

could say that he set out to reform the world without having first made a good business of life himself. When he tells us how to be happy and why we miss happiness he speaks with authority and not as the philanthropists; indeed, his ideas of what life should be commend themselves to us even without his authority, and there are many now who share them without knowing their origin.

For at the present moment the world is more interested in Morris's ideas than in Morris himself, and his influence is greater than his name. In his art he affected the art of all Europe so profoundly that what he did by himself seems to be only the product of his age. As a poet he is commonly thought of as the last and most extreme of the romantics; but his later poetry, at least, is quite free from the romantic despair of reality and nearly all of it is free from the romantic vagueness. When Morris described the world that is not, he was, as it were, making plans of the world as he wished it to be; and he was always concerned with the future even when he seemed most absorbed in the past. In that respect he differed from all the other romantic poets, and in his most visionary poetry he tells us constantly what