LECTURES ON LANDSCAPE

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Freeditorial

CHAPTER I.OUTLINE.

1. In my inaugural lecture, I stated that while holding this professorship I should direct you, in your practical exercises, chiefly to natural history and landscape. And having in the course of the past year laid the foundational elements of art sufficiently before you, I will invite you, now, to enter on real work with me; and accordingly I propose during this and the following term to give you what practical leading I can in elementary study of landscape, and of a branch of natural history which will form a kind of center for all the rest—Ichthyology.

In the outset I must shortly state to you the position which landscape painting and animal painting hold towards the higher branches of art.

2. Landscape painting is the thoughtful and passionate representation of the physical conditions appointed for human existence. It imitates the aspects, and records the phenomena, of the visible things which are dangerous or beneficial to men; and displays the human methods of dealing with these, and of enjoying them or suffering from them, which are either exemplary or deserving of sympathetic contemplation. Animal painting investigates the laws of greater and less nobility of character in organic form, as comparative anatomy examines those of greater and less development in organic structure; and the function of animal painting is to bring into notice the minor and unthought of conditions of power or beauty, as that of physiology is to ascertain the minor conditions of adaptation.

3. Questions as to the purpose of arrangements or the use of the organs of an animal are, however, no less within the province of the painter than of the physiologist, and are indeed more likely to commend themselves to you through drawing than dissection. For as you dissect an animal you generally assume its form to be necessary and only examine how it is constructed; but in drawing the

outer form itself attentively you are led necessarily to consider the mode of life for which it is disposed, and therefore to be struck by any awkwardness or apparent uselessness in its parts. After sketching one day several heads of birds it became a vital matter of interest to me to know the use of the bony process on the head of the hornbill; but on asking a great physiologist, I found that it appeared to him an absurd question, and was certainly an unanswerable one.

4. I have limited, you have just heard, landscape painting to the representation of phenomena relating to human life. You will scarcely be disposed to admit the propriety of such a limitation; and you will still less be likely to conceive its necessary strictness and severity, unless I convince you of it by somewhat detailed examples.

Here are two landscapes by Turner in his greatest time—Vesuvius in repose, Vesuvius in eruption.

One is a beautiful harmony of cool color; and the other of hot, and they are both exquisitely designed in ornamental lines. But they are not painted for those qualities. They are painted because the state of the scene in one case is full of delight to men; and in the other of pain and danger. And it is not Turner's object at all to exhibit or illustrate natural phenomena, however interesting in themselves.

He does not want to paint blue mist in order to teach you the nature of evaporation; nor this lava stream, to explain to you the operation of gravity on ponderous and viscous materials. He paints the blue mist, because it brings life and joy to men, and the lava stream because it is death to them.

5. Again here are two sea-pieces by Turner of the same period—photographs from them at least. One is a calm on the shore at Scarborough; the other the wreck of an Indiaman.

These also are each painted with exquisitely artistic purpose: the first in opposition of local black to diffused sunshine; the second in the decorative grouping of white spots on a dark ground. That decorative purpose of dappling, or ποικιλια, is as studiously and deliciously carried out by Turner with the Dædalus side of him, in the inlaying of these white spots on the Indiaman's deck, as if he were working a precious toy in ebony and ivory. But Turner did not paint either of the sea-pieces for the sake of these decorous arrangements; neither did he paint the Scarborough as a professor of physical science, to show you the level of low tide on the Yorkshire coast; nor the Indiaman to show you the force of impact in a liquid mass of sea-water of given momentum. He painted this to show you the daily course of quiet human work and happiness, and that, to enable you to conceive something of uttermost human misery—both ordered by the power of the great deep.

6. You may easily—you must, perhaps, for a little time—suspect me of exaggeration in this statement. It is so natural to suppose that the main interest of landscape is essentially in rocks and water and sky; and that figures are to be put, like the salt and mustard to a dish, only to give it a flavor.

Put all that out of your heads at once. The interest of a landscape consists wholly in its relation either to figures present—or to figures past—or to human powers conceived. The most splendid drawing of the chain of the Alps, irrespective of their relation to humanity, is no more a true landscape than a painting of this bit of stone. For, as natural philosophers, there is no bigness or littleness to you. This stone is just as interesting to you, or ought to be—as if it was a million times as big. There is no more sublimity—per se—in ground sloped at an angle of forty-five, than in ground level; nor in a perpendicular fracture of a rock, than in a horizontal one. The only thing that makes the one more interesting to you in a

landscape than the other, is that you could tumble over the perpendicular fracture—and couldn't tumble over the other. A cloud, looked at as a cloud only, is no more a subject for painting than so much feculence in dirty water. It is merely dirty air, or at best a chemical solution ill made. That it is worthy of being painted at all depends upon its being the means of nourishment and chastisement to men, or the dwelling place of imaginary gods. There's a bit of blue sky and cloud by Turner—one of the loveliest ever painted by human hand. But, as a mere pattern of blue and white, he had better have painted a jay's wing: this was only painted by him—and is, in reality, only pleasant to you—because it signifies the coming of a gleam of sweet sunshine in windy weather; and the wind is worth thinking of only because it fills the sails of ships, and the sun because it warms the sailors.

7. Now, it is most important that you should convince yourselves of and fully enter into this truth, because all the difficulty in choosing subject arises from mistakes about it. I daresay some of you who are fond of sketching have gone out often in the most beautiful country, and yet with the feeling that there was no good subject to be found in it. That always arises from your not having sympathy enough with its vital character, and looking for physical picturesqueness instead. On the contrary, there are crude efforts at landscape-painting, made continually upon the most splendid physical phenomena, in America, and other countries without any history. It is not of the slightest use. Niagara, or the North Pole and the Aurora Borealis, won't make a landscape; but a ditch at Iffley will, if you have humanity in you—enough in you to interpret the feelings of hedgers and ditchers, and frogs.

8. Next, here is one of the most beautiful landscapes ever painted, the best I have next to the Greta and Tees.

The subject physically is a mere bank of grass above a stream with some wych-elms and willows. A level-topped bank; the water has cut its way down through the soft alluvion of an elevated plain to the limestone rock at the bottom.

Had this scene been in America, no mortal could have made a landscape of it. It is nothing but a grass bank with some not very pretty trees scattered over it, wholly without grouping. The stream at the bottom is rocky indeed, but its rocks are mean, flat, and of a dull yellow color. The sky is gray and shapeless. There's absolutely nothing to paint anywhere of essential landscape subject, as commonly understood.

Now see what the landscape consists in, which I have told you is one of the most beautiful ever painted by man. There's first a little bit of it left nearly wild, not quite wild; there's a cart and rider's track through it among the copse; and then, standing simply on the wild moss-troopers' ground, the scattered ruins of a great abbey, seen so dimly, that they seem to be fading out of sight, in color as in time.

These two things together, the wild copse wood and the ruin, take you back into the life of the fourteenth century. The one is the border-riders' kingdom; the other that of peace which has striven against border-riding—how vainly! Both these are remains of the past. But the outhouses and refectory of the abbey have been turned into a farmhouse, and that is inhabited, and in front of it the Mistress is feeding her chickens. You see the country is perfectly quiet and innocent, for there is no trace of a fence anywhere; the cattle have strayed down to the riverside, it being a hot day; and some rest in the shade and two in the water.

They could not have done so at their ease had the river not been humanized. Only a little bit of its stony bed is left; a mill weir, thrown across, stays the water in a perfectly clear and delicious pool; to show how clear it is, Turner has put the only piece of playing color in all the picture into the reflections in this. One cow is white, another white and red, evidently as clean as morning dew can wash their sides. They could not have been so in a country where there was the least coal smoke; so Turner has put a wreath of perfectly white smoke through the trees; and lest that should not be enough to show you they burnt wood, he has made his foreground of a piece of copse just lopped, with the new fagots standing up against it; and this still not being enough to give you the idea of perfect cleanliness, he has

covered the stones of the river-bed with white clothes laid out to dry; and that not being enough yet, for the river-bed might be clean though nothing else was, he has put a quantity more hanging over the abbey walls.

9. Only natural phenomena in their direct relation to humanity—these are to be your subjects in landscape. Rocks and water and air may no more be painted for their own sakes, than the armor carved without the warrior.

But, secondly. I said landscape is to be a passionate representation of these things. It must be done, that is to say, with strength and depth of soul. This is indeed to some extent merely the particular application of a principle that has no exception. If you are without strong passions, you cannot be a painter at all. The laying of paint by an insensitive person, whatever it endeavors to represent, is not painting, but daubing or plastering; and that, observe, irrespective of the boldness or minuteness of the work. An insensitive person will daub with a camel's hair-brush and ultramarine; and a passionate one will paint with mortar and a trowel.

10. But far more than common passion is necessary to paint landscape. The physical conditions there are so numerous, and the spiritual ones so occult, that you are sure to be overpowered by the materialism, unless your sentiment is strong. No man is naturally likely to think first of anatomy in painting a pretty woman; but he is very apt to do so in painting a mountain. No man of ordinary sense will take pleasure in features that have no meaning, but he may easily take it in heath, woods or waterfalls, that have no expression. So that it needs much greater strength of heart and intellect to paint landscape than figure: many commonplace persons, bred in good schools, have painted the figure pleasantly or even well; but none but the strongest—John Bellini, Titian, Velasquez, Tintoret, Mantegna, Sandro Botticelli, Carpaccio and Turner—have ever painted a fragment of good landscape. In missal painting exquisite figure-drawing is frequent, and landscape backgrounds in late works are elaborate; but I only know thoroughly good landscape in one book; and I have examined—I speak deliberately—thousands.

11. For one thing, the passion is necessary for the mere quantity of design. In good art, whether painting or sculpture, I have again and again told you every touch is necessary and beautifully intended. Now it falls within the compass of ordinary application to place rightly all the folds of drapery or gleams of light on a chain, or ornaments in a pattern; but when it comes to placing every leaf in a tree, the painter gets tired. Here, for instance, is a little bit of Sandro Botticelli background; I have purposefully sketched it in the slightest way, that you might see how the entire value of it depends on thoughtful placing. There is no texture aimed at, no completion, scarcely any variety of light and shade; but by mere care in the placing the thing is beautiful. Well, every leaf, every cloud, every touch is placed with the same care in great work; and when this is done as by John Bellini in the picture of Peter Martyr,[2] or as it was by Titian in the great Peter Martyr, with every leaf in a wood he gets tired. I know no other such landscape in the world as that is, or as that was.

12. Perhaps you think on such conditions you never can paint landscape at all. Well, great landscape certainly not; but pleasant and useful landscape, yes; provided only the passion you bring to it be true and pure. The degree of it you cannot command; the genuineness of it you can—yes, and the depth of source also. Tintoret's passion may be like the Reichenbach, and yours only like a little dripping Holywell, but both equally from deep springs.

13. But though the virtue of all painting (and similarly of sculpture and every other art) is in passion, I must not have you begin by working passionately. The discipline of youth, in all its work, is in cooling and curbing itself, as the discipline of age is in warming and urging itself; you know the Bacchic chorus of old men in Plato's Laws. To the end of life, indeed, the strength of a man's finest nature is shown in due continence; but that is because the finest natures remain young to the death: and for you the first thing you have to do in art (as in life) is to be quiet and firm—quiet, above everything; and modest, with this most essential modesty, that you must like the landscape you are going to draw better than you expect to like

your drawing of it, however well it may succeed. If you would not rather have the real thing than your sketch of it, you are not in a right state of mind for sketching at all. If you only think of the scene, "what a nice sketch this will make!" be assured you will never make a nice sketch of it. You may think you have produced a beautiful work; nay, perhaps the public and many fair judges will agree with you; but I tell you positively, there will be no enduring value in what you have thus done. Whereas if you think of the scene, "Ah, if I could only get some shadow or scrawl of this to carry away with me, how glad I should be!"—then whatever you do will be, according to your strength, good and progressive: it may be feeble, or much faultful, but it will be vital and essentially precious.

14. Now, it is not possible for you to command this state of mind, or anything like it, in yourselves at once. Nay, in all probability your eyes are so satiated by the false popular art surrounding us now on all sides, that you cannot see the delicate reality though you try; but even though you may not care for the truth, you can act as if you did, and tell it.

Now, therefore, observe this following quite plain direction. Whenever you set yourself to draw anything, consider only how best you may give a person who has not seen the place, a true idea of it. Use any means in your power to do that, and don't think of the person for whom you are drawing as a connoisseur, but as a person of ordinary sense and feeling. Don't get artist-like qualities for him: but first give him the pleasant sensation of being at the place, then show him how the land lies, how the water runs, how the wind blows, and so on. Always think of the public as Molière of his old woman; you have done nothing really great or good if you can't please her.

15. Now beginning wisely, so as to lose no time or labor, you will learn to paint all the conditions of quiet light and sky, before you attempt those of variable light and cloud. Do not trouble yourselves with or allow yourselves to be tempted by any effects that are brilliant or tremendous; except only that from the beginning I

recommend you to watch always for sunrise; to keep a little diary of the manner of it, and to have beside your window a small sketch-book, with pencil cut over night, and colors moist. The one indulgence which I would have you allow yourselves in fast coloring, for some time, is the endeavor to secure some record at the instant of the colors of morning clouds; while, if they are merely white or gray or blue, you must get an outline of them with pencil. You will soon feel by this means what are the real difficulties to be encountered in all landscape coloring, and your eyes will be educated to quantity and harmonious action of forms.

But for the rest—learn to paint everything in the quietest and simplest light. First outline your whole subject completely, with delicate sharp pencil line. If you don't get more than that, let your outline be a finished and lovely diagram of the whole.

16. All the objects are then to be painted of their proper colors, matching them as nearly as you can, in the manner that a missal is painted, filling the outlined shapes neatly up to their junctions; reënforcing afterwards when necessary, but as little as possible; but, above all, knowing precisely what the light is, and where it is.

17. I have brought two old-fashioned colored engravings, which are a precise type of the style I want you to begin with. Finished from corner to corner, as well as the painter easily could; everything done to good purpose, nothing for vain glory; nothing in haste or affectation, nothing in feverish or morbid excitement. The observation is accurate; the sentiment, though childish, deep and pure; and the effect of light, for common work, quite curiously harmonious and deceptive.

They are, in spite of their weaknesses, absolutely the only landscapes I could show you which give you a real idea of the places, or which put your minds into the tone which, if you were happy and at ease, they would take in the air and light of Italy.

I dwell on the necessity of completion especially, because I have lost much time myself from my sympathy with the feverish intensity of the minds of the great engravers; and from always fastening on one or two points of my subject and neglecting the rest.

18. We have seen, then, that every subject is to be taken up first in its terminal lines, then in its light and shade, then in its color.

First of the terminal lines of landscape, or of drawing in outline.

I think the examples of shell outline in your copying series must already have made you feel the exact nature of a pure outline, the difficulty of it, and the value.

But we have now to deal with limits of a more subtle kind.

The outline of any simple solid form, even though it may have complex parts, represents an actual limit, accurately to be followed. The outline of a cup, of a shell, or of an animal's limb, has a determinable course, which your pen or pencil line either coincides with or does not. You can say of that line, either it is wrong or right; if right, it is in a measure suggestive, and nobly suggestive of the character of the object. But the greater number of objects in a landscape either have outlines so complex that no pencil could follow them (as trees in middle distance), or they have no actual outline at all, but a gradated and softened edge; as, for the most part, clouds, foam, and the like. And even in things which have determinate form, the outline of that form is usually quite incapable of expressing their real character.

19. Here is the most ordinary component of a foreground for instance, a pleasantly colored stone. Any of its pure outlines are not only without beauty, but absolutely powerless to give you any notion of its character, although that character is in itself so interesting, that here Turner has made a picture of little more than a heap of such stones, with blue water to oppose their color. In consequence of these difficulties and insufficiencies, most landscape-painters have been tempted to neglect outline altogether, and think only of effects of light or color on masses more or less obscurely defined. They have thus gradually lost their sense of organic form, their precision of hand, and their respect for limiting law; in a word, for all the safeguards and severe dignities of their art. And landscape-painting has, therefore, more in consequence of this one error than of any other, become weak, frivolous, and justly despised.

20. Now, if any of you have chanced to notice at the end of my "Queen of the Air," my saying that in landscape Turner must be your only guide, you perhaps have thought I said so because of his great power in melting colors or in massing light and shade. Not so. I have always said he is the only great landscape-painter, and to be your only guide, because he is the only landscape-painter who can draw an outline.

His finished works perhaps appear to you more vague than any other master's: no man loses his outlines more constantly. You will be surprised to know that his frankness in losing depends on his certainty of finding if he chooses; and that, while all other landscape-painters study from Nature in shade or in color, Turner always sketched with the point.

"Always," of course, is a wide word. In your copying series I have put a sketch by Turner in color from Nature; some few others of the kind exist, in the National Gallery and elsewhere. But, as a rule, from his boyhood to the last day of his life, he sketched only with the fine pencil point, and always the outline, more if he had

time, but at least the outline, of every scene that interested him; and in general, outline so subtle and elaborate as to be inexhaustible in examination and uncopiable for delicacy.

Here is a sketch of an English park scene which represents the average character of a study from Nature by Turner; and here the sketch from Nature of Dumblane Abbey for the Liber Studiorum, which shows you what he took from Nature, when he had time only to get what was most precious to him.

21. The first thing, therefore, you have to learn in landscape, is to outline; and therefore we must now know precisely what an outline is, how it ought to be represented; and this it will be right to define in quite general terms applicable to all subjects.

We saw in the fifth Lecture that every visible thing consisted of spaces of color, terminated either by sharp or gradated limits. Whenever they are sharp, the line of separation, followed by the point of your drawing instrument, is the proper outline of your subject, whether it represents the limits of flat spaces or of solid forms.

22. For instance, here is a drawing by Holbein of a lady in a dark dress, with bars of black velvet round her arm. Her form is seen everywhere defined against the light by a perfectly sharp linear limit which Holbein can accurately draw with his pen; the patches of velvet are also distinguished from the rest of her dress by a linear limit, which he follows with his pen just as decisively. Here, therefore, is your first great law. Wherever you see one space of color distinguished from another by a sharp limit, you are to draw that limit firmly; and that is your outline.

23. Also, observe that as your representing this limit by a dark line is a conventionalism, and just as much a conventionalism when the line is subtle as

when it is thick, the great masters accept and declare that conventionalism with perfect frankness, and use bold and decisive outline, if any.

Also, observe, that though, when you are master of your art, you may modify your outline by making it dark in some parts, light in others, and even sometimes thick and sometimes slender, a scientifically accurate outline is perfectly equal throughout; and in your first practice I wish you to use always a pen with a blunt point, which will make no hair stroke under any conditions. So that using black ink and only one movement of the pen, not returning to thicken your line, you shall either have your line there, or not there; and that you may not be able to gradate or change it, in any way or degree whatsoever.

24. Now the first question respecting it is: what place is your thick line to have with respect to the limit which it represents—outside of it, or inside, or over it? Theoretically, it is to be over it; the true limit falling all the way along the center of your thick line. The contest of Apelles with Protogenes consisted in striking this true limit within each other's lines, more and more finely. And you may always consider your pen line as representing the first incision for sculpture, the true limit being the sharp center of the incision.

But, practically, when you are outlining a light object defined against a dark one, the line must go outside of it; and when a dark object against a light one, inside of it.

In this drawing of Holbein's, the hand being seen against the light, the outline goes inside the contour of the fingers.

25. Secondly. And this is of great importance. It will happen constantly that forms are entirely distinct from each other and separated by true limits, which are yet

invisible, or nearly so, to the eye. I place, for instance, one of these eggs in front of the other, and probably to most of you the separation in the light is indiscernible. Is it then to be outlined? In practically combining outline with accomplished light and shade there are cases of this kind in which the outline may with advantage, or even must for truth of effect, be omitted. But the facts of the solid form are of so vital importance, and the perfect command of them so necessary to the dignity and intelligibility of the work, that the greatest artists, even for their finished drawings, like to limit every solid form by a fine line, whether its contour be visible to the eye or not.

26. An outline thus perfectly made with absolute decision, and with a wash of one color above it, is the most masterly of all methods of light and shade study, with limited time, when the forms of the objects to be drawn are clear and unaffected by mist. But without any wash of color, such an outline is the most valuable of all means for obtaining such memoranda of any scene as may explain to another person, or record for yourself, what is most important in its features.

27. Choose, then, a subject that interests you; and so far as failure of time or materials compels you to finish one part, or express one character, rather than another, of course dwell on the features that interest you most. But beyond this, forget, or even somewhat repress yourself, and make it your first object to give a true idea of the place to other people. You are not to endeavor to express your own feelings about it; if anything, err on the side of concealing them. What is best is not to think of yourself at all, but to state as plainly and simply as you can the whole truth of the thing. What you think unimportant in it may to another person be the most touching part of it: what you think beautiful may be in truth commonplace and of small value. Quietly complete each part to the best of your power, endeavoring to maintain a steady and dutiful energy, and the tranquil pleasure of a workman.

CHAPTER II.LIGHT AND SHADE.

28. In my last Lecture I laid before you evidence that the greatness of the master whom I wished you to follow as your only guide in landscape depended primarily on his studying from Nature always with the point; that is to say, in pencil or pen outline. To-day I wish to show you that his preëminence depends secondarily on his perfect rendering of form and distance by light and shade, before he admits a thought of color.

I say "before" however—observe carefully—only with reference to the construction of any given picture, not with reference to the order in which he learnt his mechanical processes. From the beginning, he worked out of doors with the point, but indoors with the brush; and attains perfect skill in washing flat color long before he attains anything like skill in delineation of form.

29. Here, for instance, is a drawing, when he was twelve or thirteen years old, of Dover Castle and the Dover Coach; in which the future love of mystery is exhibited by his studiously showing the way in which the dust rises about the wheels; and an interest in drunken sailors, which materially affected his marine studies, shown not less in the occupants of the hind seat. But what I want you to observe is that, though the trees, coach, horses, and sailors are drawn as any schoolboy would draw them, the sky is washed in so smoothly that few water-color painters of our day would lightly accept a challenge to match it.

And, therefore, it is, among many other reasons, that I put the brush into your hands from the first, and try you with a wash in lampblack, before you enter my

working class. But, as regards the composition of his picture, the drawing is always first with Turner, the color second.

30. Drawing: that is to say, the expression by gradation of light, either of form or space. Again I thus give you a statement wholly adverse to the vulgar opinion of him. You will find that statement early in the first volume of "Modern Painters," and repeated now through all my works these twenty-five years, in vain. Nobody will believe that the main virtue of Turner is in his drawing. I say "the main virtue of Turner." Splendid though he be as a colorist, he is not unrivaled in color; nay, in some qualities of color he has been far surpassed by the Venetians. But no one has ever touched him in exquisiteness of gradation; and no one in landscape in perfect rendering of organic form.

31. I showed you in this drawing, at last Lecture, how truly he had matched the color of the iron-stained rocks in the bed of the Ticino; and any of you who care for color at all cannot but take more or less pleasure in the black and greens and warm browns opposed throughout. But the essential value of the work is not in these. It is, first, in the expression of enormous scale of mountain and space of air, by gradations of shade in these colors, whatever they may be; and, secondly, in the perfect rounding and cleaving of the masses alike of mountain and stone. I showed you one of the stones themselves, as an example of uninteresting outline. If I were to ask you to paint it, though its color is pleasant enough, you would still find it uninteresting and coarse compared to that of a flower, or a bird. But if I can engage you in an endeavor to draw its true forms in light and shade, you will most assuredly find it not only interesting, but in some points quite beyond the most subtle skill you can give to it.

32. You have heard me state to you, several times, that all the masters who valued accurate form and modeling found the readiest way of obtaining the facts they required to be firm pen outline, completed by a wash of neutral tint. This method is indeed rarely used by Raphael or Michael Angelo in the drawings they have left us,

because their studies are nearly all tentative—experiments in composition, in which the imperfect or careless pen outline suggested all they required, and was capable of easy change without confusing the eye. But the masters who knew precisely before they laid touch on paper what they were going to do—and this may be, observe, either because they are less or greater than the men who change; less, in merely drawing some natural object without attempt at composition, or greater in knowing absolutely beforehand the composition they intend; it may be, even so, that what they intend, though better known, is not so good:—but at all events, in this anticipating power Tintoret, Holbein and Turner stand, I think, alone as draughtsmen; Tintoret rarely sketching at all, but painting straight at the first blow, while Holbein and Turner sketch indeed, but it is as with a pen of iron and a point of diamond.

33. You will find in your educational series many drawings illustrative of the method; but I have enlarged here the part that is executed with the pen, out of this smaller drawing, that you may see with what fearless strength Holbein delineates even the most delicate folds of the veil on the head, and of the light muslin on the shoulders, giving them delicacy, not by the thinness of his line, but by its exquisite veracity.

The eye will endure with patience, or even linger with pleasure, on any line that is right, however coarse; while the faintest or finest that is wrong will be forcibly destructive. And again and again I have to recommend you to draw always as if you were engraving, and as if the line could not be changed.

34. The method used by Turner in the Liber Studiorum is precisely analogous to that of Holbein. The lines of these etchings are to trees, rocks, or buildings, absolutely what these of Holbein are; not suggestions of contingent grace, but determinations of the limits of future form. You will see the explanatory office of such lines by placing this outline over my drawing of the stone, until the lines coincide with the limits of the shadow. You will find that it intensifies and explains

the forms which otherwise would have escaped notice, and that a perfectly gradated wash of neutral tint with an outline of this kind is all that is necessary for grammatical statement of forms. It is all that the great colorists need for their studies; they would think it wasted time to go farther; but, if you have no eye for color, you may go farther in another manner, with enjoyment.

35. Now to go back to Turner.

The first great object of the Liber Studiorum, for which I requested you in my sixth Lecture to make constant use of it, is the delineation of solid form by outline and shadow. But a yet more important purpose in each of the designs in that book is the expression of such landscape powers and character as have especial relation to the pleasures and pain of human life—but especially the pain. And it is in this respect that I desired you (Sect. 172) to be assured, not merely of their superiority, but of their absolute difference in kind from photography, as works of disciplined design.

36. I do not know whether any of you were interested enough in the little note in my catalogue on this view near Blair Athol, to look for the scene itself during your summer rambles. If any did, and found it, I am nearly certain their impression would be only that of an extreme wonder how Turner could have made so little of so beautiful a spot. The projecting rock, when I saw it last in 1857, and I am certain, when Turner saw it, was covered with lichens having as many colors as a painted window. The stream—or rather powerful and deep Highland river, the Tilt—foamed and eddied magnificently through the narrowed channel; and the wild vegetation in the rock crannies was a finished arabesque of living sculpture, of which this study of mine, made on another stream, in Glenfinlas, only a few miles away, will give you a fair idea. Turner has absolutely stripped the rock of its beautiful lichens to bare slate, with one quartz vein running up through it; he has quieted the river into a commonplace stream; he has given, of all the rich vegetation, only one cluster of quite uninteresting leaves and a clump of birches

with ragged trunks. Yet, observe, I have told you of it, he has put into one scene the spirit of Scotland.

37. Similarly, those of you who in your long vacations have ever stayed near Dumblane will be, I think, disappointed in no small degree by this study of the abbey, for which I showed you the sketch at last Lecture. You probably know that the oval window in its west end is one of the prettiest pieces of rough thirteenth-century carving in the kingdom; I used it for a chief example in my lectures at Edinburgh; and you know that the lancet windows, in their fine proportion and rugged masonry, would alone form a study of ruined Gothic masonry of exquisite interest.

Yet you find Turner representing the lancet window by a few bare oval lines like the hoop of a barrel; and indicating the rest of the structure by a monotonous and thin piece of outline, of which I was asked by one of yourselves last term, and quite naturally and rightly, how Turner came to draw it so slightly—or, we may even say, so badly.

38. Whenever you find Turner stopping short, or apparently failing in this way, especially when he does the contrary of what any of us would have been nearly sure to do, then is the time to look for your main lesson from him. You recollect those quiet words of the strongest of all Shakespeare's heroes, when any one else would have had his sword out in an instant:

"Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them ...

Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it

Without a prompter."

Now you must always watch keenly what Turner's cue is. You will see his hand go to his hilt fast enough, when it comes. Dumblane Abbey is a pretty piece of building enough, it is true; but the virtue of the whole scene, and meaning, is not in the masonry of it. There is much better masonry and much more wonderful ruin of it elsewhere; Dumblane Abbey—tower and aisles and all—would go under one of the arches of buildings such as there are in the world. Look at what Turner will do when his cue is masonry,—in the Coliseum. What the execution of that drawing is you may judge by looking with a magnifying glass at the ivy and battlements in this, when, also, his cue is masonry. What then can he mean by not so much as indicating one pebble or joint in the walls of Dumblane?

39. I was sending out the other day, to a friend in America, a chosen group of the Liber Studiorum to form a nucleus for an art collection at Boston. And I warned my friend at once to guard his public against the sore disappointment their first sight of these so much celebrated works would be to them. "You will have to make them understand," I wrote to him, "that their first lesson will be in observing not what Turner has done, but what he has not done. These are not finished pictures, but studies; endeavors, that is to say, to get the utmost result possible with the simplest means; they are essentially thoughtful, and have each their fixed purpose, to which everything else is sacrificed; and that purpose is always imaginative—to get at the heart of the thing, not at its outside."

40. Now, it is true, there are beautiful lichens at Blair Athol, and good building at Dumblane; but there are lovely lichens all over the cold regions of the world, and there is far more interesting architecture in other countries than in Scotland. The essential character of Scotland is that of a wild and thinly inhabited rocky country, not sublimely mountainous, but beautiful in low rock and light streamlet everywhere; with sweet copsewood and rudely growing trees. This wild land possesses a subdued and imperfect school of architecture, and has an infinitely tragic feudal, pastoral, and civic history. And in the events of that history a deep

tenderness of sentiment is mingled with a cruel and barren rigidity of habitual character, accurately corresponding to the conditions of climate and earth.

41. Now I want you especially to notice, with respect to these things, Turner's introduction of the ugly square tower high up on the left. Your first instinct would be to exclaim, "How unlucky that was there at all! Why, at least, could not Turner have kept it out of sight?" He has quite gratuitously brought it into sight; gratuitously drawn firmly the three lines of stiff drip-stone which mark its squareness and blankness. It is precisely that blank vacancy of decoration, and setting of the meager angles against wind and war, which he wants to force on your notice, that he may take you thoroughly out of Italy and Greece, and put you wholly into a barbarous and frost-hardened land; that once having its gloom defined he may show you all the more intensely what pastoral purity and innocence of life, and loveliness of nature, are underneath the banks and braes of Doune, and by every brooklet that feeds the Forth and Clyde.

That is the main purpose of these two studies. How it is obtained by various incidents in the drawing of stones, and trees, and figures, I will show you another time. The chief element in both is the sadness and depth of their effect of subdued though clear light in sky and stream.

42. The sadness of their effect, I repeat. If you remember anything of the Lectures I gave you through last year, you must be gradually getting accustomed to my definition of the Greek school in art, as one essentially Chiaroscurist, as opposed to Gothic color; Realist, as opposed to Gothic imagination; and Despairing, as opposed to Gothic hope. And you are prepared to recognize it by any one of these three conditions. Only, observe, the chiaroscuro is simply the technical result of the two others: a Greek painter likes light and shade, first, because they enable him to realize form solidly, while color is flat; and secondly, because light and shade are melancholy, while color is gay.

So that the defect of color, and substitution of more or less gray or gloomy effects of rounded gradation, constantly express the two characters: first, Academic or Greek fleshliness and solidity as opposed to Gothic imagination; and secondly, of Greek tragic horror and gloom as opposed to Gothic gladness.

43. In the great French room in the Louvre, if you at all remember the general character of the historical pictures, you will instantly recognize, in thinking generally of them, the rounded fleshly and solid character in the drawing, the gray or greenish and brownish color, or defect of color, lurid and moonlight-like, and the gloomy choice of subjects, as the Deluge, the Field of Eylau, the Starvation on the Raft, and the Death of Endymion; always melancholy, and usually horrible.

The more recent pictures of the painter Gérôme unite all these attributes in a singular degree; above all, the fleshliness and materialism which make his studies of the nude, in my judgment, altogether inadmissible into the rank of the fine arts.

44. Now you observe that I never speak of this Greek school but with a certain dread. And yet I have told you that Turner belongs to it, that all the strongest men in times of developed art belong to it; but then, remember, so do all the basest. The learning of the Academy is indeed a splendid accessory to original power, in Velasquez, in Titian, or in Reynolds; but the whole world of art is full of a base learning of the Academy, which, when fools possess, they become a tenfold plague of fools.

And again, a stern and more or less hopeless melancholy necessarily is under-current in the minds of the greatest men of all ages,—of Homer, Aeschylus, Pindar, or Shakespeare. But an earthy, sensual, and weak despondency is the attribute of the lowest mental and bodily disease; and the imbecilities and lassitudes which follow crime, both in nations and individuals, can only find a last stimulus to their own dying sensation in the fascinated contemplation of completer death.

45. Between these—the highest, and these—the basest, you have every variety and combination of strength and of mistake: the mass of foolish persons dividing themselves always between the two oppositely and equally erroneous faiths, that genius may dispense with law, or that law can create genius. Of the two, there is more excuse for, and less danger in the first than in the second mistake. Genius has sometimes done lovely things without knowledge and without discipline. But all the learning of the Academies has never yet drawn so much as one fair face, or ever set two pleasant colors side by side.

46. Now there is one great Northern painter, of whom I have not spoken till now, probably to your surprise, Rubens; whose power is composed of so many elements, and whose character may be illustrated so completely, and with it the various operation of the counter schools, by one of his pictures now open to your study, that I would press you to set aside one of your brightest Easter afternoons for the study of that one picture in the Exhibition of Old Masters, the so-called "Juno and Argus," No. 387.

So-called, I say; for it is not a picture either of Argus or of Juno, but the portrait of a Flemish lady "as Juno" (just as Rubens painted his family picture with his wife "as the Virgin" and himself "as St. George"): and a good anatomical study of a human body as Argus. In the days of Rubens, you must remember, mythology was thought of as a mere empty form of compliment or fable, and the original meaning of it wholly forgotten. Rubens never dreamed that Argus is the night, or that his eyes are stars; but with the absolutely literal and brutal part of his Dutch nature supposes the head of Argus full of real eyes all over, and represents Hebe cutting them out with a bloody knife and putting one into the hand of the goddess, like an unseemly oyster.

That conception of the action, and the loathsome sprawling of the trunk of Argus under the chariot, are the essential contributions of Rubens' own Netherland personality. Then the rest of the treatment he learned from other schools, but adopted with splendid power.

47. First, I think, you ought to be struck by having two large peacocks painted with scarcely any color in them! They are nearly black, or black-green, peacocks. Now you know that Rubens is always spoken of as a great colorist, par excellence a colorist; and would you not have expected that—before all things—the first thing he would have seen in a peacock would have been gold and blue? He sees nothing of the kind. A peacock, to him, is essentially a dark bird; serpent-like in the writhing of the neck, cloud-like in the toss and wave of its plumes. He has dashed out the filaments of every feather with magnificent drawing; he has not given you one bright gleam of green or purple in all the two birds.

Well, the reason of that is that Rubens is not par excellence a colorist; nay, is not even a good colorist. He is a very second-rate and coarse colorist; and therefore his color catches the lower public, and gets talked about. But he is par excellence a splendid draughtsman of the Greek school; and no one else, except Tintoret, could have drawn with the same ease either the muscles of the dead body or the plumes of the birds.

48. Farther, that he never became a great colorist does not mean that he could not, had he chosen. He was warped from color by his lower Greek instincts, by his animal delight in coarse and violent forms and scenes—in fighting, in hunting, and in torments of martyrdom and of hell: but he had the higher gift in him, if the flesh had not subdued it. There is one part of this picture which he learned how to do at Venice, the Iris, with the golden hair, in the chariot behind Juno. In her he has put out his full power, under the teaching of Veronese and Titian; and he has all the splendid Northern-Gothic, Reynolds or Gainsborough play of feature with Venetian color. Scarcely anything more beautiful than that head, or more masterly

than the composition of it, with the inlaid pattern of Juno's robe below, exists in the art of any country. Si sic omnia!—but I know nothing else equal to it throughout the entire works of Rubens.

49. See, then, how the picture divides itself. In the fleshly baseness, brutality and stupidity of its main conception, is the Dutch part of it; that is Rubens' own. In the noble drawing of the dead body and of the birds you have the Phidias-Greek part of it, brought down to Rubens through Michael Angelo. In the embroidery of Juno's robe you have the Dædalus-Greek part of it, brought down to Rubens through Veronese. In the head of Iris you have the pure Northern-Gothic part of it, brought down to Rubens through Giorgione and Titian.

50. Now, though—even if we had given ten minutes of digression—the lessons in this picture would have been well worth it, I have not, in taking you to it, gone out of my own way. There is a special point for us to observe in those dark peacocks. If you look at the notes on the Venetian pictures in the end of my "Stones of Venice," you will find it especially dwelt upon as singular that Tintoret, in his picture of "The Nativity," has a peacock without any color in it. And the reason of it is also that Tintoret belongs, with the full half of his mind, as Rubens does, to the Greek school. But the two men reach the same point by opposite paths. Tintoret begins with what Venice taught him, and adopted what Athens could teach: but Rubens begins with Athens, and adopts from Venice. Now if you will look back to my fifth Lecture[9] you will find it said that the colorists can always adopt as much chiaroscuro as suits them, and so become perfect; but the chiaroscurists cannot, on their part, adopt color, except partially. And accordingly, whenever Tintoret chooses, he can laugh Rubens to scorn in management of light and shade; but Rubens only here and there—as far as I know myself, only this once—touches Tintoret or Giorgione in color.

51. But now observe farther. The Greek chiaroscuro, I have just told you, is by one body of men pursued academically, as a means of expressing form; by another,

tragically, as a mystery of light and shade, corresponding to—and forming part of—the joy and sorrow of life. You may, of course, find the two purposes mingled: but pure formal chiaroscuro—Marc Antonio's and Leonardo's—is inconsistent with color, and though it is thoroughly necessary as an exercise, it is only as a correcting and guarding one, never as a basis of art.

52. Let me be sure, now, that you thoroughly understand the relation of formal shade to color. Here is an egg; here, a green cluster of leaves; here, a bunch of black grapes. In formal chiaroscuro, all these are to be considered as white, and drawn as if they were carved in marble. In the engraving of "Melancholy," what I meant by telling you it was in formal chiaroscuro was that the ball is white, the leaves are white, the dress is white; you can't tell what color any of these stand for. On the contrary, to a colorist the first question about everything is its color. Is this a white thing, a green thing, or a blue thing? down must go my touch of white, green, or dark blue first of all; if afterwards I can make them look round, or like fruit and leaves, it's all very well; but if I can't, blue or green they at least shall be.

53. Now here you have exactly the thing done by the two masters we are speaking of. Here is a copy of Turner's vignette of "Martigny." This is wholly a design of the colored school. Here is a bit of vine in the foreground with purple grapes; the grapes, so far from being drawn as round, are struck in with angular flat spots; but they are vividly purple spots, their whole vitality and use in the design is in their Tyrian nature. Here, on the contrary, is Dürer's "Flight into Egypt," with grapes and palm fruit above. Both are white; but both engraved so as to look thoroughly round.

54. All the other great chiaroscurists whom I named to you—Reynolds, Velasquez, and Titian—approached their shadow also on the safe side—from Venice: they always think of color first. But Turner had to work his way out of the dark Greek school up to Venice; he always thinks of his shadow first; and it held him in some degree fatally to the end. Those pictures which you all laughed at were not what

you fancied, mad endeavors for color; they were agonizing Greek efforts to get light. He could have got color easily enough if he had rested in that; which I will show you in next Lecture. Still, he so nearly made himself a Venetian that, as opposed to the Dutch academical chiaroscurists, he is to be considered a Venetian altogether. And now I will show you, in a very simple subject, the exact opposition of the two schools.

55. Here is a study of swans, from a Dutch book of academical instruction in Rubens' time. It is a good and valuable book in many ways, and you are going to have some copies set you from it. But as a type of academical chiaroscuro it will give you most valuable lessons on the other side—of warning.

Here, then, is the academical Dutchman's notion of a swan. He has laboriously engraved every feather, and has rounded the bird into a ball; and has thought to himself that never swan has been so engraved before. But he has never with his Dutch eyes perceived two points in a swan which are vital to it: first, that it is white; and, secondly, that it is graceful. He has above all things missed the proportion, and necessarily therefore the bend of its neck.

56. Now take the colorist's view of the matter. To him the first main facts about the swan are that it is a white thing with black spots. Turner takes one brush in his right hand, with a little white in it; another in his left hand, with a little lampblack. He takes a piece of brown paper, works for about two minutes with his white brush, passes the black to his right hand, and works half a minute with that, and, there you are!

You would like to be able to draw two swans in two minutes and a half yourselves. Perhaps so, and I can show you how; but it will need twenty years' work all day long. First, in the meantime, you must draw them rightly, if it takes two hours instead of two minutes; and, above all, remember that they are black and white.

57. But farther: you see how intensely Turner felt precisely what the Fleming did not feel—the bend of the neck. Now this is not because Turner is a colorist, as opposed to the Fleming; but because he is a pure and highly trained Greek, as opposed to the Fleming's low Greek. Both, so far as they are aiming at form, are now working in the Greek school of Phidias; but Turner is true Greek, for he is thinking only of the truth about the swan; and De Wit is pseudo-Greek, for he is thinking not of the swan at all, but of his own Dutch self. And so he has ended in making, with his essentially piggish nature, this sleeping swan's neck as nearly as possible like a leg of pork.

That is the result of academical work, in the hands of a vulgar person.

58. And now I will ask you to look carefully at three more pictures in the London Exhibition.

The first, "The Nativity," by Sandro Botticelli. It is an early work by him; but a quite perfect example of what the masters of the pure Greek school did in Florence.

One of the Greek main characters, you know, is to be απροσωπος, faceless. If you look first at the faces in this picture you will find them ugly—often without expression, always ill or carelessly drawn. The entire purpose of the picture is a mystic symbolism by motion and chiaroscuro. By motion, first. There is a dome of burning clouds in the upper heaven. Twelve angels half float, half dance, in a circle, round the lower vault of it. All their drapery is drifted so as to make you feel the whirlwind of their motion. They are seen by gleams of silvery or fiery light, relieved against an equally lighted blue of inimitable depth and loveliness.

It is impossible for you ever to see a more noble work of passionate Greek chiaroscuro—rejoicing in light. From this I should like you to go instantly to Rembrandt's "Portrait of a Burgomaster" (No. 77 in the Exhibition of Old Masters).

59. That is ignobly passionate chiaroscuro, rejoicing in darkness rather than light.

You cannot see a finer work by Rembrandt. It has all his power of rendering character, and the portrait is celebrated through the world. But it is entirely second-rate work. The character in the face is only striking to persons who like candle-light effects better than sunshine; any head by Titian has twice the character, and seen by daylight instead of gas. The rest of the picture is as false in light and shade as it is pretentious, made up chiefly of gleaming buttons in places where no light could possibly reach them; and of an embossed belt on the shoulder, which people think finely painted because it is all over lumps of color, not one of which was necessary. That embossed execution of Rembrandt's is just as much ignorant work as the embossed projecting jewels of Carlo Crivelli; a real painter never loads (see the Velasquez, No. 415 in the same exhibition).

60. Finally, from the Rembrandt go to the little Cima (No. 93), "St. Mark." Thus you have the Sandro Botticelli, of the noble Greek school in Florence; the Rembrandt, of the debased Greek school in Holland; and the Cima, of the pure color school of Venice.

The Cima differs from the Rembrandt, by being lovely; from the Botticelli, by being simple and calm. The painter does not desire the excitement of rapid movement, nor even the passion of beautiful light. But he hates darkness as he does death; and falsehood more than either. He has painted a noble human creature simply in clear daylight; not in rapture, nor yet in agony. He is dressed neither in a rainbow, nor bedraggled with blood. You are neither to be alarmed nor entertained by anything that is likely to happen to him. You are not to be improved by the

piety of his expression, nor disgusted by its truculence. But there is more true mastery of light and shade, if your eye is subtle enough to see it, in the hollows and angles of the architecture and folds of the dress, than in all the etchings of Rembrandt put together. The unexciting color will not at first delight you; but its charm will never fail; and from all the works of variously strained and obtrusive power with which it is surrounded, you will find that you never return to it but with a sense of relief and of peace, which can only be given you by the tender skill which is wholly without pretense, without pride, and without error.

CHAPTER III.COLOR.

61. The distinctions between schools of art which I have so often asked you to observe are, you must be aware, founded only on the excess of certain qualities in one group of painters over another, or the difference in their tendencies; and not in the absolute possession by one group, and absence in the rest, of any given skill. But this impossibility of drawing trenchant lines of parting need never interfere with the distinctness of our conception of the opponent principles which balance each other in great minds, or paralyze each other in weak ones; and I cannot too often urge you to keep clearly separate in your thoughts the school which I have called "of Crystal," because its distinctive virtue is seen unaided in the sharp separations and prismatic harmonies of painted glass, and the other, the "School of Clay," because its distinctive virtue is seen in the qualities of any fine work in uncolored terra cotta, and in every drawing which represents them.

62. You know I sometimes speak of these generally as the Gothic and Greek schools, sometimes as the colorist and chiaroscurist. All these oppositions are liable to infinite qualification and gradation, as between species of animals; and

you must not be troubled, therefore, if sometimes momentary contradictions seem to arise in examining special points. Nay, the modes of opposition in the greatest men are inlaid and complex; difficult to explain, though in themselves clear. Thus you know in your study of sculpture we saw that the essential aim of the Greek art was tranquil action; the chief aim of Gothic art was passionate rest, a peace, an eternity of intense sentiment. As I go into detail, I shall continually therefore have to oppose Gothic passion to Greek temperance; yet Gothic rigidity, στασις of εκστασις, to Greek action and ελευθεριᾳ. You see how doubly, how intimately, opposed the ideas are; yet how difficult to explain without apparent contradiction.

63. Now, to-day, I must guard you carefully against a misapprehension of this kind. I have told you that the Greeks as Greeks made real and material what was before indefinite; they turned the clouds and the lightning of Mount Ithome into the human flesh and eagle upon the extended arm of the Messenian Zeus. And yet, being in all things set upon absolute veracity and realization, they perceive as they work and think forward that to see in all things truly is to see in all things dimly and through hiding of cloud and fire.

So that the schools of Crystal, visionary, passionate, and fantastic in purpose, are, in method, trenchantly formal and clear; and the schools of Clay, absolutely realistic, temperate, and simple in purpose, are, in method, mysterious and soft; sometimes licentious, sometimes terrific, and always obscure.

64. Look once more at this Greek dancing-girl, which is from a terra cotta, and therefore intensely of the school of Clay; look at her beside this Madonna of Filippo Lippi's: Greek motion against Gothic absolute quietness; Greek indifference—dancing careless—against Gothic passion, the mother's—what word can I use except frenzy of love; Greek fleshliness against hungry wasting of the self-forgetful body; Greek softness of diffused shadow and ductile curve, against

Gothic lucidity of color and acuteness of angle; and Greek simplicity and cold veracity against Gothic rapture of trusted vision.

65. And now I may safely, I think, go into our work of to-day without confusing you, except only in this. You will find me continually speaking of four men—Titian, Holbein, Turner, and Tintoret—in almost the same terms. They unite every quality; and sometimes you will find me referring to them as colorists, sometimes as chiaroscurists. Only remember this, that Holbein and Turner are Greek chiaroscurists, nearly perfect by adopted color; Titian and Tintoret are essentially Gothic colorists, quite perfect by adopted chiaroscuro.

66. I used the word "prismatic" just now of the schools of Crystal, as being iridescent. By being studious of color they are studious of division; and while the chiaroscurist devotes himself to the representation of degrees of force in one thing—unseparated light, the colorists have for their function the attainment of beauty by arrangement of the divisions of light. And therefore, primarily, they must be able to divide; so that elementary exercises in color must be directed, like first exercises in music, to the clear separation of notes; and the final perfections of color are those in which, of innumerable notes or hues, every one has a distinct office, and can be fastened on by the eye, and approved, as fulfilling it.

67. I do not doubt that it has often been matter of wonder among any of you who had faith in my judgment, why I gave to the University, as characteristic of Turner's work, the simple and at first unattractive drawings of the Loire series. My first and principal reason was that they enforced beyond all resistance, on any student who might attempt to copy them, this method of laying portions of distinct hue side by side. Some of the touches, indeed, when the tint has been mixed with much water, have been laid in little drops or ponds, so that the pigment might crystallize hard at the edge. And one of the chief delights which any one who really enjoys painting finds in that art as distinct from sculpture is in this exquisite inlaying or joiner's work of it, the fitting of edge to edge with a manual skill

precisely correspondent to the close application of crowded notes without the least slur, in fine harp or piano playing.

68. In many of the finest works of color on a large scale there is even some admission of the quality given to a painted window by the dark lead bars between the pieces of glass. Both Tintoret and Veronese, when they paint on dark grounds, continually stop short with their tints just before they touch others, leaving the dark ground showing between in a narrow bar. In the Paul Veronese in the National Gallery, you will every here and there find pieces of outline, like this of Holbein's; which you would suppose were drawn, as that is, with a brown pencil. But no! Look close, and you will find they are the dark ground, left between two tints brought close to each other without touching.

69. It follows also from this law of construction that any master who can color can always do any pane of his window that he likes, separately from the rest. Thus, you see, here is one of Sir Joshua's first sittings: the head is very nearly done with the first color; a piece of background is put in round it: his sitter has had a pretty silver brooch on, which Reynolds, having done as much as he chose to the face for that time, paints quietly in its place below, leaving the dress between to be fitted in afterwards; and he puts a little patch of the yellow gown that is to be, at the side. And it follows also from this law of construction that there must never be any hesitation or repentance in the direction of your lines of limit. So that not only in the beautiful dexterity of the joiner's work, but in the necessity of cutting out each piece of color at once and forever (for, though you can correct an erroneous junction of black and white because the gray between has the nature of either, you cannot correct an erroneous junction of red and green which make a neutral between them, if they overlap, that is neither red nor green): thus the practice of color educates at once in neatness of hand and distinctness of will; so that, as I wrote long ago in the third volume of "Modern Painters," you are always safe if you hold the hand of a colorist.

70. I have brought you a little sketch to-day from the foreground of a Venetian picture, in which there is a bit that will show you this precision of method. It is the head of a parrot with a little flower in his beak from a picture of Carpaccio's, one of his series of the Life of St. George. I could not get the curves of the leaves, and they are patched and spoiled; but the parrot's head, however badly done, is put down with no more touches than the Venetian gave it, and it will show you exactly his method. First, a thin, warm ground had been laid over the whole canvas, which Carpaccio wanted as an under-current through all the color, just as there is an under-current of gray in the Loire drawings. Then on this he strikes his parrot in vermilion, almost flat color; rounding a little only with a glaze of lake; but attending mainly to get the character of the bird by the pure outline of its form, as if it were cut out of a piece of ruby glass.

Then he comes to the beak of it. The brown ground beneath is left, for the most part; one touch of black is put for the hollow; two delicate lines of dark gray define the outer curve; and one little quivering touch of white draws the inner edge of the mandible. There are just four touches—fine as the finest penmanship—to do that beak; and yet you will find that in the peculiar paroquettish mumbling and nibbling action of it, and all the character in which this nibbling beak differs from the tearing beak of the eagle, it is impossible to go farther or be more precise. And this is only an incident, remember, in a large picture.

71. Let me notice, in passing, the infinite absurdity of ever hanging Venetian pictures above the line of sight. There are very few persons in the room who will be able to see the drawing of this bird's beak without a magnifying-glass; yet it is ten to one that in any modern gallery such a picture would be hung thirty feet from the ground.

Here, again, is a little bit to show Carpaccio's execution. It is his signature: only a little wall-lizard, holding the paper in its mouth, perfect; yet so small that you can

scarcely see its feet, and that I could not, with my finest-pointed brush, copy their stealthy action.

72. And now, I think, the members of my class will more readily pardon the intensely irksome work I put them to, with the compasses and the ruler. Measurement and precision are, with me, before all things; just because, though myself trained wholly in the chiaroscuro schools, I know the value of color; and I want you to begin with color in the very outset, and to see everything as children would see it. For, believe me, the final philosophy of art can only ratify their opinion that the beauty of a cock robin is to be red, and of a grass-plot to be green; and the best skill of art is in instantly seizing on the manifold deliciousness of light, which you can only seize by precision of instantaneous touch. Of course, I cannot do so myself; yet in these sketches of mine, made for the sake of color, there is enough to show you the nature and the value of the method. They are two pieces of study of the color of marble architecture, the tints literally "edified," and laid edge to edge as simply on the paper as the stones are on the walls.

73. But please note in them one thing especially. The testing rule I gave for good color in the "Elements of Drawing," is that you make the white precious and the black conspicuous. Now you will see in these studies that the moment the white is inclosed properly, and harmonized with the other hues, it becomes somehow more precious and pearly than the white paper; and that I am not afraid to leave a whole field of untreated white paper all round it, being sure that even the little diamonds in the round window will tell as jewels, if they are gradated justly.

Again, there is not a touch of black in any shadow, however deep, of these two studies; so that, if I chose to put a piece of black near them, it would be conspicuous with a vengeance.

But in this vignette, copied from Turner, you have the two principles brought out perfectly. You have the white of foaming water, of buildings and clouds, brought out brilliantly from a white ground; and though part of the subject is in deep shadow the eye at once catches the one black point admitted in front.

74. Well, the first reason that I gave you these Loire drawings was this of their infallible decision; the second was their extreme modesty in color. They are, beyond all other works that I know existing, dependent for their effect on low, subdued tones; their favorite choice in time of day being either dawn or twilight, and even their brightest sunsets produced chiefly out of gray paper. This last, the loveliest of all, gives the warmth of a summer twilight with a tinge of color on the gray paper so slight that it may be a question with some of you whether any is there. And I must beg you to observe, and receive as a rule without any exception, that whether color be gay or sad the value of it depends never on violence, but always on subtlety. It may be that a great colorist will use his utmost force of color, as a singer his full power of voice; but, loud or low, the virtue is in both cases always in refinement, never in loudness. The west window of Chartres is bedropped with crimson deeper than blood; but it is as soft as it is deep, and as quiet as the light of dawn.

75. I say, "whether color be gay or sad." It must, remember, be one or the other. You know I told you that the pure Gothic school of color was entirety cheerful; that, as applied to landscape, it assumes that all nature is lovely, and may be clearly seen; that destruction and decay are accidents of our present state, never to be thought of seriously, and, above all things, never to be painted; but that whatever is orderly, healthy, radiant, fruitful and beautiful, is to be loved with all our hearts and painted with all our skill.

76. I told you also that no complete system of art for either natural history or landscape could be formed on this system; that the wrath of a wild beast, and the tossing of a mountain torrent are equally impossible to a painter of the purist

school; that in higher fields of thought increasing knowledge means increasing sorrow, and every art which has complete sympathy with humanity must be chastened by the sight and oppressed by the memory of pain. But there is no reason why your system of study should be a complete one, if it be right and profitable though incomplete. If you can find it in your hearts to follow out only the Gothic thoughts of landscape, I deeply wish you would, and for many reasons.

77. First, it has never yet received due development; for at the moment when artistic skill and knowledge of effect became sufficient to complete its purposes, the Reformation destroyed the faith in which they might have been accomplished; for to the whole body of powerful draughtsmen the Reformation meant the Greek school and the shadow of death. So that of exquisitely developed Gothic landscape you may count the examples on the fingers of your hand: Van Eyck's "Adoration of the Lamb" at Bruges; another little Van Eyck in the Louvre; the John Bellini lately presented to the National Gallery; another John Bellini in Rome: and the "St. George" of Carpaccio at Venice, are all that I can name myself of great works. But there exist some exquisite, though feebler, designs in missal painting; of which, in England, the landscape and flowers in the Psalter of Henry the Sixth will serve you for a sufficient type; the landscape in the Grimani missal at Venice being monumentally typical and perfect.

78. Now for your own practice in this, having first acquired the skill of exquisite delineation and laying of pure color, day by day you must draw some lovely natural form or flower or animal without obscurity—as in missal painting; choosing for study, in natural scenes, only what is beautiful and strong in life.

79. I fully anticipated, at the beginning of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, that they would have carried forward this method of work; but they broke themselves to pieces by pursuing dramatic sensation instead of beauty. So that to this day all the loveliest things in the world remain unpainted; and although we have occasionally spasmodic efforts and fits of enthusiasm, and green meadows and apple-blossom to

spare, it yet remains a fact that not in all this England, and still less in France, have you a painter who has been able nobly to paint so much as a hedge of wild roses or a forest glade full of anemones or wood-sorrel.

80. One reason of this has been the idea that such work was easy, on the part of the young men who attempted it, and the total vulgarity and want of education in the great body of abler artists, rendering them insensitive to qualities of fine delineation; the universal law for them being that they can draw a pig, but not a Venus. For instance, two landscape-painters of much reputation in England, and one of them in France also—David Cox and John Constable, represent a form of blunt and untrained faculty which in being very frank and simple, apparently powerful, and needing no thought, intelligence or trouble whatever to observe, and being wholly disorderly, slovenly and licentious, and therein meeting with instant sympathy from the disorderly public mind now resentful of every trammel and ignorant of every law—these two men, I say, represent in their intensity the qualities adverse to all accurate science or skill in landscape art; their work being the mere blundering of clever peasants, and deserving no name whatever in any school of true practice, but consummately mischievous—first, in its easy satisfaction of the painter's own self-complacencies, and then in the pretense of ability which blinds the public to all the virtue of patience and to all the difficulty of precision. There is more real relation to the great schools of art, more fellowship with Bellini and Titian, in the humblest painter of letters on village signboards than in men like these.

Do not, therefore, think that the Gothic school is an easy one. You might more easily fill a house with pictures like Constable's from garret to cellar, than imitate one cluster of leaves by Van Eyck or Giotto; and among all the efforts that have been made to paint our common wild-flowers, I have only once—and that in this very year, just in time to show it to you—seen the thing done rightly.

81. But now observe: These flowers, beautiful as they are, are not of the Gothic school. The law of that school is that everything shall be seen clearly, or at least, only in such mist or faintness as shall be delightful; and I have no doubt that the best introduction to it would be the elementary practice of painting every study on a golden ground. This at once compels you to understand that the work is to be imaginative and decorative; that it represents beautiful things in the clearest way, but not under existing conditions; and that, in fact, you are producing jeweler's work, rather than pictures. Then the qualities of grace in design become paramount to every other; and you may afterwards substitute clear sky for the golden background without danger of loss or sacrifice of system: clear sky of golden light, or deep and full blue, for the full blue of Titian is just as much a piece of conventional enameled background as if it were a plate of gold; that depth of blue in relation to foreground objects being wholly impossible.

82. There is another immense advantage in this Byzantine and Gothic abstraction of decisive form, when it is joined with a faithful desire of whatever truth can be expressed on narrow conditions. It makes us observe the vital points in which character consists, and educates the eye and mind in the habit of fastening and limiting themselves to essentials. In complete drawing, one is continually liable to be led aside from the main points by picturesque accidents of light and shade; in Gothic drawing you must get the character, if at all, by a keenness of analysis which must be in constant exercise.

83. And here I must beg of you very earnestly, once for all, to clear your minds of any misapprehension of the nature of Gothic art, as if it implied error and weakness, instead of severity. That a style is restrained or severe does not mean that it is also erroneous. Much mischief has been done—endless misapprehension induced in this matter—by the blundering religious painters of Germany, who have become examples of the opposite error from our English painters of the Constable group. Our uneducated men work too bluntly to be ever in the right; but the Germans draw finely and resolutely wrong. Here is a "Riposo" of Overbeck's for instance, which the painter imagined to be elevated in style because he had drawn

it without light and shade, and with absolute decision: and so far, indeed, it is Gothic enough; but it is separated everlastingly from Gothic and from all other living work, because the painter was too vain to look at anything he had to paint, and drew every mass of his drapery in lines that were as impossible as they were stiff, and stretched out the limbs of his Madonna in actions as unlikely as they are uncomfortable.

In all early Gothic art, indeed, you will find failure of this kind, especially distortion and rigidity, which are in many respects painfully to be compared with the splendid repose of classic art. But the distortion is not Gothic; the intensity, the abstraction, the force of character are, and the beauty of color.

84. Here is a very imperfect, but illustrative border of flowers and animals on a golden ground. The large letter contains, indeed, entirely feeble and ill-drawn figures: that is merely childish and failing work of an inferior hand; it is not characteristic of Gothic, or any other school. But this peacock, being drawn with intense delight in blue, on gold, and getting character of peacock in the general sharp outline, instead of—as Rubens' peacocks—in black shadow, is distinctively Gothic of fine style.

85. I wish you therefore to begin your study of natural history and landscape by discerning the simple outlines and the pleasant colors of things; and to rest in them as long as you can. But, observe, you can only do this on one condition—that of striving also to create, in reality, the beauty which you seek in imagination. It will be wholly impossible for you to retain the tranquillity of temper and felicity of faith necessary for noble purist painting, unless you are actively engaged in promoting the felicity and peace of practical life. None of this bright Gothic art was ever done but either by faith in the attainableness of felicity in heaven, or under conditions of real order and delicate loveliness on the earth.

86. As long as I can possibly keep you among them, there you shall stay—among the almond and apple blossom. But if you go on into the veracities of the school of Clay, you will find there is something at the roots of almond and apple trees, which is—This. You must look at him in the face—fight him—conquer him with what scathe you may: you need not think to keep out of the way of him. There is Turner's Dragon; there is Michael Angelo's; there, a very little one of Carpaccio's. Every soul of them had to understand the creature, and very earnestly.

87. Not that Michael Angelo understands his dragon as the others do. He was not enough a colorist either to catch the points of the creature's aspect, or to feel the same hatred of them; but I confess myself always amazed in looking at Michael Angelo's work here or elsewhere, at his total carelessness of anatomical character except only in the human body. It is very easy to round a dragon's neck, if the only idea you have of it is that it is virtually no more than a coiled sausage; and, besides, anybody can round anything if you have full scale from white high light to black shadow.

88. But look here at Carpaccio, even in my copy. The colorist says, "First of all, as my delicious paroquet was ruby, so this nasty viper shall be black"; and then is the question, "Can I round him off, even though he is black, and make him slimy, and yet springy, and close down—clotted like a pool of black blood on the earth—all the same?" Look at him beside Michael Angelo's, and then tell me the Venetians can't draw! And also, Carpaccio does it with a touch, with one sweep of his brush; three minutes at the most allowed for all the beast; while Michael Angelo has been haggling at this dragon's neck for an hour.

89. Then note also in Turner's that clinging to the earth—the specialty of him—il gran nemico, "the great enemy," Plutus. His claws are like the Clefts of the Rock; his shoulders like its pinnacles; his belly deep into its every fissure—glued down—loaded down; his bat's wings cannot lift him, they are rudimentary wings only.

90. Before I tell you what he means himself, you must know what all this smoke about him means.

Nothing will be more precious to you, I think, in the practical study of art, than the conviction, which will force itself on you more and more every hour, of the way all things are bound together, little and great, in spirit and in matter. So that if you get once the right clue to any group of them, it will grasp the simplest, yet reach to the highest truths. You know I have just been telling you how this school of materialism and clay involved itself at last in cloud and fire. Now, down to the least detail of method and subject, that will hold.

91. Here is a perfect type, though not a complex one, of Gothic landscape; the background gold, the trees drawn leaf by leaf, and full green in color—no effect of light. Here is an equally typical Greek-school landscape, by Wilson—lost wholly in golden mist; the trees so slightly drawn that you don't know if they are trees or towers, and no care for color whatever; perfectly deceptive and marvelous effect of sunshine through the mist—"Apollo and the Python." Now here is Raphael, exactly between the two—trees still drawn leaf by leaf, wholly formal; but beautiful mist coming gradually into the distance. Well, then, last, here is Turner's; Greek-school of the highest class; and you define his art, absolutely, as first the displaying intensely, and with the sternest intellect, of natural form as it is, and then the envelopment of it with cloud and fire. Only, there are two sorts of cloud and fire. He knows them both. There's one, and there's another—the "Dudley" and the "Flint." That's what the cloud and flame of the dragon mean: now, let me show you what the dragon means himself.

92. I go back to another perfect landscape of the living Gothic school. It is only a pencil outline, by Edward Burne-Jones, in illustration of the story of Psyche; it is the introduction of Psyche, after all her troubles, into heaven.

Now in this of Burne-Jones, the landscape is clearly full of light everywhere, color or glass light: that is, the outline is prepared for modification of color only. Every plant in the grass is set formally, grows perfectly, and may be realized completely. Exquisite order, and universal, with eternal life and light, this is the faith and effort of the schools of Crystal; and you may describe and complete their work quite literally by taking any verses of Chaucer in his tender mood, and observing how he insists on the clearness and brightness first, and then on the order. Thus, in Chaucer's "Dream":

"Within an yle me thought I was,

Where wall and yate was all of glasse,

And so was closed round about

That leavelesse none come in ne out,

Uncouth and straunge to beholde,

For every yate of fine golde

A thousand fanes, aie turning,

Entuned had, and briddes singing

Divers, and on each fane a paire

With open mouth again here;

And of a sute were all the toures

Subtily corven after floures,

Of uncouth colors during aye

That never been none seene in May."

93. Next to this drawing of Psyche I place two of Turner's most beautiful classical landscapes. At once you are out of the open daylight, either in sunshine admitted partially through trembling leaves, or in the last rays of its setting, scarcely any more warm on the darkness of the ilex wood. In both, the vegetation, though beautiful, is absolutely wild and uncared for, as it seems, either by human or by higher powers, which, having appointed for it the laws of its being, leave it to spring into such beauty as is consistent with disease and alternate with decay.

In the purest landscape, the human subject is the immortality of the soul by the faithfulness of love: in both the Turner landscapes it is the death of the body by the impatience and error of love. The one is the first glimpse of Hesperia to Æsacus:

"Aspicit Hesperien patria Cebrenida ripa,

Injectos humeris siccantem sole capillos:"

in a few moments to lose her forever. The other is a mythological subject of deeper meaning, the death of Procris.

94. I just now referred to the landscape by John Bellini in the National Gallery as one of the six best existing of the purist school, being wholly felicitous and enjoyable. In the foreground of it indeed is the martyrdom of Peter Martyr; but John Bellini looks upon that as an entirely cheerful and pleasing incident; it does not disturb or even surprise him, much less displease in the slightest degree.

Now, the next best landscape[14] to this, in the National Gallery, is a Florentine one on the edge of transition to the Greek feeling; and in that the distance is still beautiful, but misty, not clear; the flowers are still beautiful, but—intentionally—

of the color of blood; and in the foreground lies the dead body of Procris, which disturbs the poor painter greatly; and he has expressed his disturbed mind about it in the figure of a poor little brown—nearly black—Faun, or perhaps the god Faunus himself, who is much puzzled by the death of Procris, and stoops over her, thinking it a woeful thing to find her pretty body lying there breathless, and all spotted with blood on the breast.

95. You remember I told you how the earthly power that is necessary in art was shown by the flight of Dædalus to the 'ερπετον Minos. Look for yourselves at the story of Procris as related to Minos in the fifteenth chapter of the third book of Apollodorus; and you will see why it is a Faun who is put to wonder at her, she having escaped by artifice from the Bestial power of Minos. Yet she is wholly an earth-nymph, and the son of Aurora must not only leave her, but himself slay her; the myth of Semele desiring to see Zeus, and of Apollo and Coronis, and this having all the same main interest. Once understand that, and you will see why Turner has put her death under this deep shade of trees, the sun withdrawing his last ray; and why he has put beside her the low type of an animal's pain, a dog licking its wounded paw.

96. But now, I want you to understand Turner's depth of sympathy farther still. In both these high mythical subjects the surrounding nature, though suffering, is still dignified and beautiful. Every line in which the master traces it, even where seemingly negligent, is lovely, and set down with a meditative calmness which makes these two etchings capable of being placed beside the most tranquil work of Holbein or Dürer. In this "Cephalus" especially, note the extreme equality and serenity of every outline. But now here is a subject of which you will wonder at first why Turner drew it at all. It has no beauty whatsoever, no specialty of picturesqueness; and all its lines are cramped and poor.

The crampness and the poverty are all intended. This is no longer to make us think of the death of happy souls, but of the labor of unhappy ones; at least, of the more

or less limited, dullest, and—I must not say homely, but—unhomely life of the neglected agricultural poor.

It is a gleaner bringing down her one sheaf of corn to an old watermill, itself mossy and rent, scarcely able to get its stones to turn. An ill-bred dog stands, joyless, by the unfenced stream; two country boys lean, joyless, against a wall that is half broken down; and all about the steps down which the girl is bringing her sheaf, the bank of earth, flowerless and rugged, testifies only of its malignity; and in the black and sternly rugged etching—no longer graceful, but hard, and broken in every touch—the master insists upon the ancient curse of the earth—"Thorns also and Thistles shall it bring forth to thee."

97. And now you will see at once with what feeling Turner completes, in a more tender mood, this lovely subject of his Yorkshire stream, by giving it the conditions of pastoral and agricultural life; the cattle by the pool, the milkmaid crossing the bridge with her pail on her head, the mill with the old millstones, and its gleaming weir as his chief light led across behind the wild trees.

98. And not among our soft-flowing rivers only; but here among the torrents of the Great Chartreuse, where another man would assuredly have drawn the monastery, Turner only draws their working mill. And here I am able to show you, fortunately, one of his works painted at this time of his most earnest thought; when his imagination was still freshly filled with the Greek mythology, and he saw for the first time with his own eyes the clouds come down upon the actual earth.

99. The scene is one which, in old times of Swiss traveling, you would all have known well; a little cascade which descends to the road from Geneva to Chamouni, near the village of Maglans, from under a subordinate ridge of the Aiguille de Varens, known as the Aiguillette. You, none of you, probably, know the scene now; for your only object is to get to Chamouni and up Mont Blanc and down again; but the Valley of Cluse, if you knew it, is worth many Chamounis; and it impressed Turner profoundly. The facts of the spot are here given in mere and pure simplicity; a quite unpicturesque bridge, a few trees partly stunted and blasted by the violence of the torrent in storm at their roots, a cottage with its mill-wheel—this has lately been pulled down to widen the road—and the brook shed from the rocks and finding its way to join the Arve. The scene is absolutely Arcadian. All the traditions of the Greek Hills, in their purity, were founded on such rocks and shadows as these; and Turner has given you the birth of the Shepherd Hermes on Cyllene, in its visible and solemn presence, the white cloud, Hermes Eriophoros forming out of heaven upon the Hills; the brook, distilled from it, as the type of human life, born of the cloud and vanishing into the cloud, led down by the haunting Hermes among the ravines; and then, like the reflection of the cloud itself, the white sheep, with the dog of Argus guarding them, drinking from the stream.

100. And now, do you see why I gave you, for the beginning of your types of landscape thought, that "Junction of Tees and Greta" in their misty ravines; and this glen of the Greta above, in which Turner has indeed done his best to paint the trees that live again after their autumn—the twilight that will rise again with twilight of dawn—the stream that flows always, and the resting on the cliffs of the clouds that return if they vanish; but of human life, he says, a boy climbing among the trees for his entangled kite, and these white stones in the mountain churchyard, show forth all the strength and all the end.

101. You think that saying of the Greek school—Pindar's summary of it, "τι δε τις; τι δ'ου τις;"—a sorrowful and degrading lesson. See at least, then, that you reach

the level of such degradation. See that your lives be in nothing worse than a boy's climbing for his entangled kite. It will be well for you if you join not with those who instead of kites fly falcons; who instead of obeying the last words of the great Cloud-Shepherd—to feed his sheep, live the lives—how much less than vanity!—of the war-wolf and the gier-eagle. Or, do you think it a dishonor to man to say to him that Death is but only Rest? See that when it draws near to you, you may look to it, at least for sweetness of Rest; and that you recognize the Lord of Death coming to you as a Shepherd gathering you into his Fold for the night.