RUSKIN JOHN

ON THE OLD ROAD, VOL. 2 (OF 2)

John Ruskin

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Ruskin J.

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John Ruskin
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PICTURE GALLERIES—THEIR FUNCTIONS AND FORMATION

A. PARLIAMENTARY EVIDENCE

NATIONAL GALLERY SITE COMMISSION 1857

SELECT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS 1860

THE ROYAL ACADEMY COMMISSION 1863

B. LETTERS ON A MUSEUM OR PICTURE GALLERY

(Art Journal, June and August, 1880.)

THE NATIONAL GALLERY SITE COMMISSION.[1]

Evidence of John Ruskin, Monday, April 6, 1857

114. *Chairman.* Has your attention been turned to the desirableness of uniting sculpture with painting under the same roof?—Yes.

What is your opinion on the subject?—I think it almost essential that they should be united, if a National Gallery is to be of service in teaching the course of art.

Sculpture of all kinds, or only ancient sculpture?—Of all kinds.

Do you think that the sculpture in the British Museum should be in the same building with the pictures in the National Gallery, that is to say, making an application of your principle to that particular case?—Yes, certainly; I think so for several reasons—chiefly because I think the taste of the nation can only be rightly directed by having always sculpture and painting visible together. Many of the highest and best points of painting, I think, can only be discerned after some discipline of the eye by sculpture. That is one very essential reason. I think that after looking at sculpture one feels the grace of composition infinitely more, and one also feels how that grace of composition was reached by the painter.

Do you consider that if works of sculpture and works of painting were placed in the same gallery, the same light would be useful for both of them?—I understood your question only to refer to their collection under the same roof. I should be sorry to see them in the same room.

You would not mix them up in the way in which they are mixed up in the Florentine Gallery, for instance?—Not at all. I think, on the contrary, that the one diverts the mind from the other, and that, although the one is an admirable discipline, you should take some time for the examination of sculpture, and pass afterwards into the painting room, and so on. You should not be disturbed while looking at paintings by the whiteness of the sculpture.

You do not then approve, for example, of the way in which the famous room, the Tribune, at Florence, is arranged?—No; I think it is merely arranged for show—for showing how many rich things can be got together.

115. *Mr. Cockerell.* Then you do not regard sculpture as a proper decorative portion of the National Gallery of Pictures—you do not admit the term decoration?—No; I should not use that term of the sculpture which it was the object of the gallery to exhibit. It might be added, of course, supposing it became a part of the architecture, but not as independent—not as a thing to be contemplated separately in the room, and not as a part of the room. As a part of the room, of course, modern sculpture might be added; but I have never thought that it would be necessary.

You do not consider that sculpture would be a repose after contemplating painting for some time?—I should not feel it so myself.

116. *Dean of St. Paul's.* When you speak of removing the sculpture of the British Museum, and of uniting it with the pictures of the National Gallery, do you comprehend the whole range of the sculpture in the British Museum, commencing with the Egyptian, and going down through its regular series of gradation to the decline of the art?—Yes, because my great hope respecting the National Gallery is, that it may become a perfectly consecutive chronological arrangement, and it seems to me that it is one of the chief characteristics of a National Gallery that it should be so.

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[1] This evidence, given by Mr. Ruskin as stated above, is reprinted from the Report of the National Gallery Site Commission. London: Harrison and Sons. 1857. Pp. 92-7. Questions 2392-2504. The Commission consisted of Lord Broughton (chairman), Dean Milman, Professor Faraday, Mr. Cockerell, R.A., and Mr. George Richmond, all of whom were present on the occasion of Mr. Ruskin giving his evidence.—Ed.

Then you consider that one great excellence of the collection at the British Museum is, that it does present that sort of history of the art of sculpture?—I consider it rather its weakness that it does not.

Then you would go down further?—I would.

You are perhaps acquainted with the ivories which have been recently purchased there?—I am not.

Supposing there were a fine collection of Byzantine ivories, you would consider that they were an important link in the general history?—Certainly.

Would you unite the whole of that Pagan sculpture with what you call the later Christian art of Painting?—I should be glad to see it done—that is to say, I should be glad to see the galleries of painting and sculpture collaterally placed, and the gallery of sculpture beginning with the Pagan art, and proceeding to the Christian art, but not necessarily associating the painting with the sculpture of each epoch; because the painting is so deficient in many of the periods where the sculpture is rich, that you could not carry them on collaterally—you must have your painting gallery and your sculpture gallery.

You would be sorry to take any portion of the sculpture from the collection in the British Museum, and to associate it with any collection of painting?—Yes, I should think it highly inexpedient. My whole object would be that it might be associated with a larger collection, a collection from other periods, and not be subdivided. And it seems to be one of the chief reasons advanced in order to justify removing that collection, that it cannot be much more enlarged—that you cannot at present put other sculpture with it.

Supposing that the collection of ancient Pagan art could not be united with the National Gallery of pictures, with which would you associate the mediæval sculpture, supposing we were to retain any considerable amount of sculpture?—With the painting.

The mediæval art you would associate with the painting, supposing you could not put the whole together?—Yes.

117. *Chairman.* Do you approve of protecting pictures by glass?—Yes, in every case. I do not know of what size a pane of glass can be manufactured, but I have never seen a picture so large but that I should be glad to see it under glass. Even supposing it were possible, which I suppose it is not, the great Paul Veronese, in the gallery of the Louvre, I think would be more beautiful under glass.

Independently of the preservation?—Independently of the preservation, I think it would be more beautiful. It gives an especial delicacy to light colors, and does little harm to dark colors—that is, it benefits delicate pictures most, and its injury is only to very dark pictures.

Have you ever considered the propriety of covering the sculpture with glass?—I have never considered it. I did not know until a very few days ago that sculpture was injured by exposure to our climate and our smoke.

Professor Faraday. But you would cover the pictures, independently of the preservation, you would cover them absolutely for the artistic effect, the improvement of the picture?—Not necessarily so, because to some persons there might be an objectionable character in having to avoid the reflection more scrupulously than otherwise. I should not press for it on that head only. The advantage gained is not a great one; it is only felt by very delicate eyes. As far as I know, many persons would not perceive that there was a difference, and that is caused by the very slight color in the glass, which, perhaps, some persons might think it expedient to avoid altogether.

Do you put it down to the absolute tint in the glass like a glazing, or do you put it down to a sort of reflection? Is the effect referable to the color in the glass, or to some kind of optic action, which the most transparent glass might produce?—I do not know; but I suppose it to be referable to the very slight tint in the glass.

118. *Dean of St. Paul's.* Is it not the case when ladies with very brilliant dresses look at pictures through glass, that the reflection of the color of their dresses is so strong as greatly to disturb the

enjoyment and the appreciation of the pictures?—Certainly; but I should ask the ladies to stand a little aside, and look at the pictures one by one. There is that disadvantage.

I am supposing a crowded room—of course the object of a National Gallery is that it should be crowded—that as large a number of the public should have access to it as possible—there would of course be certain limited hours, and the gallery would be liable to get filled with the public in great numbers?—It would be disadvantageous certainly, but not so disadvantageous as to balance the much greater advantage of preservation. I imagine that, in fact, glass is essential; it is not merely an expedient thing, but an essential thing to the safety of the pictures for twenty or thirty years.

Do you consider it essential as regards the atmosphere of London, or of this country generally? —I speak of London only. I have no experience of other parts. But I have this experience in my own collection. I kept my pictures for some time without glass, and I found the deterioration definite within a very short period—a period of a couple of years.

You mean at Denmark Hill?—Yes; that deterioration on pictures of the class I refer to is not to be afterwards remedied—the thing suffers forever—you cannot get into the interstices.

Professor Faraday. You consider that the picture is permanently injured by the dirt?—Yes.

That no cleaning can restore it to what it was?—Nothing can restore it to what it was, I think, because the operation of cleaning must scrape away some of the grains of paint.

Therefore, if you have two pictures, one in a dirtier place, and one in a cleaner place, no attention will put the one in the dirtier place on a level with that in the cleaner place?—I think nevermore.

119. *Chairman.* I see that in your "Notes on the Turner Collection," you recommended that the large upright pictures would have great advantage in having a room to themselves. Do you mean each of the large pictures or a whole collection of large pictures?—Supposing very beautiful pictures of a large size (it would depend entirely on the value and size of the picture), supposing we ever acquired such large pictures as Titian's Assumption, or Raphael's Transfiguration, those pictures ought to have a room to themselves, and to have a gallery round them.

Do you mean that each of them should have a room?—Yes.

Dean of St. Paul's. Have you been recently at Dresden?—No, I have never been at Dresden.

Then you do not know the position of the Great Holbein and of the Madonna de S. Sisto there, which have separate rooms?—No.

Mr. Cockerell. Are you acquainted with the Munich Gallery—No.

Do you know the plans of it?—No.

Then you have not seen, perhaps, the most recent arrangements adopted by that learned people, the Germans, with regard to the exhibition of pictures?—I have not been into Germany for twenty years.

120. That subject has been handled by them in an original manner, and they have constructed galleries at Munich, at Dresden, and I believe at St. Petersburg upon a new principle, and a very judicious principle. You have not had opportunities of considering that?—No, I have never considered that; because I always supposed that there was no difficulty in producing a beautiful gallery, or an efficient one. I never thought that there could be any question about the form which such a gallery should take, or that it was a matter of consideration. The only difficulty with me was this—the persuading, or hoping to persuade, a nation that if it had pictures at all, it should have those pictures on the line of the eye; that it was not well to have a noble picture many feet above the eye, merely for the glory of the room. Then I think that as soon as you decide that a picture is to be seen, it is easy to find out the way of showing it; to say that it should have such and such a room, with such and such a light; not a raking light, as I heard Sir Charles Eastlake express it the other day, but rather an oblique and soft light, and not so near the picture as to catch the eye painfully. That may be easily obtained, and I think that all other questions after that are subordinate.

Dean of St. Paul's. Your proposition would require a great extent of wall?—An immense extent of wall.

121. *Chairman.* I see you state in the pamphlet to which I have before alluded, that it is of the highest importance that the works of each master should be kept together. Would not such an arrangement increase very much the size of the National Gallery?—I think not, because I have only supposed in my plan that, at the utmost, two lines of pictures should be admitted on the walls of the room; that being so, you would be always able to put all the works of any master together without any inconvenience or difficulty in fitting them to the size of the room. Supposing that you put the large pictures high on the walls, then it might be a question, of course, whether such and such a room or compartment of the Gallery would hold the works of a particular master; but supposing the pictures were all on a continuous line, you would only stop with A and begin with B.

Then you would only have them on one level and one line?—In general; that seems to me the common-sense principle.

Mr. Richmond. Then you disapprove of the whole of the European hanging of pictures in galleries?—I think it very beautiful sometimes, but not to be imitated. It produces most noble rooms. No one can but be impressed with the first room at the Louvre, where you have the most noble Venetian pictures one mass of fire on the four walls; but then none of the details of those pictures can be seen.

Dean of St. Paul's. There you have a very fine general effect, but you lose the effect of the beauties of each individual picture?—You lose all the beauties, all the higher merits; you get merely your general idea. It is a perfectly splendid room, of which a great part of the impression depends upon the consciousness of the spectator that it is so costly.

122. Would you have those galleries in themselves richly decorated?—Not richly, but pleasantly.

Brilliantly, but not too brightly?—Not too brightly. I have not gone into that question, it being out of my way; but I think, generally, that great care should be taken to give a certain splendor—a certain gorgeous effect—so that the spectator may feel himself among splendid things; so that there shall be no discomfort or meagerness, or want of respect for the things which are being shown.

123. *Mr. Richmond.* Then do you think that Art would be more worthily treated, and the public taste and artists better served, by having even a smaller collection of works so arranged, than by a much larger one merely housed and hung four or five deep, as in an auction room?—Yes. But you put a difficult choice before me, because I do think it a very important thing that we should have many pictures. Totally new results might be obtained from a large gallery in which the chronological arrangement was perfect, and whose curators prepared for that chronological arrangement, by leaving gaps to be filled by future acquisition; taking the greatest pains in the selection of the examples, that they should be thoroughly characteristic; giving a greater price for a picture which was thoroughly characteristic and expressive of the habits of a nation; because it appears to me that one of the main uses of Art at present is not so much as Art, but as teaching us the feelings of nations. History only tells us what they did; Art tells us their feelings, and why they did it: whether they were energetic and fiery, or whether they were, as in the case of the Dutch, imitating minor things, quiet and cold. All those expressions of feeling cannot come out of History. Even the contemporary historian does not feel them; he does not feel what his nation is; but get the works of the same master together, the works of the same nation together, and the works of the same century together, and see how the thing will force itself upon everyone's observation.

124. Then you would not exclude the genuine work of inferior masters?—Not by any means.

You would have the whole as far as you could obtain it?—Yes, as far as it was characteristic; but I think you can hardly call an inferior master one who does in the best possible way the thing he undertakes to do; and I would not take any master who did not in some way excel. For instance, I would not take a mere imitator of Cuyp among the Dutch; but Cuyp himself has done insuperable things in certain expressions of sunlight and repose. Vander Heyden and others may also be mentioned as first-rate in inferior lines.

Taking from the rise of art to the time of Raphael, would you in the National Gallery include examples of all those masters whose names have come down to the most learned of us?—No.

Where would you draw the line, and where would you begin to leave out?—I would only draw the line when I was purchasing a picture. I think that a person might always spend his money better by making an effort to get one noble picture than five or six second or third-rate pictures, provided only, that you had examples of the best kind of work produced at that time. I would not have second-rate pictures. Multitudes of masters among the disciples of Giotto might be named; you might have one or two pictures of Giotto, and one or two pictures of the disciples of Giotto.

Then you would rather depend upon the beauty of the work itself; if the work were beautiful, you would admit it?—Certainly.

But if it were only historically interesting, would you then reject it?—Not in the least. I want it historically interesting, but I want as good an example as I can have of that particular manner.

Would it not be historically interesting if it were the only picture known of that particular master, who was a follower of Giotto? For instance, supposing a work of Cennino Cennini were brought to light, and had no real merit in it as a work of art, would it not be the duty of the authorities of a National Gallery to seize upon that picture, and pay perhaps rather a large price for it?—Certainly; all documentary art I should include.

Then what would you exclude?—Merely that which is inferior, and not documentary; merely another example of the same kind of thing.

Then you would not multiply examples of the same masters if inferior men, but you would have one of each. There is no man, I suppose, whose memory has come down to us after three or four centuries, but has something worth preserving in his work—something peculiar to himself, which perhaps no other person has ever done, and you would retain one example of such, would you not?—I would, if it was in my power, but I would rather with given funds make an effort to get perfect examples.

Then you think that the artistic element should govern the archæological in the selection?—Yes, and the archæological in the arrangement.

125. *Dean of St. Paul's.* When you speak of arranging the works of one master consecutively, would you pay any regard or not to the subjects? You must be well aware that many painters, for instance, Correggio, and others, painted very incongruous subjects; would you rather keep them together than disperse the works of those painters to a certain degree according to their subjects?—I would most certainly keep them together. I think it an important feature of the master that he did paint incongruously, and very possibly the character of each picture would be better understood by seeing them together; the relations of each are sometimes essential to be seen.

Mr. Richmond. Do you think that the preservation of these works is one of the first and most important things to be provided for?—It would be so with me in purchasing a picture. I would pay double the price for it if I thought it was likely to be destroyed where it was.

In a note you wrote to me the other day, I find this passage: "The Art of a nation I think one of the most important points of its history, and a part which, if once destroyed, no history will ever supply the place of—and the first idea of a National Gallery is, that it should be a Library of Art, in which the rudest efforts are, in some cases, hardly less important than the noblest." Is that your opinion?—Perfectly. That seems somewhat inconsistent with what I have been saying, but I mean there, the noblest efforts of the time at which they are produced. I would take the greatest pains to get an example of eleventh century work, though the painting is perfectly barbarous at that time.

126. You have much to do with the education of the working classes in Art. As far as you are able to tell us, what is your experience with regard to their liking and disliking in Art—do comparatively uneducated persons prefer the Art up to the time of Raphael, or down from the time of Raphael?—we will take the Bolognese School, or the early Florentine School—which do you think a working man would feel the greatest interest in looking at?—I cannot tell you, because my working

men would not be allowed to look at a Bolognese picture; I teach them so much love of detail, that the moment they see a detail carefully drawn, they are caught by it. The main thing which has surprised me in dealing with these men is the exceeding refinement of their minds—so that in a moment I can get carpenters, and smiths, and ordinary workmen, and various classes to give me a refinement which I cannot get a young lady to give me when I give her a lesson for the first time. Whether it is the habit of work which makes them go at it more intensely, or whether it is (as I rather think) that, as the feminine mind looks for strength, the masculine mind looks for delicacy, and when you take it simply, and give it its choice, it will go to the most refined thing, I do not know.

Dean of St. Paul's. Can you see any perceptible improvement in the state of the public mind and taste in that respect since these measures have been adopted?—There has not been time to judge of that.

127. Do these persons who are taking an interest in Art come from different parts of London?—Yes.

Of course the distance which they would have to come would be of very great importance?—Yes.

Therefore one of the great recommendations of a Gallery, if you wish it to have an effect upon the public mind in that respect, would be its accessibility, both with regard to the time consumed in going there, and to the cheapness, as I may call it, of access?—Most certainly.

You would therefore consider that the more central the situation, putting all other points out of consideration, the greater advantage it would be to the public?—Yes; there is this, however, to be said, that a central situation involves the crowding of the room with parties wholly uninterested in the matter—a situation more retired will generally be serviceable enough for the real student.

Would not that very much depend upon its being in a thoroughfare? There might be a central situation which would not be so complete a thoroughfare as to tempt persons to go in who were not likely to derive advantage from it?—I think that if this gallery were made so large and so beautiful as we are proposing, it would be rather a resort, rather a lounge every day, and all day long, provided it were accessible.

128. Would not that a good deal depend upon its being in a public thoroughfare? If it were in a thoroughfare, a great many persons might pass in who would be driven in by accident, or driven in by caprice, if they passed it; but if it were at a little distance from a thoroughfare, it would be less crowded with those persons who are not likely to derive much advantage from it?—Quite so; but there would always be an advantage in attracting a crowd; it would always extend its educational ability in its being crowded. But it would seem to me that all that is necessary for a noble Museum of the best art should be more or less removed, and that a collection, solely for the purpose of education, and for the purpose of interesting people who do not care much about art, should be provided in the very heart of the population, if possible, that pictures not of great value, but of sufficient value to interest the public, and of merit enough to form the basis of early education, and to give examples of all art, should be collected in the popular Gallery, but that all the precious things should be removed and put into the great Gallery, where they would be safest, irrespectively altogether of accessibility.

Chairman. Then you would, in fact, have not one but two Galleries?—Two only.

129. *Professor Faraday.* And you would seem to desire purposely the removal of the true and head Gallery to some distance, so as to prevent the great access of persons?—Yes.

Thinking that all those who could make a real use of a Gallery would go to that one?—Yes. My opinion in that respect has been altered within these few days from the fact having been brought to my knowledge of sculpture being much deteriorated by the atmosphere and the total impossibility of protecting sculpture. Pictures I do not care about, for I can protect them, but not sculpture.

Dean of St. Paul's. Whence did you derive that knowledge?—I forget who told me; it was some authority I thought conclusive, and therefore took no special note of.

130. *Chairman.* Do you not consider that it is rather prejudicial to art that there should be a Gallery notoriously containing no first-rate works of art, but second-rate or third-rate works?—No; I think it rather valuable as an expression of the means of education, that there should be early lessons in art—that there should be this sort of art selected especially for first studies, and also that there should be a recognition of the exceeding preciousness of some other art. I think that portions of it should be set aside as interesting, but not unreplaceable; but that other portions should be set aside as being things as to which the function of the nation was, chiefly, to take care of those things, not for itself merely, but for all its descendants, and setting the example of taking care of them for ever.

You do not think, then, that there would be any danger in the studying or the copying of works which notoriously were not the best works?—On the contrary, I think it would be better that works not altogether the best should be first submitted. I never should think of giving the best work myself to a student to copy—it is hopeless; he would not feel its beauties—he would merely blunder over it. I am perfectly certain that that cannot be serviceable in the particular branch of art which I profess, namely, landscape-painting; I know that I must give more or less of bad examples.

Mr. Richmond. But you would admit nothing into this second gallery which was not good or true of its kind?—Nothing which was not good or true of its kind, but only inferior in value to the others.

And if there were any other works which might be deposited there with perfect safety, say precious drawings, which might be protected by glass, you would not object to exhibit those to the unselected multitude?—Not in the least; I should be very glad to do so, provided I could spare them from the grand chronological arrangement.

Do you think that a very interesting supplementary exhibition might be got up, say at Trafalgar Square, and retained there?—Yes, and all the more useful because you would put few works, and you could make it complete in series—and because, on a small scale, you would have the entire series. By selecting a few works, you would have an epitome of the Grand Gallery, the divisions of the chronology being all within the compartment of a wall, which in the great Gallery would be in a separate division of the building.

131. *Mr. Cockerell.* Do you contemplate the possibility of excellent copies being exhibited of the most excellent works both of sculpture and of painting?—I have not contemplated that possibility. I have a great horror of copies of any kind, except only of sculpture. I have great fear of copies of painting; I think people generally catch the worst parts of the painting and leave the best.

But you would select the artist who should make the copy. There are persons whose whole talent is concentrated in the power of imitation of a given picture, and a great talent it is.—I have never in my life seen a good copy of a good picture.

Chairman. Have you not seen any of the German copies of some of the great Italian masters, which are generally esteemed very admirable works?—I have not much studied the works of the copyists; I have not observed them much, never having yet found an exception to that rule which I have mentioned. When I came across a copyist in the Gallery of the Vatican, or in the Gallery at Florence, I had a horror of the mischief, and the scandal and the libel upon the master, from the supposition that such a thing as that in any way resembled his work, and the harm that it would do to the populace among whom it was shown.

Mr. Richmond. You look upon it as you would upon coining bad money and circulating it, doing mischief?—Yes, it is mischievous.

Mr. Cockerell. But you admit engravings—you admit photographs of these works, which are imitations in another language?—Yes; in abstract terms, they are rather descriptions of the paintings than copies—they are rather measures and definitions of them—they are hints and tables of the pictures, rather than copies of them; they do not pretend to the same excellence in any way.

You speak as a connoisseur; how would the common eye of the public agree with you in that opinion?—I think it would not agree with me. Nevertheless, if I were taking some of my workmen into the National Gallery, I should soon have some hope of making them understand in what excellence

consisted, if I could point to a genuine work; but I should have no such hope if I had only copies of these pictures.

132. Do you hold much to the archæological, chronological, and historical series and teaching of pictures?—Yes.

Are you of opinion that that is essential to the creative teaching, with reference to our future schools?—No. I should think not essential at all. The teaching of the future artist, I should think, might be accomplished by very few pictures of the class which that particular artist wished to study. I think that the chronological arrangement is in no-wise connected with the general efficiency of the gallery as a matter of study for the artist, but very much so as a means of study, not for persons interested in painting merely, but for those who wish to examine the general history of nations; and I think that painting should be considered by that class of persons as containing precious evidence. It would be part of the philosopher's work to examine the art of a nation as well as its poetry.

You consider that art speaks a language and tells a tale which no written document can effect?—Yes, and far more precious; the whole soul of a nation generally goes with its art. It may be urged by an ambitious king to become a warrior nation. It may be trained by a single leader to become a *great* warrior nation, and its character at that time may materially depend upon that one man, but in its art all the mind of the nation is more or less expressed: it can be said, that was what the peasant sought to when he went into the city to the cathedral in the morning—that was the sort of book the poor person read or learned in—the sort of picture he prayed to. All which involves infinitely more important considerations than common history.

133. *Dean of St. Paul's.* When you speak of your objections to copies of pictures, do you carry that objection to casts of sculpture?—Not at all.

Supposing there could be no complete union of the great works of sculpture in a country with the great works of painting in that country, would you consider that a good selection of casts comprising the great remains of sculpture of all ages would be an important addition to a public gallery?—I should be very glad to see it.

If you could not have it of originals, you would wish very much to have a complete collection of casts, of course selected from all the finest sculptures in the world?—Certainly.

Mr. Richmond. Would you do the same with architecture—would you collect the remains of architecture, as far as they are to be collected, and unite them with sculpture and painting?—I should think that architecture consisted, as far as it was portable, very much in sculpture. In saying that, I mean, that in the different branches of sculpture architecture is involved—that is to say, you would have the statues belonging to such and such a division of a building. Then if you had casts of those statues, you would necessarily have those casts placed exactly in the same position as the original statues—it involves the buildings surrounding them and the elevation—it involves the whole architecture.

In addition to that, would you have original drawings of architecture, and models of great buildings, and photographs, if they could be made permanent, of the great buildings as well as the moldings and casts of the moldings, and the members as far as you could obtain them?—Quite so.

Would you also include, in the National Gallery, what may be called the handicraft of a nation—works for domestic use or ornament? For instance, we know that there were some salt-cellars designed for one of the Popes; would you have those if they came to us?—Everything, pots and pans, and salt-cellars, and knives.

You would have everything that had an interesting art element in it?—Yes.

Dean of St. Paul's. In short, a modern Pompeian Gallery?—Yes; I know how much greater extent that involves, but I think that you should include all the iron work, and china, and pottery, and so on. I think that all works in metal, all works in clay, all works in carved wood, should be included. Of course, that involves much. It involves all the coins—it involves an immense extent.

134. Supposing it were impossible to concenter in one great museum the whole of these things, where should you prefer to draw the line? Would you draw the line between what I may call the ancient Pagan world and the modern Christian world, and so leave, to what may be called the ancient world, all the ancient sculpture, and any fragments of ancient painting which there might be—all the vases, all the ancient bronzes, and, in short, everything which comes down to a certain period? Do you think that that would be the best division, or should you prefer any division which takes special arts, and keeps those arts together?—I should like the Pagan and Christian division. I think it very essential that wherever the sculpture of a nation was, there its iron work should be—that wherever its iron work was, there its pottery should be, and so on.

And you would keep the mediæval works together, in whatever form those mediæval works existed?—Yes; I should not at all feel injured by having to take a cab-drive from one century to another century.

Or from the ancient to the modern world?—No.

Mr. Richmond. If it were found convenient to keep separate the Pagan and the Christian art, with which would you associate the mediæval?—By "Christian and Pagan Art" I mean, before Christ and after Christ.

Then the mediæval would come with the paintings?—Yes; and also the Mahomedan, and all the Pagan art which was after Christ, I should associate as part, and a most essential part, because it seems to me that the history of Christianity is complicated perpetually with that which Christianity was effecting. Therefore, it is a matter of date, not of Christianity. Everything before Christ I should be glad to see separated, or you may take any other date that you like.

But the inspiration of the two schools—the Pagan and the Christian—seems so different, that there would be no great violence done to the true theory of a National Gallery in dividing these two, would there, if each were made complete in itself?—That is to say, taking the spirit of the world after Christianity was in it, and the spirit of the world before Christianity was in it.

Dean of St. Paul's. The birth of Christ, you say, is the commencement of Christian art?—Yes.

Then Christian influence began, and, of course, that would leave a small debatable ground, particularly among the ivories for instance, which we must settle according to circumstances?—Wide of any debatable ground, all the art of a nation which had never heard of Christianity, the Hindoo art and so on, would, I suppose, if of the Christian era, go into the Christian gallery.

I was speaking rather of the transition period, which, of course, there must be?—Yes.

Mr. Cockerell. There must be a distinction between the terms "museum" and "gallery." What are the distinctions which you would draw in the present case?—I should think "museum" was the right name of the whole building. A "gallery" is, I think, merely a room in a museum adapted for the exhibition of works in a series, whose effect depends upon their collateral showing forth.

135. There are certainly persons who would derive their chief advantage from the historical and chronological arrangement which you propose, but there are others who look alone for the beautiful, and who say, "I have nothing to do with your pedantry. I desire to have the beautiful before me. Show me those complete and perfect works which are received and known as the works of Phidias and the great Greek masters as far as we possess them, and the works of the great Italian painters. I have not time, nor does my genius permit that I should trouble myself with those details." There is a large class who are guided by those feelings?—And I hope who always will be guided by them; but I should consult their feelings enough in the setting before them of the most beautiful works of art. All that I should beg of them to yield to me would be that they should look at Titian only, or at Raphael only, and not wish to have Titian and Raphael side by side; and I think I should be able to teach them, as a matter of beauty, that they did enjoy Titian and Raphael alone better than mingled. Then I would provide them beautiful galleries full of the most-noble sculpture. Whenever we come as a country and a nation to provide beautiful sculpture, it seems to me that the greatest pains should be taken to set it off beautifully. You should have beautiful sculpture in the middle of the room, with dark

walls round it to throw out its profile, and you should have all the arrangements made there so as to harmonize with it, and to set forth every line of it. So the painting gallery, I think, might be made a glorious thing, if the pictures were level, and the architecture above produced unity of impression from the beauty and glow of color and the purity of form.

Mr. Richmond. And you would not exclude a Crevelli because it was quaint, or an early master of any school—you would have the infancy, the youth, and the age, of each school, would you not?—Certainly.

Dean of St. Paul's. Of the German as well as the Italian?—Yes.

Mr. Richmond. Spanish, and all the schools?—Certainly.

136. *Mr. Cockerell.* You are quite aware of the great liberality of the Government, as we learn from the papers, in a recent instance, namely, the purchase of a great Paul Veronese?—I am rejoiced to hear it. If it is confirmed, nothing will have given me such pleasure for a long time. I think it is the most precious Paul Veronese in the world, as far as the completion of the picture goes, and quite a priceless picture.

Can you conceive a Government, or a people, who would countenance so expensive a purchase, condescending to take up with the occupation of the upper story of some public building, or with an expedient which should not be entirely worthy of such a noble Gallery of Pictures?—I do not think that they ought to do so; but I do not know how far they will be consistent. I certainly think they ought not to put up with any such expedient. I am not prepared to say what limits there are to consistency or inconsistency.

Mr. Richmond. I understand you to have given in evidence that you think a National Collection should be illustrative of the whole art in all its branches?—Certainly.

Not a cabinet of paintings, not a collection of sculptured works, but illustrative of the whole art?—Yes.

137. Have you any further remark to offer to the Commissioners?—I wish to say one word respecting the question of the restoration of statuary. It seems to me a very simple question. Much harm is being at present done in Europe by restoration, more harm than was ever done, as far as I know, by revolutions or by wars. The French are now doing great harm to their cathedrals, under the idea that they are doing good, destroying more than all the good they are doing. And all this proceeds from the one great mistake of supposing that sculpture can be restored when it is injured. I am very much interested by the question which one of the Commissioners asked me in that respect; and I would suggest whether it does not seem easy to avoid all questions of that kind. If the statue is injured, leave it so, but provide a perfect copy of the statue in its restored form; offer, if you like, prizes to sculptors for conjectural restorations, and choose the most beautiful, but do not touch the original work.

138. *Professor Faraday.* You said some time ago that in your own attempts to instruct the public there had not been time yet to see whether the course taken had produced improvement or not. You see no signs at all which lead you to suppose that it will not produce the improvement which you desire?—Far from it—I understood the Dean of St. Paul's to ask me whether any general effect had been produced upon the minds of the public. I have only been teaching a class of about forty workmen for a couple of years, after their work—they not always attending—and that forty being composed of people passing away and coming again; and I do not know what they are now doing; I only see a gradual succession of men in my own class. I rather take them in an elementary class, and pass them to a master in a higher class. But I have the greatest delight in the progress which these men have made, so far as I have seen it; and I have not the least doubt that great things will be done with respect to them.

Chairman. Will you state precisely what position you hold?—I am master of the Elementary and Landscape School of Drawing at the Working Men's College in Great Ormond Street. My efforts are directed not to making a carpenter an artist, but to making him happier as a carpenter.

Note.—The following analysis of the above evidence was given in the Index to the Report (p. 184).—Ed.

114-5-6. Sculpture and painting should be combined under same roof, not in same room.—Sculpture disciplines the eye to appreciate painting.—But, if in same room, disturbs the mind.—Tribune at Florence arranged too much for show —Sculpture not to be regarded as *decorative* of a room.—National Gallery should include works of all kinds of art *of all ages*, arranged chronologically (*cf.* 132). Mediæval sculpture should go with painting, if it is found impossible to combine art of all ages.

117-8. Pictures should be protected by glass in every case. It makes them more beautiful, independently of the preservation,—Glass is not merely expedient, but essential.—Pictures are permanently injured by dirt.

119-20-21. First-rate large pictures should have a room to themselves, and a gallery round them.—Pictures must be hung on a line with the eye.—In one, or at most two, lines.—In the Salon Carre at the Louvre the effect is magnificent, but details of pictures cannot be seen.

122. Galleries should be decorated not splendidly, but pleasantly.

123. Great importance of chronological arrangement. Art the truest history (*cf.* 125 and 132).

124. Best works of inferior artists to be secured.

125. All the works of a painter, however incongruous their subjects, to be exhibited in juxtaposition.

126. Love of detail in pictures among workmen.—Great refinement of their perceptions.

127. Accessibility of new National Gallery.

128. There should be two galleries—one containing gems, placed in as *safe* a position as possible; the other containing works good, but inferior to the highest, and located solely with a view to accessibility.

129. Impossible to protect *sculpture* from London atmosphere.

130. Inferior gallery would be useful as an instructor.—In this respect superior to the great gallery.

131-32. *Copies* of paintings much to be deprecated.

133. Good collection of casts a valuable addition to a national gallery.—Also architectural fragments and illustrations.—And everything which involves art.

134. If it is impossible to combine works of art of all ages, the Pagan and Christian division is the best.—"Christian" art including *all* art subsequent to the birth of Christ.

135. Great importance of arranging and setting off sculpture.

136. Recent purchase by Government of the great Paul Veronese.

137. "Restoring" abroad.

138. Witness is Master of the Elementary and Landscape School of Drawing at the Working Men's College in Great Ormond Street.—Progress made by students highly satisfactory.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.[2]

Evidence of John Ruskin, Tuesday, March 20, 1860

139. *Chairman.* I believe you have a general acquaintance with the leading museums, picture galleries, and institutions in this metropolis?—Yes, I know them well.

And especially the pictures?—Yes.

I believe you have also taken much interest in the Working Men's College?—Yes, much interest. I have been occupied there as a master for about five years.

I believe you conduct a class on two days in the week?—On one day of the week only.

You have given a great deal of gratuitous instruction to the working classes?—Not so much to the working classes as to the class which especially attends the lectures on drawing, but which of course is connected with the working classes, and through which I know something about them.

140. You are probably able to speak with reference to the hours at which it would be most convenient that these institutions should be opened to the working classes, so that they might enjoy them?—At all events, I can form some opinion about it.

What are the hours which you think would be the most suitable to the working classes, or those to whom you have imparted instruction?—They would, of course, have in general no hours but in the evening.

Do you think the hours which are now found suitable for mechanics' institutes would be suitable for them, that is, from eight till ten, or from seven till ten at night?—The earlier the better, I should think; that being dependent closely upon the other much more important question, how you can prepare the workmen for taking advantage of these institutions. The question before us, as a nation, is not, I think, what opportunities we shall give to the workmen of instruction, unless we enable them to receive it; and all this is connected closely, in my mind, with the early closing question, and with the more difficult question, issuing out of that, how far you can get the hours of labor regulated, and how far you can get the labor during those hours made not competitive, and not oppressive to the workmen.

141. Have you found that the instruction which you have been enabled to give to the working classes has produced very good results upon them already? I ought perhaps hardly to speak of my own particular modes of instruction, because their tendency is rather to lead the workman out of his class, and I am privately obliged to impress upon my men who come to the Working Men's College, not to learn in the hope of being anything but working men, but to learn what may be either advantageous for them in their work, or make them happy after their work. In my class, they are especially tempted to think of rising above their own rank, and becoming artists,—becoming something better than workmen, and that effect I particularly dread. I want all efforts for bettering the workmen to be especially directed in this way: supposing that they are to remain in this position forever, that they have not capacity to rise above it, and that they are to work as coal miners, or as iron forgers, staying as they are; how then you may make them happier and wiser?

I should suppose you would admit that the desire to rise out of a class is almost inseparable from the amount of self-improvement that you would wish to give them?—I should think not; I think that the moment a man desires to rise out of his own class, he does his work badly in it; he ought to desire to rise in his own class, and not out of it.

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[2] Reprinted from "The Report of the Select Committee on Public Institutions. *Ordered by* the House of Commons *to be printed*, 27 March 1860," pp. 113-123. The following members of the Committee were present on the occasion of the above evidence being given: -Sir John Trelawny (*Chairman*), Mr. Sclater Booth, Mr. Du Pre, Mr. Kinnaird, Mr. Hanbury, Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Slaney, and Mr. John Tollemache.—Ed.

The instruction which you would impart one would suppose would be beneficial to the laborer in the class which he is in?—Yes.

142. And that agrees, does it not, with what has been alleged by many working men, that they have found in their competition with foreigners that a knowledge of art has been most beneficial to them?—Quite so.

I believe many foreigners are now in competition with working men in the metropolis, in matters in which art is involved?—I believe there are many, and that they are likely still more to increase as the relations between the nations become closer.

Is it your opinion that the individual workman who now executes works of art in this country is less intellectually fit for his occupation than in former days?—Very much so indeed.

Have you not some proofs of that which you can adduce for the benefit of the Committee? —I can only make an assertion; I cannot prove it; but I assert it with confidence, that no workman, whose mind I have examined, is, at present, capable of design in the arts, only of imitation, and of exquisite manual execution, such as is unsurpassable by the work of any time or any country; manual execution, which, however, being wholly mechanical, is always profitless to the man himself, and profitless ultimately to those who possess the work.

143. With regard to those institutions in which pictures are exhibited, are you satisfied that the utmost facilities are afforded to the public compatibly with the expense which is now incurred?—I cannot tell how far it would be compatible with the expense, but I think that a very little increase of expense might certainly bring about a great increase of convenience.

Various plans have been suggested, by different persons, as to an improvement in the National Gallery, with regard to the area, and a better distribution of the pictures?—Yes.

Are you of opinion that at a very small cost it would be possible to increase the area considerably in the case of the National Gallery?—I have not examined the question with respect to the area of the National Gallery. It depends of course upon questions of rent, and respecting the mode in which the building is now constructed, which I have not examined; but in general this is true of large buildings, that expense wisely directed to giving facilities for seeing the pictures, and not to the mere show of the building, would always be productive of far more good to the nation, and especially to the lower orders of the nation, than expense in any other way directed, with reference to these institutions.

144. Some persons have been disposed to doubt whether, if the institutions were open at night, gas would be found injurious to the pictures; would that be your impression?—I have no doubt that it would be injurious to the pictures, if it came in contact with them. It would be a matter of great regret to me that valuable pictures should be so exhibited. I have hoped that pictures might be placed in a gallery for the working classes which would interest them much more than the *chefs-d'œuvre* of the great masters, and which at the same time would not be a great loss to the nation if destroyed.

145. Have you had any experience of the working of the evening openings of the South Kensington Museum?—No direct experience, but my impression is that the workmen at present being compelled to think always of getting as much work done in a day as they can, are generally led in these institutions to look to the machinery, or to anything which bears upon their trade; it therefore is no rest to them; it may be sometimes, when they are allowed to take their families, as they do on certain evenings, to the Kensington Museum, that is a great step; but the great evil is that the pressure of the work on a man's mind is not removed, and that he has not rest enough, thorough rest given him by proper explanations of the things he sees; he is not led by a large printed explanation beneath the very thing to take a happy and unpainful interest in every subject brought before him; he wanders about listlessly, and exerts himself to find out things which are not sufficiently explained, and gradually he tires of it, and he goes back to his home, or to his alehouse, unless he is a very intelligent man.

Would you recommend that some person should follow him through the building to explain the details?—No; but I would especially recommend that our institutions should be calculated for the help of persons whose minds are languid with labor. I find that with ordinary constitutions, the

labor of a day in England oppresses a man, and breaks him down, and it is not refreshment to him to use his mind after that, but it would be refreshment to him to have anything read to him, or any amusing thing told him, or to have perfect rest; he likes to lie back in his chair at his own fireside, and smoke his pipe, rather than enter into a political debate, and what we want is an extension of our art institutions, with interesting things, teaching a man and amusing him at the same time; above all, large printed explanations under every print and every picture; and the subjects of the pictures such as they can enjoy.

146. Have you any other suggestion to offer calculated to enlighten the Committee on the subject intrusted to them for consideration?—I can only say what my own feelings have been as to my men. I have found particularly that natural history was delightful to them; I think that that has an especial tendency to take their minds off their work, which is what I always try to do, not ambitiously, but reposingly. I should like to add to what I said about the danger of injury to *chefs-d'œuvre*, that such danger exists, not only as to gas, but also the breath, the variation of temperature, the extension of the canvases in a different temperature, the extension of the paint upon them, and various chemical operations of the human breath, the chance of an accidental escape of gas, the circulation of variously damp air through the ventilators; all these ought not to be allowed to affect the great and unreplaceable works of the best masters; and those works, I believe, are wholly valueless to the working classes; their merits are wholly imperceptible except to persons who have given many years of study to endeavor to qualify themselves to discover them; but what is wanting for the working man is historical painting of events noble, and bearing upon his own country; the history of his own country well represented to him; the natural history of foreign countries well represented to him; and domestic pathos brought before him. Nothing assists him so much as having the moral disposition developed rather than the intellectual after his work; anything that touches his feelings is good, and puts new life into him; therefore I want modern pictures, if possible, of that class which would ennoble and refine by their subjects. I should like prints of all times, engravings of all times; those would interest him with their variety of means and subject; and natural history of three kinds, namely, shells, birds, and plants; not minerals, because a workman cannot study mineralogy at home; but whatever town he may be in, he may take some interest in the birds and in the plants, or in the sea shells of his own country and coast. I should like the commonest of all our plants first, and most fully illustrated; the commonest of all our birds, and of our shells, and men would be led to take an interest in those things wholly for their beauty, and for their separate charm, irrespective of any use that might be made of them in the arts. There also ought to be, for the more intelligent workman, who really wants to advance himself in his business, specimens of the manufactures of all countries, as far as the compass of such institutions would allow.

147. You have traveled, I believe, a good deal abroad?—Yes.

And you have seen in many foreign countries that far more interest is taken in the improvement of the people in this matter than is taken in this country?—Far more.

Do you think that you can trace the good effects which result from that mode of treatment?—The circumstances are so different that I do not feel able to give evidence of any definite effect from such efforts; only, it stands to reason, that it must be so. There are so many circumstances at present against us, in England, that we must not be sanguine as to too speedy an effect. I believe that one great reason of the superiority of foreign countries in manufactures is, that they have more beautiful things about them continually, and it is not possible for a man who is educated in the streets of our manufacturing towns ever to attain that refinement of eye or sense; he cannot do it; and he is accustomed in his home to endure that which not the less blunts his senses.

The Committee has been informed that with regard to some of our museums, particularly the British Museum, they are very much overcharged with objects, and I apprehend that the same remark would be true as to some of our picture galleries. Are you of opinion that it would be conducive to the general elevation of the people in this country if our works of art, and objects of interest,

were circulated more expeditiously, and more conveniently, than at present, throughout the various manufacturing districts?—I think that all precious works of art ought to be treated with a quite different view, and that they ought to be kept together where men whose work is chiefly concerned with art, and where the artistically higher classes can take full advantage of them. They ought, therefore, to be all together, as in the Louvre at Paris, and as in the Uffizii at Florence, everything being illustrative of other things, but kept separate from the collections intended for the working classes, which may be as valuable as you choose, but they should be usable, and above all things so situated that the working classes could get at them easily, without keepers to watch what they are about, and have their wives and children with them, and be able to get at them freely, so that they might look at a thing as their own, not merely as the nation's, but as a gift from the nation to them as the working class.

You would cultivate a taste at the impressionable age?—Especially in the education of children, that being just the first question, I suppose, which lies at the root of all you can do for the workman.

148. With regard to the circulation of pictures and such loans of pictures as have heretofore been made in Manchester and elsewhere, are you of opinion that, in certain cases, during a part of the year, some of our best pictures might be lent for particular periods, to particular towns, to be restored in the same condition, so as to give those towns an opportunity of forming an opinion upon them, which otherwise they would not have?—I would rather keep them all in the metropolis, and move them as little as possible when valuable.

Mr. Slaney. That would not apply to loans by independent gentlemen who were willing to lend their pictures?—I should be very glad if it were possible to lend pictures, and send them about. I think it is one of the greatest movements in the nation, showing the increasing kindness of the upper classes towards the lower, that that has been done; but I think nothing can justify the risking of noble pictures by railway, for instance; that, of course, is an artist's view of the matter; but I do not see that the advantage to be gained would at all correspond with the danger of loss which is involved.

149. *Mr. Hanbury.* You mentioned that you thought it was very desirable that there should be lectures given to the working classes?—Yes.

Do you think that the duplicate specimens at the British Museum could be made available for lectures on natural history, if a part of that institution could be arranged for the purpose?—I should think so; but it is a question that I have no right to have an opinion upon. Only the officers of the institution can say what number of their duplicate specimens they could spare.

I put the question to you because I have observed in the British Museum that the people took a great interest in the natural history department, and, upon one occasion, a friend of mine stopped, and explained some of the objects, and at once a very numerous crowd was attracted round him, and the officials had to interfere, and told him to move on.—So much more depends upon the explanation than on the thing explained, that I believe, with very simple collections of very small value, but well chosen, and exhibited by a thoroughly intelligent lecturer, you might interest the lower classes, and teach them to any extent.

Would it be difficult to find such lecturers as you speak of?—Not in time; perhaps at present it would be, because we have got so much in the habit of thinking that science consists in language, and in fine words, and not in ascertaining the nature of the thing. The workman cannot be deceived by fine words; he always wants to know something about the thing, and its properties. Many of our lecturers would, I have no doubt, be puzzled if they were asked to explain the habits of a common bird.

150. Is there an increasing desire for information and improvement among the working classes?—A thirsty desire for it in every direction, increasing day by day, and likely to increase; it would grow by what it feeds upon.

To what do you attribute this improvement?—Partly to the healthy and proper efforts which have been made to elevate the working classes; partly, I am sorry to say, to an ambitious desire throughout the nation always to get on to a point which it has not yet reached, and which makes one

man struggle with another in every way. I think that the idea that knowledge is power is at the root of the movement among the working classes, much more so than in any other.

Do you consider that the distance of our public institutions is a great hindrance to the working classes?—Very great indeed.

You would, therefore, probably consider it a boon if another institution such as the British Museum could be established in the eastern end of the metropolis?—I should be most thankful to see it, especially there.

151. *Mr. Slaney.* I think you stated that you considered, that for the working classes it is a great thing to have relaxation of mind after the close occupation of the day; that they would embrace an opportunity of attending popular lectures on branches of natural history which they could comprehend, if they were given to them in plain and simple language?—Yes.

For instance, if you were to give a popular lecture upon British birds, giving them an explanation of the habits of the various birds, assisted by tolerably good plates, or figures describing the different habits of migration of those that come to us in spring, remain during the summer, and depart in the autumn to distant countries; of those which come in the autumn, remain during the winter, and then leave us; of those which charm us with their song, and benefit us in various ways; do you think that such a lecture would be acceptable to the working classes?—It would be just what they would enjoy the most, and what would do them the most good.

Do you not think that such lectures might be given without any very great cost, by finding persons who would endeavor to make the subjects plain and pleasant, not requiring a very expensive apparatus, either of figures or of birds, but which might be pointed out to them, and explained to them from time to time?—No; I think that no such lectures would be of use, unless a permanent means of quiet study were given to the men between times. As far as I know, lectures are always entirely useless, except as a matter of amusement, unless some opportunity be afforded of accurate intermediate study, and although I should deprecate the idea, on the one side, of giving the *chefs-d'œuvre* of the highest masters to the workman for his daily experiments, so I should deprecate, on the other, the idea of any economy if I saw a definite plan of helping a man in his own times of quiet study.

152. There are some popular works on British birds which the men might be referred to, containing accounts of the birds and their habits, which might be referred to subsequently?—Yes.

There are several works relating to British birds which are very beautifully illustrated, and to those they might be referred; do you not think that something might also be done with regard to popular lectures upon British plants, and particularly those which are perhaps the most common, and only neglected because of their being common; that you might point out to them the different soils in which they grow, so that they might be able to make excursions to see them in their wild state?—My wish is, that in every large manufacturing town there should be a perfect collection, at all events of the principal genera of British plants and birds, thoroughly well arranged, and a library associated with it, containing the best illustrative works on the subject, and that from time to time lectures should be given by the leading scientific men, which I am sure they would be willing to give if such collections were opened to them.

I dare say you know that there is one book upon British birds, which was compiled by a gentleman who was in trade, and lived at the corner of St. James's Street for many years, which is prized by all who are devoted to that study, and which would be easily obtained for the working men. Do you not think that this would relax their minds and be beneficial to them in many ways, especially if they were able to follow up the study?—Yes, in every way.

As to plants, might not they interest their wives as well?—I quite believe so.

If such things could be done by subscription in the vicinity of large towns, such as Manchester, would they not be very much responded to by the grateful feelings of the humbler people, who themselves would subscribe probably some trifle?—I think they would be grateful, however it were

done. But I should like it to be done as an expression of the sense of the nation, as doing its duty towards the workmen, rather than it should be done as a kind of charity by private subscription.

153. *Sir Robert Peel.* You have been five years connected with the Working Men's College?—Yes; I think about that time.

Is the attendance good there?—There is a fair attendance, I believe.

Of the working classes?—Yes; in the other lecture-rooms; not much in mine.

Do they go there as they please without going beforehand for tickets?—They pass through an introductory examination, which is not severe in any way, but merely shows that they are able to take advantage of the classes there; of course they pay a certain sum, which is not at all, at present, I believe, supporting to the college, for every class, just to insure their paying attention to it.

You stated that you did not think lectures would be of any use unless there was what you called active intermediate study?—I think not.

What did you mean by active intermediate study? if a man is working every day of the week until Saturday afternoon, how could that take place?—I think that you could not at all provide lectures once or twice a week at the institutions throughout the kingdom. By intermediate study, I mean merely that a man should have about him, when he came into the room, things that shall tempt him to look at them, and get interested in, say in one bird, or in one plant.

While the lecture was going on?—No, that might be given once a fortnight, or once a month, but that this intermediate attention should be just that which a man is delighted to give to a single plant which he cultivates in his own garden, or a single bird which he may happen to have obtained; the best of all modes of study.

154. You are in favor of the Early Closing Association?—I will not say that I am, because I have not examined their principles. I want to have our labor regulated, so that it shall be impossible for men to be so entirely crushed in mind and in body as they are by the system of competition.

You stated that you would wish the hours during which they would be able to enjoy the institutions to be as early as possible?—Yes, certainly.

But it would be impossible to have them earlier than they are now, on account of the organization of labor in the country.—I do not know what is possible. I do not know what the number of hours necessary for labor will ultimately be found to be.

Still you are of opinion that, if there was a half-holiday on the Saturday, it would be an advantage to the working classes, and enable them to visit and enjoy these institutions?—Certainly.

155. You observed, I think, that there was a thirsty desire on the part of the working classes for improvement?—Certainly.

And you also stated that there was a desire on their part to rise in that class, but not out of it?—I did not say that they wanted to rise in that class; they wish to emerge from it; they wish to become something better than workmen, and I want to keep them in that class; I want to teach every man to rest contented in his station, and I want all people, in all stations, to better and help each other as much as they can.

But you never saw a man, did you, who was contented?—Yes, I have seen several; nearly all the very good workmen are contented; I find that it is only the second-rate workmen who are discontented.

156. Surely competition with foreigners is a great advantage to the working classes of this country?—No.

It has been stated that competition is an immense advantage in the extension of artistic knowledge among the people of this country, who are rapidly stepping on the heels of foreigners?—An acquaintance with what foreign nations have accomplished may be very useful to our workmen, but a spirit of competition with foreign nations is useful to no one.

Will you be good enough to state why?—Every nation has the power of producing a certain number of objects of art, or of manufacturing productions which are peculiar to it, and which it

can produce thoroughly well; and, when that is rightly understood, every nation will strive to do its own work as well as it can be done, and will desire to be supplied, by other nations, with that which they can produce; for example, if we tried here in England to produce silk, we might possibly grow unhealthy mulberry trees and bring up unhealthy silkworms, but not produce good silk. It may be a question how far we should compete with foreigners in matters of taste. I think it doubtful, even in that view, that we should ever compete with them thoroughly. I find evidence in past art, that the French have always had a gift of color, which the English never had.

157. You stated that you thought that at very little expense the advantages to be derived from our national institutions might be greatly increased; will you state why you think very little expense would be necessary, and how it should be done?—By extending the space primarily, and by adding very cheap but completely illustrative works; by making all that such institutions contain thoroughly accessible; and giving, as I think I have said before, explanations, especially in a visible form, beside the thing to be illustrated, not in a separate form.

But that only would apply to daytime?—To nighttime as well.

But would you not have to introduce a system of lighting?—Yes; a system of lighting I should only regret as applied to the great works of art; I should think that the brightest system of lighting should be applied, especially of an evening, so that such places should be made delightful to the workman, and withdraw him from the alehouse and all other evil temptation; but I want them rather to be occupied by simple, and more or less cheap collections, than by the valuable ones, for fear of fire.

If, at the British Museum, they had printed information upon natural history, that, you think, would do great good?—Yes.

158. You stated that you thought there was far more interest taken in foreign countries in the intellectual development of the working classes than in England?—I answered that question rather rashly. I hardly ever see anything of society in foreign countries, and I was thinking, at the time, of the great efforts now being made in France, and of the general comfort of the institutions that are open.

Not political?—No.

Still you think that there is more interest taken in the intellectual development of the working classes in foreign countries than in England?—I think so, but I do not trust my own opinion.

I have lived abroad, and I have remarked that there is a natural facility in the French people, for instance, in acquiring a knowledge of art, and of combination of colors, but I never saw more, but far less desire or interest taken in the working classes than in England.—As far as relates to their intellectual development, I say yes; but I think there is a greater disposition to make them happy, and allow them to enjoy their happiness, in ordinary associations, at *fêtes*, and everything of that kind, that is amusing or recreative to them.

But that is only on Sundays?—No; on all *fête* days, and throughout, I think you see the working man, with his wife, happier in the gardens or in the suburbs of a town, and on the whole in a happier state; there is less desire to get as much out of him for the money as they can; less of that desire to oppress him and to use him as a machine than there is in England. But, observe, I do not lean upon that point; and I do not quite see how that bears upon the question, because, whatever interest there may be in foreign countries, or in ours, it is not as much as it should be in either.

But you were throwing a slur upon the character of the upper classes in this country, by insinuating that abroad a great deal more interest was taken in the working classes than in England. Now I assert, that quite the contrary is the fact.—I should be very sorry to express all the feelings that I have respecting the relations between the upper classes and the working classes in this country; it is a subject which cannot at present be discussed, and one upon which I would decline any further examination.

159. You stated that the working men were not so happy in this country as they were abroad, pursuing the same occupations?—I should think certainly not.

You have been in Switzerland?—Yes.

And at Zurich?—Not lately.

That is the seat of a great linen manufacture?—I have never examined the manufactures there, nor have I looked at Switzerland as a manufacturing country.

But you stated that there was much more interest taken in the intellectual developments of the working classes in foreign countries than in England?—Yes; but I was not thinking of Switzerland or of Zurich. I was thinking of France, and I was thinking of the working classes generally, not specially the manufacturing working classes. I used the words "working classes" generally.

Then do you withdraw the expression that you made use of, that in foreign countries the upper classes take more interest in the condition of the working classes, than they do in England?—I do not withdraw it; I only said that it was my impression.

But you cannot establish it?—No.

Therefore it is merely a matter of individual impression?—Entirely so.

You said, I think, that abroad the people enjoy their public institutions better, because inspectors do not follow them about?—I did not say so. I was asked the question whether I thought teaching should be given by persons accompanying the workman about, and I said certainly not. I would rather leave him to himself, with such information as could be given to him by printed documents.

160. *Mr. Sclater Booth.* With regard to the National Gallery, are you aware that there is great pressure and want of space there now, both with regard to the room for hanging pictures, and also with reference to the crowds of persons who frequent the National Gallery?—I am quite sure that if there is not great pressure, there will be soon, owing to the number of pictures which are being bought continually.

Do you not think that an extension of the space in the National Gallery is a primary consideration, which ought to take precedence of any improvement that might be made in the rooms as they are, with a view to opening them of an evening?—Most certainly.

That is the first thing, you think, that ought to be done?—Most certainly.

When you give your lectures at the Working Men's College, is it your habit to refer to special pictures in the National Gallery, or to special works of art in the British Museum?—Never; I try to keep whatever instruction I give bearing upon what is easily accessible to the workman, or what he can see at the moment. I do not count upon his having time to go to these institutions; I like to put the thing in his hand, and have it about.

Has it never been a stumbling-block in your path that you have found a workman unable to compare your lectures with any illustrations that you may have referred him to?—I have never prepared my lectures with a view to illustrate them by the works of the great masters.

161. You spoke, and very justly, of the importance of fixing on works of art printed explanations; are you not aware that that has been done to some extent at the Kensington Museum?—Yes.

Do you not think that a great part of the popularity of that institution is owing to that circumstance?—I think so, certainly.

On the whole, I gather from your evidence that you are not very sanguine as to the beneficial results that would arise from the opening of the British Museum and the National Gallery of an evening, as those institutions are at present constituted, from a want of space and the crowding of the objects there?—Whatever the results might be, from opening them, as at present constituted, I think better results might be attained by preparing institutions for the workman himself alone.

Do you think that museums of birds and plants, established in various parts of the metropolis, illustrated and furnished with pictures of domestic interest, and possibly with specimens of manufactures, would be more desirable, considering the mode in which the large institutions are now seen?—I think in these great institutions attention ought specially to be paid to giving perfect security to all the works and objects of art which they possess; and to giving convenience to the

thorough student, whose business lies with those museums; and that collections for the amusement and improvement of the working classes ought to be entirely separate.

If such institutions as I have described were to be established, you would of course desire that they should be opened of an evening, and be specially arranged, with a view to evening exhibition? —Certainly.

It has been stated that the taxpayer has a right to have these exhibitions opened at hours when the workpeople can go to them, they being taxpayers; do not you think that the real interest of the taxpayer is, first, to have the pictures as carefully preserved as possible, and secondly, that they should be accessible to those whose special occupation in life is concerned in their study?—Most certainly.

Is not the interest of the taxpayer reached in this way, rather than by any special opportunity being given of visiting at particular hours?—Most certainly.

162. *Mr. Kinnaird.* Have you ever turned your attention to any peculiar localities, where museums of paintings and shells, and of birds and plants, might be opened for the purpose referred to?—Never; I have never examined the subject.

Has it ever occurred to you that the Vestry Halls, which have recently been erected, and which are lighted, might be so appropriated?—No; I have never considered the subject at all.

Supposing that suitable premises could be found, do you not think that many people would contribute modern paintings, and engravings, and various other objects of interest?—I think it is most probable; in fact, I should say certain.

You would view such an attempt with great favor?—Yes; with great delight indeed.

You rather look upon it as the duty of the Government to provide such institutions for the people?—I feel that very strongly indeed.

Do you not think that the plan which has been adopted at Versailles, of having modern history illustrated by paintings, would prove of great interest to the people?—I should think it would be an admirable plan in every way.

And a very legitimate step to be taken by the Government, for the purpose of encouraging art in that way?—Most truly.

Would it have, do you think, an effect in encouraging art in this country?—I should think so, certainly.

Whose duty would you consider it to be to superintend the formation of such collections? are there any Government officers who are at present capable of organizing a staff for employment in local museums that you are aware of?—I do not know; I have not examined that subject at all.

163. *Chairman.* The Committee would like to understand you more definitely upon the point that has been referred to, as to foreigners and Englishmen. I presume that what you wished the Committee to understand was, that upon the whole, so far as you have observed, more facilities are in point of fact afforded to the working classes, in some way or other, abroad than in this country for seeing pictures and visiting public institutions?—My answer referred especially to the aspect of the working classes as I have watched them in their times of recreation; I see them associated with the upper classes, more happily for themselves; I see them walking through the Louvre, and walking through the gardens of all the great cities of Europe, and apparently less ashamed of themselves, and more happily combined with all the upper classes of society, than they are here. Here our workmen, somehow, are always miserably dressed, and they always keep out of the way, both at such institutions and at church. The temper abroad seems to be, while there is a sterner separation and a more aristocratic feeling between the upper and the lower classes, yet just on that account the workman confesses himself for a workman, and is treated with affection. I do not say workmen merely, but the lower classes generally, are treated with affection, and familiarity, and sympathy by the master or employer, which has to me often been very touching in separate eases; and that impression being on my mind, I answered, not considering that the question was of any importance, hastily; and I am not at present prepared to say how far I could, by thinking, justify that impression.

164. *Mr. Kinnaird.* In your experience, in the last few years, have you not seen a very marked improvement in the working classes in this country in every respect to which you have alluded; take the last twenty years, or since you have turned your attention that way?—I have no evidence before me in England of that improvement, because I think that the struggle for existence becomes every day more severe, and that, while greater efforts are made to help the workman, the principles on which our commerce is conducted are every day oppressing him, and sinking him deeper.

Have you ever visited the manufacturing districts of Lancashire and Yorkshire, with a view of ascertaining the state of the people there?—Not with a definite view. My own work has nothing to do with those subjects; and it is only incidentally, because I gratuitously give such instruction as I am able to give at the Working Men's College, that I am able to give you any facts on this subject. All the rest that I can give is, as Sir Robert Peel accurately expressed it, nothing but personal impression.

You admit that the Working Men's College is, after all, a very limited sphere?—A very limited sphere.

165. *Sir Robert Peel.* You have stated that, in the Louvre, a working man looks at the pictures with a greater degree of self-respect than the same classes do in the National Gallery here?—I think so.

You surely never saw a man of the upper class, in England, scorn at a working man because he appeared in his working dress in the National Gallery in London?—I have certainly seen working men apprehensive of such scorn.

Chairman. Is it not the fact, that the upper and lower classes scarcely ever meet on the same occasions?—I think, if possible, they do not.

Is it not the fact that the laboring classes almost invariably cease labor at such hours as would prevent them from going to see pictures at the time when the upper classes do go?—I meant, before, to signify assent to your question, that they do not meet if it can be avoided.

Sir Robert Peel. Take the Crystal Palace as an example; do not working men and all classes meet there together, and did you ever see a working man *gêné* in the examination of works of art?—I am sure that a working man very often would not go where he would like to go.

But you think he would abroad?—I think they would go abroad; I only say that I believe such is the fact.

Mr. Slaney. Do not you think that the light-hearted temperament of our southern neighbors, and the fineness of the climate, which permits them to enjoy themselves more in the open air, has something to do with it?—I hope that the old name of Merry England may be recovered one of these days. I do not think that it is in the disposition of the inhabitants to be in the least duller than other people.

Sir Robert Peel. When was that designation lost?—I am afraid ever since our manufactures have prospered.

Chairman. Referring to the Crystal Palace, do you think that that was an appropriate instance to put, considering the working man pays for his own, and is not ashamed to enjoy his own for his own money?—I have never examined the causes of the feeling; it did not appear to me to be a matter of great importance what was the state of feeling in foreign countries. I felt that it depended upon so many circumstances, that I thought it would be a waste of time to trace it.

166. *Sir Robert Peel.* You stated that abroad the working classes were much better dressed?—Yes.

Do you think so?—Yes.

Surely they cannot be better dressed than they are in England, for you hardly know a working man here from an aristocrat?—It is precisely because I do know working men on a Sunday and every other day of the week from an aristocrat that I like their dress better in France; it is the ordinary dress belonging to their position, and it expresses momentarily what they are; it is the blue blouse which hangs freely over their frames, keeping them sufficiently protected from cold and dust; but

here it is a shirt open at the collar, very dirty, very much torn, with ragged hair, and a ragged coat, and altogether a dress of misery.

You think that they are better dressed abroad because they wear a blouse?—Because they wear a costume appropriate to their work.

Are you aware that they make it an invariable custom to leave off the blouse on Sundays and on holidays, and that after they have finished their work they take off their blouse?—I am not familiar, nor do I profess to be familiar, with the customs of the Continent; I am only stating my impressions; but I like especially their habit of wearing a national costume. I believe the national costume of work in Switzerland to be at the root of what prosperity Switzerland yet is retaining. I think, for instance, although it may sound rather singular to say so, that the pride which the women take in their clean chemise sleeves, is one of the healthiest things in Switzerland, and that it is operative in every way on the health of the mind and the body, their keeping their costume pure, fresh, and beautiful.

You stated that the working classes were better dressed abroad than in England?—As far as I know, that is certainly the fact.

Still their better dress consists of a blouse, which they take off when they have finished their work?—I bow to your better knowledge of the matter.

Chairman. Are you aware that a considerable number of the working classes are in bed on the Sunday?—Perhaps it is the best place for them.

167. *Mr. Kinnaird.* You trace the deterioration in the condition of the working classes to the increase of trade and manufactures in this country?—To the increase of competitive trades and manufactures.

It is your conviction that we may look upon this vast extension of trade, and commerce, and competition, altogether as an evil?—Not on the vast extension of trade, but on the vast extension of the struggle of man with man, instead of the principle of help of man by man.

Chairman. I understood you to say, that you did not object to trade, but that you wished each country to produce that which it was best fitted to produce, with a view to an interchange of its commodities with those of other countries?—Yes.

You did not intend to cast a slur upon the idea of competition?—Yes, very distinctly; I intended not only to cast a slur, but to express my excessive horror of the principle of competition, in every way; for instance, we ought not to try to grow claret here, nor to produce silk; we ought to produce coal and iron, and the French should give us wine and silk.

You say that, with a view to an interchange of such commodities?—Yes.

Each country producing that which it is best fitted to produce?—Yes, as well as it can; not striving to imitate or compete with the productions of other countries. Finally, I believe that the way of ascertaining what ought to be done for the workman in any position, is for any one of us to suppose that he was our own son, and that he was left without any parents, and without any help; that there was no chance of his ever emerging out of the state in which he was, and then, that what we should each of us like to be done for our son, so left, we should strive to do for the workman.

> The following analysis of the above evidence was mainly given in the Index to the Report (p. 153).—Ed.
>
> 139. Is well acquainted with the museums, picture galleries, etc., in the metropolis.—Conducts a drawing class at the Working Men's College.
>
> 140. Desirableness of the public institutions being open in the evening (cp. 154, 161).
>
> 141. Remarks relative to the system of teaching expedient for the working classes; system pursued by witness at the Working Men's College.—Workmen to aim at rising in their class, not *out of* it (cp. 155).
>
> 142. Backward state, intellectually, of the working man of the present time; superiority of the foreigner.

143. Improvement of the National Gallery suggested (cp. 157, 160).

144. Inexpediency of submitting valuable ancient pictures to the risk of injury from gas, etc. (cp. 146, 157).

145. Statement as to the minds of the working classes after their day's labor being too much oppressed to enable them to enjoy or appreciate the public institutions, if merely opened in the evening.

146. Suggested collection of pictures and prints of a particular character for the inspection of the working classes.—Suggestions with a view to special collections of shells, birds, and plants being prepared for the use of the working classes; system of lectures, of illustration, and of intermediate study necessary in connection with such collections (cp. 151-52).

147. Statement as to greater interest being taken in France and other foreign countries than in England in the intellectual development of the working classes; examination on this point, and on the effect produced thereby upon the character and demeanor of the working people (cp. 158, 163-64).

148. Objection to circulating valuable or rare works of art throughout the country, on account of the risk of injury—Disapproval of inspectors, etc., going about with the visitors (cp. 159).—Advantage in the upper classes lending pictures, etc., for public exhibition.

149. Lectures to working men. Advantage if large printed explanations were placed under every picture (cp. 157, 161).

150. Great desire among the working classes to acquire knowledge; grounds of such desire (cp. 155).—Great boon if a museum were formed at the east end of London.

151. Lectures on natural history for working men.

152. Books available on British birds.

153. Intermediate study essential to use of Lectures.—Good attendance at Working Men's College.—Terms and conditions of admission to it.

154. Approval of Saturday half-holiday movement (cp. 140, 161).

155. See above, s. 142.

156. Competition in trade and labor regarded by witness as a great evil.

157. See above, s. 143, 149.

158-59. Happier condition of lower classes abroad than at home. Their dress also better abroad. 163-64, 166, and see above, s. 142.

160. See above, s. 143, 149, 157.

161. See above, s. 149, 154.

162. Use of existing public buildings for art collections.

163-64. See above, s. 158-59.

165. Surely England may one day be Merry England again.—When it ceased to be so.

166. See above, s. 158-59.

167. Increase of trade and deteriorated condition of working-classes.—Our duty to them.

THE ROYAL ACADEMY COMMISSION.[3]

Evidence of John Ruskin, Monday, June 8th, 1863

168. *Chairman.* You have, no doubt, frequently considered the position of the Royal Academy in this country?—Yes.

Is it in all points satisfactory to you?—No, certainly not.

Do you approve, for example, of the plan by which, on a vacancy occurring, the Royal Academicians supply that vacancy, or would you wish to see that election confided to any other hands?—I should wish to see the election confided to other hands. I think that all elections are liable to mistake, or mischance, when the electing body elect the candidate into them. I rather think that elections are only successful where the candidate is elected into a body other than the body of electors; but I have not considered the principles of election fully enough to be able to give any positive statement of opinion upon that matter. I only feel that at present the thing is liable to many errors and mischances.

Does it not seem, however, that there are some precedents, such, for example, as the Institute of France, in which the body electing to the vacancies that occur within it keeps up a very high character, and enjoys a great reputation?—There are many such precedents; and, as every such body for its own honor must sometimes call upon the most intellectual men of the country to join it, I should think that every such body must retain a high character where the country itself has a proper sense of the worth of its best men; but the system of election may be wrong, though the sense of the country may be right; and I think, in appealing to a precedent to justify a system, we should estimate properly what has been brought about by the feeling of the country. We are all, I fancy, too much in the habit of looking to forms as the cause of what really is caused by the temper of the nation at the particular time, working, through the forms, for good or evil.

If, however, the election of Academicians were to be confided to artists who were not already Academicians themselves, would it be easy to meet this objection, that they would have in many cases a personal interest in the question; that each might be striving for his own admission to that distinction; whereas, when the election takes place among those who have already attained that distinction, direct personal interest at all events is absent?—I should think personal interest would act in a certain sense in either case; it would branch into too many subtleties of interest to say in what way it would act. I should think that it would be more important to the inferior body to decide rightly upon those who were to govern them, than to the superior body to decide upon those who were to govern other people; and that the superior body would therefore generally choose those who were likely to be pleasant to themselves;—pleasant, either as companions, or in carrying out a system which they chose for their own convenience to adopt; while the inferior body would choose men likely to carry out the system that would tend most to the general progress of art.

169. As I understand you, though you have a decided opinion that it would be better for some other constituent body to elect the members of the Royal Academy, you have not a decided opinion as to how that constituent body would best be composed?—By no means.

I presume you would wish that constituent body to consist of artists, though you are not prepared to say precisely how they should be selected?—I should like the constituent body to consist both of

[3] Reprinted from "The Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Present Position of the Royal Academy in Relation to the Fine Arts." London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1863 (pp. 546-55. Questions 5079-5142). The Commission consisted of Earl Stanhope (*Chairman*), Viscount Hardinge, Lord Elcho, Sir E. W. Head, Mr. William Stirling, Mr. H. D. Seymour, and Mr. Henry Reeve, all of whom, except Mr. Seymour, were present at the above sitting.—Ed.

artists and of the public. I feel great difficulties in offering any suggestion as to the manner in which the electors should elect: but I should like the public as well as artists to have a voice, so that we might have the public feeling brought to bear upon painting as we have now upon music; and that the election of those who were to attract the public eye, or direct the public mind, should indicate also the will of the public in some respects; not that I think that "will" always wise, but I think you would then have pointed out in what way those who are teaching the public should best regulate the teaching; and also it would give the public itself an interest in art, and a sense of responsibility, which in the present state of things they never can have.

Will you explain more fully the precedent of music to which you have just adverted?—The fame of any great singer or any great musician depends upon the public enthusiasm and feeling respecting him. No Royal Academy can draw a large audience to the opera by stating that such and such a piece of music is good, or that such and such a voice is clear; if the public do not feel the voice to be delicious, and if they do not like the music, they will not go to hear it. The fame of the musician, whether singer, instrumentalist, or composer, is founded mainly upon his having produced a strong effect upon the public intellect and imagination. I should like that same effect to be produced by painters, and to be expressed by the public enthusiasm and approbation; not merely by expressions of approbation in conversation, but by the actual voice which in the theater is given by the shout and by the clapping of the hands. You cannot clap a picture, nor clap a painter at his work, but I should like the public in some way to bring their voice to bear upon the painter's work.

170. Have you formed any opinion upon the position of the Associates in the Royal Academy?—I have thought of it a little, but the present system of the Academy is to me so entirely nugatory, it produces so little effect in any way (what little effect it does produce being in my opinion mischievous), that it has never interested me; and I have felt the difficulty so greatly, that I never, till your lordship's letter reached me, paid much attention to it. I always thought it would be a waste of time to give much time to thinking how it might be altered; so that as to the position of Associates I can say little, except that I think, in any case, there ought to be some period of probation, and some advanced scale of dignity, indicative of the highest attainments in art, which should be only given to the oldest and most practiced painters.

From the great knowledge which you possess of British art, looking to the most eminent painters, sculptors, and architects at this time, should you say that the number of the Royal Academy is sufficient fully to represent them, or would you recommend an increase in the present number of Academicians?—I have not considered in what proportion the Academicianships at present exist. That is rather a question bearing upon the degree of dignity which one would be glad to confer. I should like the highest dignity to be limited, but I should like the inferior dignity corresponding to the Associateship to be given, as the degrees are given in the universities, without any limitation of number, to those possessing positive attainments and skill. I should think a very limited number of Academicianships would always meet all the requirements of the highest intellect of the country.

171. Have you formed any opinion upon the expediency of intrusting laymen with some share in the management of the affairs of the Academy?—No, I have formed no opinion upon that matter. I do not know what there is at present to be managed in the Academy. I should think if the Academy is to become an available school, laymen cannot be joined in the management of that particular department. In matters of revenue, and in matters concerning the general interests and dignity of the Academy, they might be.

Should you think that non-professional persons would be fitly associated with artists in such questions as the selection and hanging of the pictures sent in for exhibition?—No, I think not.

Some persons have suggested that the president of the Academy should not always nor of necessity be himself an artist; should you approve of any system by which a gentleman of high social position, not an artist, was placed at the head of such a body as the Academy?—"Of such a body as the Academy," if I may be permitted to repeat your words, must of course have reference to the

constitution to be given to it. As at present constituted, I do not know what advantage might or might not be derived from such a gentleman being appointed president. As I should like to see it constituted, I think he ought to be an artist only.

172. Have you had any reason to observe or to make yourself acquainted with the working of the schools of the Royal Academy?—Yes, I have observed it. I have not made myself acquainted with the actual methods of teaching at present in use, but I know the general effect upon the art of the country.

What should you say was that effect?—Nearly nugatory: exceedingly painful in this respect, that the teaching of the Academy separates, as the whole idea of the country separates, the notion of art-education from other education, and when you have made that one fundamental mistake, all others follow. You teach a young man to manage his chalk and his brush—not always that—but having done that, you suppose you have made a painter of him; whereas to educate a painter is the same thing as to educate a clergyman or a physician—you must give him a liberal education primarily, and that must be connected with the kind of learning peculiarly fit for his profession. That error is partly owing to our excessively vulgar and excessively shallow English idea that the artist's profession is not, and cannot be, a liberal one. We respect a physician, and call him a gentleman, because he can give us a purge and clean out our stomachs; but we do not call an artist a gentleman, whom we expect to invent for us the face of Christ. When we have made that primary mistake, all other mistakes in education are trivial in comparison. The very notion of an art academy should be, a body of teachers of the youth who are to be the guides of the nation through its senses; and that is a very important means of guiding it. We have done a good deal through dinners, but we may some day do a good deal more through pictures.

You would have a more comprehensive system of teaching?—Much more comprehensive.

173. Do I rightly understand you that you would wish it to embrace branches of liberal education in general, and not be merely confined to specific artistic studies?—Certainly. I would have the Academy education corresponding wholly to the university education. The schools of the country ought to teach the boy the first conditions of manipulation. He should come up, I say not at what age, but probably at about fourteen or fifteen, to the central university of art, wherever that was established; and then, while he was taught to paint and to carve and to work in metal—just as in old times he would have been taught to manage the sword and lance, they being the principal business of his life,—during the years from fifteen to twenty, the chief attention of his governors should be to make a gentleman of him in the highest sense; and to give him an exceedingly broad and liberal education, which should enable him not only to work nobly, but to conceive nobly.

174. As to the point, however, of artistic manipulation, is not it the fact that many great painters have differed, and do differ, from each other, and would it therefore be easy for the Academy to adopt any authoritative system of teaching, excluding one mode and acknowledging another?—Not easy, but very necessary. There have been many methods; but there has never been a case of a great school which did not fix upon its method: and there has been no case of a thoroughly great school which did not fix upon the right method, as far as circumstances enabled it to do so. The meaning of a successful school is, that it has adopted a method which it teaches to its young painters, so that right working becomes a habit with them; so that with no thought, and no effort, and no torment, and no talk about it, they have the habit of doing what their school teaches them.

You do not think a system is equally good which leaves to each eminent professor, according to the bent of his genius or the result of his experience, to instruct young men, the instruction varying with the character of each professor?—Great benefit would arise if each professor founded his own school, and were interested in his own pupils; but, as has been sufficiently illustrated in the schools of Domenichino and Guido, there is apt to arise rivalry between the masters, with no correlative advantages, unless the masters are all of one mind. And the only successful idea of an academy has been where the practice was consistent, and where there was no contradiction. Considering the

knowledge we now have, and the means we now have of comparing all the works of the greatest painters, though, as you suggest by your question, it is not easy to adopt an authoritative system, yet it is perfectly possible. Let us get at the best method and let us teach that. There is unquestionably a best way if we can find it; and we have now in England the means of finding it out.

The teaching in the Academy is now, under all circumstances, gratuitous; would you wish that system to continue, or should you prefer to see a system of payment?—I am not prepared to answer that question. It would depend upon the sort of system that was adopted and on the kind of persons you received into your schools.

175. I presume you would say that in artistic teaching there are some points on which there would be common ground, and others upon which there must be specific teaching; for instance, in sculpture and painting there is a point up to which the proportions of the human figure have to be studied, but afterwards there is a divergence between the two arts of chiseling marble and laying colors on the canvas?—Certainly. I should think all that might be arranged in an Academy system very simply. You would have first your teaching of drawing with the soft point; and associated with that, chiaroscuro: you would then have the teaching of drawing with the hard or black point, involving the teaching of the best system of engraving, and all that was necessary to form your school of engravers: you would then proceed to metal work; and on working in metal you would found your school of sculpture, and on that your school of architecture: and finally, and above all, you would have your school of painting, including oil painting and fresco painting, and all painting in permanent material; (not comprising painting in any material that was not permanent:) and with that you would associate your school of chemistry, which should teach what was permanent and what was not; which school of chemistry should declare authoritatively, with the Academy's seal, what colors would stand and what process would secure their standing: and should have a sort of Apothecaries' Hall where anybody who required them could procure colors in the purest state; all these things being organized in one great system, and only possibly right by their connection and in their connection.

176. Do you approve of the encouragement which of late years has been given to fresco painting, and do you look forward to much extension of that branch of art in England?—I found when I was examining the term "fresco painting," that it was a wide one, that none of us seemed to know quite the limitation or extent of it; and after giving a good deal more time to the question I am still less able to answer distinctly on an understanding of the term "fresco painting:" but using the term "decorative painting, applicable to walls in permanent materials," I think it essential that every great school should include as one of its main objects the teaching of wall painting in permanent materials, and on a large scale.

You think it should form a branch of the system of teaching in the Academy?—I think it should form a branch of the teaching in the Academy, possibly the principal branch.

Does it so far as you know form a separate branch of teaching in any of the foreign academies?—I do not know.

177. Looking generally, and of course without mentioning any names, have you in the course of the last few years been generally satisfied with the selection of artists into the Royal Academy?—No, certainly not.

Do you think that some artists of merit have been excluded, or that artists whom you think not deserving of that honor have been elected?—More; that artists not deserving of the honor have been elected. I think it does no harm to any promising artist to be left out of the Academy, but it does harm to the public sometimes that an unpromising artist should be let into it.

You think there have been cases within the last few years in which persons, in your judgment, not entitled to that distinction have nevertheless been elected?—Certainly.

178. With respect to the selection of pictures for the exhibition, are you satisfied in general with that selection, or have you in particular instances seen ground to think that it has been injudiciously exercised?—In some cases it has been injudiciously exercised, but it is a matter of small importance;

it causes heartburning probably, but little more. If a rejected picture is good, the public will see it some day or other, and find out that it is a good picture. I care little about what pictures are let in or not, but I do care about seeing the pictures that are let in. The main point, which everyone would desire to see determined, is how the pictures that are admitted are to be best seen. No picture deserving of being seen at all should be so hung as to give you any pain or fatigue in seeing it. If you let a picture into the room at all, it should not be hung so high as that either the feelings of the artist or the neck of the public should be hurt.

179. *Viscount Hardinge.* I gather from your evidence that you would wish to see the Royal Academy a sort of central university to which young men from other institutions should be sent. Assuming that there were difficulties in the way of carrying that out, do you think, under the present system, you could exact from young men who are candidates for admission into the Royal Academy, some educational test?—Certainly; I think much depends upon that. If the system of education which I have been endeavoring to point out were adopted, you would have in every one of those professions very practiced workmen. You could not have any of this education carried out, unless you had thoroughly practiced workmen; and you should fix your pass as you fix your university pass, and you should pass a man in architecture, sculpture, and painting, because he knows his business, and knows as much of any other science as is necessary for his profession. You require a piece of work from him, and you examine him, and then you pass him,—call him whatever you like;—but you say to the public, Here is a workman in this branch who will do your work well.

You do not think there would in such a system be any risk of excluding men who might hereafter be great men who under such a system might not be able to pass?—There are risks in every system, but I think every man worth anything would pass. A great many who would be good for nothing would pass, but your really great man would assuredly pass.

180. Has it ever struck you that it would be advantageous to art if there were at the universities professors of art who might give lectures and give instruction to young men who might desire to avail themselves of it, as you have lectures on botany and geology?—Yes, assuredly. The want of interest on the part of the upper classes in art has been very much at the bottom of the abuses which have crept into all systems of education connected with it. If the upper classes could only be interested in it by being led into it when young, a great improvement might be looked for; therefore I feel the expediency of such an addition to the education of our universities.

181. Is not that want of refinement which may be observed in many of the pictures from time to time exhibited in the Royal Academy to be attributed in a great measure to the want of education amongst artists?—It is to be attributed to that, and to the necessity which artists are under of addressing a low class of spectators: an artist to live must catch the public eye. Our upper classes supply a very small amount of patronage to artists at present, their main patronage being from the manufacturing districts and from the public interested in engravings;—an exceedingly wide sphere, but a low sphere,—and you catch the eye of that class much more by pictures having reference to their amusements than by any noble subject better treated, and the better treated it was the less it would interest that class.

Is it not often the case that pictures exhibiting such a want of refinement, at the same time fetch large prices amongst what I may call the mercantile patrons of art?—Certainly; and, the larger the price, the more harm done of course to the school, for that is a form of education you cannot resist. Plato said long ago, when you have your demagogue against you no human form of education can resist that.

182. *Sir E. Head.* What is your opinion of the present mode of teaching in the life school and the painting school, namely, by visitors constantly changing?—I should think it mischievous. The unfortunate youths, I should imagine, would just get what they could pick up; it would be throwing them crumbs very much as you throw bones to the animals in the Zoological Gardens.

Do you conceive that anything which can be properly called a school, is likely to be formed where the teaching is conducted in that way?—Assuredly not.

183. You stated that in the event of the introduction of lay members into the Academy, you would not think it desirable that they should take part in the selection or hanging of pictures for exhibition. Is not there a great distinction between the selection of the pictures and the hanging of the pictures, and might not they take part in the one without taking part in the other?—I should think hardly. My notion of hanging a picture is to put it low enough to be seen. If small it should be placed near the eye. Anybody can hang a picture, but the question should be, is there good painting enough in this picture to make it acceptable to the public, or to make it just to the artist to show it? And none but artists can quite judge of the workmanship which should entitle it to enter the Academy.

Do you think it depends solely upon the workmanship?—Not by any means solely, but I think that is the first point that should be looked to. An ill-worked picture ought not to be admitted; let it be exhibited elsewhere if you will, but your Academy has no business to let bad work pass. If a man cannot carve or paint, though his work may be well conceived, do not let his work pass. Unless you require good work in your Academy exhibition, you can form no school.

Mr. Reeve. Applying the rule you have just laid down, would the effect be to exclude a considerable proportion of the works now exhibited in the Academy?—Yes; more of the Academicians' than of others.

Sir E. Head. Selection now being made by technical artists?—No.

Professional?—Yes.

Lord Elcho. Do you think that none but professional artists are capable of judging of the actual merit or demerit of a painting?—Non-professional persons may offer a very strong opinion upon the subject, which may happen to be right,—or which may be wrong.

Your opinion is that the main thing with respect to the exhibition is, that the pictures should be seen; that they should not be hung too high or too low. That question has been already raised before the Commission, and it has been suggested that two feet from the ground should be the minimum height for the base of the picture, and some witnesses have said that six feet and others eight feet should be the maximum height for the base of the picture; what limit would you fix?—I should say that the horizontal line in the perspective of the picture ought always to be opposite the spectator's eye, no matter what the height may be from the floor. If the horizontal line is so placed that it must be above the spectator's eye, in consequence of the size of the picture, it cannot be helped, but I would always get the horizontal line opposite the eye if possible.

184. *Chairman.* Should you concur in the suggestion which a witness has made before this Commission, that it would be an improvement, if the space admitted of it, that works of sculpture should be intermixed in the same apartment with works of painting, instead of being kept as at present in separate apartments?—I should think it would be very delightful to have some works of sculpture mixed with works of painting; that it would make the exhibition more pleasing, and that the eye would be rested sometimes by turning from the colors to the marble, and would see the colors of the paintings better in return. Sir Joshua Reynolds mentions the power which some of the Flemish pictures seemed to derive, in his opinion, by looking at them after having consulted his note-book. Statuary placed among the pictures would have the same effect. I would not have the sculpture that was sent in for the exhibition of the year exhibited with the paintings, but I would have works of sculpture placed permanently in the painting rooms.

Lord Elcho. Supposing there were no works of sculpture available for being placed in the rooms permanently, and supposing among the works sent in for annual exhibition there were works of a character fit to be placed among the paintings, should you see any objection to their being so placed?—That would cause an immense amount of useless trouble, and perpetual quarrels among the sculptors, as to whose works were entitled to be placed in the painting rooms or not.

Are you aware that in the exhibition in Paris in 1855, that was the system adopted?—No. If the French adopted it, it was likely to be useful, and doubtless they would carry it out very cleverly; but we have not the knack of putting the right things in the right places by any means.

Did you see our own International Exhibition last year?—No.

Are you aware that a similar system was resorted to in the exhibition of pictures there?—I should think in our exhibitions we must put anything where it would go, in the sort of way that we manage them.

185. At the present moment there are on the books of the Academy five honorary members, who hold certain titular offices, Earl Stanhope being antiquary to the Academy, Mr. Grote being professor of ancient history, Dean Milman being professor of ancient literature, the Bishop of Oxford being chaplain, and Sir Henry Holland being secretary for foreign correspondence; these professors never deliver any lectures and have no voice whatever in the management, but have mere honorary titular distinctions; should you think it desirable that gentlemen of their position and character should have a voice in the management of the affairs of the Academy?—It would be much more desirable that they should give lectures upon the subjects with which they are acquainted. I should think Earl Stanhope and all the gentlemen you have mentioned, would be much happier in feeling that they were of use in their positions; and that if you gave them something to do they would very nobly do it. If you give them nothing to do I think they ought not to remain in the institution.

186. It has been suggested that the Academy now consisting of forty-two might be increased advantageously to fifty professional members, architecture, sculpture, and painting being fairly represented, and that in addition to those fifty there might be elected or nominated somehow or other ten non-professional persons, that is, men taking an interest in art, who had a certain position and standing in the country, and who might take an active part in the management of the affairs of the institution, so tending to bring the Royal Academy and the public together?—I do not know enough of society to be able to form an opinion upon the subject.

Irrespective of society, as a question of art, you know enough of non-professional persons interested in art to judge as to whether the infusion of such an element into the Academy might be of advantage to the Academy and to art generally?—I think if you educate our upper classes to take more interest in art, which implies, of course, to know something about it, they might be most efficient members of the Academy; but if you leave them, as you leave them now, to the education which they get at Oxford and Cambridge, and give them the sort of scorn which all the teaching there tends to give, for art and artists, the less they have to do with an academy of art the better.

Assuming that, at present, you have not a very great number of those persons in the country, do you not think that the mere fact of the adoption of such a principle in any reform in the constitution of the Academy might have the effect of turning attention more to this matter at the Universities, and leading to the very thing which you think so desirable?—No, I should think not. It would only at present give the impression that the whole system was somewhat artificial, and that it was to remain ineffective.

Notwithstanding the neglect of this matter at the Universities, do you think, at the present moment, you could not find ten non-professional persons, of the character you would think desirable, to add to the Academy?—If I may be so impertinent, I may say that you as one of the upper classes, and I as a layman in the lower classes, are tolerably fair examples of the kind of persons who take an interest in art, and I think both of us would do a great deal of mischief if we had much to do with the Academy.

187. Assuming those two persons to be appointed lay members, will you state in what way you think they would do mischief in the councils of the Academy?—We should be disturbing elements, whereas what I should try to secure, if I had anything to do with its arrangements, would be entire tranquillity, a regular system of tuition in which there should be little excitement, and little operation of popular, aristocratic, or any other disturbing influence; none of criticism, and therefore none of

tiresome people like myself;—none of money patronage, or even of aristocratic patronage. The whole aim of the teachers should be to produce work which could be demonstrably shown to be good and useful, and worthy of being bought, or used in any way; and after that the whole question of patronage and interest should be settled. The school should teach its art-grammar thoroughly in everything, and in every material, and should teach it carefully; and that could be done if a perfect system were adopted, and above all, if a few thoroughly good examples were put before the students. That is a point which I think of very great importance. I think it very desirable that grants should be made by the Government to obtain for the pupils of the Academy beautiful examples of every kind, the very loveliest and best; not too many; and that their minds should not be confused by having placed before them examples of all schools and times; they are confused enough by what they see in the shops, and in the annual exhibitions. Let engraving be taught by Marc Antonio and Albert Dürer,—painting by Giorgione, Paul Veronese, Titian and Velasquez,—and sculpture by good Greek and selected Roman examples, and let there be no question of other schools or their merits. Let those things be shown as good and right, and let the student be trained in those principles:—if afterwards he strikes out an original path, let him; but do not let him torment himself and other people with his originalities, till he knows what is right, so far as is known at present.

You are opposed, on the whole, to the introduction of the lay element?—Yes; but I am not opposed strongly or distinctly to it, because I have not knowledge enough of society to know how it would work.

Your not being in favor of it results from your belief that the lay element that would be useful to the Academy does not at present exist in this country; but you think, if it did exist, and if it could be made to grow out of our schools and universities by art teaching, it might, with advantage to the Academy and to artists, be introduced into the Academy?—Yes.

188. Supposing the class of Royal Academicians to be retained, and that you had fifty Royal Academicians, should you think it desirable that their works should be exhibited by themselves, so that the public might see together the works of those considered to be the first artists of this country?—Certainly, I should like all pictures to be well seen, but I should like one department of the exhibition to be given to the Associates or Graduates. I use that term because I suppose those Associates to have a degree given them for a certain amount of excellence, and any person who had attained that degree should be allowed to send in so many pictures. Then the pictures sent in by persons who had attained the higher honor of Royal Academician should be separately exhibited.

That would act as a stimulus to them to keep up their position and show themselves worthy of the honor?—Yes. I do not think they ought to be mixed at all as they are now.

189. What is your opinion with reference to the present system of traveling studentships?—I think it might be made very useful indeed.

On the one hand it has been suggested that there should be, as is the system adopted by the French Academy, a permanent professor at Rome to look after the students; on the other hand it has been said that it is not desirable, if you have those traveling studentships, that the students should go to Rome, that it is better for them to travel, and to go to Venice or Lombardy, and to have no fixed school in connection with the Academy at Rome. To which of those two systems do you give the preference?—I should prefer the latter; if a man goes to travel, he ought to travel, and not be plagued with schools.

It has been suggested that fellowships might be given to rising artists, pecuniary assistance being attached to those fellowships, the artist being required annually to send in some specimen of his work to show what he was doing, but it being left optional with him to go abroad or to work at home; should you think that would be desirable, or as has been suggested in a letter by Mr. Armitage, supposing those fellowships to be established for four years, that two of those years should be spent abroad and two at home?—Without entering into any detail as to whether two years should be spent abroad and two years at home, I feel very strongly that one of the most dangerous and retarding influences you

have operating upon art is the enormous power of money, and the chances of entirely winning or entirely losing, that is, of making your fortune in a year by a large taking picture, or else starving for ten years by very good small ones. The whole life of an artist is a lottery, and a very wild lottery, and the best artist is liable to be warped away from what he knows is right by the chance of at once making a vast fortune by catching the public eye, the public eye being only to be caught by bright colors and certain conditions of art not always desirable. If, therefore, connected with the Academy schools there could be the means of giving a fixed amount of income to certain men, who would as a consideration for that income furnish a certain number of works that might be agreed upon, or undertake any national work that might be agreed upon, that I believe would be the healthiest way in which a good painter could be paid. To give him his bread and cheese, and so much a day, and say, Here are such and such things we want you to do, is, I believe, the healthiest, simplest, and happiest way in which great work can be produced. But whether it is compatible with our present system I cannot say, nor whether every man would not run away as soon as he found he could get two or three thousand pounds by painting a catching picture. I think your best men would not.

You would be in favor of those fellowships?—Yes.

190. I gather that you are in favor of the encouragement of mural decoration, fresco painting, and so forth. The system that prevails abroad, in France, for instance, is for painters to employ pupils to work under them. It was in that way that Delaroche painted his hemicycle at the Académie des Beaux-Arts, employing four pupils, who worked for him, and who from his small sketch drew the full-sized picture on the walls, which was subsequently corrected by him. They then colored it up to his sketch, after which he shut himself up again, and completed it. On the other hand, if you go to the Victoria Gallery in the House of Lords, you find Mr. Maclise at work on a space of wall forty-eight feet long, painting the Death of Nelson on the deck of the "Victory," every figure being life size, the deck of the ship and the ropes and everything being the actual size, and you see him painting with his own hand each little bit of rope and the minutest detail. Which of the two systems do you think is the soundest and most calculated to produce great and noble work?—The first is the best for the pupils, the other is the best for the public. But unquestionably not only can a great work be executed as Mr. Maclise is executing his, but no really great work was executed otherwise, for in all mighty work, whether in fresco or oil, every touch and hue of color to the last corner has been put on lovingly by the painter's own hand, not leaving to a pupil to paint so much as a pebble under a horse's foot.

191. Do you believe that most of the works of the great masters in Italy were so executed?—No; because the pupils were nearly as mighty as the masters. Great men took such an interest in their work, and they were so modest and simple that they were repeatedly sacrificing themselves to the interests of their religion or of the society they were working for; and when a thing was to be done in a certain time it could only be done by bringing in aid; but whenever precious work was to be done, then the great man said, "Lock me up here by myself, give me a little wine and cheese, and come in a month, and I will show you what I have done."

Do you think it desirable that the pupils should be so trained as to be capable of assisting great masters in such works?—Assuredly.

Note.—The following analysis of the above evidence was given in the Index to the Report (pp. 139, 140).—Ed.

168-69. The Academy not in all points satisfactory. Would wish to see the Academicians not self-elected.—But by a constituency consisting both of artists and the public.—Public influence to be the same in painting as in music.

170. As to the Associates: is in favor of some period of probation.—Their class to be unlimited, with a very limited number of Academicians.

171. Has formed no opinion on the question of introducing laymen into the Academy; in matters of revenue they might be joined with artists, but not in the selection and hanging of pictures: opposed on the whole to their introduction,

considering the present state of art education.—As he would like to see the Academy constituted, thinks the president ought to be an artist.

172. General effect of the Academy's teaching upon the art of the country merely nugatory.—Would have a much more comprehensive system of teaching.

173. The Academy education to correspond wholly to the University education.

174. Not easy but very necessary for the Academy to adopt an authoritative system of teaching.

175. His idea of what the Academy teaching should be; would have a school of chemistry.

176. The teaching of wall-painting in permanent materials should be a branch, possibly the principal branch.

177. Not satisfied with the selection of artists to be members of the Academy.

178. In some cases the selection of pictures has been injudicious, but this a matter of small importance; the main point is how the pictures that are admitted are to be best seen.

179. In favor of an educational test for candidates for admission into the Academy.

180. And of professors of art at the Universities.

181. Causes of the want of refinement observable in many modern pictures; the large prices they fetch harmful.

182. Teaching by visitors constantly changing mischievous.

183. How a picture should be hung.—An ill-worked picture ought not to be admitted by the Academy.—Bearing of this last opinion upon the present Exhibition.

184. Would have works of sculpture placed permanently in the painting-room, but not any of those sent in for the Exhibition of the year.

185. In favor of the present honorary members being made of use in their positions.

186. Introduction of laymen into the Academy deprecated under present circumstances, and why.—Present feeling towards art and artists at the Universities.

187. Desirable that Government grants should be made to obtain for the pupils of the Academy beautiful examples of every kind of art.

188. In favor of separate exhibitions of the works of Associates (or Graduates) and Academicians.

189. In favor of art-fellowships, but not of a fixed school in connection with the Academy at Rome.

190. Comparison of the French, and English systems (as regards assistance from pupils) in the production of great public paintings.

191. How the works of the Italian masters were executed.—Desirable that pupils should be trained to assist great masters in public works.

A MUSEUM OR PICTURE GALLERY: ITS FUNCTIONS AND ITS FORMATION.[4]

March 20th, 1880.

My dear –,

192. If I put off writing the paper you asked me for, till I can do it conveniently, it may hang fire till this time next year. If you will accept a note on the subject now and then, keeping them till there are enough to be worth printing, all practical ends may be enough answered, and much more quickly.

The first function of a Museum—(for a little while I shall speak of Art and Natural History as alike cared for in an ideal one)—is to give example of perfect order and perfect elegance, in the true sense of that test word, to the disorderly and rude populace. Everything in its *own* place, everything looking its best because it is there, nothing crowded, nothing unnecessary, nothing puzzling. Therefore, after a room has been once arranged, there must be no change in it. For new possessions there must be new rooms, and after twenty years' absence—coming back to the room in which one learned one's bird or beast alphabet, we should be able to show our children the old bird on the old perch in the accustomed corner. But—first of all, let the room be beautifully complete, *i.e.* complete enough for its proper business.

193. In the British Museum, at the top of the stairs, we encounter in a terrific alliance a giraffe, a hippopotamus, and a basking shark. The public—young and old—pass with a start and a stare, and remain as wise as they were before about all the three creatures. The day before yesterday I was standing by the big fish—a father came up to it with his little boy. "That's a shark," says he; "it turns on its side when it wants to eat you," and so went on—literally as wise as he was before; for he had read in a book that sharks turn on their side to bite, and he never looked at the ticket, which told him this particular shark only ate small fish. Now he never looked at the ticket, because he didn't expect to find anything on it except that this was the Sharkogobalus Smith-Jonesianius. But if, round the walls of the room, there had been all the *well-known* kinds of shark, going down, in graduated sizes, from that basking one to our waggling dog-fish, and if every one of these had had a plain English ticket, with ten words of common sense on it, saying where and how the beast lived, and a number (unchangeable) referring to a properly arranged manual of the shark tribe (sold by the Museum publisher, who ought to have his little shop close by the porter's lodge), both father and son must have been much below the level of average English man and boy in mother wit if they did not go out of the room by the door in front of them very distinctly, and—to themselves—amazingly, wiser than they had come in by the door behind them.

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[4] These letters are reprinted from the *Art Journal* of June and August 1880, where they were prefaced with the following note by the editor in explanation of their origin:—"We are enabled, through Mr. Ruskin's kindness, to publish this month a series of letters to a friend upon the functions and formation of a model Museum or Picture Gallery. As stated in our last issue the question arose thus:—At the distribution of the prizes to the School of Art at Leicester by Mr. J. D. Linton and Mr. James Orrock, members of the Institute of Painters in Water Colors, the latter, after stating the vital importance of study from nothing but the finest models, and expressing his regret that the present price of works of Art of the first class rendered their attainment by schools almost prohibitory, offered drawings by William Hunt and David Cox as a nucleus for a collection. He urged others to follow this example, and with so much success that a few days saw a large sum and many works of Art promised in aid of a students' gallery. The attention of the Leicester Corporation was thereupon drawn to the movement, and they at once endeavored to annex the scheme to their Museum. Failing in this, they in friendly rivalry subscribed a large sum of money, and the question at once arose how best to dispose of it, each naturally thinking his own ideas the best. At this juncture Mr. Ruskin's aid was invoked by one section of the subscribers, and he replied in a letter which, owing to its having been circulated without its context, has been open to some misconstruction. As he was only asked, so he only advised, what should *not* be done. However, the letter bore its fruits, for both parties have had the attention of the country drawn to their proposals, and so are now more diffident how to set about carrying them into effect than they were before. Under these circumstances Mr. Ruskin has been induced to set out the mode in which he considers an Art Museum should be formed."The letter which was "open to some misconstruction" may be found in *Arrows of the Chace*.

194. If I venture to give instances of fault from the British Museum, it is because, on the whole, it is the best-ordered and pleasantest institution in all England, and the grandest concentration of the means of human knowledge in the world. And I am heartily sorry for the break-up of it, and augur no good from any changes of arrangement likely to take place in concurrence with Kensington, where, the same day that I had been meditating by the old shark, I lost myself in a Cretan labyrinth of military ironmongery, advertisements of spring blinds, model fish-farming, and plaster bathing nymphs with a year's smut on all the noses of them; and had to put myself in charge of a policeman to get out again. Ever affectionately yours,

J. Ruskin.
March 29th, 1880.

My dear –,

195. The only chance of my getting these letters themselves into fairly consistent and Museum-like order is by writing a word or two always the first thing in the morning till I get them done; so, I shall at least remember what I was talking of the day before; but for the rest—I must speak of one thing or another as it may come into my head, for there are too many to classify without pedantry and loss of time.

My requirement of "elegance" in that last letter contemplates chiefly architecture and fittings. These should not only be perfect in stateliness, durability, and comfort, but beautiful to the utmost point consistent with due subordination to the objects displayed. To enter a room in the Louvre is an education in itself; but two steps on the filthy floor and under the iron forks, half scaffold, half gallows, of the big Norwood glass bazaar, debase mind and eye at once below possibility of looking at anything with profit all the day afterwards. I have just heard that a French picture dealer is to have charge of the picture gallery there, and that the whole interior is to become virtually a large café, when—it is hoped—the glass monster may at last "pay." Concerning which beautiful consummation of Mr. Dickens's "Fairyland" (see my pamphlet[5] on the opening of the so-called "palace"), be it here at once noted, that all idea of any "payment," in that sense, must be utterly and scornfully abjured on the foundation stone of every National or Civic Museum. There must be neither companies to fill their own pockets out of it, nor trustees who can cramp the management, or interfere with the officering, or shorten the supplies of it. Put one man of reputation and sense at its head; give him what staff he asks for, and a fixed annual sum for expenditure—specific accounts to be printed annually for all the world's seeing—and let him alone. The original expenditure for building and fitting must be magnificent, and the current expenditure for cleaning and refitting magnanimous; but a certain proportion of this current cost should be covered by small entrance fees, exacted, not for any miserly helping out of the floor-sweepers' salaries, but for the sake of the visitors themselves, that the rooms may not be incumbered by the idle, or disgraced by the disreputable. You must not make your Museum a refuge against either rain or ennui, nor let into perfectly well-furnished, and even, in the true sense, palatial, rooms, the utterly squalid and ill-bred portion of the people. There should, indeed, be refuges for the poor from rain and cold, and decent rooms accessible to indecent persons, if they like to go there; but neither of these charities should be part of the function of a Civic Museum.

196. Make the entrance fee a silver penny (a silver groat, typically representing the father, mother, eldest son, and eldest daughter, passing always the total number of any one family), and every person admitted, however young, being requested to sign their name, or make their mark.

That the entrance money should be always of silver is one of the beginnings of education in the place—one of the conditions of its "elegance" on the very threshold.

And the institution of silver for bronze in the lower coinage is a part of the system of National education which I have been teaching these last ten years—a very much deeper and wider one than

[5] Reprinted in vol. i., §§ 253-273.—Ed.

any that can be given in museums—and without which all museums will ultimately be vain.—Ever affectionately yours,

J. R.

P.S.—There should be a well-served coffee-room attached to the building; but this part of the establishment without any luxury in furniture or decoration, and without any cooking apparatus for carnivora.

Easter Monday, 1880.

Dear –,

197. The day is auspicious for the beginning of reflection on the right manner of manifestation of all divine things to those who desire to see them. For every house of the Muses, where, indeed, they live, is an Interpreter's by the wayside, or rather, a place of oracle and interpretation in one. And the right function of every museum, to simple persons, is the manifestation to them of what is lovely in the life of Nature, and heroic in the life of Men.

There are already, you see, some quaint restrictions in that last sentence, whereat sundry of our friends will start, and others stop. I must stop also, myself, therefore, for a minute or two, to insist on them.

198. A Museum, primarily, is to be for *simple* persons. Children, that is to say, and peasants. For your student, your antiquary, or your scientific gentleman, there must be separate accommodation, or they must be sent elsewhere. The Town Museum is to be for the Town's People, the Village Museum for the Villagers. Keep that first principle clear to start with. If you want to found an academy of painting in Littleborough, or of literature in Squattlesea Mere, you must get your advice from somebody else, not me.

199. Secondly. The museum is to manifest to these simple persons the beauty and life of all things and creatures in their perfectness. Not their modes of corruption, disease, or death. Not even, always, their genesis, in the more or less blundering beginnings of it; not even their modes of nourishment, if destructive; you must not stuff a blackbird pulling up a worm, nor exhibit in a glass case a crocodile crunching a baby.

Neither must you ever show bones or guts, or any other charnel-house stuff. Teach your children to know the lark's note from the nightingale's; the length of their larynxes is their own business, and God's.

I cannot enough insist upon this point, nor too solemnly. If you wish your children to be surgeons, send them to Surgeons' College; if jugglers or necromancers, to Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke; and if butchers, to the shambles: but if you want them to lead the calm life of country gentlemen and gentlewomen, manservants and maidservants, let them seek none of Death's secrets till they die. Ever faithfully and affectionately yours,

J. R.

Easter Tuesday, 1880.

Dear –,

200. I must enter to-day somewhat further on the practical, no less than emotional, reason for the refusal of anatomical illustrations to the general public.

It is difficult enough to get one clear idea into anybody, of any single thing. But next to impossible to get *two* clear ideas into them, of the same thing. We have had lions' heads for door-knockers these hundred and fifty years, without ever learning so much as what a lion's head is like. But with good modern stuffing and fetching, I can manage now to make a child really understand something about the beast's look, and his mane, and his sullen eyes and brindled lips. But if I'm

bothered at the same time with a big bony box, that has neither mane, lips, nor eyes, and have to explain to the poor wretch of a parish schoolboy how somehow this fits on to that, I will be bound that, at a year's end, draw one as big as the other, and he won't know a lion's head from a tiger's—nor a lion's skull from a rabbit's. Nor is it the parish boy only who suffers. The scientific people themselves miss half their points from the habit of hacking at things, instead of looking at them. When I gave my lecture on the Swallow[6] at Oxford, I challenged every anatomist there to tell me the use of his tail (I believe half of them didn't know he had one). Not a soul of them could tell me, which I knew beforehand; but I did not know, till I had looked well through their books, how they were quarreling about his wings! Actually at this moment (Easter Tuesday, 1880), I don't believe you can find in any scientific book in Europe a true account of the way a bird flies—or how a snake serpentines. My Swallow lecture was the first bit of clear statement on the one point, and when I get my Snake lecture published, you will have the first extant bit of clear statement on the other; and that is simply because the anatomists can't, for their life, look at a thing till they have skinned it.

201. And matters get worse and worse every hour. Yesterday, after writing the first leaf of this note, I went into the British Museum, and found a nasty skeleton of a lizard, with its under jaw dropped off, on the top of a table of butterflies—temporarily of course—but then everything has been temporary or temporizing at the British Museum for the last half-century; making it always a mere waste and weariness to the general public, because, forsooth, it had always to be kept up to the last meeting of the Zoological Society, and last edition of the *Times*. As if there had not been beasts enough before the Ark to tell our children the manners of, on a Sunday afternoon!

202. I had gone into the Museum that day to see the exact form of a duck's wing, the examination of a lively young drake's here at Coniston having closed in his giving me such a cut on the wrist with it, that I could scarcely write all the morning afterwards. Now in the whole bird gallery there are only two ducks' wings expanded, and those in different positions. Fancy the difference to the mob, and me, if the shells and monkey skeletons were taken away from the mid-gallery, and instead, three gradated series of birds put down the length of it (or half the length—or a quarter would do it—with judgment), showing the transition, in length of beak, from bunting to woodcock—in length of leg, from swift to stilted plover—and in length of wing, from auk to frigate-bird; the wings, all opened, in one specimen of each bird to their full sweep, and in another, shown at the limit of the down back stroke. For what on earth—or in air—is the use to me of seeing their boiled sternums and scalped sinciputs, when I'm never shown either how they bear their breasts—or where they carry their heads?

Enough of natural history, you will say! I will come to art in my next letter—finishing the ugly subject of this one with a single sentence from section ix. of the "Tale of a Tub," commending the context of it to my friends of the Royal Academy.

"Last week, I saw a woman flayed, and you will hardly believe how much it altered her person for the worse."—Ever, my dear –, affectionately yours,

J. R.

7th April, 1880.

My Dear –,

203. I suppose that proper respect for the great first principles of the British Constitution, that every man should do as he pleases, think what he likes, and see everything that can be seen for money, will make most of your readers recoil from my first principle of Museum arrangement,—that nothing should be let inside the doors that isn't good of its sort,—as from an attempt to restore the Papacy, revive the Inquisition, and away with everybody to the lowest dungeon of the castle moat. They must at their pleasure charge me with these sinister views; they will find that there is no dexter view to be

[6] In 1873. See the second lecture of *Love's Meinie*.—Ed..

had of the business, which does not consist primarily in knowing Bad from Good, and Right from Wrong. Nor, if they will condescend to begin simply enough, and at the bottom of the said business, and let the cobbler judge of the crepida, and the potter of the pot, will they find it so supremely difficult to establish authorities that shall be trustworthy, and judgments that shall be sure.

204. Suppose, for instance, at Leicester, whence came first to us the inquiry on such points, one began by setting apart a Hunter's Room, in which a series of portraits of their Master's favorites, for the last fifty years or so, should be arranged, with certificate from each Squire of his satisfaction, to such and such a point, with the portrait of Lightfoot, or Lucifer, or Will o' the Wisp; and due notification, for perhaps a recreant and degenerate future, of the virtues and perfections at this time sought and secured in the English horse. Would not such a chamber of chivalry have, in its kind, a quite indisputable authority and historical value, not to be shaken by any future impudence or infidelity?

Or again in Staffordshire, would it not be easily answered to an honest question of what is good and not, in clay or ware, "This will work, and that will stand"? and might not a series of the mugs which have been matured with discrimination, and of the pots which have been popular in use, be so ordered as to display their qualities in a convincing and harmonious manner against all gainsayers?

205. Nor is there any mystery of taste, or marvel of skill, concerning which you may not get quite easy initiation and safe pilotage for the common people, provided you once make them clearly understand that there is indeed something to be learned, and something to be admired, in the arts, which will need their attention for a time; and cannot be explained with a word, nor seen with a wink. And provided also, and with still greater decision, you set over them masters, in each branch of the arts, who know their own minds in that matter, and are not afraid to speak them, nor to say, "We know," when they know, and "We don't know," when they don't.

To which end, the said several branches must be held well apart, and dealt with one at a time. Every considerable town ought to have its exemplary collections of woodwork, iron-work, and jewelry, attached to the schools of their several trades, leaving to be illustrated in its public museum, as in an hexagonal bee's cell, the six queenly and muse-taught arts of needlework, writing, pottery, sculpture, architecture, and painting.

206. For each of these, there should be a separate Tribune or Chamber of absolute tribunal, which need not be large—that, so called, of Florence, not the size of a railway waiting-room, has actually for the last century determined the taste of the European public in two arts!—in which the absolute best in each art, so far as attainable by the communal pocket, should be authoritatively exhibited, with simple statement that it is good, and reason why it is good, and notification in what particulars it is unsurpassable, together with some not too complex illustrations of the steps by which it has attained to that perfection, where these can be traced far back in history.

207. These six Tribunes, or Temples, of Fame, being first set with their fixed criteria, there should follow a series of historical galleries, showing the rise and fall (if fallen) of the arts in their beautiful associations, as practiced in the great cities and by the great nations of the world. The history of Egypt, of Persia, of Greece, of Italy, of France, and of England, should be given in their arts,—dynasty by dynasty and age by age; and for a seventh, a Sunday Room, for the history of Christianity in its art, including the farthest range and feeblest efforts of it; reserving for this room, also, what power could be reached in delineation of the great monasteries and cathedrals which were once the glory of all Christian lands.

208. In such a scheme, every form of noble art would take harmonious and instructive place, and often very little and disregarded things be found to possess unthought-of interest and hidden relative beauty; but its efficiency—and in this chiefly let it be commended to the patience of your practical readers—would depend, not on its extent, but on its strict and precise limitation. The methods of which, if you care to have my notions of them, I might perhaps enter into, next month, with some illustrative detail.—Ever most truly yours,

J. R.

10th June, 1880.[7]

My Dear –,

209. I can't give you any talk on detail, yet; but, not to drop a stitch in my story, I want to say why I've attached so much importance to needlework, and put it in the opening court of the six. You see they are progressive, so that I don't quite put needlework on a *level* with painting. But a nation that would learn to "touch" *must* primarily know how to "stitch." I am always busy, for a good part of the day, in my wood, and wear out my leathern gloves fast, after once I can wear them at all: but that's the precise difficulty of the matter. I get them from the shop looking as stout and trim as you please, and half an hour after I've got to work they split up the fingers and thumbs like ripe horse-chestnut shells, and I find myself with five dangling rags round my wrist, and a rotten white thread draggling after me through the wood, or tickling my nose, as if Ariadne and Arachne had lost their wits together. I go home, invoking the universe against sewing-machines; and beg the charity of a sound stitch or two from any of the maids who know their woman's art; and thenceforward the life of the glove proper begins. Wow, it is not possible for any people that put up with this sort of thing, to learn to paint, or do anything else with their fingers decently:—only, for the most part they don't think their museums are meant to show them how to do anything decently, but rather how to be idle, indecently. Which extremely popular and extremely erroneous persuasion, if you please, we must get out of our way before going further.

210. I owe some apology, by the way, to Mr. Frith, for the way I spoke of his picture[8] in my letter to the Leicester committee, not intended for publication, though I never write what I would not allow to be published, and was glad that they asked leave to print it. It was not I who instanced the picture, it had been named in the meeting of the committee as the kind of thing that people best like, and I was obliged to say *why* people best liked it:—namely, not for the painting, which is good, and worthy their liking, but for the sight of the racecourse and its humors. And the reason that such a picture ought not to be in a museum, is precisely because in a museum people ought not to fancy themselves on a racecourse. If they want to see races, let them go to races; and if rogues, to Bridewells. They come to museums to see something different from rogues and races.

211. But, to put the matter at once more broadly, and more accurately, be it remembered, for sum of all, that a museum is not a theater. Both are means of noble education—but you must not mix up the two. Dramatic interest is one thing; aesthetic charm another; a pantomime must not depend on its fine color, nor a picture on its fine pantomime.

Take a special instance. It is long since I have been so pleased in the Royal Academy as I was by Mr. Britton Rivière's "Sympathy." The dog in uncaricatured doggedness, divine as Anubis, or the Dog-star; the child entirely childish and lovely, the carpet might have been laid by Veronese. A most precious picture in itself, yet not one for a museum. Everybody would think only of the story in it; everybody be wondering what the little girl had done, and how she would be forgiven, and if she wasn't, how soon she would stop crying, and give the doggie a kiss, and comfort his heart. All which they might study at home among their own children and dogs just as well; and should not come to the museum to plague the real students there, since there is not anything of especial notableness or unrivaled quality in the actual painting.

212. On the other hand, one of the four pictures I chose for permanent teaching in Fors was one of a child and a dog. The child is doing nothing; neither is the dog. But the dog is absolutely and beyond comparison the best painted dog in the world—ancient or modern—on this side of it, or at

[7] *Art Journal*, August, 1880.

[8] The "Derby Day." See *Arrows of the Chase*.

the Antipodes, (so far as I've seen the contents of said world). And the child is painted so that child *cannot* be better done. *That* is a picture for a museum.

Not that dramatic, still less didactic, intention should disqualify a work of art for museum purposes. But—broadly—dramatic and didactic art should be universally national, the luster of our streets, the treasure of our palaces, the pleasure of our homes. Much art that is weak, transitory, and rude may thus become helpful to us. But the museum is only for what is eternally right, and well done, according to divine law and human skill. The least things are to be there—and the greatest—but all *good* with the goodness that makes a child cheerful and an old man calm; the simple should go there to learn, and the wise to remember.

213. And now to return to what I meant to be the subject of this letter—the arrangement of our first ideal room in such a museum. As I think of it, I would fain expand the single room, first asked for, into one like Prince Houssain's,—no, Prince Houssain had the flying tapestry, and I forget which prince had the elastic palace. But, indeed, it must be a lordly chamber which shall be large enough to exhibit the true nature of thread and needle—omened in "Thread-needle Street!"

The structure, first of wool and cotton, of fur, and hair, and down, of hemp, flax, and silk:—microscope permissible if any cause can be shown *why* wool is soft, and fur fine, and cotton downy, and down downier; and how a flax fiber differs from a dandelion stalk, and how the substance of a mulberry leaf can become velvet for Queen Victoria's crown, and clothing of purple for the housewife of Solomon.

Then the phase of its dyeing. What azures, and emeralds, and Tyrians scarlets can be got into fibers of thread.

214. Then the phase of its spinning. The mystery of that divine spiral, from finest to firmest, which renders lace possible at Valenciennes—anchorage possible, after Trafalgar—if Hardy had but done as he was bid.

Then the mystery of weaving. The eternal harmony of warp and woof, of all manner of knotting, knitting, and reticulation, the art which makes garment possible, woven from the top throughout, draughts of fishes possible, miraculous enough in any pilchard or herring shoal, gathered into companionable catchableness;—which makes, in fine, so many Nations possible, and Saxon and Norman beyond the rest.

215. And finally, the accomplished phase of needlework, the *Acu Tetigisti* of all time, which does, indeed, practically exhibit what mediæval theologists vainly tried to conclude inductively—How many angels can stand on a needle-point. To show the essential nature of a stitch—drawing the separate into the inseparable, from the lowly work of duly restricted sutor, and modestly installed cobbler, to the needle-Scripture of Matilda, the Queen.

All the acicular Art of Nations, savage and civilized, from Lapland boot, letting in no snow-water—to Turkey cushion bossed with pearl—to valance of Venice gold in needlework -to the counterpanes and samplers of our own lovely ancestresses, imitable, perhaps, once more, with good help from Whiteland's College—and Girton.

216. It was but yesterday, my own womankind were in much wholesome and sweet excitement delightful to behold, in the practice of some new device of remedy for rents (to think how much of evil there is in the two senses of that four-lettered word! as in the two methods of intonation of its synonym tear!) whereby they might be daintily effaced, and with a newness which would never make them worse. The process began beautifully, even to my uninformed eyes, in the likeness of herring-bone masonry, crimson on white, but it seemed to me marvelous that anything should yet be discoverable in needle process, and that of so utilitarian character.

All that is reasonable, I say of such work is to be in our first museum room. All that Athena and Penelope would approve. Nothing that vanity has invented for change, or folly loved for costliness; but all that can bring honest pride into homely life, and give security to health—and honor to beauty.

J. Ruskin.

MINOR WRITINGS UPON ART

A. PARLIAMENTARY EVIDENCE

NATIONAL GALLERY SITE COMMISSION 1857

SELECT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS 1860

THE ROYAL ACADEMY COMMISSION 1863

B. LETTERS ON A MUSEUM OR PICTURE GALLERY

(Art Journal, June and August, 1880.)

THE CAVALLI MONUMENTS IN THE CHURCH OF ST. ANASTASIA, VERONA.[9]

217. The tomb of Federigo and Nicola Cavalli is in the southernmost chapel of the five which form the east end of the church of St. Anastasia at Verona.

The traveler in Italy is so often called upon to admire what he cannot enjoy, that it must relieve the mind of any reader intending to visit Verona to be assured that this church deserves nothing but extraordinary praise; it has, however, some characters which a quarter of an hour's attention will make both interesting and instructive, and which I will note briefly before giving an account of the Cavalli chapel. This church "would, if the font were finished, probably be the most perfect specimen in existence of the style to which it belongs," says a critic quoted in "Murray's Guide." The conjecture is a bold one, for the font is not only unfinished, and for the most part a black mass of ragged brickwork, but the portion pretending to completion is in three styles; approaches excellence only in one of them; and in that the success is limited to the sides of the single entrance door. The flanks and vaults of this porch, indeed, deserve our almost unqualified admiration for their beautiful polychrome masonry. They are built of large masses of green serpentine alternating with red and white marble, and the joints are so delicate and firm that a casual spectator might pass the gate with contempt, thinking the stone was painted.

218. The capitals on these two sides, the carved central shaft, and the horizontal lintel of this door are also excellent examples of Veronese thirteenth century sculpture, and have merits of a high order, but of which the general observer cannot be cognizant. I do not mean, in saying this, to extol them greatly; the best art is pleasing to all, and its virtue, or a portion of its virtue, instantly manifest. But there are some good qualities in every earnest work which can only be ascertained by attention; and in saying that a casual observer cannot see the good qualities in early Veronese sculpture, I mean that it possesses none but these, nor of these many.

219. Yet it is worth a minute's delay to observe how much the sculpture has counted on attention. In later work, figures of the size of life, or multitudinous small ones, please, if they do not interest, the spectator who can spare them a momentary glance. But all the figures on this door are diminutive, and project so slightly from the stone as scarcely to catch the eye; there are none in the sides and none in the vault of the gate, and it is only by deliberate examination that we find the faith which is to be preached in the church, and the honor of its preacher, conclusively engraved on the lintel and door-post. The spiral flutings of the central shaft are uninterrupted, so as to form a slight recess for the figure of St. Dominic, with, I believe, St. Peter Martyr and St. Thomas Aquinas, one on each side with the symbols of the sun and moon. At the end of the lintel, on the left, is St. Anastasia; on the right, St. Catherine (of Siena); in the center, on the projecting capital, the Madonna; and on the lintel, the story of Christ, in the four passages of the Annunciation, Nativity, Crucifixion, and Resurrection.

220. This is the only part of the front of the church which is certainly part of the first structure in 1260. The two statues of St. Anastasia and St. Catherine are so roughly joined to the lateral capitals as to induce a suspicion that even these latter and the beautiful polychrome vault are of later work, not, however, later than 1300. The two pointed arches which divide the tympanum are assuredly subsequent, and the fresco which occupies it is a bad work of the end of the fourteenth century; and the marble frieze and foundations of the front are at least not earlier than 1426.

Of this portion of the building the foundation is noble, and its color beautifully disposed, but the sculpture of the paneling is poor, and of no interest or value.

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[9] Published by the Arundel Society (1872), together with a chromo-lithograph after a drawing by Herr Gnauth.—Ed.

221. On entering the church, and turning immediately to the left, there will be seen on the inner side of the external wall a tomb under a boldly trefoiled canopy. It is a sarcophagus with a recumbent figure on it, which is the only work of art in the church deserving serious attention. It is the tomb of Gerard Bolderius "sui temporis physicorum principi," says his epitaph,[10] not, as far as I can discover, untruly. On the front of the sarcophagus is the semi-figure of Christ rising from the tomb, used generally at the period for the type of resurrection, between the Virgin and St. John; and two shields, bearing, one the fleur-de-lys, the other an eagle. The recumbent figure is entirely simple and right in treatment, sculptured without ostentation of skill or exaggeration of sentiment, by a true artist, who endeavors only to give the dead due honor, and his own art subordinate and modest scope.

This monument, being the best in St. Anastasia, is, by the usual spite of fortune, placed where it is quite invisible except on bright days. On the opposite side of the church, the first monument on the right, well lighted by the tall western window, should be looked at next to the physician's; for as that is the best, this is essentially the worst, piece of sculptured art in the building; a series of academy studies in marble, well executed, but without either taste or invention, and necessarily without meaning, the monument having been erected to a person whose only claim to one was his having stolen money enough to pay for it before he died. It is one of the first pieces extant of entirely mechanical art workmanship, done for money; and the perfection of its details may justify me in directing special attention to it.

222. There are no other monuments, still less pictures, in the body of the church deserving notice. The general effect of the interior is impressive, owing partly to the boldness and simplicity of the pillars which sustain the roof; partly to the darkness which involves them: these Dominican churches being, in fact, little more than vast halls for preaching in, and depending little on decoration, and not at all on light. But the sublimity of shadow soon fails when it has nothing interesting to shade; and the chapel or monuments which, opposite each interval between the pillars, fill the sides of the aisles, possess no interest except in their arabesques of cinque-cento sculpture, of which far better examples may be seen elsewhere; while the differences in their ages, styles, and purposes hinder them from attaining any unity of decorative effect, and break the unity of the church almost as fatally, though not as ignobly, as the incoherent fillings of the aisles at Westminster. The Cavalli chapel itself, though well deserving the illustration which the Arundel Society has bestowed upon it, is filled with a medley of tombs and frescoes of different dates, partly superseding, none illustrating, each other, and instructive mainly as showing the unfortunate results of freedom and "private enterprise" in matters of art, as compared with the submission to the design of one ruling mind which is the glory of all the chapels in Italy where the art is entirely noble.

223. Instructive, thus, at least, even if seen hastily; much better teaching may be had even from the unharmonious work, if we give time and thought to it. The upper fresco on the north wall, representing the Baptism of Christ, has no beauty, and little merit as art; yet the manner of its demerit is interesting. St. John kneels to baptize. This variation from the received treatment, in which he stands above the Christ, is enough in itself to show that the poor Veronese painter had some intelligence of his subject; and the quaint and haggard figure, grim-featured, with its black hair rising in separate locks like a crown of thorns, is a curious intermediate type between the grotesque conception which we find in earlier art (or, for instance, on the coins of Florence) and the beautiful, yet always melancholy and severe figures of St. John painted by Cima da Conegliano at Venice. With this stern figure, in raiment of camel's hair, compare the Magdalen in the frescoes at the side of the altar, who is veiled from head to foot with her own, and sustained by six angels, being the type of repentance from the passions, as St. John of resistance to them. Both symbols are, to us, to say the very least, without charm, and to very few without offense; yet consider how much nobler the temper of the people must

[10] D.M.Gerardo Bolderiosui temporisPhysicorum PrincipiFranciscus etMatthaeus NepotesP.P.

have been who could take pleasure in art so gloomy and unadorned, than that of the populace of to-day, which must be caught with bright colors and excited by popular sentiment.

224. Both these frescoes, with the others on the north wall of the chapel, and Madonna between four saints on the south side, by the Cavalli tomb, are evidently of fourteenth century work, none of it good, but characteristic; and the last-named work (seen in the plate) is so graceful as to be quite worth some separate illustration. But the one above it is earlier, and of considerable historical interest. It was discovered with the other paintings surrounding the tomb, about the year 1838, when Persico published his work, "Verona, e la sua Provincia," in which he says (p. 13), "levatane l'antica incrostatura, tornarono a vita novella."

It would have been more serviceable to us if we could have known the date of the rough cast, than of its removal; the period of entire contempt for ancient art being a subject of much interest in the ecclesiastical history of Italy. But the tomb itself was an incrustation, having been raised with much rudeness and carelessness amidst the earlier art which recorded the first rise of the Cavalli family.

225. It will be seen by reference to the plate that the frescoes round the tomb have no symmetrical relation to it. They are all of earlier date, and by better artists. The tomb itself is roughly carved, and coarsely painted, by men who were not trying to do their best, and could not have done anything very well, even if they had tried: it is an entirely commonplace and dull work, though of a good school, and has been raised against the highest fresco with a strange disregard of the merit of the work itself, and of its historical value to the family. This fresco is attributable by Persico to Giotto, but is, I believe, nothing more than an interesting example of the earnest work of his time, and has no quality on which I care to enlarge; nor is it ascertainable who the three knights are whom it commemorates, unless some evidence be found of the date of the painting, and there is, yet, none but that of its manner. But they are all three Cavallis, and I believe them to represent the three first founders of the family, Giovanni, "che fioriva intorno al 1274," his son Nicola (1297), and grandson Federigo, who was Podesta of Vicenza under the Scaligers in 1331, and by whom I suppose the fresco to have been commanded. The Cavallis came first from Germany into the service of the Visconti of Milan, as condottieri, thence passing into the service of the Scaligers. Whether I am right in this conjecture or not, we have, at all events, record in this chapel of seven knights of the family, of whom two are named on the sarcophagus, of which the inscription (on the projecting ledge under the recumbent figure) is:—

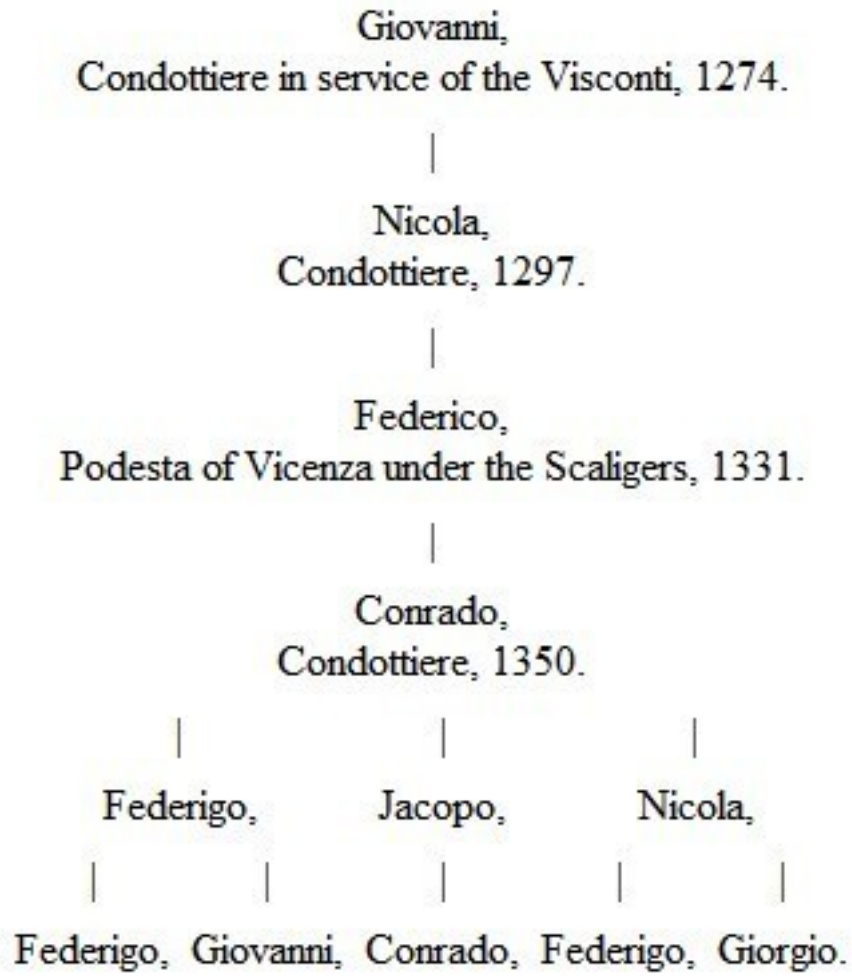
> S. (Sepulchrum) nobilis et egregii viri Federici et egregii et strenui viri domini Nicolai de Cavalis suorunique heredum, qui spiritum redidit astris Ano Dni MCCCLXXXX.

Of which, I think, the force may be best given thus in modern terms:—

"The tomb of the noble and distinguished Herr Frederic, and of the distinguished and energetic Herr the Lord Nicholas of the house of the Horse, and of their heirs, who gave back his soul to the stars in the year of our Lord 1390."

226. This Frederic and Nicolas Cavalli were the brothers of the Jacopo Cavalli who is buried at Venice, and who, by a singular fatality, was enrolled among the Venetian nobles of the senate in the year in which his brother died at Verona (for I assume the "spiritum redidit" to be said of the first-named brother). Jacopo married Constance della Scala, of Verona, and had five sons, of whom one, Giorgio, Conte di Schio, plotted, after the fall of the Scaligers, for their restoration to power in Verona, and was exiled, by decree of the Council of Ten, to Candia, where he died. From another son, Conrad, are descended the Cavallis of Venice, whose palace has been the principal material from which recent searchers for the picturesque in Venice compose pictures of the Grand Canal. It forms the square mass of architecture on the left, in the continually repeated view of the Church of the Salute seen from the steps of the Academy.

The genealogy of the family, from the thirteenth century, when they first appeared in Italy, to the founder of this Venetian lordship, had better be set before the reader in one view.[11]



Founds Venetian family.

227. Now, as above stated, I believe that the fresco of the three knights was commanded by the Podesta of Vicenza, on his receiving that authority from the Scaligers in 1331, and that it represents Giovanni, Nicola, and himself; while the tomb of Federigo and Nicola would be ordered by the Venetian Cavallis, and completed without much care for the record of the rise of the family at Verona.

Whether my identification of the figures seen kneeling in the fresco be correct or not, the representation of these three Cavalli knights to the Madonna, each interceded for by his patron saint, will be found to receive a peculiar significance if the reader care to review the circumstances influencing the relation of the German chivalry to the power of the Church in the very year when Giovanni Cavalli entered the ranks of the Visconti.

228. For the three preceding centuries, Milan, the oldest archbishopric of Lombardy, had been the central point at which the collision between the secular and ecclesiastical power took place in Europe. The Guelph and Ghibelline naturally met and warred throughout the plain of Lombardy; but the intense civic stubbornness and courage of the Milanese population formed a kind of rock in their tide-way, where the quarrel of burgher with noble confused itself with, embittered, and brought again and again to trial by battle, that of pope with emperor. In 1035 their warrior archbishop, heading

[11] I am indebted for this genealogy to the research and to the courtesy of Mr. J. Stefani. The help given me by other Venetian friends, especially Mr. Rawdon Brown, dates from many years back in matters of this kind.

their revolt against Conrad of Franconia, organized the first disciplined resistance of foot-soldiers to cavalry by his invention and decoration of the Carroccio; and the contest was only closed, after the rebuilding of the walls of ruined Milan, by the wandering of Barbarossa, his army scattered, through the maize fields, which the traveler now listlessly crosses at speed in the train between Milan and Arona, little noting the name of the small station, "Legnano," where the fortune of the Lombard republic finally prevailed. But it was only by the death of Frederick II. that the supremacy of the Church was secured; and when Innocent IV., who had written, on hearing of that death, to his Sicilian clergy, in words of blasphemous exultation, entered Milan, on his journey from Lyons to Perugia, the road, for ten miles before he reached the gates, was lined by the entire population of the city, drawn forth in enthusiastic welcome; as they had invented a sacred car for the advance of their standard in battle, they invented some similar honor for the head of their Church as the harbinger of peace: under a canopy of silk, borne by the first gentlemen of Milan, the Pope received the hosannas of a people who had driven into shameful flight their Caesar-king; and it is not uninteresting for the English traveler to remember, as he walks through the vast arcades of shops, in the form of a cross, by which the Milanese of to-day express their triumph in liberation from Teutonic rule, that the "Baldacchino" of all mediæval religious ceremony owed its origin to the taste of the milliners of Milan, as the safety of the best knights in European battle rested on the faithful craftsmanship of her armorers.

229. But at the date when the Cavalli entered the service of the great Milanese family, the state of parties within the walls had singularly changed. Three years previously (1271) Charles of Anjou had drawn together the remnants of the army of his dead brother, had confiscated to his own use the goods of the crusading knights whose vessels had been wrecked on the coast of Sicily, and called the pontifical court to Viterbo, to elect a pope who might confirm his dominion over the kingdoms of Sicily and Jerusalem.

On the deliberations of the Cardinals at Viterbo depended the fates of Italy and the Northern Empire. They chose Tebaldo Visconti, then a monk in pilgrimage at Jerusalem. But, before that election was accomplished, one of the candidates for the Northern Empire had involuntarily withdrawn his claim; Guy de Montfort had murdered, at the altar foot, the English Count of Cornwall, to avenge his father, Simon de Montfort, killed at Evesham. The death of the English king of the Romans left the throne of Germany vacant. Tebaldo had returned from Jerusalem with no personal ambition, but having at heart only the restoration of Greece to Europe, and the preaching of a new crusade in Syria. A general council was convoked by him at Lyons, with this object; but before anything could be accomplished in the conclave, it was necessary to balance the overwhelming power of Charles of Anjou, and the Visconti (Gregory X.) ratified, in 1273, the election of Rudolph of Hapsburg.

230. But Charles of Anjou owed his throne, in reality, to the assistance of the Milanese. Their popular leader, Napoleone della Torre, had facilitated his passage through Lombardy, which otherwise must have been arrested by the Ghibelline states; and in the year in which the Visconti pope had appointed the council at Lyons, the Visconti archbishop of Milan was heading the exiled nobles in vain attempts to recover their supremacy over the popular party. The new Emperor Rudolph not only sent a representative to the council, but a German contingent to aid the exiled archbishop. The popular leader was defeated, and confined in an iron cage, in the year 1274, and the first entrance of the Cavalli into the Italian armies is thus contemporary with the conclusive triumph of the northern monarchic over the republican power, or, more literally, of the wandering rider, Eques, or Ritter, living by pillage, over the sedentary burgher, living by art, and hale peasant, living by labor. The essential nature of the struggle is curiously indicated in relation to this monument by the two facts that the revolt of the Milanese burghers, headed by their archbishop, began by a gentleman's killing an importunate creditor, and that, at Venice, the principal circumstance recorded of Jacopo Cavalli (see my notice of his tomb in the "Stones of Venice," Vol. III. ch. ii. § 69) is his refusal to assault Feltre, because the senate would not grant him the pillage of the town. The reader may follow out,

according to his disposition, what thoughts the fresco of the three kneeling knights, each with his helmet-crest, in the shape of a horse's head, thrown back from his shoulders, may suggest to him on review of these passages of history: one thought only I must guard him against, strictly; namely, that a condottiere's religion must necessarily have been false or hypocritical. The folly of nations is in nothing more manifest than in their placid reconciliation of noble creeds with base practices. But the reconciliation, in the fourteenth as in the nineteenth century, was usually foolish only, not insincere.

VERONA AND ITS RIVERS.[12]

231. The discourse began with a description of the scenery of the eastern approach to Verona, with special remarks upon its magnificent fortifications, consisting of a steep ditch, some thirty feet deep by sixty or eighty wide, cut out of the solid rock, and the precipice-like wall above, with towers crested with forked battlements set along it at due intervals. The rock is a soft and crumbling limestone, containing "fossil creatures still so like the creatures they were once, that there it first occurred to the human brain to imagine that the buried shapes were not mockeries of life, but had indeed once lived; and, under those white banks by the roadside, was born, like a poor Italian gypsy, the modern science of geology." … "The wall was chiefly built, the moat entirely excavated, by Can Grande della Scala; and it represents typically the form, of defense which rendered it possible for the life and the arts of citizens to be preserved and practiced in an age of habitual war. Not only so, but it is the wall of the actual city which headed the great Lombard league, which was the beginner of personal and independent power in the Italian nation, and the first banner-bearer, therefore, of all that has been vitally independent in religion and in art throughout the entire Christian world to this day." At the upper angle of the wall, looking down the northern descent, is seen a great round tower at the foot of it, not forked in battlements, but with embrasures for guns. "The battlemented wall was the cradle of civic life. That low circular tower is the cradle of modern war and of all its desolation. It is the first European tower for artillery; the beginning of fortification against gunpowder —the beginning, that is to say, of the end of *all* fortification."

232. After noticing the beautiful vegetation of the district, Mr. Ruskin described the view from the promontory or spur, about ten miles long, of which the last rock dies into the plain at the eastern gate of Verona. "This promontory," he said, "is one of the sides of the great gate out of Germany into Italy, through which the Goths always entered, cloven up to Innspruck by the Inn, and down to Verona by the Adige. And by this gate not only the Gothic armies came, but after the Italian nation is formed, the current of northern life enters still into its heart through the mountain artery, as constantly and strongly as the cold waves of the Adige itself." … "The rock of this promontory hardens as we trace it back to the Alps, first into a limestone having knots of splendid brown jasper in it as our chalk has flints, and in a few miles more into true marble, colored by iron into a glowing orange or pale warm red—the peach-blossom marble, of which Verona is chiefly built—and then as you advance farther into the hills into variegated marbles very rich and grotesque in their veinings."

233. After dilating on the magnificent landscape viewed from the top of this promontory, embracing the blue plain of Lombardy and its cities" Mr. Ruskin said:—

"I do not think that there is any other rock in all the world from which the places and monuments of so complex and deep a fragment of the history of its ages can be visible as from this piece of crag with its blue and prickly weeds. For you have thus beneath you at once the birthplaces of Virgil and of Livy—the homes of Dante and Petrarch, and the source of the most sweet and pathetic inspiration to your own Shakespeare—the spot where the civilization of the Gothic kingdoms was founded on the throne of Theodoric; and there whatever was strongest in the Italian race redeemed itself into life by its league against Barbarossa; the beginning of the revival of natural science and medicine in the schools of Padua; the center of Italian chivalry, in the power of the Scaligers; of Italian cruelty, in that of Ezzelin; and, lastly, the birthplace of the highest art; for among those hills, or by this very Adige bank, were born Mantegna, Titian, Correggio, and Veronese."

[12] Report (with extracts) of a paper entitled "A Talk respecting Verona and its Rivers," read by Mr. Ruskin at the Weekly Evening Meeting of the Royal Institution of Great Britain, Feb. 4th, 1870. See *Proceedings* of the Royal Institution, vol. vi., p. 55.—Ed.

234. Mr. Ruskin then referred to a series of drawings and photographs taken at Verona by himself and his assistants, Mr. Burgess and Mr. Bunney, which he had divided into three series, and of which he had furnished a number of printed catalogues illustrated with notes.[13]

I. "Lombard, extending to the end of the twelfth century, being the expression of the introduction of Christianity into barbaric minds; Christianization.

II. "The Gothic period. Dante's time, from 1200 to 1400 (Dante beginning his poem exactly in the midst of it, in 1300); the period of vital Christianity, and of the development of the laws of chivalry and forms of imagination which are founded on Christianity.

III. "The first period of the revival, in which the arts of Greece and some of its religion return and join themselves to Christianity; not taking away its sincerity or earnestness, but making it poetical instead of practical. In the following period even this poetical Christianity expired; the arts became devoted to the pursuit of pleasure, and in that they persist except where they are saved by a healthy naturalism or domesticity.

235. I. "The Lombardic period is one of savage but noble life gradually subjected to law. It is the forming of men, not out of clay but wild beasts. And art of this period in all countries, including our own Norman especially, is, in the inner heart of it, the subjection of savage or terrible, or foolish and erring life, to a dominant law. It is government and conquest of fearful dreams. There is in it as yet no germ of true hope—only the conquest of evil, and the waking from darkness and terror. The literature of it is, as in Greece, far in advance of art, and is already full of the most tender and impassioned beauty, while the art is still grotesque and dreadful; but, however wild, it is supreme above all others by its expression of governing law, and here at Verona is the very center and utmost reach of that expression.

"I know nothing in architecture at once so exquisite and so wild and so strange in the expression of self-conquest achieved almost in a dream. For observe, these barbaric races, educated in violence —chiefly in war and in hunting—cannot feel or see clearly as they are gradually civilized whether this element in which they have been brought up is evil or not. They *must* be good soldiers and hunters—that is their life; yet they know that killing is evil, and they do not expect to find wild beasts in heaven. They have been trained by pain, by violence, by hunger and cold. They know there is a good in these things as well as evil: they are perpetually hesitating between the one and the other thought of them. But one thing they see clearly, that killing and hunting, and every form of misery, pleasure, and of passion, must somehow at last be subdued by law, which shall bring good out of it all, and which they feel more and more constraining them every hour. Now, if with this sympathy you look at their dragon and wild beast decoration, you will find that it now tells you about these Lombards far more than they could know of themselves.... All the actions, and much more the arts, of men tell to others, not only what the worker does not know, but what he can never know of himself, which you can only recognize by being in an element more advanced and wider than his.... In deliberate symbolism, the question is always, not what a symbol meant first or meant elsewhere, but what it means now and means here. Now, this dragon symbol of the Lombard is used of course all over the world; it means good here, and evil there; sometimes means nothing; sometimes everything. You have always to ask what the man who here uses it means by it. Whatever is in his mind, that he is sure partly to express by it; nothing else than that can he express by it."

236. II. In the second period Mr. Ruskin said was to be found "the highest development of Italian character and chivalry, with an entirely believed Christian religion; you get, therefore, joy and courtesy, and hope, and a lovely peace in death. And with these you have two fearful elements of evil. You have first such confidence in the virtue of the creed that men hate and persecute all who do not accept it. And worse still, you find such confidence in the power of the creed that men not only can do anything that is wrong, and be themselves for a word of faith pardoned, but are even sure that

[13] This catalogue (London: Queen Street Printing-Office, 1870) is printed below, p. 109, § 242 *seqq.*—Ed.

after the wrong is done God is sure to put it all right again for them, or even make things better than they were before. Now, I need not point out to you how the spirit of persecution, as well as of vain hope founded on creed only, is mingled in every line with the lovely moral teaching of the 'Divina Conmedia,' nor need I point out to you how, between the persecution of other people's creeds and the absolution of one's own crimes, all Christian error is concluded."

In relation to this Mr. Ruskin referred to the history of the founder of the power of the Scalas, Mastino, a simple citizen, chosen first to be podesta and then captain of Verona, for his justice and sagacity, who, although wise and peaceful in his policy, employed the civil power in the persecution of heresy, burning above two hundred persons; and he also related how Can Signorio della Scala on his death-bed, after giving a pious charge to his children, ordered the murder of his brother—examples of the boundless possibility of self-deception. One of these children killed the other, and was himself driven from the throne, so ending the dynasty of the Scalas. Referring to his illustrations, Mr. Ruskin pointed out the expressions of hope, in the conquest of death, and the rewards of faith, apparent in the art of the time. The Lombard architecture expresses the triumph of law over passion, the Christian, that of hope over sorrow.

Mr. Ruskin concluded his remarks on this period by commenting on the history and the tomb of Can Grande della Scala, a good knight and true, as busy and bright a life as is found in the annals of chivalry.

237. III. "The period when classical literature and art were again known in Italy, and the painters and sculptors, who had been gaining steadily in power for two hundred years—power not of practice merely, but of race also—with every circumstance in their favor around them, received their finally perfect instruction, both in geometrical science, in that of materials, and in the anatomy and action of the human body. Also the people about them—the models of their work—had been perfected in personal beauty by a chivalric war; in imagination by a transcendental philosophy; in practical intellect by stern struggle for civic law; and in commerce, not in falsely made or vile or unclean things, but in lovely things, beautifully and honestly made. And now, therefore, you get out of all the world's long history since it was peopled by men till now—you get just fifty years of perfect work. Perfect. It is a strong word; it is also a *true* one. The doing of these fifty years is unaccusably Right, as art; what its sentiment may be—whether too great or too little, whether superficial or sincere—is another question, but as artists' work it admits no conception of anything better.

"It is true that in the following age, founded on the absolutely stern rectitude of this, there came a phase of gigantic power and of exquisite ease and felicity which possess an awe and a charm of their own. They are more inimitable than the work of the perfect school. But they are not *perfect*." …

238. This period Mr. Ruskin named "the 'Time of the Masters,' Fifty Years, including Luini, Leonardo, John Bellini, Vitto Carpaccio, Andrea Mantegna, Andrea Verrocchio, Cima da Conegliano, Perugino, and in date, though only in his earlier life, belonging to the school, Raphael.... The great fifty years was the prime of life of three men: John Bellini, born 1430, died at 90, in 1516; Mantegna, born 1430, died at 76, in 1506; and Vittor Carpaccio, who died in 1522."

"The object of these masters is wholly different from that of the former school. The central Gothic men always want chiefly to impress you with the facts of their subject; but the masters of this finished time desire only to make everything dainty and delightful. We have not many pictures of the class in England, but several have been of late added to the National Gallery, and the Perugino there, especially the compartment with Raphael and Tobit, and the little St. Jerome by John Bellini, will perfectly show you this main character—pictorial perfectness and deliciousness—sought before everything else. You will find, if you look into that St. Jerome, that everything in it is exquisite, complete, and pure; there is not a particle of dust in the cupboards, nor a cloud in the air; the wooden shutters are dainty, the candlesticks are dainty, the saint's scarlet hat is dainty, and its violet tassel, and its ribbon, and his blue cloak and his spare pair of shoes, and his little brown partridge—it is

all a perfect quintessence of innocent luxury—absolute delight, without one drawback in it, nor taint of the Devil anywhere." …

239. After dilating on several other pictures of this class, giving evidence of the entire devotion of the artists of the period to their art and work, Mr. Ruskin adverted to the second part of his discourse, the rivers of Verona. "There is but one river at Verona, nevertheless Dante connects its name with that of the Po when he says of the whole of Lombardy,—

'In sul paese, ch' Adice e Po riga,
Solea valore e cortesia trovarsi
Prima che Federigo avesse briga.'

I want to speak for a minute or two about those great rivers, because in the efforts that are now being made to restore some of its commerce to Venice precisely the same questions are in course of debate which again and again, ever since Venice was a city, have put her senate at pause—namely, how to hold in check the continually advancing morass formed by the silt brought down by the Alpine rivers. Is it not strange that for at least six hundred years the Venetians have been contending with those rivers at their *mouths*—that is to say, where their strength has become wholly irresistible—and never once thought of contending with them at their sources, where their infinitely separated streamlets might be, and are meant by Heaven to be, ruled as easily as children? And observe how sternly, how constantly the place where they are to be governed is marked by the mischief done by their liberty. Consider what the advance of the delta of the Po in the Adriatic signifies among the Alps. The evil of the delta itself, however great, is as nothing in comparison of that which is in its origin.

240. "The gradual destruction of the harborage of Venice, the endless cost of delaying it, the malaria of the whole coast down to Ravenna, nay, the raising of the bed of the Po, to the imperiling of all Lombardy, are but secondary evils. Every acre of that increasing delta means *the devastation of part of an Alpine valley, and the loss of so much fruitful soil and ministering rain*. Some of you now present must have passed this year through the valleys of the Toccia and Ticino. You know therefore the devastation that was caused there, as well as in the valley of the Rhone, by the great floods of 1868, and that ten years of labor, even if the peasantry had still the heart for labor, cannot redeem those districts into fertility. What you have there seen on a vast scale takes place to a certain extent during every summer thunderstorm, and from the ruin of some portion of fruitful land the dust descends to increase the marshes of the Po. But observe further—whether fed by sudden melting of snow or by storm—every destructive rise of the Italian rivers signifies the loss of so much power of irrigation on the south side of the Alps. You must all well know the look of their chain—seen from Milan or Turin late in summer—how little snow is left, except on Monte Rosa, how vast a territory of brown mountain-side heated and barren, without rocks, yet without forest. There is in that brown-purple zone, and along the flanks of every valley that divides it, another Lombardy of cultivable land; and every drift of rain that swells the mountain torrents if it were caught where it falls is literally rain of gold. We seek gold beneath the rocks; and we will not so much as make a trench along the hillside to catch it where it falls from heaven, and where, if not so caught, it changes into a frantic monster, first ravaging hamlet, hill, and plain, then sinking along the shores of Venice into poisoned sleep. Think what that belt of the Alps might be—up to four thousand feet above the plain—if the system of terraced irrigation which even half-savage nations discovered and practiced long ago in China and in Borneo, and by which our own engineers have subdued vast districts of farthest India, were but in part also practiced here—here, in the oldest and proudest center of European arts, where Leonardo da Vinci—master among masters—first discerned the laws of the coiling clouds and wandering streams, so that to this day his engineering remains unbettered by modern science; and yet in this center of all human achievements of genius no thought has been taken to receive with sacred art these great gifts of quiet snow and flying rain. Think, I repeat, what that south slope of the Alps might be: one

paradise of lovely pasture and avenued forest of chestnut and blossomed trees, with cascades docile and innocent as infants, laughing all summer long from crag to crag and pool to pool, and the Adige and the Po, the Dora and the Ticino, no more defiled, no more alternating between fierce flood and venomous languor, but in calm clear currents bearing ships to every city and health to every field of all that azure plain of Lombard Italy....

241. "It has now become a most grave object with me to get some of the great pictures of the Italian schools into England; and that, I think, at this time—with good help—might be contrived. Further, without in the least urging my plans impatiently on anyone else, I know thoroughly that this, which I have said *should* be done, *can* be done, for the Italian rivers, and that no method of employment of our idle able-bodied laborers would be in the end more remunerative, or in the beginnings of it more healthful and every way beneficial than, with the concurrence of the Italian and Swiss governments, setting them to redeem the valleys of the Ticino and the Rhone. And I pray you to think of this; for I tell you truly—you who care for Italy—that both her passions and her mountain streams are noble; but that her happiness depends not on the liberty, but the right government of both."[14]

CATALOGUE

(*See ante,* p. 101.—Ed.)

Drawings and Photographs, illustrative of the Architecture of Verona, shown at the Royal Institution, Feb. 4th, 1870.

SECTION I. Nos. 1 to 7. LOMBARD

242. (1.) *Porch of the Church of St. Zeno.* (Photograph.)

Of the 12th century.

(2.) *Porch of the South Entrance of the Duomo.*

Probably of the 10th or 11th century, and highly remarkable for the wildness of its grotesque or monstrous sculpture, which has been most carefully rendered by the draughts-man, Mr. Bunney.

It will save space to note that the sketches by my two most skillful and patient helpers, Mr. A. Burgess and Mr. Bunney, will be respectively marked (A) and (B), and my own (R).

(3.) *Porch of the Western Entrance of the Duomo.*

[14] See *Arrows of the Chace*.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.