

the whole of his extraordinary powers towards no less an object than the reconstitution of the civilized life of mankind. That is true, and it had never been true of any artist before him; at least no artist had ever been turned from his art to politics because he was an artist. Morris was so turned; and for that reason he is the chief representative of that æsthetic discontent which is peculiar to our time.

One might have expected that he would be the last man to feel it; since he could himself make whatever beautiful things he wanted. Not only could he express his desire for beauty in poetry, but he could also express his own ideas of beauty in all the work of his hands. However ugly the world outside him might be, he could make an earthly Paradise for himself, and could enjoy all the happiness of the artist in doing so. There are some men of great gifts who can never be content with their exercise; but Morris was as happy in making any of the hundred different things that he made so well as a child is happy at play. He knew early in life what he wanted to do; and he was as free as any man could be to do it. At the age of twenty-one he became his own master, with a comfortable