

reply by referring to Oscar Wilde, his antics and his poems, to Dadoes and Neutral Tints. The deeper questions that underlie the whole movement, and which were uppermost in the mind of its great teacher, Ruskin, the doctrine of "art by the people and for the people, as a happiness to the maker and the user," are things that have hardly crossed their minds. Nor is this strange. Every movement of human progress has its charlatans and quacks, as well as its apostles and prophets. The earnest reformers of the Oxford movement of 1830, who sought to impart deeper feeling and the true spirit of religion to the Anglican church, are by many people confounded with the shallow young curates, with their taste for ornamental church display and gorgeous robes. The moral of the Art movement, we may be sure, is worthy of our consideration. Let us try fairly to see what there is in it, what lesson it has to teach to our age when the older beliefs of our fathers are passing away and the new faith of the future is hardly in the making.

I will take as my text a thoughtful article contributed to the pages of the *Academy*, by Mr. E. Purcell, upon the "Hopes and Fears of Art," and suggested by Mr. W. Morris's lately published lectures bearing that title. The writer speaks of art as of a voice crying in the wilderness listened to by a generation "eager to accept whatever is beautiful or moving or original in its tones, out of its message,—nothing." What this message is, Mr. Purcell proceeds to explain at length. Mr. Ruskin has long ago pointed out the function of labour as a delight to the producer as well as to the consumer. "But Mr. Morris does more; he puts this truth in a foremost, almost a solitary position, he builds on it his sole hope of that little reform, the revival of art, and of *that vastest reform, the recovery of human contentment*. What he and the rest of us are looking for is just this: that the degradation of mechanical labour will sink lower and lower yet, till in the nether deeps of perfect baseness the nature of man, if there be anything of human left therein, will at last rebel, and the poor will choose to die rather than to spend their blood on the cheap luxuries which when made are but as weariness or poison to the rich—the wealthy will sigh in vain for the ways of peace and pleasantness which their riches can no longer buy." Looked at from this point of view, the Art movement means much more than a mere addition to the luxury of the rich. It is but another side of Carlyle's gospel that