

more impotent than many tribes of savages. We can make things such as men have never made before; but we cannot express any feelings of our own in the making of them, and the vast new world of cities which we have made and are making so rapidly, seems to us, compared with the little slow-built cities of the past, either blankly inexpressive or pompously expressive of something which we would rather not have expressed. That is what we mean when we complain of the ugliness of most modern things made by men. They say nothing to us or they say what we do not want to hear, and therefore we should prefer a world without them.

For us there is a violent contrast between the beauty of nature and the ugliness of man's work which most past ages have felt little or not at all. We think of a town as spoiling the country, and even of a single modern house as a blot on the face of the earth. But in the past, until the eighteenth century, men have thought that their own handiwork heightened the beauty of nature or was, at least, in perfect harmony with it. And we are aware of this harmony in a village church or an old manor house or a thatched cottage, however plain these may