference is invariably given to the latter". (24)

The close theological import of these attributes may be taken to mean that esthetic pleasure is a rudimentary pleasure preparing us for the eternal pleasures of the Beatific Vision. This idea is lucid and possibly true, but one wonders how Ruskin discovered this truth, since it is not a matter of revelation.

Again one may suspect Ruskin of introducing these Divine attributes because he is not convinced of the accuracy or of the explanation of his list of stimuli and wishes to buttress them by theology. It may be a germ of his future disgust of philosophy or an indication of the same tendency in Ruskin which Professor Whitehead has noted about eighteenth century thinkers: "While the Middle Ages were an age of faith based on reason, the eighteenth century was an age of reason based on faith". (25)

At any rate the linkage of the characteristics of beauty which he arrived at inductively with the a priori assumptions of their theological import is not necessary to his theory of beauty. They have an interesting association with the ideas of Newman whose affinities with Ruskin on many subjects have

24. John Ruskin, Modern Painters, II, 265.

25. Christopher Dawson, Progress and Religion, 231.

been noted. (26) Newman says of the beauty of music: "Can it be that these mysterious stirrings of the heart and keen emotions, and strange yearnings after we know not what, and awful impressions from we know not whence should be wrought in us by what is unsubstantial, and comes and goes, and begins and ends in itself? It is not so; it cannot be. No; they have escaped from some higher sphere; they are the out-pouring of eternal harmony in the medium of created sound; they are the echoes from our Home; they are the voice of angels, or the magnificat of Saints, or the living laws of Divine Government, or the Divine Attributes; something are they besides themselves, which we cannot compass, which we cannot utter - through mortal man, and he perhaps not otherwise distinguished from his fellows, has the gift of eliciting them". (27)

26. Hugh Walker, The Literature of the Victorian Era, p.1005.

27. S. Alexander, Beauty and Other Forms of Value, 95.

From Newman, University Sermons.

CHAPTER FIVE  
ESTHETIC PLEASURE

While we give special attention to Ruskin's theory of beauty proper, it will be well here to sketch his whole esthetic system. This system is a complex one for Ruskin believed that beauty comes not from any single quality, but from a blending of his five "ideas" and their components.

Ruskin when he uses the term "idea" uses it as did Locke, who said, "Whatever the mind perceives, I call idea"; (1) Ruskin leaving aside any thought of metaphysical reality makes idea synonymous with simple perception. He reduces all sources of pleasure into five distinct classes of ideas, those of power, imitation, truth, beauty, and relation.

Power. The recognition of power comes with the realization that difficulties of knowing, relating or inventing have been overcome. By estimating the greatness of the difficulty to be overcome and the means employed, we can form an estimate of the faculties exerted and the power required for such exertion. There can be sensations of power about imperfect art and often times these sensations are more vivid regarding the hasty sketch than the tinted canvas. However, the sense of power in something really completed should be greater than in something merely sketched. There is a sense of power in viewing the sketches of Frederick Taylor, with every line telling and with enormous effect in proportion to the apparent means, yet the effect is not complete, and so

1. John Locke, Essay on Human Understanding.

the sense of power is not as great as in a more complete work.

The knowledge of the mechanical means used to produce the given end also gives us a sense of power. Ruskin lists seven of these qualities of execution which enhance the power of the work. They are:

1. Truth. All qualities of execution are influenced by and dependent on the knowledge, for in proportion as the artist is sure of his end, he will be swift and simple in the means; and as accurate and deep as he is in knowledge will he be refined and precise in his touch.
2. Simplicity. The more unpretentious and quiet the means the more impressive will be the effect.
3. Mystery. The execution that is most incomprehensible and defies imitation is best.
4. Inadequacy. The less sufficient the means appear to the end, the greater will be the sensation of power.
5. Decision. The appearance that whatever has been done has been done fearlessly gives the impression that the fact represented and the means to represent it were known perfectly.
6. Velocity. Truth supposed being equally present, there will be more evenness, grace, and variety in

the quick touch than in the slow one.

7. Bizarreness. This shows the power of the painter to recognize the picturesque.

These seven qualities are, according to Ruskin the only legitimate sources of the beholder's pleasure in the execution of the artist. The first three, truth, simplicity, and mystery, are the greater qualities and withdraw attention from the means and fix it on the result. The last four, Inadequacy, decision, velocity and bizarreness, are the attractive qualities and withdraw attention from the results and fix it on the means.

Imitation. The second of his "ideas" to give esthetic pleasure is that of imitation. Whenever a painting looks like what it is not, the resembling being so great as nearly to deceive, we feel a kind of pleasureable surprise, and when we see that it is caused by art we receive the idea of imitation. Surprise is pleasing to the nature of every man and there can be no more distinct surprise than that coming by the evidence that the thing is not what it appears to be. The most perfect idea of imitation comes when one sense is contradicted by another as when the eye says a thing is round and the touch that it is flat.

Ruskin considers the pleasures arising from imitation the most contemptible that can be derived from art, because for their enjoyment the mind rejects the impression of the thing

represented and fixes itself only on the reflection that it is not what it seems to be. Still another reason for the low state of these ideas is that for their attainment there is only needed a true eye, a steady hand, and moderate industry, qualities that can be found in any artificer.

Truth. A third idea, that of truth, applied to art signifies the faithful statement, either to the mind or to the sense, of any fact of nature. When we perceive the faithfulness of such a statement we receive an idea of truth. While imitation can concern itself only with something material, truth concerns as well the emotions, impressions, and thoughts, thus having a universal application. Truth may be stated by any signs or symbols which have a definite signification in the mind of those to whom they are addressed, while ideas of imitation require a likeness. The latter speak only to the perceptive, the ideas of truth to the conceptive faculties. Ideas of truth are even inconsistent with those of imitation; for example, pictures that imitate to deceive are never true.

Beauty. We will consider beauty proper, the fourth idea, only briefly here and more fully later. Ruskin defines as beautiful any material object that can give us pleasure in the simple contemplation of its outward qualities without any direct and definite exertion of the intellect. Perfect taste is the faculty of receiving the greatest possible pleasure

from these material sources which are attractive to our moral nature in its purity and perfection. He who receives little pleasure from these sources wants taste; he who receives pleasure from any other sources has a bad or false taste.

Taste is not to be confused with judgement, which is a term expressing definite action of the intellect and applicable to every kind of subject that may be submitted to it. These exertions of the intellect are entirely distinct from taste, which is the instinctive and instant preferring of one material object to another without any obvious reason except that it is proper for human nature in its perfection to do so.

We must not however think that beauty has no effect upon the intellect; for all our feelings are so interwoven with our intellectual powers that we cannot affect the one without in some degree affecting the others; in all high ideas of beauty it is more than probable that much of the pleasure depends upon delicate and untraceable perceptions of fitness, propriety and relation, which are purely intellectual and through which we arrive at our noblest ideas of what is commonly called "intellectual beauty".

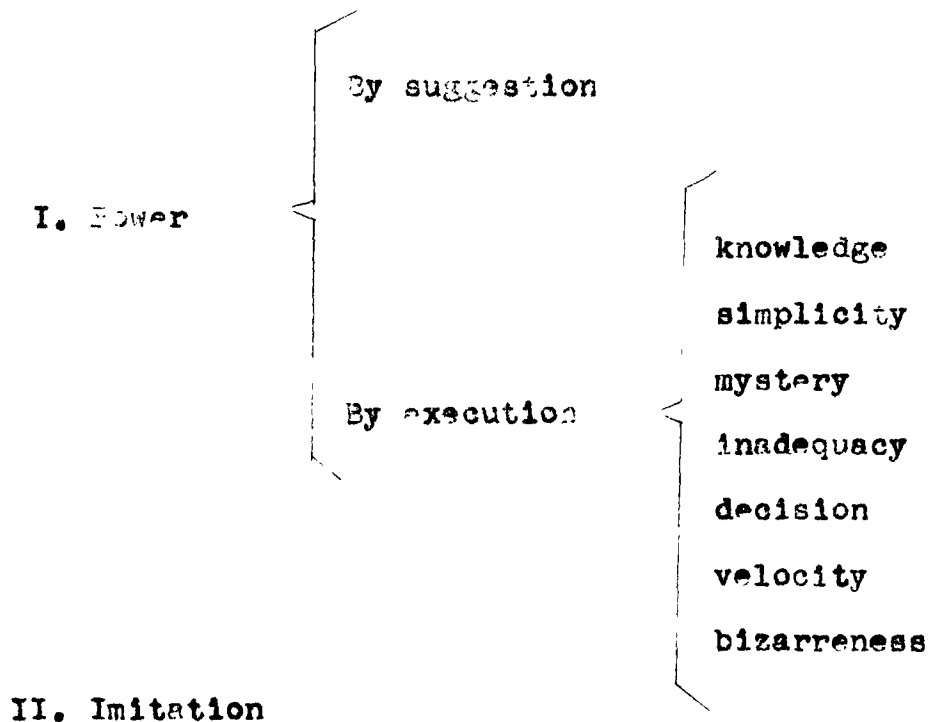
Relation. The fifth idea of Ruskin's theory is that of relation and, while he tells us in his first volume of Modern Painters what he means by it, he does not systematically

develop this idea in his later work. Relation is a term of convenience expressive of a vast number of ideas conveyable by art, which are subjects of distinct intellectual perceptions and actions, and hence worthy of the name thoughts. Under relation must be arranged everything productive of expression, sentiment and character whether in figures or landscape. The children sailing boats in the foreground of Turner's The Building of Carthage express the source of the Greeks' future greatness although it has nothing to do with the technicalities of painting. Such a thought, says Ruskin, is above all art.

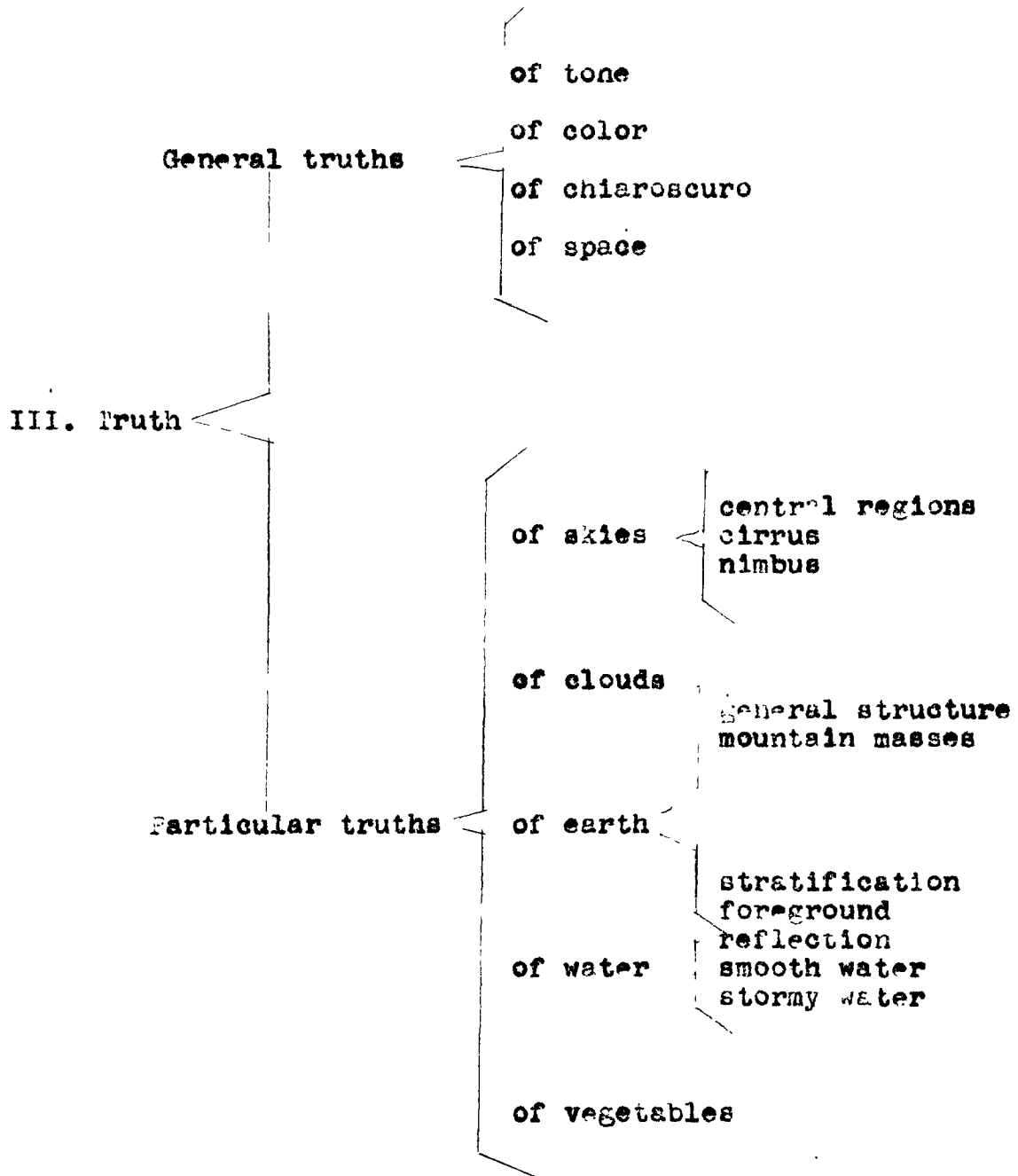
CHAPTER SIX  
THE THEORY IN OUTLINE

The preceding has given the reader a general notion of Ruskin's ideas. Ruskin carried each one of these down to very specific ends; under power he treated thoroughly the qualities of execution, while under truth he spoke of the general truths of tone, color, chiaroscuro and space, and the more particular truths of the painting of skies, clouds, water, earth and vegetation. The chart given below in outline the details as well as the general topics treated. The sketch of the theory of beauty will serve as well for a plan of the treatment of this subject which will follow.

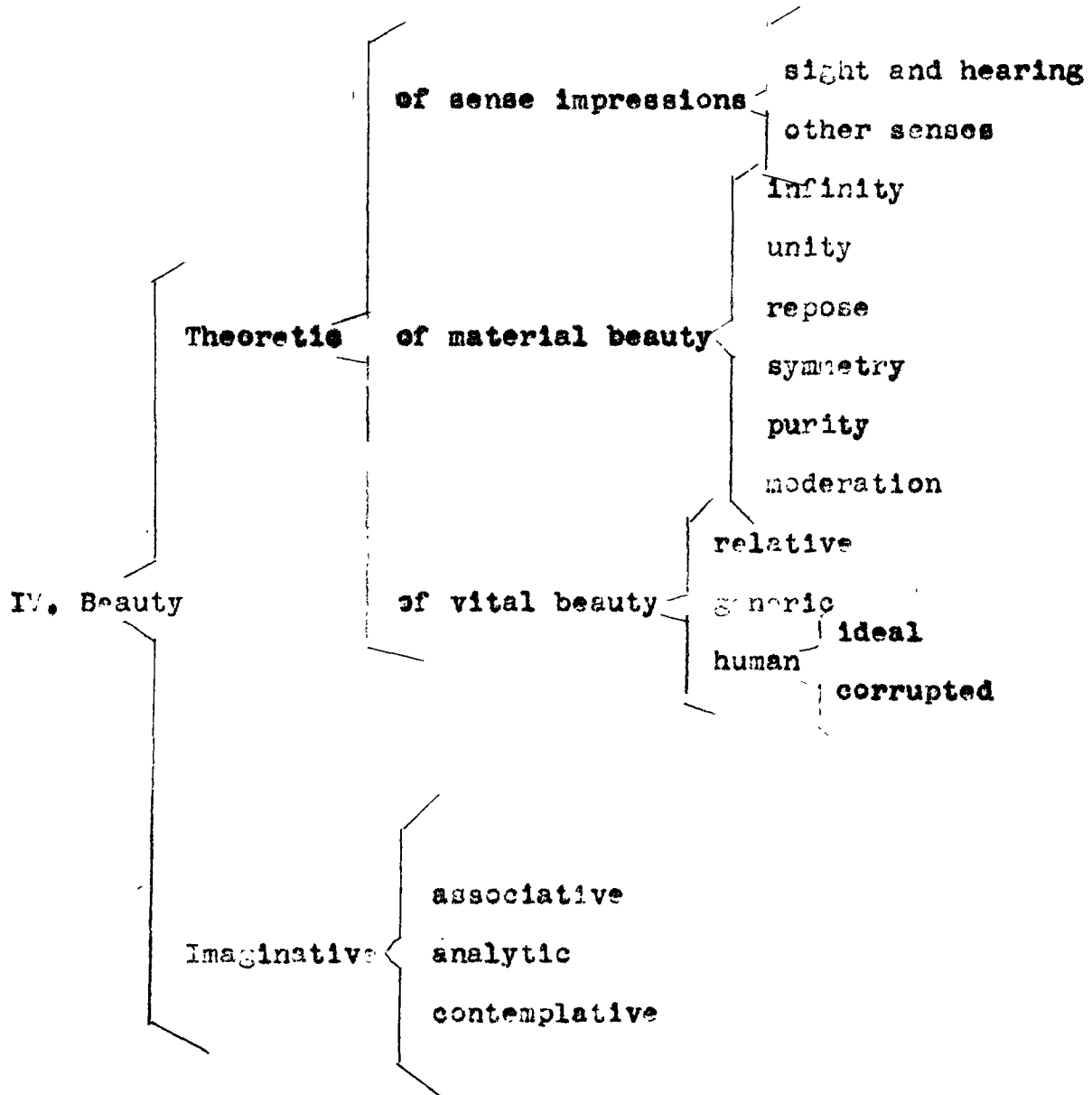
Ideas of:



Ideas of:



Ideas of:



V. Relation

CHAPTER SEVEN  
THE THEORETIC FACULTY

All creatures are thoughts of God in being, and in being they are to express His glory and to further it. The latter part of this statement Ruskin affirms when he writes that man's function is to be the "witness of the glory of God, and to advance this glory by his reasonable obedience and resultant happiness". ( 1) But men all too often forget this and allow the faculties that should assist them to increase God's glory <sup>th</sup> lead them from it. Discussion of these two faculties, the theoretic and imaginative, form the two main divisions of Ruskin's consideration of beauty. He tells us first that the theoretic faculty, which is concerned with the moral perception and appreciation of ideas of beauty is too often degraded to a mere operation of sense so that the arts which append to it become "minister of morbid sensibilities"; secondly, that the function of the imaginative faculty strives with such earnestness to show things as they are not that it seems to try to improve the works of God.

Ruskin substitutes the word, "theoretic", for "esthetic" for to him the latter word denotes only sensual pleasure and the impressions of beauty are more than sensual impressions. For beauty is not perceived through the lower senses, taste and touch; these senses give only an inferior part of the pleasure. They are necessary to life and are means of

1. John Ruskin, Modern Painters, II, 1, 2.

preserving and propagating it, but when either of these senses is contrary to reason they destroy rather than preserve life. These two senses if over-indulged lead man into intemperance because the over-indulgence interferes with the physical functions for which the senses have been instituted.

The higher senses, sight and hearing, while they have functions to perform that make life easier and more bearable for man are not essential either to the preservation of the individual or the propagation of the race. Again in their being they are, as Ruskin says, eternal and inexhaustible. He continues to point out that they are not means of life, but rather an object of life and as such there is something of the divine in them for "God will not make anything an object of life to his creatures which does not point to or partake of himself.....Now the mere animal consciousness of the pleasantness I call aesthesis; but the exulting, reverent, and grateful perception of it I call theoria. For this and this only is the full comprehension and contemplation of the beautiful as a gift of God, a gift not necessary to our being, but added to and elevating it, and two-fold, first of the degree, and secondly of the thing desired". (2)

It is because the pleasures coming from the ideas of beauty perceived through the higher senses act upon the

2. *ibid.* II, 235, 236.

intelligence and are led through the intelligence to the knowledge of the Superior Intelligence that these ideas are said to be essentially moral. Ruskin in his chapter on the theoretic faculty as concerned the pleasures of sense says that even more important than sensual or intellectual perception is the "pure, right, and open state of the heart" of the one perceiving.

Before considering Ruskin's notions concerning the accuracy and inaccuracy in impressions of sense it may be well to mention that when he speaks of right or wrong impressions or right or wrong judgements he means not only impressions and judgements artistically right or wrong but also morally right or wrong.

Ruskin next inquires concerning by what test we may determine whether these impressions are rightly or wrongly esteemed beautiful. He admits that it does not seem easy to prove that men ought to prefer one thing to another, for many will assert that each individual has a right to his own opinion. Ruskin, too, will admit this but contends that the sensation of beauty is intuitive and necessary; he contends as well that there are some sources from which it is rightly derived and others from which it is wrongly derived.

Concerning this he asks two questions: "the first, in what way an impression of sense may be deceptive, and therefore respecting it untrue; and the second, in what way an impression of sense or the preference of one, may be a

subject of will, and therefore a moral duty, or delinquency".  
(3)

He answers that the false impression may arise because the perceptor feels differently from the majority respecting the object or that he merely prefers for the present those of his impressions which he will not ultimately prefer.

To the second question as to what way the impression or preference may be a subject of will Ruskin states that we have no power over immediate impressions or preferences but only over ultimate ones. Going on to explain this he offers an example concerning the impressions obtained from the sense of taste; when two different things are offered to the palate we have not the power to prevent or command the instinctive preference, and the immediate reaction will be that one will be unavoidably preferred to the other. However, at first only the more evident qualities attract our sense of taste, and if the two things are submitted to a more careful and discriminating test it is quite possible that our first impression may be changed. Hence it is evident that the power we possess over the preference of impressions is not something immediate but is rather a power of testing and comparing until we are able to determine what is actually preferable. Practice in making such tests will make it

3 . *ibid.* II, 241.

possible for us to distinguish more quickly what is of real worth in the object being tested. The principles of preference that we will thus acquire will be applicable to all objects that can be judged by the particular sense under consideration. Ruskin asserts that the three constituents of perfection in sense are true judgement, maximum sensibility, and right relation to others, and these are co-existent and involved in one another for the true judgement is the result of high sensibility, and the high sensibility is in turn the result of right relation. He points out that intemperance and overcultivation of any one of the senses will not only dull our ability to make correct judgement concerning the impressions perceived by that sense, but will also weaken impartial judgement of impressions received by the other senses.

Since for many beneficent purposes the nature of man has come to accept many things that are naturally painful and even improper to it, he must be careful not to follow blindly either authority or fashion but continue to judge carefully for himself lest by custom he come to tolerate or even admire objects that are really harmful.

We must be careful however never to despise the opinion of authority but to give it careful consideration in the examination of our own impressions. We must too compare with great care all the objects under consideration rather than blindly accept one as best. It becomes evident that one of the greatest virtues that we can possess in the development

of good taste is patience. With patience we must contemplate whatever is offered to our senses even though our first impressions be unfavorable. We must, to use Ruskin's words, clasp the object so hard that it will be crushed if it be hollow.

We will quote Ruskin himself concerning false taste and true taste. "False taste may be known by its fastidiousness, by its demands of pomp, splendor, and unusual combination, by its enjoyment only of particular styles and modes of things, and by its pride also, for it is forever meddling, mending, accumulating, and self-exulting, its eyes always upon itself, and it tests all things around it by the way they fit it. But true taste is forever growing, learning, reading, worshipping, laying its hand upon its mouth because it is astonished, casting its shoes from off its feet because it finds all ground holy, lamenting over itself and testing itself by the way that it fits things. And it finds whereof to feed and whereby to grow in all things". (4) The man of good taste therefore will avoid constantly choosing the same things for his contemplation but will have interest and will develop this interest in every thing.

It is important to realize that Ruskin believes that there is a common denominator of beauty in every object and that it is necessary to strip every object of its distinctive

4. *ibid.* II, 248.

qualities until we arrive to that point where we can judge if it possesses a common denominator of beauty.

By the term beauty Ruskin signifies two things; first, the external quality of bodies which he shows to be in some way typical of the Divine attributes and which he designates as typical beauty; second, the appearance of fulfillment of functions in living things and this he designates as vital beauty.

At this point in the exposition of his theory Ruskin mentions four opinions concerning beauty which he holds to be false.

The first of these is that truth is beauty. He points out the falseness of the theory by saying that a stone looks as truly to be a stone as a rose does a rose and yet in spite of that truth it is not as beautiful.

Again it has been claimed that beauty is usefulness and this error he considers to be the most degrading and dangerous advanced on the subject. We can easily realize the fault of this utilitarian view and there is no need to explain the deficiency of such a system further.

Still others contend that beauty results from custom. We must admit that there is in custom a twofold operation; the first by which repeated operations tend to lessen what was at first repulsive; the second by which repeated impressions familiarize us with the object viewed and increase in us

an affection for it. Ruskin says that however much we experience impressions they, of themselves, can neither create nor destroy the essence of beauty. He gives for an example the tasting of two wines. Although we may continue to taste them we may either deaden the perception of the flavor of the one we do not like and appreciate more fully the one more pleasing to our palate, actually there can be no real change in the wines themselves; nor can the custom, or continued tasting, be the cause of either flavor.

The last error which he considers the most weighty is that beauty depends on the association of ideas. Association of ideas may be of two kinds, rational and accidental. The first may be the interest which is aroused by an object historically connected with the affairs or affections of man and hence shared by all who are aware of the connection. Accidental association arises from the accidental connection of ideas and memories with a certain material thing which, because of these ideas and memories, come to be regarded as agreeable or otherwise according to the feelings they arouse. Ruskin admits that no one of us perhaps forms any opinion in matters of taste which is not more or less influenced by such association. Reason however has no part to play with such association of ideas and it can easily happen that in those who have no definite rules of judgement that a

substitution of this instinctive association may come to take the place of a more valid system of reasoning.

Ruskin feels that this associative faculty tends to not so much to add beauty to material things as to add force to the conscience. There is danger that this habit might overpower the theoretic faculty and that we may fall into the habit of judging by feeling and instinct and overlook much of the beauty that is inherent in external things. He does not believe however that this associative faculty has not some value for man, for it is through this that men conceive different ideas concerning the same subject. These ideas and the interchange of them that follows makes human companionship more pleasant and indeed more instructive than if all men instinctively reacted alike. The real danger in the use of this faculty arises from the fact that each of us has peculiar sources of enjoyment that certain senses and objects arouse to which others do not react. There is danger that we might look upon these peculiar feelings as ultimate conclusions of taste and strive to force them upon others as authoritative. It often happens in the consideration of the same object by a young person and by an older one that entirely distinct sensations will follow. In such situations care must be taken that each has the breadth of view to sympathize with the reactions of the other and to look beyond the first impressions to discover what might be enjoyed in common before blindly condemning the opinion of others.

At the beginning of his treatment of typical beauty Ruskin asks his reader to rid himself of all conventional and authoritative thoughts and of associations arising from his respect for pagan art as well as from those in any way traceable to classical readings; he desires the reader in other words to enter into the consideration of his subject with a perfectly childlike attitude. He tells us that practically every child awakens to the sense of beauty at the first gleam of reason and he further states that much of this first intense delight is lost with the coming of years and the many diverse notions and cares that come with them.

One of the purest emotions of childhood and one which is continued in later life, is that caused by "all open ground, or lines of any spacious kind against the sky, behind which there might be conceived the sea". (5) While we enjoy the beauty of nearby objects, whether of the fall of water over a cascade or the glitter of the sun on the trunk of the birch, there seems invariably to be a more intense enjoyment and a deeper feeling of beauty on beholding the rising or setting of the sun or the flakes of a lone cloud in a clear sky. The pleasure brought by these last named views is derived not from any play of light or more perfection or fullness of color but rather because the

5 . *ibid.* II, 265.

distance of space suggests infinity.

So important does Ruskin consider infinity that he writes: "And as much as I dread the enunciation of anything that may seem like a conventional rule, I have no hesitation in asserting, that no work of any art, in which this expression of infinity is possible, can be perfect, or supremely elevated without it, and that, in proportion to its presence, it will exalt and render impressive even the most tame and trivial themes.....For I know not any truly great painter of any time, who manifests not the most intense pleasure in the luminous space of his backgrounds, or whoever sacrifices this pleasure where the nature of his subject admits of its attainment, as on the other hand I know not that the habitual use of dark backgrounds can be shown as having ever been co-existent with pure and high feeling, and, except in the case of Rembrandt, (and then under peculiar circumstances only), with any high power of intellect." ( 6 )

It is indeed true that many artists show in their works that they felt as Ruskin that infinity was of great importance, and, feeling this, they used some means to suggest it. It is generally admitted too by the majority of men that no amount of beauty in the nearer form, so long as we have only that to consider, gives as great enjoyment as does beauty joined with some idea of space or infinity.

Besides giving the impression of space to suggest infinity Ruskin writes that the same sense is given by the

76. *ibid.* II, 267, 268.

grace of curvature which is found in all natural forms, and by gradations of shade and color. It is easy to perceive that both curves and shading suggest contrasts which can lead the mind to a sense of infinity. Ruskin ends his treatment of infinity by warning us not to confuse it with mere vastness which is neither more wonderful nor impressive than littleness.

Ruskin next treats of unity and compares the unity existing among objects with Divine Unity, for, he says, when there is an appearance of separation or isolation in anything there is an appearance of imperfection and where there is appearance of connection and brotherhood there is the signification of perfection in things united. He prefers to speak of this unity as comprehensiveness since unity sometimes is considered as oneness or singleness instead of universality.

Ruskin lists several sorts of appearances of unity. There is unity of different and separate things subjected to the same influence and called subjectional unity. Again among things arising from one source there is unity of origin. Unity of sequence exists among things that follow one another but which at the same time, have some connection with one another.

The greatest of the unities, of which all others are but parts, is unity of membership which is the unity of things

imperfect in themselves into a perfect whole. This unity cannot exist among things similar to each other for two or more like things cannot be members one of another or form a whole thing. Ruskin gives us an example of this that two arms must always remain two arms in our conception and they can only be brought into unity of membership by being joined to the body.

Because this unity of membership is brought about by a variety of parts, variety itself has come to be over-rated so much so that some artists believe that there is inherent agreeableness in variety. Variety, it is true, can increase beauty but only when it is harmonious. We all realize that a variety of colors does not necessarily bring beauty to the object so colored but that we receive the idea of beauty only when the colors are harmonious and do not clash.

Connected with the pleasantness that can result from variety is the love of change as a principle of human nature. Ruskin laments that such a great love of change exists for he looks upon it both in subjects of the intellect and the senses as a weakness and imperfection of our nature. He contends that this love of change is found among the weakest-minded men for they are incapable of constancy in their appreciations and hence are continually wondering at new things. This love of change prevents man from being able to judge the true qualities of any object over a period of time because they do not give themselves time for such

consideration. It is well known that much that is worthless in art of all sorts can only be truly judged such after long contemplation and sincere consideration. Love of change makes it impossible to subject any work of art to such contemplation or consideration.

Another important relation in bringing about unity is proportion which is of two kinds. First there is apparent proportion which takes place between qualities for the sake of connection only, without any ultimate object or casual necessity; and second, constructive, when it has reference to some function to be discharged by the qualities depending upon their proportions. While there is no sense of rightness or wrongness connected with apparent proportion, it is one of the most important means of obtaining unity between things which otherwise would have remained distinct in similarity. Constructive proportion, or the adaptation of quantities to functions, is pleasing to the mind which is cognizant of the functions to be performed. It is to be noted that we see beauty only in apparent proportion. Ruskin concludes his treatment of unity in considerations concerning how it may be best obtained by melodies of line.

Following his treatment of unity Ruskin next considers repose, or the type of Divine Permanence. "As opposed to passion, changefulness, or laborious exertion, repose is the especial and separating characteristic of the eternal mind

and power; it is the "I am" of the Creator opposed to the "I become" of all creatures; It is the sign alike of the supreme knowledge which is incapable of labor, the supreme volition which is incapable of change; it is the stillness of the beams of the eternal chambers laid upon the variable waters of ministering creatures". (7.)

Repose is twofold; either merely the appearance of permanence and quietness, or it is the repose of things in which there is vitality and capability of motion actual or imagined. Just as unity is more evident when what might have seemed its contrary is clear, so repose is more noticeable when its opposite, energy, is distinctly implied. Nothing is more noble in man than mental repose for he shows great power in holding to this repose in the midst of all the conflicts of life.

Ruskin calls repose the most unfailing test of beauty and says that nothing can be ignoble that possesses it, nothing right that has it not. Wordsworth testifies to the universality of the instinct of repose when he writes:

"The universal instinct of repose,  
The longing for confirmed tranquility  
Inward and outward, humble yet sublime.  
The life where hope and memory are as one.  
Earth quiet and unchanged; the human soul  
Consistent in self rule the heaven revealed

7 . *ibid.* II, 296.

To meditation, in that quietness." (8)

It is the absence of repose that is responsible for the glitter and glare of color, inconsistency or absence of thought, forced expressions, bad choice of subjects, and over accumulation of material. These defects clutter all art, literature, music, and painting, when repose is lacking.

Ruskin gives little space to the consideration of symmetry, or the type of Divine Justice, for he feels that its importance is universally understood. Nature herself in plants and animals and man shows symmetry. Symmetry does not mean that there be equality, still less absolute similarity of parts but only that there be a balance between them. Symmetry is the balancing of equals - proportion of unequals.

Symmetry is not in itself sufficient to give beauty but it does add to the dignity of every form. It is indeed possible for any form to be symmetrical and ugly, but no form is ever so ugly as if it were unsymmetrical.

Ruskin points out that symmetry has been used always in religious art and usually too by landscape painters. Artists consider it so important that they even preserve it by artificiality.

8. William Wordsworth, Excursion, III.

The next quality considered by Ruskin is purity, the type of Divine Energy. There is in everyone, Ruskin contends, an instinctive love of light. This love is not for all light but that which is diffused or infinite, for that which is tranquil and not startling or variable, and for that which is pure and not sullied. Ruskin believes it is difficult to assign purity to one color more than to another and points out the characteristics of purity by analyzing the nature of our ideas of impurity in general. We have an idea of impurity when various elements are placed in a relation incapable of healthy or proper operation; and again when conditions are apparent in which the negation of vital action is most evident, as in corruption and decay of all kinds. This same sense of impurity is given by the association of inorganic and organic matter. As an example of this Ruskin tells us that dirt in a mass, as in a mountain, can excite our greatest admiration and yet the sight of it on skin can produce an unpleasant sensation because it deadens the vital and healthy power of the skin. Anything, in short, that suggests to our mind defilement offends our sense of purity.

The ideas of purity and energy are connected because where there is purity, there is commonly the most perfect fulfillment of function and there energy is most vital and unimpaired.

At the beginning of his chapter concerning moderation, or the type of government by law, Ruskin points out that the terms chasteness and refinement which are often used have no valid meaning but refer too often to objects which by their costliness or rarity are difficult of attainment. These two ideas are not however in any way connected with beauty for they do not at all account for the pleasantness of form or color which may be rightly termed chasteness. Refinement is often used referring to exactness and Ruskin says that it is a sign of the imperfection of general taste that it is so often content with forms and things which while they profess completeness are neither exact or complete.

Most of the bad art which strives but never attains completion and exactness is bad because there is in it a lack of moderation.

Of the importance of this quality Ruskin says: "I have put this attribute of beauty last, because I think it the girdle and safeguard of all the rest and in this respect the most essential of all, for it is possible that a certain degree of beauty may be attained even in the absence of one of its other constituents, as sometimes in some measure without symmetry or without unity. But the least appearance of violence or extravagance, of the want of moderation and restraint is, I think, destructive of all beauty whatsoever in everything, color, form, motion, thought, or language, giving

rise to that which in color we call glaring, in form inelegant, in motion ungraceful, in language coarse, in thought undisciplined, in all unchastened.....I would have the necessity of it foremost among all our inculcating, and the name of it largest among all our inscribing, in so far that, over the doors of every school of art, I would have this one word, relieved out in deep letters of pure gold, -- Moderation". ( 9)

Ruskin next gives consideration to vital beauty of which we have already spoken as consisting "in the appearance of felicitous fulfillment of function in living things". Living beings in a perfect state possess certain appearances or evidences of happiness. Ruskin here says that the perfection that comes from such perfect living things is in the kindness of the heart which receives pleasure from the happiness of these things. This feeling is charity and is increased as we draw nearer to God.

Since the exercise of the full perception of vital beauty therefore depends upon charity a right and healthy condition of the moral being is necessary. So important does Ruskin consider charity to be in the appreciation of vital beauty that he holds that the one who does not love God and his brother can have no love for the creatures of God. It is such charity that has inspired the great nature poets.

9. John Ruskin, Modern Painters, II, 318, 319.

Most necessary for our appreciation is the possession of vital energy in the object under consideration. A dead plant or a dead human body possess the same lines of symmetry as does the one which lives and yet cannot be the source of the same pleasure to us as the living object. The reason for this is that we receive pleasure in proportion to the appearance of vigor and sensibility.

The pleasure that we get from the appearance of vital beauty arises from unselfish sympathy at the happiness of the being possessing this beauty. This appreciation arises above any interest in the purpose of the being. As soon as we come to regard the utility of any object we are considering it from a different aspect and no longer have the same perception of its beauty. Again interest in the mechanism of an object destroys our sense of beauty. The movement of a body may impress us as beautiful while we would not at all receive that impression were we to regard the movements of ligaments that make the motion possible.

Thus far we have considered the appreciation of vital beauty as belonging to the affections. Ruskin next considers how it is concerned with the moral functions of animals and is hence dependent on the cultivation of every moral sense. So it is that we esteem as most beautiful those creatures whose functions are the most noble and are repulsed by those whose functions seem to us ignoble; it is for this reason that slothful or sly animals do not give us the same

pleasure in perceiving them as do those whose ways of acting are more energetic and open. Even in animals as in man a lack of high purpose imparts to the expressive characteristics, as the eye, an expression that offends and detracts from the beauty of the being. Eyes which express malignity or subtlety and a mouth which is a cruel or hard or snarling one do not impress us as do the eyes and mouth expressing mildness or serenity.

Pursuing the inquiries concerning vital beauty Ruskin observes what impressions of beauty are connected with the more or less perfect fulfillment of appointed functions by different individuals of the same species. Here we no longer consider worthiness or dignity but rather we regard the employment, capacity and duty and compare it with the other individuals of the same species to determine to what extent it executes its office.

We have already considered the pleasure received from the mere happiness in living things and we have seen that beauty is increased as the standard of moral perfection is raised. Here we consider how thoroughly each being is able to perform its function and we will derive pleasure from beholding their entire perfection and fitness in performing the duties that belong to their nature.

Ruskin continues to say that the perfect idea of the form and condition in which all the properties of the species are

fully developed is called the ideal of the species: and he calls upon the student of his theory to give close attention to the following statements. A work of art which represents, not a material object, but the mental conception of one is, in the primary sense of the word, ideal. In other words it represents an idea and not a thing. On the other hand a work representing the material object is, in the primary sense of the word, unideal.

Ideal works of art therefore represent acts of the imagination and are good or bad in proportion to the healthy condition and power of the imagination; while unideal works of art represent actually existing things, and are good and bad in proportion to the perfection of the representation.

From this it is evident that all bad works of art are either those, which professing to be imaginative, have no stamp of the imagination, and those which profess to be representative, are in no manner such. It is also evident from this that since a work may be either imaginative or representative that before we judge it conclusively we must be certain of the grounds of our judgement. Later we will consider Ruskin's definition and the nature of the imaginative faculty and we will determine the signs of its existence and the evidence of its healthy existence.

Here we are going to consider the ideal in respect to members of the same species. Among animals and men we

commonly look upon those as ideal who are in every way most perfectly developed.

Ruskin here goes on to speak of the ideal form in lower animals, plants and vegetables. He admits here that it is difficult to point out ideal forms, for example, in trees, for the most that can be said of them is that each one, growing under the conditions in which it does, has fulfilled all that could be expected of it under those conditions.

In the higher forms as in man it is to be observed that since their existence involves birth, growth, and decay, ideality is predicable of them through each period of their existence, so long as they can be perfect with reference to their supposed period of being. Thus it is that there is an ideal of infancy, of youth and of old age. Ordinarily when we speak of the ideal form of the species, however, we think of that period when its generic attributes are most perfectly developed for at that period the characteristics of vital and typical beauty are most concentrated in them.

At the beginning of his consideration of vital beauty in man Ruskin says: "we come at last to set ourselves face to face with ourselves, expecting that in creatures made after the image of God we are to find comeliness and completion more exquisite than in the fowls of the air and the things that pass through the paths of the sea. But behold now a

sudden change from all former experience. No longer among the individuals of the race is there equality or likeness, a distributed fairness and fixed type visible in each, but evil diversity, and terrible stamp of various degradation; features seamed with sickness, dimmed by sensuality, convulsed by passion, pinched by poverty, shadowed by sorrow, branded with remorse; bodies consumed with sloth, broken down by labor, tortured by disease, dishonored in foul uses; intellects without power, hearts without hope, minds earthly and devilish; our bones full of the sin of our youth, the heaven revealing our iniquity, the earth rising up against us, the roots dried up beneath, and the branch cut off above; well for us only, if, after beholding this our natural face in a glass, we desire not straightway to forget what manner of men we be". (10)

Out of this maze of sorrow and sin it is not the work of the imagination to draw forth the ideal man but he must be depicted from whatever good remains in his soul. It is only in this way that any sort of the ideal may be reached in man.

The Greeks have conceived and attained the ideal of bodily form but here inquiry is made concerning the influence for good and evil of the mind upon the bodily shape. The operation of the mind upon the body and the evidence of it is considered under three heads.

10. *ibid.* II, 350.

First is considered the operation of the intellectual powers upon the features through which the features are more finely cut and by which are removed from them the signs of sensuality and a substitution of energy and intensity made for vacancy and insipidity. All agree that there are outward evidences of constant employment and high capacity of the brain which are reflected in the keenness of the eye and the comprehensiveness of the forehead.

The second consideration concerns the influence of mind upon body in the mode of operation and conjunction of the moral feelings with the intellectual powers, and lastly their joint influence on the bodily form. It is not possible that selfishness, anger, sensuality, agitation, enmity, fear, nor cunning and deceit can ever reason rightly in any respect. Nor can these failings help but leave their signature on the body. But self-command, love, and faith so control the body as to keep it from any of the evil influences that the lesser qualities inflict upon it. No matter what the mental and spiritual struggles of man may be, if they have taken place under the control of right reason and deep faith they can never completely destroy the serenity and noble origin of the human countenance. Nor does there exist any virtue the exercise of which does not impress a new fairness upon man. His very movements and gestures denote the control and restraint that is imparted to him by the practice of virtues.

The third consideration treats of the soul culture when it begins to interfere with the typical beauty belonging to the bodily frame. This is noticeable when the stirring of the intellect wears down the flesh and the moral enthusiasm burning its way to heaven emaciates the body. Here there is an indication of the subduing of the material part of man by the immaterial; and here is the sign of an ideal, pure and higher than that of the most perfect material form.

These considerations while they concern true effects of the mind and the moral virtues and soul culture upon man cannot be constant in their application for there are in men individual differences and characteristics which prevent the same causes producing always the same exact effects. Again in the consideration of the ideal in man there are necessarily many differences of opinion. Different men possess different original gifts, are subjected to different trials of sorrow and pain, possess different ambitions, and are more or less successful in attaining their ambitions; hence there must needs be great differences in the development of men and these great differences admit more than one ideal.

In portraying man it is not necessary that we banish from the human countenance and form every trace of the fall of our first parents, for this would be impossible, but it

is necessary only that we banish the immediate operation and presence of the degenerating power of sin. This follows because there is not any part of our nature that is not influenced by the fall while it is possible for us to be undisturbed by the presence in ourselves of the effects of serious sin.

The ideal countenance can express evidences of sorrow because sorrow comes to every man; man too can show the effects of hard struggle and bitter pain and he can show this without any diminution of the ideal.

Idealism in humanity can be successful only when there is made the most constant, patient, and humble rendering of actual models accompanied by mental as well as ocular study of the model; for the mental consideration must be given to the study of the character and its imprint upon the body. There are many instances both among painters and writers where disgusting results have been obtained when the workers failed to look at their model with intellectual or loving penetration and took, as a result, only the outside of them, or perhaps took the evil and left the good.

This failure on the part of the artist is the cause of much of the want of vitality of characters which indeed failed to become on paper or canvas real characters but rather are as so many blocks on which fashions are displayed in shop windows.

We have already mentioned that the right ideal can be reached only when the immediate signs of sin upon the countenance and body are banished. For their banishment, intellectual operation is not sufficient for it is not by reasoning that the evidences of depravity are to be traced in the movements of the body. This can be done only through moral perception and through love and a sympathetic understanding. Only the right Christian mind will be able to find its own image in others and will be able to overlook what is evil and to depict what remains of the good.

While Ruskin realizes that this spirit cannot be given or taught by men he comments upon some practical points which will be of use to anyone wishing to portray his fellow creature. He says that there are certain broad indications of evil that may be recognized with a fair amount of ease. These four are the signs of pride, of sensuality, of fear, and of cruelty. Anyone of these can destroy the ideal character.

Pride is perhaps the most destructive and the most easily discernible. Pride since it is grounded on our own superiority cannot but imply that our eyes look downward only and have never been raised above our own measure. The attributing of such excellency as man may have to himself is the real presence and criminality of pride. It shows itself in insolence of attitude, and levity and haughtiness of

expression and in mean accompaniments of worldly splendor and possession.

The second destructor of ideal character, sensuality, is more difficult to trace because it is impossible to tell by what minute differences the right conception of the human form is separated from the evil. If the portrayer be himself of impure mind he will present us with impure characters; but if he be of pure mind he will recognize the foulness in his subjects for what it is and avoid portraying what will be disgusting and degenerating to the beholder.

Fear and ferocity, the two other vices, are less to be noted as they only occasionally enter into the conception of character. It is necessary to distinguish between ignoble fear which is a fear of weakness, and noble fear or awe which is experienced when man realizes his insignificance in the face of some mighty manifestation of power. Both types of fear tend to destroy all power of contemplation and to freeze and shrink the intellect. Ferocity is the most ignoble of the four for it is entirely unbecoming to man and portrays him as bereft temporarily of his reason.

Passion generally becomes ignoble when entertained respecting unworthy objects or when of impious violence. Grief, for example, is ignoble because it is often shallow and always temporarily maintained; and artists often forget that passion is not in itself great or violent but only in proportion to the weakness of the mind it has to deal with.

When they exaggerate this display they do not exalt passion and they certainly leave a poor impression of the one who is influenced by it.

In the general conclusions concerning the theoretic faculty Ruskin points out that there are no sources of the emotion of beauty other than those found in visible things. It is impossible for human eyes to behold perfect beauty since perfection does not reside upon earth. Because this is true everything that is visible to us has a measure of imperfection. Whatever of beauty we are able to see derives its sources of pleasure from something Divine, for it is either a record of conscience, printed in things external, or it is a symbolizing of Divine attributes and matter, or it is a felicity of living things, or the perfect fulfillment of their duties and functions.

The closing of the treatment of the theoretic faculty concerns two objections. The first asks how it happens, if it be to the moral part of us that beauty addresses itself, that it is ever found in the works of impious men, and how can such men desire or conceive it. The second asks how it is that men in the high state of moral culture are often insensible to the influence of material beauty.

In answer to these objections Ruskin states in general that no supreme power of art has ever been exhibited by impious men, and that the neglect of art has been of evil consequence to the

Christian world. The powers of the artist have been given with greater intensity to some than to others, and if some to whom they have been given are impious, they will cultivate only the material principles with no thought of Divine. There is bound to be in the work of such men "a taint and stain, and jarring discord, blacker and louder exactly in proportion to the moral deficiency, of which the best proof is to be found in their treatment of the human form, of which the highest beauty has been attained only once and then by no system taught painter but by a most holy Dominican monk of Fiesole; and beneath him all stoop lower and lower in proportion to their inferior sanctity". ( 1)

Ruskin does not deny entirely that it is possible for work of the purest feeling to be done sometimes by men of indifferent minds for it is always possible for God to choose instruments seemingly weak.

Concerning the general disinterestedness and lack of ability in truly Christian men concerning external beauty Ruskin believes this to follow from their habit of turning their eyes more often upon themselves in their relations with God rather than upon the other external works of creation. Ruskin believes that this habit is a selfish one because it prevents these men of the best disposition from making manifest to others their high ideals .

11. *ibid.* II, 379.

CHAPTER EIGHT  
THE IMAGINATIVE FACULTY

Hitherto we have considered the sources of pleasure existing in external creation or any faithful copy of it. These sources of beauty receive a certain reflection of the mind under whose shadow they have passed, and are modified or colored by its image. This modification is the work of the imagination. In this part of his work Ruskin reviews the conditions and limits of the imaginative faculty and considers by what tests its sane, healthy, and profitable operations may be distinguished from those which are erratic, dangerous, or diseased. The essence of the imaginative faculty is something mysterious and inexplicable but it can be recognized to a certain degree in its results. Imagination is distinct from fancy, for imagination is the source of whatever is great in the poetic arts while fancy is merely decorative and entertaining.

Imagination has three totally distinct functions. It combines, and by combination creates new forms; this type we call associative imagination. Imagination too can penetrate, analyze and reach truths; when it does this we speak of it as penetrative imagination. Lastly, imagination can regard both the simple images and its own combinations of them, and when it does this we speak of it as contemplative imagination.

When we see and examine any material object, our knowledge of it exists in two different forms. The first are verbal forms which are known but not conceived. In other words we have

no mental conception or picture of these objects but when they are recalled we only associate them with a certain quality as lightness or heaviness, or a certain length. Other facts exist in the mind in an invisible form so that, though we might find it very difficult to describe them verbally, on hearing of them the image of the thing is immediately before us.

We have a greater command over these images than we have over nature, for we can always recall them and group them in any way we wish. The artist does this when in a picture he places a mountain which he had beheld in one country towering over a valley beheld in another. The writer in depicting a character may attribute to it characteristics that he has noticed in several different persons. This is composition and is not the work of imagination. In composing thus the mind summons up before it whatever features it desires and selects those it considers most fit.

In doing this the artist, if he possesses little sensibility, will regard only the absolute beauty of each image and will use it without regard for their sympathy with those for whose company they are destined. If the artist does possess sensibility he will look for the sympathy or contrast of the features and to their likeness or dissimilarity. The process of composition will therefore be quicker and more happy in proportion to the artist's powers of conception and association, for the distinctness of these powers will give value and truth to

every fragment that he draws from memory. In this work too his powers of association will place before him in greater or lesser number images from which to choose. When this last power is very brilliant it is called fancy and can make the artist's work interesting, impressive, and captivating.

Thus far imagination has not shown itself, for all that has been mentioned may be taught; but imagination is not something that may be taught.

The real work of the imagination is to choose ideas, although they may be separately wrong, together shall be right, and which therefore shall possess unity. Ruskin compares this process with that which takes place in the forming of a new chemical compound. Just as there are untold combinations of elements to form new compounds, so there are untold possibilities for the bringing forth of new combinations for the one possessing a lively imagination. No single part of any great work possesses the completeness and the perfection of the whole and it is only by the power of the artist who can associate imperfect parts so happily that a perfect whole is obtained. This perfect whole admits of the use of second thoughts for the purpose of dressing the first conception, which however, must be fully realized by the artist before the work is undertaken; for no great idea has ever been formed in fragments.

The human imagination is not without limits and it is for this reason, for example, that no human mind has ever conceived

a new animal. We conceive of each part of the human body, for example, in the relation that it has to other parts; the joining of any part of the human body to the body of an animal is not the work of imagination but of fancy. L

The truly imaginative artist is not bound by laws. Because he knows nature he is without restraint; knowing nature, there is nothing within the limits of natural possibility that he dares not to do.

The unimaginative artist is unable so to select and fit parts as to be able to bring out real beauty. If there is ugliness in the parts, a great share of it is likely to remain in the whole. If there is beauty in the parts, his want of imagination will prevent his making a beautiful whole. On the other hand the imaginative artist recognizing the imperfection of the parts, will nevertheless be able to arrange them in such a manner that the final work will possess beauty. He will never be at loss in conceiving ideas.

Concerning the relation of the imaginative to the theoretic faculty Ruskin states: "And now we find what noble sympathy and unity there is between the imaginative and the theoretic faculties. Both agree in this, that they reject nothing and are thankful for all; but the theoretic faculty takes out of everything that which is beautiful, while the imaginative faculty takes hold of the very imperfections which the theoretic rejects, and by means of these angles and roughnesses, it joints and bolts the

separate stones into a mighty temple, wherein the theoretic faculty does deepest homage. Thus sympathetic in their desires, harmoniously divert in their operation, each working for the other with what the other needs not, all things external to man are by one or other turned to good". (1)

There are few artists of any standing totally devoid of the imaginative faculty. The associative and the penetrative imagination is, however, the rarest and most precious form of the intellect. On the other hand, very few are possessed of it in the highest degree, and it is for this reason that there are not more great works.

An important conclusion to keep always in mind is that there can be no imagination in anything that possesses unnaturalness. It is the lack of imagination in works that makes them liable to the charge that they have no truth in them. It follows therefore that the final tests of the work of associative imagination are its intense simplicity, its perfect harmony and its absolute truth.

The penetrative imagination concerns itself with the dealing of the imagination with its separate conceptions and endeavors to understand not only its principles of selection, but its modes of apprehension with respect to what it selects. Ruskin here quotes Milton's and Dante's description of flame

1. *ibid.* II, 405.

and points out that it is too detailed and concerns too much with externals so that we are more aware of the form of the fire than its fury. He tells us that the highest imaginative faculty never stops at crusts or ashes, or outward images of any kind, but plows them all aside and lunges into the very central heart. The very function and gift of this faculty are the getting at the very root, and its nature and dignity are dependent on its holding things always by the heart. When it contents itself only with externals it fails.

There is in this faculty no reasoning nor can any formula be offered whereby it may be exercised. It is this faculty that has enabled the great authors as Homer, Dante, and Shakespeare, to make every circumstance and sentence of their characters tell. Everyone of their sentences has been thought out from the heart of the author and opens the way for us to the heart of the character speaking. It often happens in lesser writers that they think only obscurely of the thoughts and emotions of their characters, and to the degree in which they do this the characters will remain obscure to the reader, and our sympathies remain as idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean.

This virtue of originality that every artist must strive to attain is not newness, as many wrongly think, but is only genuineness.

I believe it well here because we are to be particularly interested in the application of Ruskin's ideas to literature to quote at length from what follows.

"I believe it will be found that the entirely unimaginative sees nothing of the object that it has to dwell upon or describe, and is therefore utterly unable, as it is blind itself, to set anything before the eyes of the reader.

"The fancy sees the outside, and is able to give a portrait of the outside, clear, brilliant, and full of detail.

"The imagination sees the heart and inner nature, and makes them felt, but is often obscure, mysterious, and interrupted, in its giving of outer details.

"Take an instance. A writer with neither imagination or fancy, describing a fair lip, does not see it, but thinks about it, and what is said of it, and calls it well turned, or rosy, or delicate, or lovely, or afflicts us with some other quenching or chilling epithet. Now hear fancy speak, -

"Her lips were red, and one was thin,  
Compared with that was next her chin,  
Some bee had stung it newly."

"The real, red, bright being of the lip is there in a moment, but is all outside; no expression yet, no mind. Let us go a step farther with Warner, of fair Rosamond struck by Eleanor.

"with that she dashed her on the lips  
So dyed double red;  
Hard was the heart that gave the blow,  
Soft were those lips that bled".

"The tenderness of mind begins to mingle with the outside color, the imagination is seen in its awakening. Next Shelley,-

"Lamp of life, thy lips are burning  
Through the veil that seems to hide them,  
As the radiant lines of morning  
Through thin clouds, ere they divide them".

"There dawns the entire soul in that morning; yet we may stop if we choose at the image still external, at the crimson clouds. The imagination is contemplative rather than penetrative. Lastly, hear Hamlet, -

"Here hung those lips that I have kissed, I know not how oft. Where be your gibes, your gambols, your songs, your flashes of merriment that were once to set the table on a roar?"

"There is the essence of lips, and the full power of the imagination.

"Again, compare Milton's flowers in Lycidas with Perdita's. In Milton it happens, I think, generally, and in the case before us most certainly, that the imagination is mixed and broken with fancy, and so the strength of the imagery is part of iron and part of clay.

"Bring the rather primrose, that forsaken dies  
The tufted crow-toe and pale Jessamine,  
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet -  
The glowing violet  
The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,  
With cowslips wan, that hang the pensive head,  
And every flower that sad embroidery wears."

"Then hear Perdita: -

"O, Proserpina,  
For the flowers now, that frightened thou let'st fall  
From Dis's wagon, Daffodils  
That come before the swallow dares, and take  
The winds of March with beauty. Violets, dim,  
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes  
Or Cytherea's breath; pale primroses  
That die unmarried, ere they can behold  
Bright Phoebus in his strength, a malady  
Most incident to girls."

"Observe how the imagination in these last lines goes into the very inmost soul of every flower, after having touched them all at first with that heavenly timidity, the shadow of Proserpine's; and gilded them with celestial gathering, and never stops on their spots or their bodily shapes, while Milton sticks in the stains upon them, and puts us off with that unhappy freak of jet in the very flower that without this bit of paper staining would have been most precious to us all.

"So I believe they will be found throughout the operation of the fancy, that it has to do with the outside of things, and is content therewith; of this there can be no doubt in such passages as that description of Mab so often given as an illustration of it and many other instances will be found in Leigh Hunt's work already referred to. Only some embarrassment is caused by the passages in which fancy is seizing the outward signs of emotions, understanding them as such, and yet, in pursuance of her proper function, taken for her share, and for that which she chooses to dwell upon, the outward sign rather than the emotion. Note in Macbeth that brilliant instance.

"Where the Norwegian banners flout the sky  
And fan our people cold.

"The outward shiver and coldness of fear is seized on, and irregularly but admirably attributed by the fancy to the drift of the banners. Compare Solomon's song where the imagination stays not at the outside, but dwells on the fearful emotion itself.

"Who is she that looks forth as the morning; fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" (2)

2. *ibid.* II, 416, 417, 418, 419.

It can be seen from this quotation that fancy since she regards only externals is incapable of deep feeling. She cannot be made serious, whereas imagination must be always serious for she sees into the heart of everything. This leads us to realize that there is a reciprocal action between the intensity of moral feeling and the power of imagination. It would seem then that the powers of the imagination may always be tested by accompanying tenderness of emotion.

Another essential difference between imagination and fancy, since she gets at the very heart of things and regards what she finds there, is that imagination is quiet and still; whereas fancy regarding only the exterior goes from point to point and finds it difficult to fasten her regard at any point. Hence it is that imagination is quiet and fancy is restless.

Even in the point of time there is likely to be more order in the events which are considered by imagination quietly than those gazed at through fancy restlessly.

The work that possesses the greatest amount of suggestiveness is not necessarily the most imaginative, for it is possible for merely accidental forms to arouse more suggestions than a finished work. Ruskin says that there is a vacancy in a truly imaginative work that results not from the absence of ideas but because the artist has so well drawn his subject that the imagination of the beholder is forced to react in a certain way.

To be able to appreciate the work of any artist, the beholder or hearer must himself possess certain powers of the imagination. Where these powers are lacking the beholder is very likely to miss completely the ideas of the artist.

Again it must be noted that imaginative truth is far different not only from falsehood but also from realism. Realism very often holds the attention of the mind to mannerisms or habits that shackle and fetter the true nature. By giving our whole attention to these externals we very likely fail in grasping true significance.

The true virtue of the imagination, therefore, lies in its reaching a more essential truth than is seen on the surface of things. Because this is not understood works are often praised as being imaginative which are only simple, slavish, and exaggerated. One of the great tests of the real value of any work is the time test, and it will be found that unimaginative works will be unable to meet this test.

Since the work of the imagination is to discover truth it must not be a slave to the sayings and opinions of others. It does not disregard these through pride but rather because it is fully aware of the necessity of judging for itself.

In the acts of the penetrative and associative imaginations we considered its separating and characteristic attributes.

The manner in which conception actually occurs to ordinary minds appears to derive its value from a certain indefiniteness of the object conceived; and there exists always a charm in the memory and anticipation of beautiful things. It is possible for the actual presence at all times of beautiful objects to become tiring, but the faculty of retaining their images in our imagination is one which never tires us. The indistinctness that often surrounds images is not in itself a great benefit, for the brighter the images are the better.

Nevertheless it is this indistinctness with which we are concerned in considering contemplative imagination, for this type of imagination deprives the subject of material and bodily shape and regards only those of its qualities as it chooses for particular purposes and groups them in whatever way is desirable and gives to their abstract being consistency and reality. This regarding of abstract images must not be confused with fancy of which we have already spoken because here there is lacking the restlessness of fancy but there is rather a serious beholding of the new and spiritual image. Since fancy and imagination are continually united it is necessary always to distinguish the feelingless part which is fancy's from the sentient part, which is imagination's.

"Let us take a few instances. Here is fancy, first, very beautiful in her simple capacity of likeness - catching: -

"Today we propose - ay, this hour we mount  
To spur three leagues towards the Apennine.  
Come down, we pray thee, ere the hot sun count  
His dewy rosary on the Eglantine."

"Seizing on the outside resemblances of bead form, and on the slipping from their threading bough one by one, the fancy is content to lose the heart of the thing, the solemnity of prayer: or perhaps I do the glorious poet wrong in saying this, for the sense of a sun worship and orison in beginning its race, may have been in his mind; and so far as it was so, the passage is imaginative and not fanciful. But that which most readers would accept from it, is the mere flash of the external image, in whose truth the fancy herself does not yet believe and therefore is not yet contemplative. Here, however, is fancy believing in the images she creates; -

"It feeds the quick growth of the serpent-vine,  
And the dark linked ivy tangling wild  
And budding, blown, or odor faded blooms,  
Which star the winds with points of colored light  
As they rain through them; and bright golden globes  
Of fruits suspended in their own green heaven."

"It is not, observe, a mere likeness that is taught here; but the flowers and fruit are entirely deprived by their fancy of their material existence, and contemplated by her seriously as stars and worlds; yet it is only external likeness

that she catches; she forces the resemblance and lowers the dignity of the adopted image.

"Next take two delicious stanzas of fancy regardant, (believing in her creations) followed by one of heavenly imagination, from Wordsworth's address to the Daisy: -

"A nun demure - of lowly port;  
Or sprightly maiden - of Love's court,  
In thy simplicity the sport  
Of all temptations,  
A queen in crown of rubies drest,  
A starveling in a scanty vest,  
Are all as seems to suit thee best, -  
Thy appellations.

I see thee glittering from afar,  
And then thou art a pretty star, -  
Not quite so fair as many are  
In heaven above thee.  
Yet like a star, with glittering crest,  
Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest; -  
May peace come near to his nest  
Who shall reprove thee.

Sweet flower, for by that name at last,  
When all my reveries are past,

I call thee, and to that cleave fast.  
Sweet silent creature,  
Thou breath'st with me, in sun and air,  
Do thou, as thou art wont, repair  
My heart with gladness, and a share  
Of thy meek nature."

"Observe how spiritual, yet how wandering and playful the fancy is in the first two stanzas, and how far she flies from the matter in hand, never stopping to brood on the character of any one of the images she summons, and yet for a moment truly seeing and believing in them all; while in the last stanza the imagination returns with its deep feeling to the heart of the flower, and "cleaves fast" to that. Compare the operation of the imagination in Coleridge, on one of the most trifling objects that could possibly have been submitted to its action.

"The thin blue flame  
Lies on my low-burnt fire, and quivers not:  
Only that film which fluttered on the gate  
Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing.  
Methinks its motion in this hush of nature  
Gives its dim sympathies with me, who live,  
Making it a companionable form,  
Whose puny flaps and freaks the idling spirits  
By its own moods interprets; everywhere,

"One or mirror seeing of itself,  
And make a toy of thought."

"Lastly, observe the sweet operation of fancy regarant,  
in the following well-known passage from Scott, where both her  
beholding and transforming powers are seen in their simplicity.

"The rocky summits - split and rent,  
From turret dome or battlement, -  
Or seemed fantastically set  
With cupola or minaret,  
Nor were these earth-born castles rare,  
Nor lacked they many a banner fair,  
For from their shivered brows displayed,  
Far o'er th' unfathomable glade,  
All twinkling with the dew-drop sheen,  
The briar-rose fell, in streamers green, -  
And creeping shrubs of thousand dyes  
Waved in the west wind's summer sigh."

"Let the reader refer to this passage, with its  
pretty tremulous conclusion about the pine-tree, "where  
glistening streamers waved and danced", and then compare it  
with the following, where imagination operates on a scene  
nearly similar.

"Gray rocks did peep from the oxen nose, and steep'd  
In struggling brook; tall spires of windle trees  
Threw their thin shadows down the rugged slope,  
And nought but knarled roots of ancient pines,

Branchless and blasted, clenched with grasping roots  
Th' unwilling soil.....

.....a gradual change was here,  
Yet ghastly. For, as fast years flow away,  
The smooth brow gathers, and the hair grows thin  
And white; and where irradiated dewy eyes  
Had shone, gleam stony orbs; so from his steps  
Bright flowers departed, and the beautiful shade  
Of the green groves, with all their odorous winds  
And musical motion.....

.....Where the pass extends  
Its stony jaws, the abrupt mountain breaks,  
And seems with its accumulated crags  
To overhang the world; for wide expand  
Beneath the wan stars, and descending moon,  
Island seas, blue mountains, mighty streams,  
Dim tracks and vast, robed in the lustrous gloom  
Of leaden-colored even, and fiery hills  
Mingling their flames with twilight on the verge  
Of the remote horizon. The near scene  
In naked, and severe simplicity  
Made contrast with the universe. A pine  
Rock-rooted, stretch'd athwart the vacancy  
Its swinging boughs, to each in constant blast,  
Yielding one only response at each pause,

In most familiar cadence, with a howl,  
The thunder, and the hiss of homeless streams,  
Mingling its solemn song."

"In this last passage, the mind never departs from its solemn possession of the solitary scene, the imagination giving weight, meaning, and strange human sympathies to all its sounds and sights.

"In that from Scott, the fancy, led away by the outside of floating form and hue to the banners, loses the feeling and possession of the scene and places herself in circumstances of character completely opposite to the quietness and grandeur of the natural objects; this would have been unjustifiable, but that the resemblance occurs to the mind of the monarch, rather than to that of the poet; and it is that, which of all others, would have been most likely to occur at the time; in this point of view it has high imaginative propriety". ( 3)

Right exercise of this imagination must, therefore, be based always upon deep feeling. The real subject matter must never be covered over with extraneous and material accidents, but must as far as possible be regarded in its very essence.

13. *ibid.* II, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456.

Thus far Ruskin has concerned himself in considering the laws of beauty to the observation of the lower forms of nature or of humanity. Next he considers the various ways in which supernatural beings may be conceived as manifesting themselves to human sense, and he lists four ways in which this may be done. First, by external types or signs; as God to Moses in the flames of the bush. Second, by the assuming of forms not properly belonging to them; as the Holy Ghost assuming the form of a dove. Third, by the manifestation of a form properly belonging to them but not operating naturally; as the risen Christ to His disciples when the doors were shut. And fourth, by their operation on the human form; as in the shining in the face of Moses.

Every one of these forms is of something familiar to us since it is beyond our nature to conceive something that has no foundation in reality. We usually obtain the effect of the supernatural by changing in some way the appearance of the reality which we know, either by giving it a colossal size or unusual color or material. Another way of accomplishing the effect of the supernatural is by expressing as far as is humanly possible, the inherent dignity of the being. This is done by removing signs of sin and human weakness. This, however, is most difficult and few artists have ever achieved it. Most of them have endeavored to express the idea

of the supernatural by giving to the whole work an appearance of perfect symmetry and order, for they feel that such symmetry and order are consistent with the Divine order. It is in works expressing the supernatural that we find the artists striving to attain the sense of repose, which, together with symmetry and order already mentioned, they consider to be significant of the supernatural.

CHAPTER NINE  
LANDSCAPE

In his third volume of Modern Painters there are two chapters which it is to our purpose to consider. They are the chapters on landscape and consider classical landscape and modern landscape. It is in this order that we will consider them. In his chapter on classical landscape Ruskin concerns himself with the attitude of the Greeks concerning their gods and shows how this attitude effected their consideration of the elements.

He quotes from Keats the following description of a wave, breaking, out at sea:

"Down whose green back the short-lived foam, all hoar  
Bursts gradually, with a wayward indolence."

While the picture here is one that catches our attention, it is unlike any which the Greeks of the classical period would paint. They would not, for a moment, have lost sight of the fact that a wave is nothing but salt water, and being salt water could be neither wayward nor indolent. The Greeks would however and did feel that there was animation in the sea, but rather than attribute this to water itself they attributed it to the god who controlled the water. They considered this god as so powerful as to be able to use this great mass under his control so that he could make it rage or keep it calm at will. It is easy to see how they came to the conclusion that there was some power behind the elements other than that actually in them. They knew that they could light a fire and put

it out, or that they could dry up some water or drink it. From this too, they knew that it was not something in the fire or water thus at their command that raged but rather something more powerful than either the fire or the water or themselves. It was in this way that they came to believe in the various gods.

It is easy to see that it was only a step from this idea to the endowing of these spirits with human forms in order that they might hold intercourse with men. Many times these spirits were made to speak in a most materialistic and ungod-like manner, and were made too to stoop to arguing with various Greek heroes. We have the example in the Iliad of the river Scamander defending the Trojans against Achilles. The river god assumes a human form but as soon as Achilles has refused to obey him it returns at once into the form of the river and tries to overwhelm him with waves. Then Vulcan sends fire against the river until the river pleads for respite.

Because the Greek conception of the gods was much more real than we commonly suppose, they were bolder and more familiar than sometimes seems possible to the modern. This is because the Greeks made no effort to conceive the divine mind as above the human, nor did they draw back from nor dread the presence of a divine being more than that of the simplest of creatures.

That the modern mind is sometimes shocked by the familiarity of the Greeks with their gods is due more to the lack or misunderstanding of the nature of the Greeks than to a right understanding of that of their deity. The Greeks expected to be rightly dealt with in the next world and did not hesitate even in this to remonstrate with their gods whenever they thought that they were in the right and the gods in the wrong.

These notions of the Greeks were entirely naturalistic and they came more and more to regard beauty whether in humans or in their imagined divinities as the principal object of their culture and sympathy. This beauty was always considered as perfect, orderly, symmetrical, and tender. These notions gave them a certain spirit that shows itself both in the orderliness and symmetry of their sculpture and literature. In the latter there is always a quiet subjection of every feature of nature to human service. Another effect of their attitudes is shown by an almost excessive familiarity of scene so that we have often a description of "orderly square beds of herbs". Again there is constantly mentioned in Greek landscape meadows bordered by trees.

It is to be noted that the Greeks, once they had achieved the idea of what they felt to be significant of beauty, were not forever endeavoring to improve upon them by experimenting with new ideas.

While their ideas of many things were far different than those of the Greeks, it is to be noted that the pleasure of

the medievalists was in stability, definiteness and luminousness. The first thing that will impress us when we consider modern landscape is its cloudiness.

This same spirit shows itself in the love of mystery in our romance, poetry, and our art. Still another characteristic of the moderns is the love of liberty. Our general attitude, indeed, is far different from that of the Greeks or medieval artists. Of this difference Ruskin writes: "whereas the medieval never painted a cloud but with a purpose of placing an angel in it; and a Greek never entered a wood without expecting to meet a god in it; we should think the appearance of an angel in the cloud wholly unnatural, and should be seriously surprised by meeting a god anywhere. Our chief ideas about the wood are connected with poaching. We have no belief that the clouds contain more than so many inches of rain or hail, and from our ponds and ditches expect nothing more divine than ducks and water cresses." (1)

Ruskin goes on to point out that we wrongly refer to the medieval centuries as the "Dark Ages", whereas, these were really the bright ages. The present age is a much sadder one. There was something wholehearted in the lives of the more ancient peoples. Our festivities even are forced and mistaken and not of the heart. While we have lost the power of laughing at bad jests, the finish of our wit shows our true want of gaiety.

1. John Ruskin, Modern Painters, III, 317, 318.

The general reason for gloominess that Ruskin notes is our want of faith. He attests: "There never yet was a generation of men (savage or civilized) who, taken as a body, so woefully fulfilled the words, 'having no hope, and without God in the world', as the present civilized European race. A Red Indian or Otaheitan savage has more sense of a Divine existence around him, or government over him, than the plurality of refined Londoners and Parisians.....Hence, nearly all our powerful men in this age of the world are unbelievers; the best of them in doubt and misery; the worst in reckless defiance; the plurality in plodding hesitation, doing, as well as they can, what practical work lies ready to their hands.... In politics, religion is now a name; in art, a hypocrisy or affectation.....This faithlessness operates among us according to our tempers, producing either sadness or levity, and being the ultimate root alike of our discontents and of our wantonesses". (2)

The Renaissance principles of art set beauty above truth and sought for it at the expense of truth. Proper punishment was that they managed to express more ugliness than beauty. The present age has indeed revolted against the art of the Renaissance but it has failed to fasten itself on principles that are strong enough to help it support a true art of its own and hence there has come to be a great deal of the romantic

2. *ibid.* III, 319, 320, 321.

and sentimental in all forms of our art. We have a tendency to imitate much from the past, while, at the same time regarding the people of the past either as foolish, or wicked, or, even worse, unprogressive.

Science has unquestionably advanced more in our age than in whole centuries in the past. Hence we possess elements of both progress and decline, and these being mingled, give inconsistency to our work. Hence it is, that we see that the admiration of mankind has, in great part, passed from men to materials, and from human emotions to natural phenomena. Ruskin here praises Scott as one of the greatest writers of his age. He does so for this reason that he believes that Scott achieved the greatest thing a human soul ever does in this world, that is, that he saw something, and told what he saw in a plain way. "To see clearly is poetry, prophecy, and religion, - all is one". It is typical of an age whose chief characteristic was its faithlessness that even the man to whom Ruskin attributed the greatest powers in literature was himself incapable of steady belief in anything.

Far lower than the literature which describes what it sees is the mass of sentimental literature concerned with the analysis and description of emotion. The one who sees well will describe everything he sees but will not attempt to analyze the emotions of each of his characters. To do this last is the work of a truly great writer, and a work which very few have proved themselves capable of doing. Greater

than the one who sees and tells what he sees is the man capable of thinking. Ruskin asserts that a true thinker, who has a practical purpose in his thinking, must be always of infinite use in his generation. On the other hand, an affected thinker is about the vainest kind of person that can be found.

CHAPTER TEN  
TWO CRITICISMS

To say that there are no faults in Ruskin's ideas of beauty would be rash. It has been objected that Ruskin's theory is too dogmatic and too theological. Neither a denial nor an excuse can be made concerning these accusations, but we will endeavor to point out briefly why these faults were natural to Ruskin.

A self-centered person is usually a dogmatic person and Ruskin has told us in his Praeterita that he was self-centered. His training had made him independent at an early age, and to further this independence he enjoyed too great an admiration especially on his father's part for his theories of art.

His dogmatism was accentuated by his inability to endure criticism. This was due chiefly to his failure to understand the criticism. To be hurt by criticism is natural, but to remain unimproved by it is unexcusable. Tennyson detested criticism and because of it, he did not publish a poem for ten years, but he spent those ten years in study and in perfecting his natural gifts, and in this way became the great poet that he is.

Ruskin, however, was utterly unable to adopt a conciliatory attitude towards critics during the period preceding the time of writing the first two volumes of Modern Painters. Until much later than this, 1856 to be exact, he had a complete

faith in the simplicity of his task -- "Happily for mankind, beauty and ugliness are as positive in their nature as physical pain and pleasure, as light and darkness, or as life and death". (1) Since he wrote with such an idea in his mind it is no wonder that he was dogmatic.

Nor is it more surprising that theology was interwoven with his theory of beauty. His early training in the Bible and an active religious sense made it a necessity for him to mix religious and artistic ideas, not that a relation does not exist between art and God but Ruskin carried his analogies and inferences so far as to be obviously belaboring the point, and instead of a sense of conviction he leaves us with the feeling of being tiresomely didactic.

Ruskin's terminology too has brought much criticism to him. He laid himself open to this by such declarations as that stating that infinity, unity, repose, symmetry, purity, and moderation were emblems of God's incomprehensibility, comprehensiveness, permanence, justice, and energy, and that, because of this, they arouse esthetic pleasure.

It is indeed difficult to see the symbolism here and we are tempted to answer that anything can be a symbol of anything else, if it has been sufficiently associated with it in the mind. But beauty, which Ruskin designates as the "signature of God" for the very reason that it has apparently no evolutionary significance, is, as Emerson said, "its own excuse for being".

1. John Ruskin, Modern Painters, III, 47.

The attributes of God certainly excite our admiration and in that sense give us pleasure, so far as we meditate on them and are able to understand them. To identify the latter purely mental pleasures with the former sensory pleasures is a theory which needs support; and in offering it Ruskin showed more piety than wisdom. It is quite clear that this tendency gives support to those who criticize his overuse of theology.

But to condemn Ruskin's whole theory because of these faults and to ignore its good qualities on account of its bad would be imprudent. We would fall into the class with those who condemn everything that Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote because he was a bigot, forgetting that being Holmes with his Brahmin background he could hardly have thought otherwise than he did. And so with Ruskin, we must take him as he is.

CHAPTER ELEVEN  
A WORKING PLAN

The preceding pages offered the reader the principal ideas expressed by Ruskin concerning the esthetic pleasure. There follows a plan of these ideas to be used in judging the esthetic value of literary work.

Two attitudes to be always avoided:

1. the blind following of authority or fashion,
2. the despising of authority before it is given proper consideration.

A virtue necessary for the acquisition of good taste:

1. patience.

We regard two things in searching for beauty:

1. external quality of bodies; this is the part of typical beauty;
2. appearance of fulfillment of function and living things; this is the part of vital beauty.

TYPICAL BEAUTY

Here we consider the pleasure obtained from the consideration of the external form. There follows a list of the qualities which give and increase typical beauty:

- I. INFINITY -- this gives a sense of the Divine, and is not to be confused with vastness which is, in itself, no more beautiful than littleness.

The idea of infinity is obtained by:

1. suggestion of space,

2. gradations of shades and colors,
3. contrasts

## II. UNITY

Different types of unity are:

1. subjunctive - of different things subjected to the same influence;
2. of origin - union of things from same source;
3. of sequence - union of things that follow in order;
4. of membership - union of imperfect things into a perfect whole. This unity is brought about by harmonious variety of parts.

Unity is strengthened by proportion, which is of two kinds:

1. apparent, which brings unity between things which would otherwise remain distinct in similarity; there may be beauty in this type of proportion;
2. constructive, concerns the function to be discharged by the qualities depending on their proportion. this does not give beauty.

## III. REPOSE

Types of repose are:

1. appearance of permanence and quietness,
2. repose of objects in which there is vitality or capability of motion.

Repose is more noticeable when its opposite, energy, is clearly implied.

Mental repose amidst strife shows nobility in man.

Absence of repose is responsible for glare of color, inconsistency or absence of thought, bad choice of subjects, over-accumulation of material.

#### IV. SYMMETRY

Symmetry is the opposition of equal quantities to each other.

Symmetry can exist in something ugly, but an object is never as ugly as if symmetry were wanting.

#### V. PURITY

We gain the idea of purity when there is present the sense of unimpeded light and energy.

Impurity exists when:

1. various elements are placed in a relation incapable of healthy or proper relation,
2. conditions are apparent in which there is evidence of the negation of vital operation,
3. there is apparent the association of inorganic and organic matter,

Any impurity impedes fulfillment of function and so impedes energy.

#### VI. MODERATION

There is moderation where no portion of the work is overdone or underdone.

Moderation is offended against by:

1. violence,
2. extravagance.

The lack of moderation is seen in:

1. glaring color,
2. inelegant form,
3. ungraceful motion,
4. coarse language,
5. undisciplined thought.

## VITAL BEAUTY

### I. RELATIVE

Objects to be considered under vital beauty must possess vital energy. The reason is that we receive pleasure in proportion to the appearance of vigor and sensibility.

The idea of vital beauty arises from:

1. the affections which give us:
  - a) an unselfish sympathy at the happiness of the being possessing this beauty, and not from
    1. a regard for the utility of the object, or,
    2. a contemplation of its mechanism;
  2. a cultivation of the moral sense which makes us realize that
    - a) a lack of high purpose in animals and man detracts from beauty.

### II. GENERIC

Here consideration is given to the ability of each being to perform well its proper function.

Works are considered:

1. Ideal, which represent the mental conception of a material object;
  - a) ideal works of art are good or bad in proportion to the healthy condition and power of the imagination;
2. Unideal, which represent the material object as it is;
  - a) unideal works of art are good or bad in proportion to the perfection of the representation.

The ideal of any species is the one fulfilling most perfectly the functions of that species.

Ideality is predicable to beings through every period of their existence, as long as they be perfect with reference to their supposed period of being.

III. VITAL BEAUTY IN MAN

Here consider:

1. Operations of the intellectual powers on the features,
2. The influence of mind on body in the mode of operation and bodily form;
  - a) Have selfishness, anger, sensuality, agitation, enmity, fear, or cunning or deceit left their mark on the body?  
or,
  - b) Have reason and faith kept serenity?
3. The subduing of the material part of man by the immaterial, noticeable when the energy of the intellect wears down the flesh.

In portraying man:

1. evidences of sorrow, hard struggle, bitter pain do not interfere with the portraying of the ideal;
2. There must be no immediate operation and presence of sin.

Idealism in humanity can be successfully portrayed only when:

1. actual models are before the artist;
2. he studies these models not only ocularly, but,
3. he considers their character and its imprint on the body.

Four indications of evil that destroy the ideal in character:

1. pride,
2. sensuality,
3. fear,
4. cruelty.

Fassion is usually not great or violent but in proportion to the weakness of the mind it deals with.

Grief is ignoble because it is often shallow and always temporary.

THE IMAGINATIVE FACULTY

Here we consider the means taken by the artist that he might present his work in a manner pleasing to the beholder.

Imagination is three-fold:

1. Associative, combines to form new forms;
2. Penetrative, analyzes and reaches truth;

3. Contemplative, regards simple images and the combinations of them.

I. ASSOCIATIVE IMAGINATION

Objects examined exist in two forms:

1. verbal, which are known but not visualized;
2. visible, which are visualized but cannot be expressed in words.

Composition is the process of grouping characters or qualities from different sources for the creation of a new object.

Associative imagination takes ideas or images which may be separately wrong but which joined possess unity and harmony.

1. The imaginative artist is capable of grouping parts to bring together a beautiful whole.
2. The unimaginative artist is incapable of harmoniously grouping parts.

The test of the success of the operations of the associative imagination is to judge if the object presented possesses:

1. naturalness,
2. simplicity,
3. harmony,
4. truth.

## II. PENETRATIVE IMAGINATION

1. goes to the very root of the object considered and avoids:
  - a) too great detail,
  - b) merely surface examination,
  - c) depicting thought and emotion obscurely,
  - d) restlessness.
2. does not confuse itself with fancy which is:
  - a) full of detail,
  - b) concerned with outward signs of emotion,
  - c) restless.
3. does not confuse imaginative truth with realism which:
  - a) draws our attention to mannerisms and habits and fails to grasp deeper significance.

## III. NON-EMPLATIVE IMAGINATION

1. clothes abstract images with:
  - a) consistency,
  - b) reality,
  - c) deep feeling.

CHAPTER TWELVE  
APPLICATION TO THE NOVEL

The Scarlet Letter

The Scarlet Letter, by Hawthorne is a portrait of sin and its consequences against a Puritan background. It is in no sense an historical novel, for Hawthorne suppresses in the background everything except deep shadows from which the grim tragedy naturally proceeds. The moods created are those of remorse, sorrow, and despair.

If we examine it for the qualities of typical beauty, we will find that Hawthorne has given us principally notions of infinity, unity, and moderation. This last he achieved by the complete lack of the appearance of violence and extravagance, while, analyzing most violent emotional struggles.

At the very beginning of the book in his description of the somber jail he uses a contrast suggesting infinity. After describing the Boston jail, he continues: "like all that pertains to crime, it seems never to have known a youthful era. Before this ugly edifice and between it and the wheel-track of the street, was a grass-plot, much overgrown with burdock, pig weed, apple-peru, and such unsightly vegetation, which evidently found something congenial in the soil that had so lately borne the black flower of civilized society, a prison. But, on one side of the portal, and rooted almost at the threshold, was a wild rose-bush, covered, in this month of June, with its delicate gems, which might be imagined to offer their fragrance and fragile beauty to the prisoner as he went in, and to the condemned criminal as

he came forth to his doom, in token that the deep heart of Nature could pity and be kind to him." (1)

Several other examples of this same quality are: "Had there been a Papist among the crowd of Puritans who might have seen in this beautiful woman so picturesque in her attire and mien, and with the infant at her bosom, an object to remind him of the image of Divine Maternity, which so many illustrious painters have vied with one another to represent; something which should remind him, indeed, but only by contrast, of that sacred image of sinless motherhood, whose infant was to redeem the world. Here, there was the taint of deepest sin in the most sacred quality of human life, working such effect, that the world was only the darker for this woman's beauty, and the more lost for the infant she had borne". (2)

"But before Mr. Dimmesdale had done speaking, a light gleamed far and wide over all the muffled sky. It was doubtless caused by one of those meteors, which the night watcher may so often observe, burning out to waste, in the vacant regions of the atmosphere. So powerful was its radiance, that it thoroughly illuminated the dense medium of cloud betwixt the sky and the earth. The great vault brightened, like the dome of an immense lamp. It showed the familiar scene of the street with the distinctness of mid-day, but also with that awfulness that is always imparted to familiar objects by an unaccustomed light.....

1. Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter, 68.

2. *ibid.* 77.

And there stood the minister, with his hand over his heart; and Hester Prynne, with the embroidered letter glimmering on her bosom; and little Pearl, herself a symbol, and the connecting link between these two. There stood in the noon of that strange and solemn splendor, as if it were the light that is to reveal all secrets, and the daybreak that shall unite all who belong to one another". (3)

"The day was chill and somber. Overhead was a gray expanse of clouds, slightly stirred, however, by a breeze; so that a gleam of flickering sunshine might now and then be seen at its solitary play along the path. The flitting cheerfulness was always at the farther extremity of some long vista through the forest. The sportive sunlight feebly sportive, at best, in the predominant pensiveness of the day and scene withdrew itself as they were nigh, and left the spots where it had danced the drearier, because they had hoped to find them bright.

"Mother," said little Pearl, "the sunshine does not love you. It runs away and hides itself, because it is afraid of something on your bosom. Now see! There it is, playing a good way off. Stand you here, and let me run and catch it. I am but a child. It will not flee from me, for I wear nothing on my bosom".

"Nor ever will, my child, I hope", said Hester.

"And why not, mother?" asked Pearl, stooping short just at the beginning of her race. "Will it not come of its own accord, when I am a grown woman?"

3. *ibid.* 137.

"Run away, child," answered her mother, "and catch the sunshine. It will soon be gone".

"Pearl set forth at a great pace, and, as Hester smiled to perceive, did actually catch the sunshine, and stood laughing in the midst of it, all brightened by its splendor, and scintillating with vivacity excited by rapid motion. The light lingered about the lonely child, as if glad of such a playmate, until her mother had drawn almost nigh enough to step into the magic circle too.

"It will go now", said Pearl, shaking her head.

"See!" answered Hester, smiling. "Now I can stretch out my hand and grasp some of it."

"As she attempted to do so, the sunshine vanished". (4)

In the quotations given we can find examples of the qualities which express typical beauty. Infinity is suggested in the night visit of the minister, Mr. Dimmesdale, to the scaffold. There is a very definite suggestion of space given in the description of the awesomeness of the aspect of the village under the meteor-lighted heavens.

In the three quotations offered the idea of infinity is obtained by gradations of shade and colors. In the first quotation the rose-covered bush stands out against the somberness of the jail and its surroundings; in the second, the general gloominess of the village stands out in contrast to the strangely lighted sky; in the third, the cheerlessness of the forest path

4. *ibid.* 220, 221.

is in contrast to the sunlight portions to which little Pearl runs on ahead.

There is in The Scarlet Letter a very distinct unity. It is the unity of different things subjected to the same influence and called by Ruskin, subjectional unity. Every scene in the book is somber and typifies sin; every character in the book is under the influence of sin and its results. It is sin that groups them and carries them along each to his proper end.

Repose is implied throughout The Scarlet Letter. It is evident in the description of the life of Puritan Boston; evident particularly in the slow, unchanging attitudes of its citizens. These attitudes are pointed out to us in the very first chapters when we first meet the inhabitants of the town assembled to witness the punishment of Hester. These attitudes seem as steadfast and as permanent as do the ancient trees that shade the streets and buildings.

The same spirit permeates the description of the life and Pearl in the years immediately after the opening of the story, especially those descriptions that concern their life in their own little home.

Lastly it is expressed in her description of nature, and particularly in the description of the wood where Hester and Pearl meet Mr. Dimmesdale. Here the shade, the luxuriance of the foliage, and the murmuring of the brook all tend to increase the notion of repose and permanence.

In pointing out the vital beauty to be found in the

characters of The Scarlet Letter, we will first consider instances of it in Hester. Hester, because of her sin and the constant reminder of it that was inflicted upon her as a punishment, might well have been so overcome by enmity toward her fellow beings that she would have lost both our sympathy and respect. As it was, however, reason and faith gave her the serenity that showed her to possess the qualities of mind that finally caused her to be regarded with admiration rather than disdain.

From the very moment that Hester stepped forth into the light from the dark confines of the gloomy prison, she was at all times under all trying circumstances in perfect possession of herself. "It was no great distance, in those days from the prison door to the market-place. Measured by the prisoner's experience, however, it might be reckoned a journey of some length; for, haughty as her demeanor was, she perchance underwent an agony from every footstep of those that thronged to see her, as if her heart had been flung into the street for them all to spurn and trample upon,.... with almost a serene deportment, therefore, Hester Prynne passed through this portion of her ordeal, and came to a sort of scaffold, at the western extremity of the market place." (5)

"It may seem marvelous, that, with the world before her,.... this woman should still call that place her home, where, and

5. *ibid.* 75, 76.

where only, she must needs be a type of shame..... that she compelled herself to believe, what, finally, she reasoned upon, as her motive for continuing a resident of New England, was half a truth, and half a self-dillusion. Here, she said to herself, had been the scene of her guilt, and here should be the scene of her earthly punishment; and so, perchance, the torture of her daily shame would at length purge her soul, and work out another purity than that which she had lost; more saint-like, because the result of martyrdom." (6)

"Hester Prynne did not now occupy precisely the same position in which we beheld her during the earlier period of her ignominy. Years have come and gone. Pearl was now seven years old. Her mother, with the scarlet letter on her breast glittering in its phantastic embroidery had long been a familiar object to the towns-people..... it is to the credit of human nature that, except where its selfishness is brought into play, it loves more readily than it hates. Hatred, by a gradual process, will be even transformed to love, unless the change be impeded by a continually new irritation of the original feeling of hostility. In this matter of Hester Prynne, there was neither irritation nor irksomeness. She never battled with the public, but submitted uncomplainingly, to its worst usage; she made no claim upon it, in requittal for what she suffered; she did not weigh upon its sympathies. Then, also, the blameless purity of her life

6, *ibid.*, 102, 103, 104.

during all these years in which she had been set apart to infamy, was reckoned largely to her favor. With nothing now to lose, in the sight of mankind, with no hope and seemingly no wish, of gaining anything, it could only be a genuine regard for virtue that had brought back the poor wanderer to its paths." (7)

Something of Hester's serenity and the strength of her will is evident in her encouragement of Arthur Dimmesdale: "Thou art crushed under the seven years weight of misery, but thou shalt leave it all behind thee!..... Leave this wreck and ruin here where it hath happened. Meddle no more with it! Begin all anew! Hast thou exhausted possibility in the failure of this one trial? Not so? The future is yet full of trial and success. There is happiness to be enjoyed! There is good to be done! Exchange this false life of thine for a true one. Be, if thy spirit summon thee to such a mission, the teacher and apostle of the red men. Or, - as is more thy nature, - be a scholar and a sage among the wisest and most renowned of the cultivated world. Preach! Write! Act! Do anything, save to lie down and die!" (8)

These quotations have shown the strength of character that Hester possessed. It is evident that anger against the community for having condemned her to a lasting ignominy, at least as long as she remained in the community, did not influence her

7. *ibid.* 194.

8. *ibid.* 237.

life; nor did fear, either of this punishment or of a future punishment, so perturb her as to leave its mark upon her. She offers us a perfect example of that vital beauty evidenced when the mind exercises a proper control over the body.

The life of her partner in sin, Arthur Dimmesdale, shows the want of the reason and faith that gave serenity to Hester. In the beginning he was a man of deep faith, but his cowardice and hesitancy in acknowledging his guilt almost completely robbed him of his faith and our sympathy. It is only his final triumph over his weakness manifested in his dramatic confession as he lays dying that redeems him.

Agitation, fear and hesitancy show themselves constantly in what he says. In the first quotation, he is addressing Roger Chillingworth who has suggested that he reveal to him the sickness of his spirit. "No! - not to thee! - not to an earthly physician!" cried Mr. Dimmesdale, passionately, and turning his eyes full and bright and with a kind of fierceness, on old Roger Chillingworth. "Not to thee! but, if it be the soul's disease, then do I commit myself to the one Physician of the soul! He, if it stand with His pleasure, can cure; or He can kill! Let Him do with me as, in His justice and wisdom, He shall see good. But who art thou, that meddlest in this matter? - that dares trust himself between the sufferer and His God?" (9)

"To the high mountain-peaks of sanctity Mr. Dimmesdale

9. *ibid.* 167.

would have climbed, had not the tendency been thwarted by the burden whatever it might be, of crime or anguish, beneath which it was his doom to totter. It kept him down, on the level with the lowest; him, the man of ethereal attributes, whose voice the angels might have listened to and answered!" (10)

"Thou must dwell no longer with this man," said Hester slowly and firmly. "Thy heart must be no longer under his evil eye!"

"It were far worse than death!" replied the minister. "But how to avoid it? What choice remains to me? Shall I lie down again on these withered leaves, where I cast myself when thou didst tell me what he was? Must I sink down here, and die at once?"

"Alas, what a ruin has befallen me!" said Hester, with the tears gushing into her eyes. "Wilt thou die for every weakness? There is no other cause!"

"The judgement of God is on me," answered the conscious - stricken priest. "It is too mighty for me to struggle with." (11)

"O Hester!" cried Arthur Dimmesdale, in whose eyes a fitful light, kindled by her enthusiasm flashed up and died away, "thou tellest of running a race to a man whose knees are tottering beneath him! I must die here! There is not the strength or courage left me to venture into the wide, strange,

10. *ibid.* 173

11. *ibid.* 235.

difficult world, alone!" (12)

"Tempted by a dream of happiness, the minister had yielded himself, with deliberate choice, as he had never done before to what he knew was deadly sin. And the infectious poison of that sin had been thus rapidly diffused throughout his moral system. It had stupified all blessed impulses, and awakened into vivid life the whole brotherhood of bad ones. Scorn, bitterness, unprovoked malignity, gratuitous desire of ill, ridicule of whatever was good and holy, all awoke, to tempt even while they frightened him." (13)

"Hush, Hester, Hush!" said he, with tremulous solemnity. "The law we broke! - the sin here so awfully revealed! - let these alone be in thy thoughts! I fear! I fear! It may be that, when we forgot our God, - when we violated our reverence each for the other's soul, - it was thenceforth vain to hope that we could meet hereafter, in an everlasting and pure reunion. God knows; and He is merciful! He has proved His mercy, most of all in my afflictions. By giving me this burning torture to bear upon my breast! By sending yonder dark and terrible old man, to keep the torture always at red-heat! By bringing me hither, to die this death of triumphant ignominy before the people! Had either of these agonies been wanting, I had been lost forever! Praise be His name! His will be done! Farewell!" (14)

12. *ibid.* 238

13. *ibid.* 265.

14. *ibid.* 304.

The quotations concerning Arthur Dimmesdale show that he lacked true vital beauty. Agitation and fear worked always against him. Ruskin has told us that passion is usually not great but in proportion to the weakness of the mind it deals with. Dimmesdale was a real victim of passion, and had it not been for the final encouragement and support of Hester and her willingness to help him escape from Boston, he would never have mustered courage to put his mind at peace by a final confession.

In relation to vital beauty in man, we have noted that evidences of sorrow, hard struggle and bitter pain do not interfere with the portrayal of the ideal; this is true only when the person afflicted with these trials rises above them and by faith and reason control themselves. We saw that Hester so rose above them. Dimmesdale failed to do so, and had he fled to Europe as he had planned his character would have been without any vestige of beauty.

The third of the chief characters in The Scarlet Letter is entirely without beauty and is a thoroughly evil character. The spirit of vengeance marked his very features. We first meet him as he stands upon the edge of the crowd and gazes upon his wife, Hester, as she stands upon the scaffold. "He was small in stature with a furrowed visage, which, as yet, could hardly be termed age. There was a remarkable intelligence in his features, as of a person who had so cultivated his mental part that it could not fail to mold the physical to itself, and

become manifest by unmistakeable tokens." (15)

"And now, Mistress Prynne," said old Roger Chillingworth, as he was hereafter to be named, "I leave thee alone; alone with th infant, and the scarlet letter! How is it, Hester? Doth thy sentence bind thee to wear the token in thy sleep? Art thou not afraid of nightmares and hideous dreams?"

"Why dost thou smile so at me?" inquired Hester, troubled at the expression of his eyes. "Art thou like the Black Man that haunts the forest round about us? Hast thou enticed me into a bond that will prove the ruin of my soul?"

"Not thy soul," he answered, with another smile. "No, not thine!" (16)

"Old Roger Chillingworth, with a smile on his face, whispered something in the young clergyman's ear. Hester Prynne looked at the man of skill, and even then, with her fate hanging in the balance, was startled to perceive that a change had come over his features, - how much uglier they were, - how his dark complexion seemed to have grown duskier, and his figure more mishappened, - since the days when she had familiarly known him." (17)

"A large number.....affirmed that Roger Chillingworth's aspect had undergone a remarkable change while he had dwelt in

15. *ibid.* 81.

16. *ibid.* 99, 100.

17. *ibid.* 139.

town, and especially since his abode with Mr. Dimmesdale. At first his expression had been calm, meditative, so scholar-like. Now, there was something ugly and evil in his face, which they had not previously noticed, and which grew still the more obvious to sight the oftener they looked upon him." (18)

"The physician advanced directly in front of his patient, laid his hand upon his bosom, and thrust aside the vestment that, hitherto, had always covered it even from the professional eye.

"Then, indeed, Mr. Dimmesdale shuddered, and slightly stirred.

"Then after a brief pause, the physician turned away.

"But with what a wild look of wonder, joy and horror! With what a ghastly rapture, as it were, too mighty to be expressed only by the eye and features and therefore bursting forth through the whole ugliness of his figure, and making itself even riotously manifest by the extravagant gestures by which he threw up his arms toward the ceiling, and stamped his foot upon the floor! Had a man seen old Roger Chillingworth at the moment of his ecstasy, he would have had no need to ask how Satan comports himself when a precious human soul is lost to heaven, and won into his kingdom." (19)

18. *ibid.* 156.

19. *ibid.*, 169.

"But the former aspect of an intellectual and studious man, calm and quiet, which was what she best remembered in him, had altogether vanished, and been succeeded by an eager searching, almost fierce, yet carefully guarded look. It seemed to be his wish and purpose to mark this expression with a smile; but the latter played him false, and flickered over his visage so derisively, that the spectator could see his blackness all the better for it..... In a word, old Roger was a striking evidence of man's faculty of transforming himself into a devil, if he will only, for a reasonable space of time, undertake a devil's office." (20)

Many other passages could be quoted to show the deterioration of the character of Roger Chillingworth. There is no doubt that, after he dedicated himself to the work of doing vengeance to the father of Hester's child, cunning began little by little to leave this mark upon his features. It was through the portrayal of the havoc wrought by his evil desires upon his features that Hawthorne points out the gradual decline of Roger Chillingworth from a quiet, studious peaceable man to a repelling and lost creature. In Chillingworth we have an example of everything that Ruskin said made any trace of beauty impossible in man. In Chillingworth was a smouldering anger, hidden by cunning and deceit which little by little left their mark upon him. There was too the immediate presence and operation of the sin that caused him to seek every moment the torment of

20. *ibid.* 204, 205.

a fellow man. Again he was deeply stamped with the imprint of cruelty. Finally this whole passion in its vehemence showed a want of mental control.

As we pass from the consideration of the theoretic to the imaginative faculty we cease to regard the perfection of the setting and characters of the novel and come to regard the means taken by the writer that he might present his work in a manner pleasing to the reader.

Ruskin has said that the test of the success of the operations of the associative imagination is to judge if the object presented possesses naturalness, simplicity, harmony, and truth. Though the problem and particularly the treatment of Hester is uncommon, there is the utmost naturalness and simplicity in Hawthorne's relation of the tale. At the very beginning of the story in a description of the prison and the market place with its crowd of self-righteous but rather callous individuals, Hawthorne has set before us briefly but clearly the atmosphere of the place and the temper of the people among whom Hester was to live out her punishment. "The crowd was somber and grave. The unhappy culprit sustained herself as best she might under the heavy weight of a thousand unrelenting eyes, all fastened upon her and concentrated at her bosom. It was almost intolerable to be borne." (21)

The description of the relentlessness of the Puritans in their treatment of Hester during the earlier years of her

21. *ibid.* 78

punishment is given plainly and, as we know, from the study of their characteristics, truthfully. The jailer, in leading Hester forth on that first day had cried out as was the custom: "A blessing on the righteous colony of Massachusetts, where iniquity is dragged out into the sunshine! Come along, Madame Hester, and show your scarlet letter in the market place!" (22) From that moment the Puritans never failed to show that they looked upon Hester as a criminal. "Continually, and in a thousand ways did she feel the innumerable throbs of anguish that had been so cunningly contrived for her by the undying, the ever-active sentence of the Puritan tribunal. Clergymen paused in the street to address words of exhortation, that brought a crowd with its mingled grin and frown, around the poor, sinful woman. If she entered a church, trusting to share the Sabbath smile of the Universal Father, it was often her mishap to find herself the text of the discourse. She grew to have a dread of children; for they had imbibed from their parents a vague idea of something horrible in this dreary woman, gliding silently through the town, with never any companion but one only child. Therefore, first allowing her to pass, they pursued her at a distance with shrill cries and the utterance of a word that had no distinct purport to their own minds, that was none the less terrible to her as proceeding from lips that babbled it unconsciously. It seemed to argue so wide a diffusion of her shame,

22. *ibid.* 75.

that all nature knew of it." (23)

It might have pleased us more and given us a more pleasant sense of the kindness of human nature had the Puritans been less harsh in their treatment of Hester and quicker to perceive the sterling qualities that she possessed. But had Hawthorne made the mistake of showing them as thus early relenting he might have made a more romantic story, but he would have introduced in it a note of untruth and a discord that would have ruined the harmony of this story of the Puritan days.

Hawthorne again shows rare skill in the work of his associative imagination in his treatment of the hold that Roger Chillingworth came to gain little by little over the minister. We must agree with him when he writes: "All this was accomplished with a subtlety so perfect that the minister, though he had constantly a dim perception of some evil influence watching over him could never gain a knowledge of its actual nature." (24)

Even nature seemed to add to the harmony of melancholy that permeates the whole book, and it does so in such a manner that we never question its brooding. "Continually, indeed, as it stole onward, the streamlet kept up a babble kind, quiet, soothing, but melancholy, like the voice of a young child that was spending its infancy without playfulness, and knew not how to be merry among sad acquaintance and events of somber hue.

23. *ibid.* 109.

24. *ibid.* 171.

"O brook! O foolish and tiresome little brook!" cried Pearl, after listening awhile to its talk. "Why art thou so sad? Pluck up a spirit, and do not be all the time sighing and murmuring."

"But the brook, in the course of its little life-time among the forest-trees, had gone through so solemn an experience that it could not help talking about it, and seemed to have nothing else to say. Pearl resembled the brook, in as much as the current of her life gushed from a well-spring as mysterious and had flowed through scenes shadowed as heavily with gloom. But, unlike the little stream, she danced and sparkled, and prattled airily along her course.

"What does this sad little brook say, Mother?" inquired she.

"If thou hadst a sorrow of thine own, the brook might tell thee of it," answered her mother, "even as it is telling me of mine!" (25)

Hawthorne gives proof of his penetrative imagination throughout The Scarlet Letter, and particularly in two chapters, the one entitled, 'Hester and Her Needle', and the other, 'The Interior Of A Heart'. In the first of these chapters the author analyzes the emotions of Hester. In the analysis Hawthorne delves deeply into Hester's mind, at the same time avoiding a burden of detail. He speaks of her feelings and of her life, he tells us of the punishment that she underwent daily by being

25. *ibid.* 224.

deprived of normal social relations with her fellow beings and the peculiar torture that she endured. He not only shows how her condition influenced her exterior actions but points out as well its effect even upon her imagination. When Hawthorne finishes this chapter he has left no obscurity in our mind regarding Hester.

In the second chapter mentioned above Hawthorne submits Mr. Dimmesdale to an equally penetrating search. He tells us the troubled state of his conscience and how not only the evil attentions of Roger Chillinworth but also how the veneration of his parishoners, tormented him. There is perhaps not to be found elsewhere in English literature and surely not in American a truer portrait of an uneasy conscience.

The thoroughness of the examination of Hester and Mr. Dimmesdale removes them far from the realms of fancy. Little Pearl, on the other hand, is a creature of pure fancy. The descriptions of her are full of detail and are concerned primarily with outward signs of emotions. Again the descriptions, as Pearl herself, are restless; if we refer to the outline of the penetrative imagination we will notice that she fulfills perfectly the requirements that a figure of fancy should possess. And this is precisely what Hawthorne intended her to be, for Pearl is in the story as a symbol and the tangible evidence of the sin of her parents. Not once does Hawthorne attempt to analyze her as a character.

## The Return of the Native

The Return of the Native by Thomas Hardy is a study of a small group of the inhabitants of Egdon Heath. Some of them look upon the Heath with genuine affection, and others regard it only as a dreary waste. Chance, here, as in all the novels of Hardy, plays an important part.

In examining the book for evidences of typical beauty, we find that it possesses definitely infinity, repose, symmetry, unity, and moderation. At the very beginning the author gives us a sense of infinity when he writes: "The heaven being spread with this pallid screen and the earth with the darkest vegetation their meeting-line at the horizon was clearly marked. In such contrast the Heath wore the appearance of an installment of night which had taken up its place before its astronomical hour was come: darkness had to a great extent arrived here on, while day stood distinct in the sky." (26)

"Twilight combined with the scenery of Egdon Heath to evolve a thing majestic without severity, impressive without showiness, emphatic in its admonitions, grand in its simplicity". (27)

"While she looked a heron arose on that side of the sky and flew on with his face towards the sun. He had come dripping wet from some pool in the valley, and as he flew the edges and lining of his wings, his thighs, and his breast were so

26. Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, 3.

27. *ibid.* 4.

caught by the bright sunbeams that he appeared as if formed of burnished silver. Upon the zenith where he was, seemed a free and happy place, away from all contact with the earthly ball to which he was pinioned; and she wished that she could arise uncrushed from its surface and fly as he flew then." (28)

"A consciousness of a vast impassivity in all which lay around him took possession even of Yeobright in his wild walk toward Alderworth. He had once before felt in his own person this overpowering of the fervid by the inanimate; but then it had tended to enervate a passion far sweeter than that which at present pervaded him. It was once when he stood parting from Eustacia in the moist still levels beyond the hills." (29)

"They stood silently looking upon Eustacia, who, as she lay there still in death, eclipsed all her living phases. Pallor did not include all the quality of her complexion, which seemed more than whiteness; it was almost light. The expression of her finely carved mouth was pleasant, as if a sense of dignity had just compelled her to leave off speaking. Eternal rigidity had seized upon it in a momentary transition between fervor and resignation. Her black hair was looser now than either of them had ever seen it before and surrounded her brow like a forest. The stateliness of look which had been almost too marked for a dweller in a country domicile had at

28. *ibid.* 343.

29. *ibid.* 385.

last found an artistically happy background." (30)

Unity in The Return of the Native is subjectional for the Heath subjects all the characters to its influence. Those who love the Heath as Thomasin, Clym Yeobright, and Diggory Venn were in true sympathy with it and to them it became a source of peace; but to Wildeve and Eustacia, the Heath was brooding and menacing and seemed only to accentuate their restlessness. Hardy said of Eustacia: "To dwell on a heath without studying its meanings was like wedding a foreigner without learning his tongue. The subtle beauties of the Heath were lost to Eustacia; she only caught its vapors. An environment that would have made a contented woman a poet, a suffering woman a devotee, a pious woman a psalmist, even a giddy woman thoughtful, made a rebellious woman saturnine." (31)

It was this same dislike of the Heath that caused Eustacia to marry Clym with the hope that he would take her to Paris. His failure to do so was one of the chief reasons for the dissatisfaction which led to the chain of circumstances bringing about the final catastrophe.

While the whole setting of the story is one of repose, the repose is most evident because from the beginning Hardy stresses its opposite, energy. "To do things musingly, and by small degrees, seemed, indeed, to be a duty in the Egdon valley

30. *ibid.* 384.

31. *ibid.* 81.

at this transitional hour, for there was that in the condition of the Heath itself which resembled protracted and halting dubiousness. It was the quality of the repose appertaining to the scene. This was not the repose of actual stagnation, but the apparent repose of incredible slowness. A condition of healthy life so nearly resembling the torpor of death is a noticeable thing of its sort; to exhibit the inertness of the desert and at the same time to be exercising powers akin to those of the meadow, and even of the forest, awakened in those who thought of it the attentiveness usually engendered by understatement and reserve." (32)

Hardy exercises moderation throughout the book in his treatment of its background. He is never extravagant in his description of it, although he seldom allows us to forget it.

Before considering the evidences of vital beauty in the main characters, we shall consider briefly the character of Christain Cattle. Christain is an example of the ideal in man completely destroyed by fear. A simple creature, at best, he excites more scorn than pity by his constant worryings. "How dark 'tis now the fire's gone down!" said Christain Cattle, looking behind him with his hare eyes. "Don't ye think we'd better get home-along, neighbors? The heath isn't haunted, I know; but we'd better get home." (33)

32. *ibid.* 12

33. *ibid.* 32.

"Coffins, where?" inquired Christian, drawing nearer.

"Have the ghost of anyone appeared to anybody, Mr. Fairway?"

"No, No. Don't let your mind so mislead your ears, Christian; and be a man," said Timothy reproachfully.

"I will," said Christian. "But now I think o't my shadder last night looked just the shape of a coffin. What is it a sign of when your shade's like a coffin, neighbors? It can't be nothing to be afeared of, I supposed?" (34)

"Standing about the room was the little knot of men who formed the chief part of the Egdon coterie, there being present Fairway himself, Grandfer Cantle, Humphrey, Christian, and one or two turf-cutters. It was a warm day, and the men were as a matter of course in shirt-sleeves, except Christian, who always had a nervous fear of parting with a scrap of his clothin' when in anybody's house but his own." (35)

Regardless of the fact that Christian is a kindly and devoted worker of the Yeobright's, this constantly recurring fear which he is forever expressing causes us to consider him a greater simpleton than he actually was.

Clym Yeobright was a man with an ideal. It was this which caused him to leave Paris and to return to Egdon in the hope of being able to do some good to its inhabitants by teaching them. His idealism was marked on his features.

34. *ibid.* 165.

35. *ibid.* 474.

"The face was well shaped, even excellently. But the mind within was beginning to use it as a mere waste tablet whereon to trace its idiosyncrasies as they developed themselves. The beauty here visible would in no time be ruthlessly overrun by its parasite, thought, which might just as well have fed upon a plainer exterior where there was nothing it could harm." (36)

Clym's idealism was an unselfish one, and one which made him ready to sacrifice himself for the good of others. "Yea-bright loved his kind. He had a conviction that the want of most men was knowledge of a sort which brings wisdom rather than affluence. He wished to raise the less at the expense of individuals rather than individuals at the expense of the class. What was more, he was ready at once to be the first unit sacrificed." (37)

There is much to admire in Clym when we first meet him, much that leads us to judge his character as beautiful according to the plan of Ruskin. If we follow this plan, however, in judging him throughout that part of his life that Hardy gives us, we find a gradual change in him. At the beginning, he seemed to possess a control over his emotions that would be sufficient to keep him the ideal character through pain and sorrow. We see something of this ideality expressed in the following two quotations. The first expresses the love between Clym and his mother; the second, something of his philosophy

36. *ibid.* 161.

37. *ibid.* 203.

of hardship.

"The love between the young man and his mother was strangely invisible now. Of love it may be said, the less earthly the less demonstrative. In its absolutely indestructible form it reaches a profundity in which all exhibition of itself is painful. It was so with these. Had conversations between them been overheard, people would have said, 'How cold they are to each other!' " (38)

"Yeobright placed his hand upon her arm. 'Now don't you suppose, my inexperienced girl, that I cannot rebel, in high Promethian fashion, against the gods and fate as well as you. I have felt more steam and smoke of that sort than you have ever heard of, but the more I see of life the more do I perceive that there is nothing particularly great in its greatest walks, and therefore nothing particularly small in mine of furze-cutting. If I feel that the greatest blessings vouchsafed to us are not very valuable, how can I feel it to be any great hardship when they are taken away? So I sing to pass the time. Have you indeed lost all tenderness for me, that you begrudge me a few cheerful moments?' " (39)

After the death of his mother unfortunate as it was in fact and in circumstances, Clym failed to show sufficient courage to overcome his sorrow, great though it was.

38. *ibid.* 222.

39. *ibid.* 302.

"Is it you, Eustacia?" he said as he sat down.

"Yes, Clym. I have been down to the gate. The moon is shining beautifully, and there is not a leaf stirring."

"Shining, is it? What's the moon to a man like me? Let it shine - let anything be, so that I never see another day!.. Eustacia, I don't know where to look: my thoughts go through me like swords. O, if any man wants to make himself immortal by painting a picture of wretchedness, let him come here." (40)

"Yeobright's manner had been so quiet, he had uttered so few syllables since his reappearance, than Venn imagined him resigned. It was only when they had left the room and stood upon the landing that the true state of his mind was apparent. Here he said, with a wild smile, inclining his head toward the chamber in which Eustacia lay, 'She is the second woman I have killed this year. I was a great cause of my mother's death; and I am the chief cause of hers'.

'How?' said Venn.

'I spoke cruel words to her, and she left my house. I did not invite her back till it was too late. It is I who ought to have drowned myself. It would have been a charity to the living had the river overwhelmed me and borne her up. But I cannot die. Those who ought to have lived lie dead; and here am I alive!'

'But you can't charge yourself with crimes in that way,' said Venn. 'You may as well say that the parents be the cause

40. *ibid.* 366.

of a murder by the child, for without the parents the child would never had been begot.'

'Yes, Venn, that is very true; but you don't know all the circumstances. If it had pleased God to put an end to me it would have been a good thing for all. But I am getting used to the horror of my existence. They say that a time comes when men laugh at misery through long acquaintance with it. Surely that time will come to me!'

'Your aim has always been good,' said Venn. 'Why should you say such desperate things?'

'No, they are not desperate. They are only hopeless; and my great regret is that for what I have done no man or law can punish me!' " (41)

These last attributes of mind show in Clym a want of reason and faith, indeed, a selfishness which shows him incapable of bearing the trials that came to him. His passion is that of a weak man, and while he ceases to openly pity himself, he retains to the end an air of self-sacrifice that makes him unideal in our eyes.

Eustacia Vye, although physically beautiful, fails to possess real beauty. She fails primarily because pride and selfishness have made their imprint upon her. At no time do we discover in her character the saving influences of reason and faith.

41. *ibid.* 449.

She has no love for her surroundings, nor does she attempt as most people do, to attain a sympathy with the setting of her life. "I cannot endure the heath, except in its purple season. The heath is a cruel task master to me." (42)

Again, she speaks concerning her fellow beings and nature:

"I have not much love for my fellow creatures. Sometimes I quite hate them."

"Still I think that if you were to hear my scheme you might take an interest in it. There is no use in hating people - if you hate anything, you should hate what produced them.

"Do you mean Nature? I hate her already." (43)

Perhaps Eustacia's selfishness expressed in her self-pity is the quality that most detracts from her. To give but a few examples of this:

"No, it is my general way of looking. I think it arises from my feeling sometimes an agonizing pity for myself that I ever was born." (44)

"One week and another wore on, and nothing seemed to lighten the gloom of the young people. Dreadful imaginings occurred to Eustacia, but she carefully refrained from uttering them to her husband. Suppose he should become blind, or, at all events, never recover sufficient strength of sight to engage in an occupation which would be congenial to her feelings and conduce to her removal from this lonely dwelling among the hills?

42. *ibid.* 220.

43. *ibid.* 219.

44. *ibid.* 232.

That dream of beautiful Paris was not likely to cohere into substance in the presence of this misfortune". (45)

"Eustacia walked out alone in the direction of Yeobright's place of work. He was busily chopping away at the furze, a long row of fagots which stretched downward from his position representing the labor of the day. He did not observe her approach, and she stood close to him and heard his undercurrent of song. It shocked her. To see him there a poor afflicted man, earning money by the sweat of his brow, had at first moved her to tears; but to hear him sing and not at all rebel against an occupation which, however satisfactory to himself, was degrading to her as an educated lady-wife, wounded her through..... It was bitterly plain to Eustacia that he did not care much about social favor; and the proud fair woman bowed her head and wept in sick despair at thought of the blasting effect upon her own life of that mood and condition in him." (46)

"Why will you force me, Clym, to say bitter things? I deserve pity as much as you. As much? - I think I deserve more. For you can sing! It would be a strange hour which should catch me singing under such a cloud as this!" (47)

"How I have tried and tried to be a splendid woman, and how destiny has been against me!.....I do not deserve my lot!"

45. *ibid.* 295.

46. *ibid.* 299, 300.

47. *ibid.* 301.

she cried in a frenzy of bitter revolt. 'O, the cruelty of putting me into this ill-conceived world! I was capable of much; but I have been injured and blighted and crushed by things beyond my control! O, how hard it is of Heaven to devise such tortures for me, who have done no harm to Heaven at all!'

(48)

Eustacia, through her attitude, is for us a perfect example of the lack of vital beauty. The influence of her mind showed itself incapable of overcoming the difficulties that life offered her. Had there been any trace of unselfishness in her, she would have been able to rise above the trouble that came to her and Clym. She married him only because she wished in her pride to show Wildeve that he meant little to her; and, although she had some love for Clym, it was not a pure love but one rather that looked for her own satisfaction, in the hope of being able to leave the heath for Paris with him. Never being able to find any weakness in her own attitude, but blaming her surroundings, her husband, and even God for her unhappiness, she fell into final despair.

The two other main characters of the book, Diggory Venn and Thomasin, Wildeve's wife, both possess beauty. Hardy, however, does not analyze their characters to any great extent as he was always more interested in pessimism and misfortune than in the fulfillment of love and its happiness. He makes it clear, nevertheless, that both Diggory and Thomasin are persons whose

48. *ibid.* 422.

lives are directed in a reasonable manner. Diggory was constant in his unselfish devotion to Thomasin even after he had lost the hope of marrying her. Thomasin, too, although she did not love Wildeve, said nothing to anyone in disparagement of him, but rather lived as his devoted wife.

In this novel Hardy shows that he possesses a lively associative imagination for he groups the various characters and incidents in a convincing bond of unity and harmony.

Because chance plays such an important part in this novel the acquisition of unity and harmony was no easy task. Had chance seemed to impose itself on the events one single time in such a way that it would disturb the inevitableness of the tragedy discord would have resulted. Beginning with the mistake concerning the marriage license at Anglebury until the last appearance of chance in the book, chance always appears naturally. The mistake concerning the marriage license at Anglebury brought together Diggory Venn and Thomasin; and it was this meeting that reawakened Diggory's interest in Thomasin and her fate and gave him the part to play that he had during the novel. The first meeting of Eustacia and Clytemnestra at Mistover was hastened by the accident of the well-bucket. It was the chance meeting of Eustacia and Wildeve at the dance at East-Egdon that led to his again paying special attention to her. This renewed attention, in turn, brought him to her home at Alderworth on the day that Mrs. Yeobright chose to call, and it was his presence there that brought about the fatal mistake

of not opening the door to Clym's mother. Chance again led Charley to light the fire on the heath near Mistover which Wildeve took to be a signal for him to come to Eustacia. He indeed came and they planned her leaving Egdon. The fact that she did not receive Clym's letter was due to the forgetfulness of Mr. Fairway and her grandfather's mistaken notion that she was asleep. Had she received this letter she would not have ventured out to her death. These are but a few of the instances of chance in the book.

While Hardy only penetrates deeply into the emotions of two of the characters, Eustacia and Clym, there remains nothing obscure in the reader's mind concerning them. Clym shows his emotion and expresses it more freely than Eustacia, yet there is truth in his manner and we never have the feeling that too much attention has been given to outward signs.

## Windswept

One of the outstanding qualities of typical beauty in Windswept by Mary Ellen Chase is its unity. It possesses subj-ctional unity, unity of origin, and unity of membership. All its characters were subjected to the influence of Windswept, the house on a high promontory of land on the coast of Maine miles from villages or towns. The chief characters of the novel all love Windswept and are deeply influenced by it. Many of them possess unity of origin in that they are the descendents of Philip Marston. "John Marston never forgot that night in the cabin among the spruces above the dark, swirling water. Nor did those who came after and because of him ever forget it. They were always being brought up sharply by the difficulty that not one of them had actually been there; and yet the reality of it became as so much a part of their conscious experience from the beginning that they never really believed that truth, much as it reproved them. Eileen Marston, once she had come to Windswept, found her presence in the cabin on that night the easiest part to play of all the parts in the drama she was forever playing. Ann Marston still believes that she was there. Young Philip Marston was all his short life so much there that Jan's face in that firelight was the last thing he saw as he died Belleau Wood. Rod even placed the dogs there with him, Giles and Friday and Pippin; and when he was at last convinced after years of bickering that Julie had as much right

to the claim of her presence there as he had of his own, he grudgingly allowed her a place there also. For from out of the bright and dark moments of that night windswept and all those who make its story come." (49)

The setting of this novel on the coast of Maine gave Miss Chase ample opportunity to impress her readers with the atmosphere of infinity. In such a setting it was simple to give suggestions of space and to note gradations of shades and color. Among the numerous examples of the quality of infinity in the book we will quote but a few. "It is safe to assume that there is no sound there this morning except those of the wind and water. There is surely no human sound.....If there are hunters about, they are miles eastward in the woods and marshes. The snow has discouraged any birds that there might be. The gulls have gone into the bays where there is a chance of food. The curlews have long since gone now that the blueberries are gathered. Crows do not often cry above so treeless a space of land as Windswept.

"But the sea thunders against the high, gaunt boulders and pounds the shingle below the headland, pulling back the small stones with a roar, hurling them forward, forever rounding and polishing them. It reverberates in the fissures and openings among the rocks with a roll of drumbeats throbbing for miles as the surging tide inundates each hollow and crevice

49. Mary Ellen Chase, Windswept, 63, 64.

of the massive, uneven coastline. And as for the wind, there is no stopping it either in sound or in volume." (50)

"Then they all stood together by the open grave, and John Marston read the words that Jan had marked in his book.

"It was the Collect for Advent Sunday. In all the years afterwards that they read it in the chapel at Windswept, which they were later to build, its prayer for grace to cast away the works of darkness and to put upon us all the armour of light now in the time of this mortal life, they were to see that little group of men standing about John Marston on that vast brown summit of land beneath that whitening sky. They were to hear his voice sounding clear and strong in the still air, as Jan told them it had sounded, reading the words about the quick and the dead, about rising to life immortal, about corruption and incorruption, the Resurrection and the Life.

"The sun came suddenly out, bright and warm, as John Marston finished his reading. It made the red flowers which Jan had held in his hand, glow above the brown earth. It made the wide waste of sea before them blue; it sharpened the distant Mt. Desert hills." (51)

Repose or peace, as infinity, is strongly marked throughout the book. The repose of the characters is all the more noticeable as it is never far removed from the energy and

50. *ibid.* 20.

51. *ibid.* 75, 76.

activity of life. The quietness of the scene in which we first meet Ann Marston and Julie, rudely shattered as it was, is quite typical of the contrast of repose and vitality that continues throughout the book. "The women in the car were markedly of different age.....yet there existed between them that rare harmony which, unhampered by the confusing reservations and expectations of blood relationship, sometimes exists between women of disparate ages. Theirs had been a long association,.....begun on the wildest of autumn nights, in a place far away from the sleeping German countryside;..... they had been driving for sometime in silence, enjoying the drowsy, unoccupied country, the warmth of the sun, even the almost imperceptible purr of the engine. It was one of those days when time seems graciously to halt when a sense of waiting is welcome and inevitable, when the concerns of the world are not so much distant as completely absent, and when an odd security enfolds one,.....Then suddenly from somewhere on the road eastward came a confused rumble, growing constantly heavier in volume, shattering the silence of the land like an approaching earthquake.....There was nothing in sight, but the sound continued, the rumble increasing now to a steady throbbing, punctuated by quick explosive beats.....They were beats of motorcycles, which soon burst into full view, a contingent of five ahead, mounted by swift, swooping Centaurs in goggles and steel helmets.

"Now the lorries were hurtling past, one by one, in

mathematical precision, in exact speed, none faster, none slower, none deviating an inch toward left or right from the one ahead. Between each two of them thudded a motorcycle, like a period following a unity of heavy, lumbering prose, a period exactly placed, only marking no completion, thudding on and on.....

"When the shattered silence had resembled itself and again lay over the land, the girl at the wheel of the car made no movement toward starting it again.....This terror which had swept seemingly from nowhere across a still, peaceful land had swept them elsewhere; and they had returned in instinctive adherence to all those things which had shaped and anchored their thoughts for many years and from which, for them, there could be no release." (52)

Ruskin has said that we gain the idea of purity from a sense of unimpeded light. Of the many examples of this quality in Windswept we will quote but one; "I clamored up the rocks as quickly as I could and found myself suddenly in a warm hayfield flooded with sun. There was a convent near, and some nuns in bright blue habits were gathering in the hay, pitching it upon a rack drawn by white oxen. I don't know why a scene like that should have so impressed a child, but I have never forgotten how I stood at the cliff's edge in the sun and watched those nuns. They and the field were so flooded with light that ever since then all strong, clear sunlight,

52. *ibid.* 3, 4, 5, 7, 9.

wherever I have seen it, has been the sunlight in that noon-day field. All the light since the world began seemed concentrated there in that one field, and even as a child I think I felt that." (53)

In Windswept as in every story of life, there are moments of great anxiety; and in handling such moments, there is always a temptation for the author to step beyond the bounds of good taste, and hence to offend against the quality of moderation. Miss Chase never offends against moderation. We will quote two passages to show her use of it. The first concerns the time of the birth of young Philip Marston and the second concerns the reception of the news of his death in the last months of the World War. "And yet Philomena knew what at birth Death was close, out of sight and yet there, waiting to note the strength of the living, ready to spring if that strength faltered. She would tell that listening Death, she said to herself, how many times she, Philomena Pisek, had outwitted Him." (54)

"Even death with all its heartbreaks had not meant disorder, or even, strange as it seemed, the cruel shattering of one's hopes. It had not meant resentment, or that almost as bitter effect of death, resignation..... What had it meant then, he wondered, trying again to put into tangible thought

53. *ibid.* 285.

54. *ibid.* 230.

what death had meant.

"Pain, then, first of all. There was no mistaking pain, no sublimation for its strangling hold. There it was, gnawing at one's body, filling one's eyes, actual physical pain at one's throat, in one's heart..... And outlasting the pain, inundating it in quick healing flood, moments and hours of tenderness for those who suffered the same agony, Eileen, Jan, Philomena, Ann, and finally, beyond them, for all everywhere who knew pain. There was gratitude also in this suffering, the almost instinctive gratitude that one could know grief.....

"This grief, which death had granted, was simple in the old classical sense of simplicity. It was a gift bestowed by life, forever incomplete without the dignity of suffering."  
(55)

When we came to consider the vital beauty of the characters and the powers of imagination of the author of Windswept, we find that there is more realism in the development of this novel than in either The Scarlet Letter or The Return of the Native. We learn to know the characters not so much by what they think and say as by their mannerisms and habits. There is throughout, however, naturalness, simplicity, harmony and truth. When Eileen dies, her son, Rod, says little and we are given little concerning his thoughts. In spite of this, we have a good idea of how he feels. The idea, however,

55. *ibid.* 350, 351.

comes more from our imagination than from Rod himself or from the imagination of the author. "Wait a minute - I know exactly where it is. I'll get it for you." (Eileen said.)

"She got up quickly from the stone shelf, Roderick and Julie, intent on their programs, did not see her stumble and fall. When they looked up, startled by the sudden noise, she was lying on the floor, white and still.

"Roderick Marston always remembered how the sun came through the fog, seemingly at that very moment, so that when he and Julie saw her there, the sunlight lay full upon her face, on her mouth with its eager smile." (56)

"He did feel better in the cool, twilight air. It was better to walk than to go to bed. Did life ever slip back to be the same? he wondered. Would things go on again, lessons and hauling traps, games, sailing, reading at night? Or would things never be even partly the same again?" (57)

Perhaps the two characters who actually possess the greatest beauty for us in the whole book are Jan and Mrs. Haskell, and this, because we are given more of the motives which direct their lives. Both of these characters were ideal, each in their own way and we will give a few quotations first concerning Jan, and second, concerning Mrs. Haskell.

"It was not so much that Jan remembered the things of

56. *ibid.* 405.

57. *ibid.* 406.

the past; the wide plains reaching to the distant mountains; the hollyhocks in the angles of his father's white cottage; the mushrooms in the deep woods; the snow and cold and hunger. Rather he remembered what these things had done to him, the effect they had had upon him in quick moments of sorrow or anger or affection, which after all is the reward and meaning of memory to those who have the gift of understanding it. Time had pulled no dark curtain between the past and the present for Jan..... There was no sharp distinction between the old and the new for him." (58)

"Whenever he passed Philip Marston's grave on the way to and from his work, he felt gratitude that in a new land he was thus receiving again and retaining the blessings and realities of an old. Sometimes he felt like the first man to receive life and inhabit the earth; sometimes he felt like the last man alive, his power to complete in dignity and in solitude the brief cycle of existence." (59)

"By the time the spring darkness had fallen, Jan knew Anna's letter by heart. It was strange, he thought, as the stars came slowly out and the air grew cold, how one could never get oneself quite ready for sadness. One could know for months and years that sadness must come, and yet one was never ready for it when it came. All the good food a man could eat could not prepare his heart against its sickness.

58. *ibid.* 32.

59. *ibid.* 138.

All the good thoughts one could think of could not save one's mind from the pain which the very act of unmasked-for living made sure and certain. Even all the prayers one could say, in the woods, at his work, in the Holy Presence of God Himself, could not frame a wall so high and strong that suffering could not crawl above it." (60)

Not only in his thoughts but in his devoted service to the Marstons did Jan show himself to be ideal in perfectly fulfilling the duties of life.

"Mrs. Haskell always like to think of her mother's death.... The sick woman had been unconscious for hours..... But Mrs. Haskell always liked to remember how, just before her mother left a life, which through so many of its years had been inevitably not what she had wished it to be, she opened her eyes, pointing to a picture which hung on the wall opposite her bed, said in the clearest of voices; 'My dear, it's crooked. Straighten it for me.'

"Although Mrs. Haskell was by no means an imaginative woman in the full sense of the word, she was able to see what lay beyond and behind her mother's last words, to understand that to go into a world of order with any of her belongings in disorder or out of line would have been to her not only insufferable but sinful. When Mrs. Haskell sat in the afternoon in her immaculate kitchen.....she liked occasionally to recall her mother's death and to feel a neat pleasure in the

60. *ibid.* 181, 182.

knowledge that all her own belongings also, within her and without, as well as all those of others to whom she was responsible, were, in so far as she could manage, in seemliness and order." (61)

"I'm not one to stick my nose in other folks' business, but since you brought the subject up like, he meeches round in a way I don't like. He don't seem to have no drive in him, no git up and git. He slouches between the shoulders, an' he never picks up his leavin's. He don't put himself out for folks, don't have no respect for 'em.....

"Dick doesn't know about things. He meant nothing at all.

"Well, you can't go about this world meanin' nothin'. As I see it, you've got to mean somethin', an' the sooner the better. If you don't mean somethin', but just go about meanin' nothin', it's hard for other folks to get the right slant on you. I've said my say. Take it or leave it." (62)

Miss Chase shows herself the possessor of a lively imagination in her development of Mindswept. To this lonely spot on the Maine coast she has brought together a group of very diverse characters, and has given them to her readers with a naturalness and simplicity that is noteworthy. Jan and especially Philomena, although they are from another country and cling to many of its customs, fit into the scene without any

61. *ibid.* 148, 149.

62. *ibid.* 152, 153.

lack of harmony. Indeed they increase the harmony of the novel. Mrs. Haskell and Caleb Perkins, two natives of Maine, are thoroughly described in a perfectly natural manner. Although, as we have already mentioned, there is more realism in Windswept than in the other two novels treated, Miss Chase has given us no merely surface examination of the objects and personages of her novel. The detail is never confusing nor is there too great a stress on the outward signs of the emotions of the characters. If there be any fault, it is that of understatement rather than extravagance in language.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN  
APPLICATION TO POETRY

In the examination of The Lady of Shalott, (1) we will discover that one of its chief claims to beauty lies in its symmetry. This will be studied in detail, and the other qualities of typical beauty found in the poem will be pointed out at the end of the chapter.

Objectively, as in all poems, its total effect will be due to the qualities of typical beauty that will be found in (1) the idea or thought of the whole; (2) the choice and usage of words; (3) the rhythmical effect. Subjectively the effect will vary in different readers according to their appreciation of and susceptibility to these various elements, and the expression of the imagination of the writer.

The theme of The Lady of Shalott is particularly interesting, since the poem is based on a Catholic tale found in Conte Nouvelle Antiche. (2) It is the story of one consecrated to God looking back into the world and becoming unfaithful to her vows. The idea in The Lady of Shalott is apparent to a Catholic, but to those not familiar with the Catholic notion of vocation it is not apparent; and Edgar Allan Poe took this poem as an illustration of the power of "indefinitiveness" in poetry. If the true idea behind the poem is rejected by the

1. Alfred Tennyson, Poetical Works, 27.

2. Modern Language Review, Vol. V, pp. 530-31, 1910.

reader, they will create some occult or mystical half-understood symbolism in their minds to which the poem will appeal.

There are many beauties in the organization of the thought of the poem which appeal strongly to the esthetic sense. By organization is meant the subdivision and illustration of the thought, and the choice of symbols in which to clothe it that it may appeal not only to the mind but the imagination.

The choice and usage of words is also important. Words are chosen in poetry as having a wide imaginative connotation, and rarely for their precise denotation. This connotation itself is due to a number of elements, such as the sources of the word, its past usage, its association, its onomatopoeic quality. The sound of the word also is most important in forwarding the general effect. Its sound in relation to other nearby words is also vital; under this head come the phenomena of assonance, consonance, alliteration, and tone-color.

While the thought of a poem requires for its effectiveness that it be not only perceived but reflected on by the reader's mind at least to some extent, the rhythm of poetry, like that of music, need only be perceived by the senses, and in the majority of cases the mind does not advert to it with any degree of particularity. To understand this it is only necessary to reflect that precisely the same is true of the rhythm of music; few that hear the marked rhythm in a musical selection are able to pick out the rhythm of every particular instrument, of every voice, of every phrase, or even

to describe specifically the rhythm of the whole. The musician can by study indicate these, and they have their definite laws of composition; the student of poetry likewise can indicate all the rhythms of a poem, and the main purpose of this chapter is to point out how this is done in the Lady of Shalott, and how the rhythms add their part to the symmetry of the thought.

To show the perfect symmetry of this poem we will take the various units and indicate as briefly as possible the rhythm.

The largest space-unit is that of the four parts or stanza-groups. As might be expected, the thought in these groups shows progression, but not rhythm - the number of elements is too small to set up a sense of rhythm, and the development of the thought to its final unfolding does not allow of it. When we come to the stanzas, we find that these are patterned.

The turning point of the poem is almost exactly half way in it, forming a balance. It occurs when the will of the Lady first yields to the suggestion of the world:

"I am half sick of shadows," said

The Lady of Shalott.

By exactness of definition, we lose most of the imaginative content, but schematically we may call the two parts of the poem before this midway point, "Before the fall"; the two

parts after, "After the fall". We will call these B and A.

Again there are two viewpoints contrasted in the poem, the natural and the supernatural; or we may say, the usual and the mystic. Here again, by being too exact we lose imaginative content, as is inevitable to a certain extent in an analysis of this sort. We will refer to the natural and supernatural viewpoints as N and S.

Now examining the four parts, we note that the first is the natural life of those outside the tower, the second the supernatural of the Lady (unfallen) inside the tower; the third the natural life of the Lady (fallen) inside the tower; The fourth the supernatural life of the lady outside the tower. Here we have three balances patterned with each other, an example of what we might call "poetic counterpoint". Using I and O for inside and outside, we have for the four parts

N	S	I	O
B	B	A	A
O	I	I	O

Now examining the stanza content, we find that the first stanza of each unit gives us a scene. The second stanza gives the effect or "color" of the scene. The third stanza, the external movement of the scene. The fourth stanza, the internal or psychological effect of the scene. In the four stanza units, we find that the divisions fall in this order.

Thus in part one we have:

1. The scene: as it appears before the fall to the laity,  
outside the tower.

2. The effect: as it appears before the fall to the laity,  
outside the tower.
3. The movement: as it appears before the fall to the laity,  
outside the tower.
4. The psychological effect: as it appears before the fall  
to the laity, outside the  
tower.

In part two we have:

1. The scene: as it appears before the fall to the Lady,  
inside the tower.
2. The effect: as it appears before the fall to the Lady,  
inside the tower.
3. The movement: as it appears before the fall to the  
Lady, inside the tower, emphasizing the  
mystical separation of the Lady.
4. The psychological effect: as it appears before the fall  
to the Lady, inside the tower,  
both for good and for evil.

In part three we have:

1. The scene: as it appears after the fall to the Lady,  
inside the tower. (Note that she now sees  
Lancelot from a natural viewpoint.)
2. The effect: as it appears after the fall to the Lady,  
inside the tower.

3. The movement: as it appears after the fall to the Lady, inside the tower. (Note the "meteor" symbol indicating the sense of doom to the Lady.)
4. The psychological effect: as it appears after the fall to the Lady, inside the tower.
5. The curse: as it appears after the fall to the Lady, inside the tower. (Note that this the first part in which this fifth step has appeared; it occurs from here on as we shall see.)

In part four we have:

1. The scene: as it appears after the fall from the supernatural viewpoint, outside the tower. (Note that her vocation is indelible, and that despite the fall she is still the Lady of Shalott.)
2. The effect: as it appears after the fall from the supernatural viewpoint, outside the tower.
3. The movement: as it appears after the fall from the supernatural viewpoint, outside the tower. (Note the "snowy white" as again emphasizing her consecration.)
4. The psychological effect: as it appears after the fall from the supernatural viewpoint, outside the tower.

5. The curse: as it appears after the fall from the supernatural viewpoint, outside the tower.

(Note the connotation of the word "silent" as suggesting the awe.)

6. The possibility of redemption: as it appears after the

fall from the supernatural viewpoint, outside

the tower. (Note the suggestion of this by

the Sign of the Cross

and the prayer of Lancelot

who had seen her temptation.)

tation.)

Thus to make the presentation complete we may represent the rhythm scheme of the nineteen stanzas using the following key: S, scene; E, effect; M, movement; P, psychological effect; s, supernatural; N, natural; B, before the fall; A, after the fall; O, outside the tower; I, inside the tower; C, curse; R, possibility of redemption.

Reading horizontally-

S N B O	S s B I	S N A I	S s A O
E N B O	E s B I	E N A I	E s A O
M N B O	M s B I	M N A I	M s A O
P N B O	P s B I	P N A I	P s A O
		C N A I	C s A O
			R s A O

The above rhythm is what is termed a "thought-rhythm", for the recurrence in more or less regular sequences which we call

"rhythm" is a recurrence of thoughts. There is found another thought-rhythm associated with a sound-rhythm in the half-stanzas throughout the poem. Each stanza consists of a quatrain rhymed *aaaa*, followed by a refrain rhymed *b*; then a tercet rhymed *ccc*, followed by a refrain line rhymed *b*. The refrain lines are beautifully varied to avoid monotony, yet sufficiently alike to maintain their identity as a refrain.

The sound-rhythm in the half-stanza is thus unmistakable. But there is also a thought-rhythm here. The first refrain line in each stanza, except once, ends with the word Camelot. Camelot is the center of the world's business and in some way the quatrain has to do with this world's business. The second refrain line ends always with Shalott. Shalott is the anglicization of "celotto" or "cielotto" meaning "strong heaven". It denotes in the poem the devotion to heaven in which the Lady is or should be immersed. In some way the tercet in each stanza will be found to be linked to heaven's business. At the risk of becoming tedious, indication will be given of these contrasts in each stanza of the poem.

1. Road of commerce vs. island of prayer; earthly food in fields vs. lilies of heaven.
2. The restlessness of the world vs. the peace of God; wild life vs. flowers.
3. Trade vs. the cloister.

4. The cheer of youthful work (morning) vs. the reaping in the "uplands" of life's sheaves in the evening of life.
5. The secular whisper of the curse and the Lady's motive vs. the carefree trust of the Lady herself.
6. Shadows of the world along the highway vs. the good and evil in life.
7. Comforts of life vs. the loneliness of consecration.
8. Death for the world vs. love and marriage.
9. Brute force of knighthood vs. submission to the gentle through the Cross.
10. Beauty of Lancelot's equipment vs. its efficiency.
11. Unclouded earthly happiness vs. the presence of spiritual evil.
12. Lancelot seen in the sun vs. Lancelot seen in the mirror or prayer.
13. What the Lady gains of earth vs. what she loses of heaven.
14. The threat of nature vs. the protection of her vocation.
15. Despair vs. resignation.
16. Death in life vs. Life in death.
17. Despair in life vs. hope in death.
18. The dead vs. the living.
19. Fear vs. charity.

At the end of stanza one in part three Lancelot takes the place of Camelot at the end of the refrain line. This breaks the monotony but it also presents Lancelot as the embodiment

of the world represented by Camelot brought near to sweep the Lady from her hold..

The line-rhythm is a rhythm partly of time, partly of sound, and is marked by the rhymes or recurrences of vowel sounds. The rhyme is the same throughout each half-stanza, and this emphasizing the unity of the half-stanzas, and, at the same time, emphasizing the balance between the two parts of the stanzas.

Within the lines we have the phrase-rhythm. Where the two halves of a line are balanced against each other there is no denying that a rhytmical effect is produced. When this effect is repeated over and over by the balancing of the majority of lines, a true sense of rhythm exists.

There is also thought-rhythm in this balancing. If the balancing was merely a customary pause in the middle of the line, or the balancing of assonant vowels against each other, it would be a sound rhythm. But in seven of the nineteen first lines, eleven of the nineteen second lines, and so on, we have a thought contrast between the first half of the line and the second half; these might not of themselves, being in the minority, be sufficient to establish a sense of rhythm, but they greatly reinforce the phrase-rhythm.

The stress-rhythm, falling as it does on the accented syllables, emphasizes the rhythm of the meter. Now there are many degrees of stress while the number of feet in the line,

on the other hand, is usually constant. This gives rise to a distinction which the ear readily conceives between the meter-rhythm and the stress-rhythm and greatly affects what we may call the "expression" of the line.

We have tried to show the perfect symmetry that is to be found in The Lady of Shalott. This symmetry is derived from the balance between the two parts of the poem, the two parts of each stanza, and the two parts even of each line. We have also endeavored to show that there is a balance not only in the mechanical structure of these parts but even in the thoughts expressed in them.

Although we will not enter into as great detail in pointing out the other qualities of typical beauty besides symmetry we will endeavor to show definitely that they exist in The Lady of Shalott.

The idea of infinity comes to us through the expression of the notion of space, and through gradations of shade and color, and finally through contrast. There are numerous examples of these in this poem. In the very first stanza, space is suggested in the lines: "On either side the river lie long fields of barley and of rye, that clothe the field and meet the sky". In the same stanza, we read: "and up and down the people go, gazing where the lilies blow, round an island there below". In the first instance the idea of distant space is given as we gaze over the vast fields stretching to the horizon. In the second instance space is suggested when

Tennyson writes that we look down on the island.

Again space is suggested in the eleventh stanza "in the blue unclouded weather" which gives us a picture of the distances of the atmosphere unimpeded by any cloud-formations. In the thirteenth stanza in the description of the immediate falling of the curse is evidently the work of some unseen power: "Out flew the web and floated wide; the mirror crack- ed from side to side; 'the curse is come upon me', cried the Lady of Shalott!" In the description of the storm in the fourteenth stanza, distance is implied in the line, "the pale yellow woods were waning". A final example of the sug- gestion of space is made at the beginning of the description of the Lady's journey to Camelot, in the first line of the fifteenth stanza: "and down the river's dim expanse".

In pointing out the use that Tennyson makes of the grad- ations of shade and color, the number of the stanza will be indicated together with the quotation containing the above mentioned gradations.

II. "Four gray walls, and four gray towers,  
Overlook a space of flowers.

VII. "Sometimes a curly shephard-lad,  
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,  
Goes by to tower'd Camelot;  
Or sometimes thro' the mirror blue  
The knights come riding two by two.

- VIII. "For often thro' the silent nights  
A funeral, with plumes and lights  
And music, went to Camelot.
- IX. "The sun came dazzling through the leaves,  
And flamed upon the brazen greaves  
Of bold Sir Lancelot.  
A red-cross knight forever kneel'd  
To a lady in a shield,  
That sparkled on the yellow field,  
Beside remote Shalott.
- XI. "All in the blue unclouded weather  
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,  
The helmet and the helmet feather  
Burn'd like one burning flame together,  
As he rode down to Camelot;  
As often thro' the purpled night,  
Below the starry clusters bright,  
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,  
Moves over still Shalott.
- XII. "His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd;  
On burnish'd hoves his war-horse trode;  
From underneath his helmet flow'd  
His coal-black curls as on he rode.
- XIV. "In the stormy east-wind straining,  
The pale yellow woods were waning."

The examples of contrast will be indicated in the same way as those of gradations of shades and colors.

I. breath of fields - the island of Shalott

II. gray walls - flowers

III. heavy barges trailed by slow horses - the shallop flitteth  
silken-sailed

VI. surly village-churls - red cloaks of market girls

XVI. leaves upon her falling light - noises of the night

XVII. chanted loudly - chanted lowly

calmness of nature before her fall - storm after her fall

"I am half-sick of shadows" contrasted by the light in the description of Sir Lancelot.

In the poem is perfect unity. The two outstanding unities here are those of sequence and of membership. The unity of sequence in the poem is particularly noticeable in the tercets, the second part of the stanzas. So true is this that were the tercets placed in order they would tell the story of the Lady, her fall, and her death. There are only three places in the poem where we need to depend on the quatrain for the sense of the Lady's story. The first instance of this is in part two, stanza one, where mention is first made of the curse in the quatrain; the second in the next stanza, where mention is first made of the mirror in the quatrain; and finally, in part three, stanza one, we first hear of Lancelot in the quatrain.

While the tercets grouped would not be without meaning, we will note that there is a unity of sequence in the quatrains as well. In part one, the scene is given to us in the first part of the stanzas; in part two emphasis in the quatrains is upon the life that passes through the scene; in part three the quatrains give us a picture of Sir Lancelot, the immediate cause of the Lady's leaving the island; and in part four they give us the progress of her journey to Camelot.

There is unity too of membership in that the first and last parts of the poem concern themselves with events outside the lady's enclosure, while parts two and three treat of life as she saw it from the enclosure. All the events in these last mentioned two parts are framed as it were, in her mirror and are joined in close unity.

There is much evidence of the appearance of permanence and quietness in the poem which gives a sense of repose that Ruskin holds to be necessary to any work that claims to possess beauty. We will point out phrases and words giving the impressions of permanence and quietness in the order in which they appear in the poem.

- I. long fields - lilies blow
- II. aspens quiver - little breezes dusk and shiver thro'  
the wave that runs forever - gray walls and gray towers -  
silent isle.
- III. willow veil'd - heavy barges - slow horses - shallop  
skimming

- IV. by the moon the reaper weary - listening, whispers
- V. weaves by night and day - whisper
- VI. shadows
- VII. anblin: pad
- VIII. silent nights - shadows.
- XI. blue unclouded weather - purple night
- XV. the river's dia expanse - trence - glassy countenance
- XVI. snowy white-loosely flew - falling light - willow hills
- XVII. mournful - holy

The island of Challett and the Lady's life on it give a definite sense of repose.

Purity is expressed particularly in the description of Sir Lancelot for here above all parts of the poem is expressed the idea of light.

- IX. the sun came dazeling - and flomed - shield that sparkled on the yellow field
- X. Jeany bridle glitter'd - branch o' stars - golden Galaxy - a mighty silver bugle
- XI. blue unclouded weather - thick jewell'd shone - burn'd like one burning flame - starry clusters - meteor, trailing light
- XII. in sunlight - low'd - burnish'd - flash'd into the crystal mirror

The description of the Lady, lying, robed in snowy white, seems rather to be symbolic than to be expressive of light, and is therefore not listed above.

Moderation exists when there is a sense of completion in the work done. This means that we are not left with the sense of anything having been overdone or underdone. To discover whether it exists here we can ask ourselves if each part of the poem actually tells what it sets out to tell us, that is, if it satisfactorily fulfills its part.

Part one contains the description of the dwelling of the Lady and its surrounding. Most of the action of the poem is to take place in these surroundings while mystery always encircles the Lady. It is seemingly for this reason that the description we have of the Lady's dwelling is not as detailed as that of its surroundings. We know of it only that it is a gray building with some flowers, including lilies, nearby. On the other hand, we have a detailed description of the country immediately surrounding the island. The river itself has traffic for there is mention of barges and shallops. The trees along its banks are willows and aspens. Above the banks of the river, on both sides, stretch great fields of ripe barley and rye, extending so far that they meet the horizon. Through one of these fields is the road to Camelot. We are told too that the river flows to Camelot, and we can infer that in one part of the distance a glimpse may be had of its many towers.

In the second part of the poem we learn of the Lady's work and the causes for her dissatisfaction. She is forbidden

to look out upon the world, under pain of a curse, and sees the world only through a mirror. She weaves into a gay-colored web the sights seen through the mirror. After telling us this the poet lists, in a very short space, the goodly number and diversified types of people passing by. Among these are village-churls, market girls, a troop of damsels, an abbot, a curly shepherd-lad, a page, knights, funeral procession, and two lovers lately wed. And at the end of this part we are told that the Lady is sick of seeing the world only through the mirror. This prepares us somewhat for her fall which is related in the next section.

In the third section we are introduced to the second main character, Sir Lancelot. No detail of the description of his person and equipment is omitted. Mention is made particularly of the bright beauty of the equipment; and by the recounting of the red-cross knight kneeling to the lady in his shield, the suggestion of the chivalry and romance of knighthood is given us. The colors in this section are the brighter colors, significant perhaps of romance. We are told nothing concerning the Lady's thoughts on beholding Sir Lancelot, but we had been told immediately before he appeared that she was "half-sick of shadows", and at the end of the description of him, we are told that she left her web and loom and walked across the room to gaze out upon the scene. The curse fell immediately.

The last part of the poem tells us of her leaving the bower, procuring a boat and going down to Camelot. Here we discover more of her attitude than in any other part of the poem, for she looks down to Camelot "like some old seer in a trance, seeing all his own mischance - with a glassy countenance". And as she was dying we are told that she chanted "a carol, mournful, holy". The very last stanza of the poem ends with Lancelot's prayer for her, and so we feel that though she abandoned her former life that by her death she may have regained what she had lost.

We have endeavored to show that the completeness of each of the parts, explaining clearly some definite portion of the story, gives moderation to the whole poem. There seems to be only one thing that might cause us to question the moderation of The Lady of Shalott. We might ask if the symbolism of the poem does not leave the lady as an abstraction. We can explain the poem by saying that the whisper that tells her of the curse that will come if she looks down to Camelot is her conscience, that the web represents her soul, and the mirror her eyes, and that Lancelot himself represents romance. However, even if we do explain it thus so great an amount of symbolism is bound to give abstraction, and abstraction in turn may leave some readers with a sense of incompleteness. We believe, nevertheless, the various parts of the poem being well developed and the symbolism being not too vague, that the final impression of the reader is one of completeness.

in the poem.

The detailed analysis of the poem and the conclusion that it possesses moderation shows us that its author himself possessed that moderation which gives to a work naturalness, simplicity, harmony, and truth. There is nothing in the poem, although it is most colorful, that makes for discord either in the description of the scenes or characters.

Like every other artistic effect the pleasure derived from poetry is dependent not upon some transcendental formula, but upon the working out in harmony of a number of separate and individually simple laws. Although Ruskin long ago pointed this out, his theory has not yet come into its own. But as in chemistry the most complicated product can be shown to be composed by a particular conjunction of certain of a definitely limited number of very simple substances under certain of a very definitely limited number of simple laws, so it is in poetry. In poetry, the greatest is that which contains the greatest of these conjunctions or effects.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### CONCLUSION

Having presented the ideas of Ruskin together with an application of these ideas to the two literary forms of the novel and the poem, it remains to judge how successfully these ideas can be used as a measure of the beauty to be found in these literary forms.

It will be helpful in making this judgement to consider how many of the qualities that Ruskin offers can be applied to the novel and the poem. It is evident that if it were found that but one or two of the qualities of typical or vital beauty alone could be applied that the system would not be sufficiently comprehensive. Actually it has been demonstrated that they are all applicable. Not all, indeed, were applicable to each of the novels, although in each novel it was pointed out that the majority of the qualities were found; in the poem each of the qualities of typical beauty was most evident.

In the three novels, The Scarlet Letter, The Return of the Native, and Windswept, we have shown that the idea of infinity is clearly marked. In each case, the author obtains the idea by the use of the suggestions of space, and by the use of gradations and shades of colors, and finally through contrasts. In each novel too there is unity. In The Scarlet Letter it is subjectional unity as it is in The Return of the

Native. In Windswept there is both subjectional unity and unity of origin. While the unity of membership has not been specifically mentioned in each instance, it is evident in the lack of any discord in the structure of the parts of the novel.

The quality of repose exists in the three novels, but is clearest in Windswept. It is clearer in this last-named novel, because the novel is one of setting and Miss Chase has spent more effort on the development of typical beauty than on the development of vital beauty.

Moderation, which we realize on applying it to definite works is closely akin to unity of membership, and this quality is present in all three of the works. Any absence of it will give a sense of incompleteness in any work; and although the separate parts of a work may contain beauty, the whole will give the impression of a series of sketches rather than of one completed work.

Purity is the quality that seems most difficult to attribute to any given work. This is due in great part to Ruskin's own vagueness concerning it. As we have seen he calls it energy and says that the best notions of it are obtained through the idea of light. He points out very definitely that by purity he does not mean sinlessness, not therefore a moral purity but rather a material purity. Concerning purity in this way it seems that it can exist where there is

either infinity or repose.

In considering the vital beauty of the characters of the novel, we found that Hester in The Scarlet Letter, Thomasin and Diggory Venn in The Return of the Native, and Jan in Windswept were definite examples of it. Other characters, as Arthur Dimmesdale and Clym Yeobright, possessed some of the qualities of beauty but they so lacked others that could not be classed as having vital beauty. Still other characters, as Roger Chillingworth, Christian Cantle, and Eustacia Vye, possessed no vestige of beauty. Roger Chillingworth possessed none of the qualities after he was overcome by the spirit of revenge; Christian Cantle lost any claim to vital beauty because he was constantly obsessed by fear; and Eustacia Vye possessed only physical beauty which lends little to vital beauty when all other qualities are wanting.

It was interesting to note that in Windswept which possesses much more realism according to Ruskin's idea of it gave us the least clear notions of vital beauty. Realism since it concerns itself with mannerisms gives us only a clear picture of the exteriors of the persons treated but concerns itself little with their thoughts and motives, and, in consequence, prevents us from knowing them thoroughly. The characters in the realistic novel become our acquaintances but seldom our friends; or, in other words, we never really come to know them. They are almost like the creatures of

fancy that Ruskin has mentioned.

The Lady of Shalott possessed clearly all the qualities of typical beauty; it possessed them, indeed, more clearly than any of the novels. This will be true of all poems of this type as they depend for beauty almost entirely on atmosphere.

The fact that the qualities of beauty are all found in this poem of Tennyson's and that each of them adds to its total beauty is due largely to the great care taken by the author in the development of the poem and the precise finish that he gave to each part of it. It would seem from the application of Ruskin's plan that its complexity is not a hindrance to its use. It is true that a complex plan demands more time in the applying than does a simple one, but its very complexity make the findings more detailed and complete. Complexity would indeed be a hindrance if the parts of the plan were not in themselves clear; but, in Ruskin's plan, all is clear enough except as has been pointed out, the term, purity.

Although it has been said that Ruskin's plan is well-fitted to be used as a test of beauty in the novel, it would be wrong to infer that any novel in which beauty could not be found was by that fact worthless. This is true since beauty is not the only province of the novel. The purpose of the novel may be the presentation or solution of a problem or it

may be the psychological treatment of a group of characters. It would be wrong to say therefore that a problem or psychological novel was unsuccessful because it contained little or no beauty. The real success of a novel depends on the fulfillment of the author's purpose in writing the novel. It would be wrong, for example, to say that Hawthorne failed in portraying beauty in The Scarlet Letter because Roger Chillingworth is utterly lacking beauty. There is no fault in Hawthorne because of Roger, for he definitely sets out to portray Roger as being without beauty. The plan of Ruskin is valuable in finding beauty when and where it does exist and in comparing the beauty of one novel with that of another.

The situation as regards poetry is rather different for as Poe says beauty is "the atmosphere and the essence of the poem". It is difficult to imagine that a poem possessing no beauty could have any claim to success. Beauty is the chief province of poetry and when this is forgotten we have only the poetic form without any substance. It should be noted that we have not said that there can be no evil characters in a beautiful poem. Father Callahan says of such ugliness in poetry: "Not only physical but even intellectual and moral ugliness may be introduced by the artist, but with sobriety and precaution and in the interest of beauty itself; for through the power of contrast the beautiful gains new luster when set against such a foil. Dante's hell and the Satan of

Milton bear witness for all time to the right and the method of the artist as regards the introduction of such features". (1)

Eric Gill tells us of the necessity of knowing a thing and the laws governing it before we judge it. "A bad painting is one whose painter has not known clearly what he was painting -- has not seen clear in his imagination or has not known the nature of paint -- has not seen the thing as a painting.

"Or the painter's will may fail him -- he may not have cared enough about it. .

"Or given both knowledge and will, mere dexterity may be wanting.

"But dexterity is generally sufficient when knowledge and will are adequate.

"And people who are pleased with bad painting are like bad painters.

"They are ill-informed as to the nature of the thing.

"Or their wills fail them, as when a person says: 'I know it's silly, but I can't help liking it'.

"And, even if it seems difficult to believe, it is true that painting and sculptures and poems and music are governed by the same laws and reasons as govern buildings and furniture and sewing machines and hammers and hats.

"You must first know what a thing is before you can

1. L. Callahan, O.P. A Theory of Esthetic, 93.

judge it." (2)

And Ruskin is valuable because he does tell us how to know whether something is beautiful or not - he tells us where to look for the beauty; and he tells us what qualities increase beauty. No merely human set of rules is perfect and while it is possible to point out faults in Ruskin, as we have, this does not or should not cause us to hold his whole theory in disdain. The mind works in a surer manner when it works logically and those who would take away such a working system as Ruskin's are taking away a logical system of testing beauty. We should be wary of those advocating such a lack of method because there is striking evidence about us in the fields of religion, philosophy, economics, and morals of the results that follow unsystematic procedure. Art has too great an influence on the lives of men to let it and its interpretation fall into the hands of those whose ideas of beauty are hazy; beauty brings a joy into the lives of men that can be supplied in no other way, a joy that is necessary to men. And this joy and pleasure is art's true end. Ruskin's theory taken as a norm for judging beauty will surely bring a wider knowledge of God's signature on His creation and by doing this so lead men to the Writer of that signature.

2. Eric Gill, Beauty Looks After Herself, 189.

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