

surpassed in their own line ; Hogarth remains still our greatest humorist with the pencil ; Garrick is still our greatest actor ; Flaxman is still our greatest sculptor ; and it is well to remember that Turner was of the Royal Academy before the century was out. But besides all these, Crome, Stothard, Blake, Bewick, Chippendale, Wedgwood, and Battolozzi worked in the century—and in their given lines these men have never been surpassed.

"There is another art which lies closer to civilization than any art but poetry. Music is a better test of the moral culture of an age than its painting, or its sculpture, or even its architecture. . . .

"Music is the art of the eighteenth century, the art wherein it stands supreme in the ages ; perfect, complete, and self-created. If one thinks of the pathos of those great songs, of the majesty of those full quires, of the inexhaustible melody of their operas, and all that Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Glück, and the early years of Beethoven gave us, it is strange to hear that that age was dead to art. Neither the age which gave us the Madonnas and the Sistine, nor the age which gave us Reims and Westminster Abbey, nor even the age which gave us the Parthenon, did more for humanity than the age to which we owe the oratorios, and the operas, the sonatas, symphonies, and masses of the great age of music."

It must be confessed, in view of facts like these, that some of us will have to reconsider our hasty and sweeping verdict on the eighteenth century and its productions.

In regard to the whole subject, it will need no prolonged argument to prove that we have duties alike to art and literature which is only another way of saying that we have duties to mankind and to ourselves ; since the degradation of either art or literature is both an evidence and a cause of the

degradation of society. For this reason every effort to set before men's eyes and minds elevating examples of art should receive encouragement from those who, either from the possession of wealth or from having any considerable influence with their neighbors, have special powers and opportunities in this respect. Such a duty, properly considered, would be very far-reaching. No educated man or woman, no man or woman having any pretence to education, could hold himself discharged from the performance of such a duty. What is the actual state of things among ourselves in respect to the love of literature and art ? This is a question not quite easy to answer. Certainly there are many signs that the public taste in literature and art is improving. The pictures and engravings which adorn the walls of our houses will bear favorable comparison with those of earlier times. They are now, even in humble homes, seldom coarse or vulgar. And the same judgment may, to a large extent, be pronounced on the literature which is most in vogue at the present day.

Still there are considerable deductions to be made, and I will allow Mr. Ruskin to express his thoughts on this side of the subject—only reminding you that Mr. Ruskin learnt the art of railing from his master Carlyle, and like him, is chargeable with exaggeration and caricature. In his little book "*Sesame and Lilies*" (Lect. i.), he declares that the English people of the present day have no love of literature or science or art or nature. I will select some passages from his remarks on art and literature, taking them in this order.

"I say (exclaims Mr. Ruskin) you have despised art ! 'What !' you again answer, 'have we not art exhibitions, miles long ? and do we not pay thousands of pounds for single pictures ? and have we not art schools and institutions, more than ever nation