

chiaroscuro or tone, facile execution with the brush, the bringing of a picture broadly together by masses, the melting and evanescent effects of atmosphere upon forms; in all these things he is a little child.

To persons having a small acquaintance with art, all this presents a great difficulty. How, they may ask, can we reconcile this apparent contradiction? We see forms imperfectly rendered, figures which defy the anatomist, round and solid bodies represented as perfectly flat, lines of arrangement often stiff and archaic. Upon what ground, they say, do you call upon us to admire the works of Angelico, wherein we see these defects, whereas we observe that if such defects are apparent in a modern picture they are at once taken as evidence of its badness.

The answer to this is, that owing to the different conditions under which the modern work was produced, such defects indicate the absence of certain mental qualities in its author. The value of a work of art depends on the existence of such qualities; being active in a work of art they endow it with a positive merit. In the case of Angelico, owing to the condition of art at the time, and his peculiar surroundings, it was possible for these essential mental qualities to co-exist in him and to vitalize his work though accompanied by many defects.

The value of a work of art does not depend on its freedom from errors, but in the possession of some positive merit. This may consist either in the dwelling upon or emphasizing some aspect of nature, or it may be in the selection of certain facts of appearance in nature to express an idea in the mind of the artist. It is this latter quality which renders the works of Angelico valuable. Whatever fault they may have, they have also qualities efficient in conveying the ideas he wished to express. It is not their errors and imperfections, however, which render his works valuable. True it is that so closely is the thought in a work of art wedded to its expression that to dis sever the two is impossible, and the imperfections thus seem, and indeed are, necessary forces in the work. A picture it must be remembered is not a mere reproduction of nature.