

the revival meant nothing except that the public was sick of the native ugliness of its own time and wished to make an excursion into the past as if for change of air and scene.

But this weariness was at first quite unconseious. Men were not aware that the art of their time was afflicted with a disease, still less had they any notion that that disease was social. They had lost a joy in life, but they did not know it until Ruskin came to tell them that they had lost it and why. In him æsthetic discontent first became conseious and scientific. For he saw that the prevailing ugliness was not caused merely by the loss of one particular faculty, that the artistic powers of men were not isolated from all their other powers. He was the first to judge works of art as if they were human actions, having moral and intellectual qualities as well as æsthetic; and he saw their total effect as the result of all those qualities and of the condition of the society in which they were produced. So his criticism gave a new importance to works of art, as being the clearest expression of men's minds which they can leave to future ages; and in particular it gave a new importance to architecture and all the applied arts.