

There were still painters like Turner and Constable, but soon neither rich nor poor could buy new furniture or any kind of domestic implement that was not hideous. Every new building was vulgar or mean, or both. Everywhere the ugliness of irrelevant ornament was combined with the meanness of grudging material and bad workmanship.

At the time no one seems to have noticed this change. None of the great poets of the Romantic movement, except perhaps Blake, gives a hint of it. They turned with an unconscious disgust from the works of man to nature; and if they speak of art at all it is the art of the Middle Ages, which they enjoyed because it belonged to the past. Indeed the Romantic movement, so far as it affected the arts at all, only afflicted them with a new disease. The Gothic revival, which was a part of the Romantic movement, expressed nothing but a vague dislike of the present with all its associations and a vague desire to conjure up the associations of the past as they were conjured up in Romantic poetry. Pinnacles, pointed arches and stained glass windows were symbols, like that blessed word Mesopotamia; and they were used without propriety or understanding. In fact,