

able to describe it in detail. This is one proof, among many, that he understood Gothic art as the child Mozart understood music, seeming to recognize in it a language which he knew by nature. This process of recognition continued all through his youth. It was the chief part of his education; it was what distinguished him from other youths of his time; and it was, as we can see now, a sign of his strong natural character and a preparation for the whole of his after life.

A Gothic building was not to Morris merely something beautiful or romantic or strange. He did not enjoy it only as most of us enjoy a beautiful tune. It had for him that more precise meaning which music had for the young Mozart. He saw not only that it was the kind of art which he liked, but also why he liked it. For it expressed to him, more clearly than words, a state of being which he felt to be desirable. It was as if the men who had made it were before him in the flesh and he saw them and loved them. Indeed he had that passionate liking for the whole society in which the great works of Gothic art were produced which some of us have for our favourite poets or musicians. And he missed Gothic art from the present