

# **ART AS EXPERIENCE**

**BY JOHN  
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**A WIDEVIEW/PERIGEE BOOK**

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**SBN 399-50025-1**

**Perigee Books  
are published by  
G. P. Putnam's Sons  
200 Madison Avenue  
New York, New York 10016**

**First Perigee Printing, 1980**

***23rd Impression***

**Library of Congress Catalog  
Card Number: 58-59756**

**MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

# CONTENTS

PREFACE	vii
I. THE LIVE CREATURE	3
II. THE LIVE CREATURE AND "ETHERIAL THINGS"	20
III. HAVING AN EXPERIENCE	35
IV. THE ACT OF EXPRESSION	58
V. THE EXPRESSIVE OBJECT	82
VI. SUBSTANCE AND FORM	106
VII. THE NATURAL HISTORY OF FORM	134
VIII. THE ORGANIZATION OF ENERGIES	162
IX. THE COMMON SUBSTANCE OF THE ARTS	187
X. THE VARIED SUBSTANCE OF THE ARTS	214
XI. THE HUMAN CONTRIBUTION	245
XII. THE CHALLENGE TO PHILOSOPHY	272
XIII. CRITICISM AND PERCEPTION	298
XIV. ART AND CIVILIZATION	326
INDEX	351

## CHAPTER I

### THE LIVE CREATURE

BY ONE of the ironic perversities that often attend the course of affairs, the existence of the works of art upon which formation of an esthetic theory depends has become an obstruction to theory about them. For one reason, these works are products that exist externally and physically. In common conception, the work of art is often identified with the building, book, painting, or statue in its existence apart from human experience. Since the actual work of art is what the product does with and in experience, the result is not favorable to understanding. In addition, the very perfection of some of these products, the prestige they possess because of a long history of unquestioned admiration, creates conventions that get in the way of fresh insight. When an art product once attains classic status, it somehow becomes isolated from the human conditions under which it was brought into being and from the human consequences it engenders in actual life-experience.

When artistic objects are separated from both conditions of origin and operation in experience, a wall is built around them that renders almost opaque their general significance, with which esthetic theory deals. Art is remitted to a separate realm, where it is cut off from that association with the materials and aims of every other form of human effort, undergoing, and achievement. A primary task is thus imposed upon one who undertakes to write upon the philosophy of the fine arts. This task is to restore continuity between the refined and intensified forms of experience that are works of art and the everyday events, doings, and sufferings that are universally recognized to constitute experience. Mountain peaks do not float unsupported; they do not even just rest upon the earth. They *are* the earth in one of its manifest operations. It is the business of those who are concerned with the theory of the earth, geographers and geologists, to make this fact

evident in its various implications. The theorist who would deal philosophically with fine art has a like task to accomplish.

If one is willing to grant this position, even if only by way of temporary experiment, he will see that there follows a conclusion at first sight surprising. In order to understand the meaning of artistic products, we have to forget them for a time, to turn aside from them and have recourse to the ordinary forces and conditions of experience that we do not usually regard as esthetic. We must arrive at the theory of art by means of a detour. For theory is concerned with understanding, insight, not without exclamations of admiration, and stimulation of that emotional outburst often called appreciation. It is quite possible to enjoy flowers in their colored form and delicate fragrance without knowing anything about plants theoretically. But if one sets out to *understand* the flowering of plants, he is committed to finding out something about the interactions of soil, air, water and sunlight that condition the growth of plants.

By common consent, the Parthenon is a great work of art. Yet it has esthetic standing only as the work becomes an experience for a human being. And, if one is to go beyond personal enjoyment into the formation of a theory about that large republic of art of which the building is one member, one has to be willing at some point in his reflections to turn from it to the bustling, arguing, acutely sensitive Athenian citizens, with civic sense identified with a civic religion, of whose experience the temple was an expression, and who built it not as a work of art but as a civic commemoration. The turning to them is as human beings who had needs that were a demand for the building and that were carried to fulfillment in it; it is not an examination such as might be carried on by a sociologist in search for material relevant to his purpose. The one who sets out to theorize about the esthetic experience embodied in the Parthenon must realize in thought what the people into whose lives it entered had in common, as creators and as those who were satisfied with it, with people in our own homes and on our own streets.

In order to *understand* the esthetic in its ultimate and approved forms, one must begin with it in the raw; in the events and scenes that hold the attentive eye and ear of man, arousing his interest and affording him enjoyment as he looks and

listens: the sights that hold the crowd—the fire-engine rushing by; the machines excavating enormous holes in the earth; the human-fly climbing the steeple-side; the men perched high in air on girders, throwing and catching red-hot bolts. The sources of art in human experience will be learned by him who sees how the tense grace of the ball-player infects the onlooking crowd; who notes the delight of the housewife in tending her plants, and the intent interest of her goodman in tending the patch of green in front of the house; the zest of the spectator in poking the wood burning on the hearth and in watching the darting flames and crumbling coals. These people, if questioned as to the reason for their actions, would doubtless return reasonable answers. The man who poked the sticks of burning wood would say he did it to make the fire burn better; but he is none the less fascinated by the colorful drama of change enacted before his eyes and imaginatively partakes in it. He does not remain a cold spectator. What Coleridge said of the reader of poetry is true in its way of all who are happily absorbed in their activities of mind and body: "The reader should be carried forward, not merely or chiefly by the mechanical impulse of curiosity, not by a restless desire to arrive at the final solution, but by the pleasurable activity of the journey itself."

The intelligent mechanic engaged in his job, interested in doing well and finding satisfaction in his handiwork, caring for his materials and tools with genuine affection, is artistically engaged. The difference between such a worker and the inept and careless bungler is as great in the shop as it is in the studio. Oftentimes the product may not appeal to the esthetic sense of those who use the product. The fault, however, is oftentimes not so much with the worker as with the conditions of the market for which his product is designed. Were conditions and opportunities different, things as significant to the eye as those produced by earlier craftsmen would be made.

So extensive and subtly pervasive are the ideas that set Art upon a remote pedestal, that many a person would be repelled rather than pleased if told that he enjoyed his casual recreations, in part at least, because of their esthetic quality. The arts which today have most vitality for the average person are things he does not take to be arts: for instance, the movie, jazzed music,

the comic strip, and, too frequently, newspaper accounts of love-nests, murders, and exploits of bandits. For, when what he knows as art is relegated to the museum and gallery, the unconquerable impulse towards experiences enjoyable in themselves finds such outlet as the daily environment provides. Many a person who protests against the museum conception of art, still shares the fallacy from which that conception springs. For the popular notion comes from a separation of art from the objects and scenes of ordinary experience that many theorists and critics pride themselves upon holding and even elaborating. The times when select and distinguished objects are closely connected with the products of usual vocations are the times when appreciation of the former is most rife and most keen. When, because of their remoteness, the objects acknowledged by the cultivated to be works of fine art seem anemic to the mass of people, esthetic hunger is likely to seek the cheap and the vulgar.

The factors that have glorified fine art by setting it upon a far-off pedestal did not arise within the realm of art nor is their influence confined to the arts. For many persons an aura of mingled awe and unreality encompasses the "spiritual" and the "ideal" while "matter" has become by contrast a term of depreciation, something to be explained away or apologized for. The forces at work are those that have removed religion as well as fine art from the scope of the common or community life. The forces have historically produced so many of the dislocations and divisions of modern life and thought that art could not escape their influence. We do not have to travel to the ends of the earth nor return many millennia in time to find peoples for whom everything that intensifies the sense of immediate living is an object of intense admiration. Bodily scarification, waving feathers, gaudy robes, shining ornaments of gold and silver, of emerald and jade, formed the contents of esthetic arts, and, presumably, without the vulgarity of class exhibitionism that attends their analogues today. Domestic utensils, furnishings of tent and house, rugs, mats, jars, pots, bows, spears, were wrought with such delighted care that today we hunt them out and give them places of honor in our art museums. Yet in their own time and place, such things were enhancements of the processes of everyday life. Instead of being elevated to a niche apart, they belonged to display of prowess, the

manifestation of group and clan membership, worship of gods, feasting and fasting, fighting, hunting, and all the rhythmic crises that punctuate the stream of living.

Dancing and pantomime, the sources of the art of the theater, flourished as part of religious rites and celebrations. Musical art abounded in the fingering of the stretched string, the beating of the taut skin, the blowing with reeds. Even in the caves, human habitations were adorned with colored pictures that kept alive to the senses experiences with the animals that were so closely bound with the lives of humans. Structures that housed their gods and the instrumentalities that facilitated commerce with the higher powers were wrought with especial fineness. But the arts of the drama, music, painting, and architecture thus exemplified had no peculiar connection with theaters, galleries, museums. They were part of the significant life of an organized community.

The collective life that was manifested in war, worship, the forum, knew no division between what was characteristic of these places and operations, and the arts that brought color, grace, and dignity, into them. Painting and sculpture were organically one with architecture, as that was one with the social purpose that buildings served. Music and song were intimate parts of the rites and ceremonies in which the meaning of group life was consummated. Drama was a vital reënactment of the legends and history of group life. Not even in Athens can such arts be torn loose from this setting in direct experience and yet retain their significant character. Athletic sports, as well as drama, celebrated and enforced traditions of race and group, instructing the people, commemorating glories, and strengthening their civic pride.

Under such conditions, it is not surprising that the Athenian Greeks, when they came to reflect upon art, formed the idea that it is an act of reproduction, or imitation. There are many objections to this conception. But the vogue of the theory is testimony to the close connection of the fine arts with daily life; the idea would not have occurred to any one had art been remote from the interests of life. For the doctrine did not signify that art was a literal copying of objects, but that it reflected the emotions and ideas that are associated with the chief institutions of social life. Plato felt this connection so strongly that it led him

to his idea of the necessity of censorship of poets, dramatists, and musicians. Perhaps he exaggerated when he said that a change from the Doric to the Lydian mode in music would be the sure precursor of civic degeneration. But no contemporary would have doubted that music was an integral part of the ethos and the institutions of the community. The idea of "art for art's sake" would not have been even understood.

There must then be historic reasons for the rise of the compartmental conception of fine art. Our present museums and galleries to which works of fine art are removed and stored illustrate some of the causes that have operated to segregate art instead of finding it an attendant of temple, forum, and other forms of associated life. An instructive history of modern art could be written in terms of the formation of the distinctively modern institutions of museum and exhibition gallery. I may point to a few outstanding facts. Most European museums are, among other things, memorials of the rise of nationalism and imperialism. Every capital must have its own museum of painting, sculpture, etc., devoted in part to exhibiting the greatness of its artistic past, and, in other part, to exhibiting the loot gathered by its monarchs in conquest of other nations; for instance, the accumulations of the spoils of Napoleon that are in the Louvre. They testify to the connection between the modern segregation of art and nationalism and militarism. Doubtless this connection has served at times a useful purpose, as in the case of Japan, who, when she was in the process of westernization, saved much of her art treasures by nationalizing the temples that contained them.

The growth of capitalism has been a powerful influence in the development of the museum as the proper home for works of art, and in the promotion of the idea that they are apart from the common life. The *nouveaux riches*, who are an important by-product of the capitalist system, have felt especially bound to surround themselves with works of fine art which, being rare, are also costly. Generally speaking, the typical collector is the typical capitalist. For evidence of good standing in the realm of higher culture, he amasses paintings, statuary, and artistic *bijoux*, as his stocks and bonds certify to his standing in the economic world.

Not merely individuals, but communities and nations, put their cultural good taste in evidence by building opera houses,

galleries, and museums. These show that a community is not wholly absorbed in material wealth, because it is willing to spend its gains in patronage of art. It erects these buildings and collects their contents as it now builds a cathedral. These things reflect and establish superior cultural status, while their segregation from the common life reflects the fact that they are not part of a native and spontaneous culture. They are a kind of counterpart of a holier-than-thou attitude, exhibited not toward persons as such but toward the interests and occupations that absorb most of the community's time and energy.

Modern industry and commerce have an international scope. The contents of galleries and museums testify to the growth of economic cosmopolitanism. The mobility of trade and of populations, due to the economic system, has weakened or destroyed the connection between works of art and the *genius loci* of which they were once the natural expression. As works of art have lost their indigenous status, they have acquired a new one—that of being specimens of fine art and nothing else. Moreover, works of art are now produced, like other articles, for sale in the market. Economic patronage by wealthy and powerful individuals has at many times played a part in the encouragement of artistic production. Probably many a savage tribe had its Maecenas. But now even that much of intimate social connection is lost in the impersonality of a world market. Objects that were in the past valid and significant because of their place in the life of a community now function in isolation from the conditions of their origin. By that fact they are also set apart from common experience, and serve as insignia of taste and certificates of special culture.

Because of changes in industrial conditions the artist has been pushed to one side from the main streams of active interest. Industry has been mechanized and an artist cannot work mechanically for mass production. He is less integrated than formerly in the normal flow of social services. A peculiar esthetic "individualism" results. Artists find it incumbent upon them to betake themselves to their work as an isolated means of "self-expression." In order not to cater to the trend of economic forces, they often feel obliged to exaggerate their separateness to the point of eccentricity. Consequently artistic products take on a

still greater degree the air of something independent and esoteric.

Put the action of all such forces together, and the conditions that create the gulf which exists generally between producer and consumer in modern society operate to create also a chasm between ordinary and esthetic experience. Finally we have, as the record of this chasm, accepted as if it were normal, the philosophies of art that locate it in a region inhabited by no other creature, and that emphasize beyond all reason the merely contemplative character of the esthetic. Confusion of values enters in to accentuate the separation. Adventitious matters, like the pleasure of collecting, of exhibiting, of ownership and display, simulate esthetic values. Criticism is affected. There is much applause for the wonders of appreciation and the glories of the transcendent beauty of art indulged in without much regard to capacity for esthetic perception in the concrete.

My purpose, however, is not to engage in an economic interpretation of the history of the arts, much less to argue that economic conditions are either invariably or directly relevant to perception and enjoyment, or even to interpretation of individual works of art. It is to indicate that *theories* which isolate art and its appreciation by placing them in a realm of their own, disconnected from other modes of experiencing, are not inherent in the subject-matter but arise because of specifiable extraneous conditions. Embedded as they are in institutions and in habits of life, these conditions operate effectively because they work so unconsciously. Then the theorist assumes they are embedded in the nature of things. Nevertheless, the influence of these conditions is not confined to theory. As I have already indicated, it deeply affects the practice of living, driving away esthetic perceptions that are necessary ingredients of happiness, or reducing them to the level of compensating transient pleasurable excitations.

Even to readers who are adversely inclined to what has been said, the implications of the statements that have been made may be useful in defining the nature of the problem: that of recovering the continuity of esthetic experience with normal processes of living. The understanding of art and of its rôle in civilization is not furthered by setting out with eulogies of it nor by occupying ourselves exclusively at the outset with great works of art recognized as such. The comprehension which theory

essays will be arrived at by a detour; by going back to experience of the common or mill run of things to discover the esthetic quality such experience possesses. Theory can start with and from acknowledged works of art only when the esthetic is already compartmentalized, or only when works of art are set in a niche apart instead of being celebrations, recognized as such, of the things of ordinary experience. Even a crude experience, if authentically an experience, is more fit to give a clue to the intrinsic nature of esthetic experience than is an object already set apart from any other mode of experience. Following this clue we can discover how the work of art develops and accentuates what is characteristically valuable in things of everyday enjoyment. The art product will then be seen to issue from the latter, when the full meaning of ordinary experience is expressed, as dyes come out of coal tar products when they receive special treatment.

Many theories about art already exist. If there is justification for proposing yet another philosophy of the esthetic, it must be found in a new mode of approach. Combinations and permutations among existing theories can easily be brought forth by those so inclined. But, to my mind, the trouble with existing theories is that they start from a ready-made compartmentalization, or from a conception of art that "spiritualizes" it out of connection with the objects of concrete experience. The alternative, however, to such spiritualization is not a degrading and Philistinish materialization of works of fine art, but a conception that discloses the way in which these works idealize qualities found in common experience. Were works of art placed in a directly human context in popular esteem, they would have a much wider appeal than they can have when pigeon-hole theories of art win general acceptance.

A conception of fine art that sets out from its connection with discovered qualities of ordinary experience will be able to indicate the factors and forces that favor the normal development of common human activities into matters of artistic value. It will also be able to point out those conditions that arrest its normal growth. Writers on esthetic theory often raise the question of whether esthetic philosophy can aid in cultivation of esthetic appreciation. The question is a branch of the general theory of criticism, which, it seems to me, fails to accomplish

its full office if it does not indicate what to look for and what to find in concrete esthetic objects. But, in any case, it is safe to say that a philosophy of art is sterilized unless it makes us aware of the function of art in relation to other modes of experience, and unless it indicates why this function is so inadequately realized, and unless it suggests the conditions under which the office would be successfully performed.

The comparison of the emergence of works of art out of ordinary experiences to the refining of raw materials into valuable products may seem to some unworthy, if not an actual attempt to reduce works of art to the status of articles manufactured for commercial purposes. The point, however, is that no amount of ecstatic eulogy of finished works can of itself assist the understanding or the generation of such works. Flowers can be enjoyed without knowing about the interactions of soil, air, moisture, and seeds of which they are the result. But they cannot be *understood* without taking just these interactions into account—and theory is a matter of understanding. Theory is concerned with discovering the nature of the production of works of art and of their enjoyment in perception. How is it that the everyday making of things grows into that form of making which is genuinely artistic? How is it that our everyday enjoyment of scenes and situations develops into the peculiar satisfaction that attends the experience which is emphatically esthetic? These are the questions theory must answer. The answers cannot be found, unless we are willing to find the germs and roots in matters of experience that we do not currently regard as esthetic. Having discovered these active seeds, we may follow the course of their growth into the highest forms of finished and refined art.

It is a commonplace that we cannot direct, save accidentally, the growth and flowering of plants, however lovely and enjoyed, without understanding their causal conditions. It should be just a commonplace that esthetic understanding—as distinct from sheer personal enjoyment—must start with the soil, air, and light out of which things esthetically admirable arise. And these conditions are the conditions and factors that make an ordinary experience complete. The more we recognize this fact, the more we shall find ourselves faced with a problem rather than with a final solution. *If* artistic and esthetic quality is implicit in every

normal experience, how shall we explain how and why it so generally fails to become explicit? Why is it that to multitudes art seems to be an importation into experience from a foreign country and the esthetic to be a synonym for something artificial?

WE cannot answer these questions any more than we can trace the development of art out of everyday experience, unless we have a clear and coherent idea of what is meant when we say "normal experience." Fortunately, the road to arriving at such an idea is open and well marked. The nature of experience is determined by the essential conditions of life. While man is other than bird and beast, he shares basic vital functions with them and has to make the same basal adjustments if he is to continue the process of living. Having the same vital needs, man derives the means by which he breathes, moves, looks and listens, the very brain with which he coördinates his senses and his movements, from his animal forbears. The organs with which he maintains himself in being are not of himself alone, but by the grace of struggles and achievements of a long line of animal ancestry.

Fortunately a theory of the place of the esthetic in experience does not have to lose itself in minute details when it starts with experience in its elemental form. Broad outlines suffice. The first great consideration is that life goes on in an environment; not merely *in* it but because of it, through interaction with it. No creature lives merely under its skin; its subcutaneous organs are means of connection with what lies beyond its bodily frame, and to which, in order to live, it must adjust itself, by accommodation and defense but also by conquest. At every moment, the living creature is exposed to dangers from its surroundings, and at every moment, it must draw upon something in its surroundings to satisfy its needs. The career and destiny of a living being are bound up with its interchanges with its environment, not externally but in the most intimate way.

The growl of a dog crouching over his food, his howl in time of loss and loneliness, the wagging of his tail at the return of his human friend are expressions of the implication of a living in a natural medium which includes man along with the animal he has domesticated. Every need, say hunger for fresh air

or food, is a lack that denotes at least a temporary absence of adequate adjustment with surroundings. But it is also a demand, a reaching out into the environment to make good the lack and to restore adjustment by building at least a temporary equilibrium. Life itself consists of phases in which the organism falls out of step with the march of surrounding things and then recovers unison with it—either through effort or by some happy chance. And, in a growing life, the recovery is never mere return to a prior state, for it is enriched by the state of disparity and resistance through which it has successfully passed. If the gap between organism and environment is too wide, the creature dies. If its activity is not enhanced by the temporary alienation, it merely subsists. Life grows when a temporary falling out is a transition to a more extensive balance of the energies of the organism with those of the conditions under which it lives.

These biological commonplaces are something more than that; they reach to the roots of the esthetic in experience. The world is full of things that are indifferent and even hostile to life; the very processes by which life is maintained tend to throw it out of gear with its surroundings. Nevertheless, if life continues and if in continuing it expands, there is an overcoming of factors of opposition and conflict; there is a transformation of them into differentiated aspects of a higher powered and more significant life. The marvel of organic, of vital, adaptation through expansion (instead of by contraction and passive accommodation) actually takes place. Here in germ are balance and harmony attained through rhythm. Equilibrium comes about not mechanically and inertly but out of, and because of, tension.

There is in nature, even below the level of life, something more than mere flux and change. Form is arrived at whenever a stable, even though moving, equilibrium is reached. Changes interlock and sustain one another. Wherever there is this coherence there is endurance. Order is not imposed from without but is made out of the relations of harmonious interactions that energies bear to one another. Because it is active (not anything static because foreign to what goes on) order itself develops. It comes to include within its balanced movement a greater variety of changes.

Order cannot but be admirable in a world constantly

threatened with disorder—in a world where living creatures can go on living only by taking advantage of whatever order exists about them, incorporating it into themselves. In a world like ours, every living creature that attains sensibility welcomes order with a response of harmonious feeling whenever it finds a congruous order about it.

For only when an organism shares in the ordered relations of its environment does it secure the stability essential to living. And when the participation comes after a phase of disruption and conflict, it bears within itself the germs of a consummation akin to the esthetic.

The rhythm of loss of integration with environment and recovery of union not only persists in man but becomes conscious with him; its conditions are material out of which he forms purposes. Emotion is the conscious sign of a break, actual or impending. The discord is the occasion that induces reflection. Desire for restoration of the union converts mere emotion into interest in objects as conditions of realization of harmony. With the realization, material of reflection is incorporated into objects as their meaning. Since the artist cares in a peculiar way for the phase of experience in which union is achieved, he does not shun moments of resistance and tension. He rather cultivates them, not for their own sake but because of their potentialities, bringing to living consciousness an experience that is unified and total. In contrast with the person whose purpose is esthetic, the scientific man is interested in problems, in situations wherein tension between the matter of observation and of thought is marked. Of course he cares for their resolution. But he does not rest in it; he passes on to another problem using an attained solution only as a stepping stone from which to set on foot further inquiries.

The difference between the esthetic and the intellectual is thus one of the place where emphasis falls in the constant rhythm that marks the interaction of the live creature with his surroundings. The ultimate matter of both emphases in experience is the same, as is also their general form. The odd notion that an artist does not think and a scientific inquirer does nothing else is the result of converting a difference of tempo and emphasis into a difference in kind. The thinker has his esthetic moment when his ideas cease to be mere ideas and become the corporate mean-

ings of objects. The artist has his problems and thinks as he works. But his thought is more immediately embodied in the object. Because of the comparative remoteness of his end, the scientific worker operates with symbols, words and mathematical signs. The artist does his thinking in the very qualitative media he works in, and the terms lie so close to the object that he is producing that they merge directly into it.

The live animal does not have to project emotions into the objects experienced. Nature is kind and hateful, bland and morose, irritating and comforting, long before she is mathematically qualified or even a congeries of "secondary" qualities like colors and their shapes. Even such words as long and short, solid and hollow, still carry to all, but those who are intellectually specialized, a moral and emotional connotation. The dictionary will inform any one who consults it that the early use of words like sweet and bitter was not to denote qualities of sense as such but to discriminate things as favorable and hostile. How could it be otherwise? Direct experience comes from nature and man interacting with each other. In this interaction, human energy gathers, is released, dammed up, frustrated and victorious. There are rhythmic beats of want and fulfillment, pulses of doing and being withheld from doing.

All interactions that effect stability and order in the whirling flux of change are rhythms. There is ebb and flow, systole and diastole; ordered change. The latter moves within bounds. To overpass the limits that are set is destruction and death, out of which, however, new rhythms are built up. The proportionate interception of changes establishes an order that is spatially, not merely temporally patterned: like the waves of the sea, the ripples of sand where waves have flowed back and forth, the fleecy and the black-bottomed cloud. Contrast of lack and fullness, of struggle and achievement, of adjustment after consummated irregularity, form the drama in which action, feeling, and meaning are one. The outcome is balance and counterbalance. These are not static nor mechanical. They express power that is intense because measured through overcoming resistance. Environing objects avail and counteravail.

There are two sorts of possible worlds in which esthetic experience would not occur. In a world of mere flux, change

would not be cumulative; it would not move toward a close. Stability and rest would have no being. Equally is it true, however, that a world that is finished, ended, would have no traits of suspense and crisis, and would offer no opportunity for resolution. Where everything is already complete, there is no fulfillment. We envisage with pleasure Nirvana and a uniform heavenly bliss only because they are projected upon the background of our present world of stress and conflict. Because the actual world, that in which we live, is a combination of movement and culmination, of breaks and re-unions, the experience of a living creature is capable of esthetic quality. The live being recurrently loses and reestablishes equilibrium with his surroundings. The moment of passage from disturbance into harmony is that of intensest life. In a finished world, sleep and waking could not be distinguished. In one wholly perturbed, conditions could not even be struggled with. In a world made after the pattern of ours, moments of fulfillment punctuate experience with rhythmically enjoyed intervals.

Inner harmony is attained only when, by some means, terms are made with the environment. When it occurs on any other than an "objective" basis, it is illusory—in extreme cases to the point of insanity. Fortunately for variety in experience, terms are made in many ways—ways ultimately decided by selective interest. Pleasures may come about through chance contact and stimulation; such pleasures are not to be despised in a world full of pain. But happiness and delight are a different sort of thing. They come to be through a fulfillment that reaches to the depths of our being—one that is an adjustment of our whole being with the conditions of existence. In the process of living, attainment of a period of equilibrium is at the same time the initiation of a new relation to the environment, one that brings with it potency of new adjustments to be made through struggle. The time of consummation is also one of beginning anew. Any attempt to perpetuate beyond its term the enjoyment attending the time of fulfillment and harmony constitutes withdrawal from the world. Hence it marks the lowering and loss of vitality. But, through the phases of perturbation and conflict, there abides the deep-seated memory of an underlying harmony, the sense of which haunts life like the sense of being founded on a rock.

Most mortals are conscious that a split often occurs between their present living and their past and future. Then the past hangs upon them as a burden; it invades the present with a sense of regret, of opportunities not used, and of consequences we wish undone. It rests upon the present as an oppression, instead of being a storehouse of resources by which to move confidently forward. But the live creature adopts its past; it can make friends with even its stupidities, using them as warnings that increase present wariness. Instead of trying to live upon whatever may have been achieved in the past, it uses past successes to inform the present. Every living experience owes its richness to what Santayana well calls "hushed reverberations." \*

To the being fully alive, the future is not ominous but a promise; it surrounds the present as a halo. It consists of possibilities that are felt as a possession of what is now and here. In life that is truly life, everything overlaps and merges. But all too often we exist in apprehensions of what the future may bring, and are divided within ourselves. Even when not overanxious, we do not enjoy the present because we subordinate it to that which is absent. Because of the frequency of this abandonment of the present to the past and future, the happy periods of an experience that is now complete because it absorbs into itself memories of the past and anticipations of the future, come to constitute an esthetic ideal. Only when the past ceases to trouble and anticipations of the future are not perturbing is a being wholly united with his environment and therefore fully alive. Art celebrates with peculiar intensity the moments in which the past reenforces the present and in which the future is a quickening of what now is.

To grasp the sources of esthetic experience it is, therefore, necessary to have recourse to animal life below the human scale.

\* "These familiar flowers, these well-remembered bird notes, this sky with its fitful brightness, these furrowed and grassy fields, each with a sort of personality given to it by the capricious hedge, such things as these are the mother tongue of our imagination, the language that is laden with all the subtle inextricable associations the fleeting hours of our childhood left behind them. Our delight in the sunshine on the deep-bladed grass today might be no more than the faint perception of wearied souls, if it were not for the sunshine and grass of far-off years, which still live in us and transform our perception into love." George Eliot in "The Mill on the Floss."

The activities of the fox, the dog, and the thrush may at least stand as reminders and symbols of that unity of experience which we so fractionize when work is labor, and thought withdraws us from the world. The live animal is fully present, all there, in all of its actions: in its wary glances, its sharp sniffings, its abrupt cocking of ears. All senses are equally on the *qui vive*. As you watch, you see motion merging into sense and sense into motion—constituting that animal grace so hard for man to rival. What the live creature retains from the past and what it expects from the future operate as directions in the present. The dog is never pedantic nor academic; for these things arise only when the past is severed in consciousness from the present and is set up as a model to copy or a storehouse upon which to draw. The past absorbed into the present carries on; it presses forward.

There is much in the life of the savage that is sodden. But, when the savage is most alive, he is most observant of the world about him and most taut with energy. As he watches what stirs about him, he, too, is stirred. His observation is both action in preparation and foresight of the future. He is as active through his whole being when he looks and listens as when he stalks his quarry or stealthily retreats from a foe. His senses are sentinels of immediate thought and outposts of action, and not, as they so often are with us, mere pathways along which material is gathered to be stored away for a delayed and remote possibility.

It is mere ignorance that leads then to the supposition that connection of art and esthetic perception with experience signifies a lowering of their significance and dignity. Experience in the degree in which it *is* experience is heightened vitality. Instead of signifying being shut up within one's own private feelings and sensations, it signifies active and alert commerce with the world; at its height it signifies complete interpenetration of self and the world of objects and events. Instead of signifying surrender to caprice and disorder, it affords our sole demonstration of a stability that is not stagnation but is rhythmic and developing. Because experience is the fulfillment of an organism in its struggles and achievements in a world of things, it is art in germ. Even in its rudimentary forms, it contains the promise of that delightful perception which is esthetic experience.

## CHAPTER III

### HAVING AN EXPERIENCE

**E**XPERIENCE occurs continuously, because the interaction of live creature and environing conditions is involved in the very process of living. Under conditions of resistance and conflict, aspects and elements of the self and the world that are implicated in this interaction qualify experience with emotions and ideas so that conscious intent emerges. Oftentimes, however, the experience had is inchoate. Things are experienced but not in such a way that they are composed into *an* experience. There is distraction and dispersion; what we observe and what we think, what we desire and what we get, are at odds with each other. We put our hands to the plow and turn back; we start and then we stop, not because the experience has reached the end for the sake of which it was initiated but because of extraneous interruptions or of inner lethargy.

In contrast with such experience, we have *an* experience when the material experienced runs its course to fulfillment. Then and then only is it integrated within and demarcated in the general stream of experience from other experiences. A piece of work is finished in a way that is satisfactory; a problem receives its solution; a game is played through; a situation, whether that of eating a meal, playing a game of chess, carrying on a conversation, writing a book, or taking part in a political campaign, is so rounded out that its close is a consummation and not a cessation. Such an experience is a whole and carries with it its own individualizing quality and self-sufficiency. It is *an* experience.

Philosophers, even empirical philosophers, have spoken for the most part of experience at large. Idiomatic speech, however, refers to experiences each of which is singular, having its own beginning and end. For life is no uniform uninterrupted march or flow. It is a thing of histories, each with its own plot, its own inception and movement toward its close, each having its own

particular rhythmic movement; each with its own unrepeated quality pervading it throughout. A flight of stairs, mechanical as it is, proceeds by individualized steps, not by undifferentiated progression, and an inclined plane is at least marked off from other things by abrupt discreteness.

Experience in this vital sense is defined by those situations and episodes that we spontaneously refer to as being "real experiences"; those things of which we say in recalling them, "that *was* an experience." It may have been something of tremendous importance—a quarrel with one who was once an intimate, a catastrophe finally averted by a hair's breadth. Or it may have been something that in comparison was slight—and which perhaps because of its very slightness illustrates all the better what is to be an experience. There is that meal in a Paris restaurant of which one says "that *was* an experience." It stands out as an enduring memorial of what food may be. Then there is that storm one went through in crossing the Atlantic—the storm that seemed in its fury, as it was experienced, to sum up in itself all that a storm can be, complete in itself, standing out because marked out from what went before and what came after.

In such experiences, every successive part flows freely, without seam and without unfilled blanks, into what ensues. At the same time there is no sacrifice of the self-identity of the parts. A river, as distinct from a pond, flows. But its flow gives a definiteness and interest to its successive portions greater than exist in the homogenous portions of a pond. In an experience, flow is from something to something. As one part leads into another and as one part carries on what went before, each gains distinctness in itself. The enduring whole is diversified by successive phases that are emphases of its varied colors.

Because of continuous merging, there are no holes, mechanical junctions, and dead centers when we have *an* experience. There are pauses, places of rest, but they punctuate and define the quality of movement. They sum up what has been undergone and prevent its dissipation and idle evaporation. Continued acceleration is breathless and prevents parts from gaining distinction. In a work of art, different acts, episodes, occurrences melt and fuse into unity, and yet do not disappear and lose their own character as they do so—just as in a genial conversatio-

there is a continuous interchange and blending, and yet each speaker not only retains his own character but manifests it more clearly than is his wont.

An experience has a unity that gives it its name, *that meal*, that storm, that rupture of friendship. The existence of this unity is constituted by a single *quality* that pervades the entire experience in spite of the variation of its constituent parts. This unity is neither emotional, practical, nor intellectual, for these terms name distinctions that reflection can make within it. In discourse *about* an experience, we must make use of these adjectives of interpretation. In going over an experience in mind *after* its occurrence, we may find that one property rather than another was sufficiently dominant so that it characterizes the experience as a whole. There are absorbing inquiries and speculations which a scientific man and philosopher will recall as "experiences" in the emphatic sense. In final import they are intellectual. But in their actual occurrence they were emotional as well; they were purposive and volitional. Yet the experience was not a sum of these different characters; they were lost in it as distinctive traits. No thinker can ply his occupation save as he is lured and rewarded by total integral experiences that are intrinsically worth while. Without them he would never know what it is really to think and would be completely at a loss in distinguishing real thought from the spurious article. Thinking goes on in trains of ideas, but the ideas form a train only because they are much more than what an analytic psychology calls ideas. They are phases, emotionally and practically distinguished, of a developing underlying quality; they are its moving variations, not separate and independent like Locke's and Hume's so-called ideas and impressions, but are subtle shadings of a pervading and developing hue.

We say of an experience of thinking that we reach or draw a conclusion. Theoretical formulation of the process is often made in such terms as to conceal effectually the similarity of "conclusion" to the consummating phase of every developing integral experience. These formulations apparently take their cue from the separate propositions that are premisses and the proposition that is the conclusion as they appear on the printed page. The impression is derived that there are first two independent

and ready-made entities that are then manipulated so as to give rise to a third. In fact, in an experience of thinking, premisses emerge only as a conclusion becomes manifest. The experience, like that of watching a storm reach its height and gradually subside, is one of continuous movement of subject-matters. Like the ocean in the storm, there are a series of waves; suggestions reaching out and being broken in a clash, or being carried onwards by a coöperative wave. If a conclusion is reached, it is that of a movement of anticipation and cumulation, one that finally comes to completion. A "conclusion" is no separate and independent thing; it is the consummation of a movement.

Hence *an* experience of thinking has its own esthetic quality. It differs from those experiences that are acknowledged to be esthetic, but only in its materials. The material of the fine arts consists of qualities; that of experience having intellectual conclusion are signs or symbols having no intrinsic quality of their own, but standing for things that may in another experience be qualitatively experienced. The difference is enormous. It is one reason why the strictly intellectual art will never be popular as music is popular. Nevertheless, the experience itself has a satisfying emotional quality because it possesses internal integration and fulfillment reached through ordered and organized movement. This artistic structure may be immediately felt. In so far, it is esthetic. What is even more important is that not only is this quality a significant motive in undertaking intellectual inquiry and in keeping it honest, but that no intellectual activity is an integral event (*is an* experience), unless it is rounded out with this quality. Without it, thinking is inconclusive. In short, esthetic cannot be sharply marked off from intellectual experience since the latter must bear an esthetic stamp to be itself complete.

The same statement holds good of a course of action that is dominantly practical, that is, one that consists of overt doings. It is possible to be efficient in action and yet not have a conscious experience. The activity is too automatic to permit of a sense of what it is about and where it is going. It comes to an end but not to a close or consummation in consciousness. Obstacles are overcome by shrewd skill, but they do not feed experience. There are also those who are wavering in action, uncertain,

and inconclusive like the shades in classic literature. Between the poles of aimlessness and mechanical efficiency, there lie those courses of action in which through successive deeds there runs a sense of growing meaning conserved and accumulating toward an end that is felt as accomplishment of a process. Successful politicians and generals who turn statesmen like Caesar and Napoleon have something of the showman about them. This of itself is not art, but it is, I think, a sign that interest is not exclusively, perhaps not mainly, held by the result taken by itself (as it is in the case of mere efficiency), but by it as the outcome of a process. There is interest in completing an experience. The experience may be one that is harmful to the world and its consummation undesirable. But it has esthetic quality.

The Greek identification of good conduct with conduct having proportion, grace, and harmony, the *kalon-agathon*, is a more obvious example of distinctive esthetic quality in moral action. One great defect in what passes as morality is its anesthetic quality. Instead of exemplifying wholehearted action, it takes the form of grudging piecemeal concessions to the demands of duty. But illustrations may only obscure the fact that any practical activity will, provided that it is integrated and moves by its own urge to fulfillment, have esthetic quality.

A generalized illustration may be had if we imagine a stone, which is rolling down hill, to have an experience. The activity is surely sufficiently "practical." The stone starts from somewhere, and moves, as consistently as conditions permit, toward a place and state where it will be at rest—toward an end. Let us add, by imagination, to these external facts, the ideas that it looks forward with desire to the final outcome; that it is interested in the things it meets on its way, conditions that accelerate and retard its movement with respect to their bearing on the end; that it acts and feels toward them according to the hindering or helping function it attributes to them; and that the final coming to rest is related to all that went before as the culmination of a continuous movement. Then the stone would have an experience, and one with esthetic quality.

If we turn from this imaginary case to our own experience, we shall find much of it is nearer to what happens to the actual stone than it is to anything that fulfills the conditions fancy

just laid down. For in much of our experience we are not concerned with the connection of one incident with what went before and what comes after. There is no interest that controls attentive rejection or selection of what shall be organized into the developing experience. Things happen, but they are neither definitely included nor decisively excluded; we drift. We yield according to external pressure, or evade and compromise. There are beginnings and cessations, but no genuine initiations and concludings. One thing replaces another, but does not absorb it and carry it on. There is experience, but so slack and discursive that it is not *an* experience. Needless to say, such experiences are anesthetic.

Thus the non-esthetic lies within two limits. At one pole is the loose succession that does not begin at any particular place and that ends—in the sense of ceasing—at no particular place. At the other pole is arrest, constriction, proceeding from parts having only a mechanical connection with one another. There exists so much of one and the other of these two kinds of experience that unconsciously they come to be taken as norms of all experience. Then, when the esthetic appears, it so sharply contrasts with the picture that has been formed of experience, that it is impossible to combine its special qualities with the features of the picture and the esthetic is given an outside place and status. The account that has been given of experience dominantly intellectual and practical is intended to show that there is no such contrast involved in having an experience; that, on the contrary, no experience of whatever sort is a unity unless it has esthetic quality.

The enemies of the esthetic are neither the practical nor the intellectual. They are the humdrum; slackness of loose ends; submission to convention in practice and intellectual procedure. Rigid abstinence, coerced submission, tightness on one side and dissipation, incoherence and aimless indulgence on the other, are deviations in opposite directions from the unity of an experience. Some such considerations perhaps induced Aristotle to invoke the "mean proportional" as the proper designation of what is distinctive of both virtue and the esthetic. He was formally correct. "Mean" and "proportion" are, however, not self-explanatory, nor to be taken over in a prior mathematical sense, but are properties

belonging to an experience that has a developing movement toward its own consummation.

I have emphasized the fact that every integral experience moves toward a close, an ending, since it ceases only when the energies active in it have done their proper work. This closure of a circuit of energy is the opposite of arrest, of *stasis*. Maturation and fixation are polar opposites. Struggle and conflict may be themselves enjoyed, although they are painful, when they are experienced as means of developing an experience; members in that they carry it forward, not just because they are there. There is, as will appear later, an element of undergoing, of suffering in its large sense, in every experience. Otherwise there would be no taking in of what preceded. For "taking in" in any vital experience is something more than placing something on the top of consciousness over what was previously known. It involves reconstruction which may be painful. Whether the necessary undergoing phase is by itself pleasurable or painful is a matter of particular conditions. It is indifferent to the total esthetic quality, save that there are few intense esthetic experiences that are wholly gleeful. They are certainly not to be characterized as amusing, and as they bear down upon us they involve a suffering that is none the less consistent with, indeed a part of, the complete perception that is enjoyed.

I have spoken of the esthetic quality that rounds out an experience into completeness and unity as emotional. The reference may cause difficulty. We are given to thinking of emotions as things as simple and compact as are the words by which we name them. Joy, sorrow, hope, fear, anger, curiosity, are treated as if each in itself were a sort of entity that enters full-made upon the scene, an entity that may last a long time or a short time, but whose duration, whose growth and career, is irrelevant to its nature. In fact emotions are qualities, when they are significant, of a complex experience that moves and changes. I say, when they are *significant*, for otherwise they are but the outbreaks and eruptions of a disturbed infant. All emotions are qualifications of a drama and they change as the drama develops. Persons are sometimes said to fall in love at first sight. But what they fall into is not a thing of that instant. What would love be were it compressed into a moment in which there is no room

for cherishing and for solicitude? The intimate nature of emotion is manifested in the experience of one watching a play on the stage or reading a novel. It attends the development of a plot; and a plot requires a stage, a space, wherein to develop and time in which to unfold. Experience is emotional but there are no separate things called emotions in it.

By the same token, emotions are attached to events and objects in their movement. They are not, save in pathological instances, private. And even an "objectless" emotion demands something beyond itself to which to attach itself, and thus it soon generates a delusion in lack of something real. Emotion belongs of a certainty to the self. But it belongs to the self that is concerned in the movement of events toward an issue that is desired or disliked. We jump instantaneously when we are scared, as we blush on the instant when we are ashamed. But fright and shamed modesty are not in this case emotional states. Of themselves they are but automatic reflexes. In order to become emotional they must become parts of an inclusive and enduring situation that involves concern for objects and their issues. The jump of fright becomes emotional fear when there is found or thought to exist a threatening object that must be dealt with or escaped from. The blush becomes the emotion of shame when a person connects, in thought, an action he has performed with an unfavorable reaction to himself of some other person.

Physical things from far ends of the earth are physically transported and physically caused to act and react upon one another in the construction of a new object. The miracle of mind is that something similar takes place in experience without physical transport and assembling. Emotion is the moving and cementing force. It selects what is congruous and dyes what is selected with its color, thereby giving qualitative unity to materials externally disparate and dissimilar. It thus provides unity in and through the varied parts of an experience. When the unity is of the sort already described, the experience has esthetic character even though it is not, dominantly, an esthetic experience.

Two men meet; one is the applicant for a position, while the other has the disposition of the matter in his hands. The interview may be mechanical, consisting of set questions, the

replies to which perfunctorily settle the matter. There is no experience in which the two men meet, nothing that is not a repetition, by way of acceptance or dismissal, of something which has happened a score of times. The situation is disposed of as if it were an exercise in bookkeeping. But an interplay may take place in which a new experience develops. Where should we look for an account of such an experience? Not to ledger-entries nor yet to a treatise on economics or sociology or personnel-psychology, but to drama or fiction. Its nature and import can be expressed only by art, because there is a unity of experience that can be expressed only as an experience. The *experience* is of material fraught with suspense and moving toward its own consummation through a connected series of varied incidents. The primary emotions on the part of the applicant may be at the beginning hope or despair, and elation or disappointment at the close. These emotions qualify the experience as a unity. But as the interview proceeds, secondary emotions are evolved as variations of the primary underlying one. It is even possible for each attitude and gesture, each sentence, almost every word, to produce more than a fluctuation in the intensity of the basic emotion; to produce, that is, a change of shade and tint in its quality. The employer sees by means of his own emotional reactions the character of the one applying. He projects him imaginatively into the work to be done and judges his fitness by the way in which the elements of the scene assemble and either clash or fit together. The presence and behavior of the applicant either harmonize with his own attitudes and desires or they conflict and jar. Such factors as these, inherently esthetic in quality, are the forces that carry the varied elements of the interview to a decisive issue. They enter into the settlement of every situation, whatever its dominant nature, in which there are uncertainty and suspense.

THERE are, therefore, common patterns in various experiences, no matter how unlike they are to one another in the details of their subject matter. There are conditions to be met without which an experience cannot come to be. The outline of the common pattern is set by the fact that every experience is the result

of interaction between a live creature and some aspect of the world in which he lives. A man does something; he lifts, let us say, a stone. In consequence he undergoes, suffers, something: the weight, strain, texture of the surface of the thing lifted. The properties thus undergone determine further doing. The stone is too heavy or too angular, not solid enough; or else the properties undergone show it is fit for the use for which it is intended. The process continues until a mutual adaptation of the self and the object emerges and that particular experience comes to a close. What is true of this simple instance is true, as to form, of every experience. The creature operating may be a thinker in his study and the environment with which he interacts may consist of ideas instead of a stone. But interaction of the two constitutes the total experience that is had, and the close which completes it is the institution of a felt harmony.

An experience has pattern and structure, because it is not just doing and undergoing in alternation, but consists of them in relationship. To put one's hand in the fire that consumes it is not necessarily to have an experience. The action and its consequence must be joined in perception. This relationship is what gives meaning; to grasp it is the objective of all intelligence. The scope and content of the relations measure the significant content of an experience. A child's experience may be intense, but, because of lack of background from past experience, relations between undergoing and doing are slightly grasped, and the experience does not have great depth or breadth. No one ever arrives at such maturity that he perceives all the connections that are involved. There was once written (by Mr. Hinton) a romance called "The Unlearner." It portrayed the whole endless duration of life after death as a living over of the incidents that happened in a short life on earth, in continued discovery of the relationships involved among them.

Experience is limited by all the causes which interfere with perception of the relations between undergoing and doing. There may be interference because of excess on the side of doing or of excess on the side of receptivity, of undergoing. Unbalance on either side blurs the perception of relations and leaves the experience partial and distorted, with scant or false meaning. Zeal for doing, lust for action, leaves many a person, especially

in this hurried and impatient human environment in which we live, with experience of an almost incredible paucity, all on the surface. No one experience has a chance to complete itself because something else is entered upon so speedily. What is called experience becomes so dispersed and miscellaneous as hardly to deserve the name. Resistance is treated as an obstruction to be beaten down, not as an invitation to reflection. An individual comes to seek, unconsciously even more than by deliberate choice, situations in which he can do the most things in the shortest time.

Experiences are also cut short from maturing by excess of receptivity. What is prized is then the mere undergoing of this and that, irrespective of perception of any meaning. The crowding together of as many impressions as possible is thought to be "life," even though no one of them is more than a flitting and a sipping. The sentimentalist and the day-dreamer may have more fancies and impressions pass through their consciousness than has the man who is animated by lust for action. But his experience is equally distorted, because nothing takes root in mind when there is no balance between doing and receiving. Some decisive action is needed in order to establish contact with the realities of the world and in order that impressions may be so related to facts that their value is tested and organized.

Because perception of relationship between what is done and what is undergone constitutes the work of intelligence, and because the artist is controlled in the process of his work by his grasp of the connection between what he has already done and what he is to do next, the idea that the artist does not think as intently and penetratingly as a scientific inquirer is absurd. A painter must consciously undergo the effect of his every brush stroke or he will not be aware of what he is doing and where his work is going. Moreover, he has to see each particular connection of doing and undergoing in relation to the whole that he desires to produce. To apprehend such relations is to think, and is one of the most exacting modes of thought. The difference between the pictures of different painters is due quite as much to differences of capacity to carry on this thought as it is to differences of sensitivity to bare color and to differences in dexterity of execution. As respects the basic quality of pictures, difference depends, indeed, more upon the quality of intelligence brought to bear upon

perception of relations than upon anything else—though of course intelligence cannot be separated from direct sensitivity and is connected, though in a more external manner, with skill.

Any idea that ignores the necessary rôle of intelligence in production of works of art is based upon identification of thinking with use of one special kind of material, verbal signs and words. To think effectively in terms of relations of qualities is as severe a demand upon thought as to think in terms of symbols, verbal and mathematical. Indeed, since words are easily manipulated in mechanical ways, the production of a work of genuine art probably demands more intelligence than does most of the so-called thinking that goes on among those who pride themselves on being "intellectuals."

I HAVE tried to show in these chapters that the esthetic is no intruder in experience from without, whether by way of idle luxury or transcendent ideality, but that it is the clarified and intensified development of traits that belong to every normally complete experience. This fact I take to be the only secure basis upon which esthetic theory can build. It remains to suggest some of the implications of the underlying fact.

We have no word in the English language that unambiguously includes what is signified by the two words "artistic" and "esthetic." Since "artistic" refers primarily to the act of production and "esthetic" to that of perception and enjoyment, the absence of a term designating the two processes taken together is unfortunate. Sometimes, the effect is to separate the two from each other, to regard art as something superimposed upon esthetic material, or, upon the other side, to an assumption that, since art is a process of creation, perception and enjoyment of it have nothing in common with the creative act. In any case, there is a certain verbal awkwardness in that we are compelled sometimes to use the term "esthetic" to cover the entire field and sometimes to limit it to the receiving perceptual aspect of the whole operation. I refer to these obvious facts as preliminary to an attempt to show how the conception of conscious experience as a perceived relation between doing and undergoing enables

us to understand the connection that art as production and perception and appreciation as enjoyment sustain to each other.

Art denotes a process of doing or making. This is as true of fine as of technological art. Art involves molding of clay, chipping of marble, casting of bronze, laying on of pigments, construction of buildings, singing of songs, playing of instruments, enacting rôles on the stage, going through rhythmic movements in the dance. Every art does something with some physical material, the body or something outside the body, with or without the use of intervening tools, and with a view to production of something visible, audible, or tangible. So marked is the active or "doing" phase of art, that the dictionaries usually define it in terms of skilled action, ability in execution. The Oxford Dictionary illustrates by a quotation from John Stuart Mill: "Art is an endeavor after perfection in execution" while Matthew Arnold calls it "pure and flawless workmanship."

The word "esthetic" refers, as we have already noted, to experience as appreciative, perceiving, and enjoying. It denotes the consumer's rather than the producer's standpoint. It is Gusto, taste; and, as with cooking, overt skillful action is on the side of the cook who prepares, while taste is on the side of the consumer, as in gardening there is a distinction between the gardener who plants and tills and the householder who enjoys the finished product.

These very illustrations, however, as well as the relation that exists in having an experience between doing and undergoing, indicate that the distinction between esthetic and artistic cannot be pressed so far as to become a separation. Perfection in execution cannot be measured or defined in terms of execution; it implies those who perceive and enjoy the product that is executed. The cook prepares food for the consumer and the measure of the value of what is prepared is found in consumption. Mere perfection in execution, judged in its own terms in isolation, can probably be attained better by a machine than by human art. By itself, it is at most technique, and there are great artists who are not in the first ranks as technicians (witness Cézanne), just as there are great performers on the piano who are not great esthetically, and as Sargent is not a great painter.

Craftsmanship to be artistic in the final sense must be

"loving"; it must care deeply for the subject matter upon which skill is exercised. A sculptor comes to mind whose busts are marvelously exact. It might be difficult to tell in the presence of a photograph of one of them and of a photograph of the original which was of the person himself. For virtuosity they are remarkable. But one doubts whether the maker of the busts had an experience of his own that he was concerned to have those share who look at his products. To be truly artistic, a work must also be esthetic—that is, framed for enjoyed receptive perception. Constant observation is, of course, necessary for the maker while he is producing. But if his perception is not also esthetic in nature, it is a colorless and cold recognition of what has been done, used as a stimulus to the next step in a process that is essentially mechanical.

In short, art, in its form, unites the very same relation of doing and undergoing, outgoing and incoming energy, that makes an experience to be an experience. Because of elimination of all that does not contribute to mutual organization of the factors of both action and reception into one another, and because of selection of just the aspects and traits that contribute to their interpenetration of each other, the product is a work of esthetic art. Man whittles, carves, sings, dances, gestures, molds, draws and paints. The doing or making is artistic when the perceived result is of such a nature that *its qualities as perceived* have controlled the question of production. The act of producing that is directed by intent to produce something that is enjoyed in the immediate experience of perceiving has qualities that a spontaneous or uncontrolled activity does not have. The artist embodies in himself the attitude of the perceiver while he works.

Suppose, for the sake of illustration, that a finely wrought object, one whose texture and proportions are highly pleasing in perception, has been believed to be a product of some primitive people. Then there is discovered evidence that proves it to be an accidental natural product. As an external thing, it is now precisely what it was before. Yet at once it ceases to be a work of art and becomes a natural "curiosity." It now belongs in a museum of natural history, not in a museum of art. And the extraordinary thing is that the difference that is thus made is not one of just intellectual classification. A difference is made in

appreciative perception and in a direct way. The esthetic experience—in its limited sense—is thus seen to be inherently connected with the experience of making.

The sensory satisfaction of eye and ear, when esthetic, is so because it does not stand by itself but is linked to the activity of which it is the consequence. Even the pleasures of the palate are different in quality to an epicure than in one who merely "likes" his food as he eats it. The difference is not of mere intensity. The epicure is conscious of much more than the taste of the food. Rather, there enter into the taste, as directly experienced, qualities that depend upon reference to its source and its manner of production in connection with criteria of excellence. As production must absorb into itself qualities of the product as perceived and be regulated by them, so, on the other side, seeing, hearing, tasting, become esthetic when relation to a distinct manner of activity qualifies what is perceived.

There is an element of passion in all esthetic perception. Yet when we are overwhelmed by passion, as in extreme rage, fear, jealousy, the experience is definitely non-esthetic. There is no relationship felt to the qualities of the activity that has generated the passion. Consequently, the material of the experience lacks elements of balance and proportion. For these can be present only when, as in the conduct that has grace or dignity, the act is controlled by an exquisite sense of the relations which the act sustains—its fitness to the occasion and to the situation.

The process of art in production is related to the esthetic in perception organically—as the Lord God in creation surveyed his work and found it good. Until the artist is satisfied in perception with what he is doing, he continues shaping and reshaping. The making comes to an end when its result is experienced as good—and that experience comes not by mere intellectual and outside judgment but in direct perception. An artist, in comparison with his fellows, is one who is not only especially gifted in powers of execution but in unusual sensitivity to the qualities of things. This sensitivity also directs his doings and makings.

As we manipulate, we touch and feel, as we look, we see; as we listen, we hear. The hand moves with etching needle or with brush. The eye attends and reports the consequence of what is done. Because of this intimate connection, subsequent doing

is cumulative and not a matter of caprice nor yet of routine. In an emphatic artistic-esthetic experience, the relation is so close that it controls simultaneously both the doing and the perception. Such vital intimacy of connection cannot be had if only hand and eye are engaged. When they do not, both of them, act as organs of the whole being, there is but a mechanical sequence of sense and movement, as in walking that is automatic. Hand and eye, when the experience is esthetic, are but instruments through which the entire live creature, moved and active throughout, operates. Hence the expression is emotional and guided by purpose.

Because of the relation between what is done and what is undergone, there is an immediate sense of things in perception as belonging together or as jarring; as reënforcing or as interfering. The consequences of the act of making as reported in sense show whether what is done carries forward the idea being executed or marks a deviation and break. In as far as the development of an experience is *controlled* through reference to these immediately felt relations of order and fulfillment, that experience becomes dominantly esthetic in nature. The urge to action becomes an urge to that kind of action which will result in an object satisfying in direct perception. The potter shapes his clay to make a bowl useful for holding grain; but he makes it in a way so regulated by the series of perceptions that sum up the serial acts of making, that the bowl is marked by enduring grace and charm. The general situation remains the same in painting a picture or molding a bust. Moreover, at each stage there is anticipation of what is to come. This anticipation is the connecting link between the next doing and its outcome for sense. What is done and what is undergone are thus reciprocally, cumulatively, and continuously instrumental to each other.

The doing may be energetic, and the undergoing may be acute and intense. But unless they are related to each other to form a whole in perception, the thing done is not fully esthetic. The making for example may be a display of technical virtuosity, and the undergoing a gush of sentiment or a reverie. If the artist does not perfect a new vision in his process of doing, he acts mechanically and repeats some old model fixed like a blue print in his mind. An incredible amount of observation and of the kind

of intelligence that is exercised in perception of qualitative relations characterizes creative work in art. The relations must be noted not only with respect to one another, two by two, but in connection with the whole under construction; they are exercised in imagination as well as in observation. Irrelevancies arise that are tempting distractions; digressions suggest themselves in the guise of enrichments. There are occasions when the grasp of the dominant idea grows faint, and then the artist is moved unconsciously to fill in until his thought grows strong again. The real work of an artist is to build up an experience that is coherent in perception while moving with constant change in its development.

When an author puts on paper ideas that are already clearly conceived and consistently ordered, the real work has been previously done. Or, he may depend upon the greater perceptibility induced by the activity and its sensible report to direct his completion of the work. The mere act of transcription is esthetically irrelevant save as it enters integrally into the formation of an experience moving to completeness. Even the composition conceived in the head and, therefore, physically private, is public in its significant content, since it is conceived with reference to execution in a product that is perceptible and hence belongs to the common world. Otherwise it would be an aberration or a passing dream. The urge to express through painting the perceived qualities of a landscape is continuous with demand for pencil or brush. Without external embodiment, an experience remains incomplete; physiologically and functionally, sense organs are motor organs and are connected, by means of distribution of energies in the human body and not merely anatomically, with other motor organs. It is no linguistic accident that "building," "construction," "work," designate both a process and its finished product. Without the meaning of the verb that of the noun remains blank.

Writer, composer of music, sculptor, or painter can retrace, during the process of production, what they have previously done. When it is not satisfactory in the undergoing or perceptual phase of experience, they can to some degree start afresh. This retracing is not readily accomplished in the case of architecture—which is perhaps one reason why there are so many

ugly buildings. Architects are obliged to complete their idea before its translation into a complete object of perception takes place. Inability to build up simultaneously the idea and its objective embodiment imposes a handicap. Nevertheless, they too are obliged to think out their ideas in terms of the medium of embodiment and the object of ultimate perception unless they work mechanically and by rote. Probably the esthetic quality of medieval cathedrals is due in some measure to the fact that their constructions were not so much controlled by plans and specifications made in advance as is now the case. Plans grew as the building grew. But even a Minerva-like product, if it is artistic, presupposes a prior period of gestation in which doings and perceptions projected in imagination interact and mutually modify one another. Every work of art follows the plan of, and pattern of, a complete experience, rendering it more intensely and concentratedly felt.

It is not so easy in the case of the perceiver and appreciator to understand the intimate union of doing and undergoing as it is in the case of the maker. We are given to supposing that the former merely takes in what is there in finished form, instead of realizing that this taking in involves activities that are comparable to those of the creator. But receptivity is not passivity. It, too, is a process consisting of a series of responsive acts that accumulate toward objective fulfillment. Otherwise, there is not perception but recognition. The difference between the two is immense. Recognition is perception arrested before it has a chance to develop freely. In recognition there is a beginning of an act of perception. But this beginning is not allowed to serve the development of a full perception of the thing recognized. It is arrested at the point where it will serve some *other* purpose, as we recognize a man on the street in order to greet or to avoid him, not so as to see him for the sake of seeing what is there.

In recognition we fall back, as upon a stereotype, upon some previously formed scheme. Some detail or arrangement of details serves as cue for bare identification. It suffices in recognition to apply this bare outline as a stencil to the present object. Sometimes in contact with a human being we are struck with traits, perhaps of only physical characteristics, of which we were not previously aware. We realize that we never knew the person

before; we had not seen him in any pregnant sense. We now begin to study and to "take in." Perception replaces bare recognition. There is an act of reconstructive doing, and consciousness becomes fresh and alive. *This* act of seeing involves the co-operation of motor elements even though they remain implicit and do not become overt, as well as co-operation of all funded ideas that may serve to complete the new picture that is forming. Recognition is too easy to arouse vivid consciousness. There is not enough resistance between new and old to secure consciousness of the experience that is had. Even a dog that barks and wags his tail joyously on seeing his master return is more fully alive in his reception of his friend than is a human being who is content with mere recognition.

Bare recognition is satisfied when a proper tag or label is attached, "proper" signifying one that serves a purpose outside the act of recognition—as a salesman identifies wares by a sample. It involves no stir of the organism, no inner commotion. But an act of perception proceeds by waves that extend serially throughout the entire organism. There is, therefore, no such thing in perception as seeing or hearing *plus* emotion. The perceived object or scene is emotionally pervaded throughout. When an aroused emotion does not permeate the material that is perceived or thought of, it is either preliminary or pathological.

The esthetic or undergoing phase of experience is receptive. It involves surrender. But adequate yielding of the self is possibly only through a controlled activity that may well be intense. In much of our intercourse with our surroundings we withdraw; sometimes from fear, if only of expending unduly our store of energy; sometimes from preoccupation with other matters, as in the case of recognition. Perception is an act of the going-out of energy in order to receive, not a withholding of energy. To steep ourselves in a subject-matter we have first to plunge into it. When we are only passive to a scene, it overwhelms us and, for lack of answering activity, we do not perceive that which bears us down. We must summon energy and pitch it at a responsive key in order to *take in*.

Every one knows that it requires apprenticeship to see through a microscope or telescope, and to see a landscape as the geologist sees it. The idea that esthetic perception is an affair

for odd moments is one reason for the backwardness of the arts among us. The eye and the visual apparatus may be intact; the object may be physically there, the cathedral of Notre Dame, or Rembrandt's portrait of Hendrik Stoeffel. In some bald sense, the latter may be "seen." They may be looked at, possibly recognized, and have their correct names attached. But for lack of continuous interaction between the total organism and the objects, they are not perceived, certainly not esthetically. A crowd of visitors steered through a picture-gallery by a guide, with attention called here and there to some high point, does not perceive; only by accident is there even interest in seeing a picture for the sake of subject matter vividly realized.

For to perceive, a beholder must *create* his own experience. And his creation must include relations comparable to those which the original producer underwent. They are not the same in any literal sense. But with the perceiver, as with the artist, there must be an ordering of the elements of the whole that is in form, although not in details, the same as the process of organization the creator of the work consciously experienced. Without an act of recreation the object is not perceived as a work of art. The artist selected, simplified, clarified, abridged and condensed according to his interest. The beholder must go through these operations according to his point of view and interest. In both, an act of abstraction, that is of extraction of what is significant, takes place. In both, there is comprehension in its literal signification—that is, a gathering together of details and particulars physically scattered into an experienced whole. There is work done on the part of the percipient as there is on the part of the artist. The one who is too lazy, idle, or indurated in convention to perform this work will not see or hear. His "appreciation" will be a mixture of scraps of learning with conformity to norms of conventional admiration and with a confused, even if genuine, emotional excitation.

THE considerations that have been presented imply both the community and the unlikeness, because of specific emphasis, of *an* experience, in its pregnant sense, and esthetic experience. The former has esthetic quality; otherwise its materials would not be

rounded out into a single coherent experience. It is not possible to divide in a vital experience the practical, emotional, and intellectual from one another and to set the properties of one over against the characteristics of the others. The emotional phase binds parts together into a single whole; "intellectual" simply names the fact that the experience has meaning; "practical" indicates that the organism is interacting with events and objects which surround it. The most elaborate philosophic or scientific inquiry and the most ambitious industrial or political enterprise has, when its different ingredients constitute an integral experience, esthetic quality. For then its varied parts are linked to one another, and do not merely succeed one another. And the parts through their experienced linkage move toward a consummation and close, not merely to cessation in time. This consummation, moreover, does not wait in consciousness for the whole undertaking to be finished. It is anticipated throughout and is recurrently savored with special intensity.

Nevertheless, the experiences in question are dominantly intellectual or practical, rather than *distinctively* esthetic, because of the interest and purpose that initiate and control them. In an intellectual experience, the conclusion has value on its own account. It can be extracted as a formula or as a "truth," and can be used in its independent entirety as factor and guide in other inquiries. In a work of art there is no such single self-sufficient deposit. The end, the terminus, is significant not by itself but as the integration of the parts. It has no other existence. A drama or novel is not the final sentence, even if the characters are disposed of as living happily ever after. In a distinctively esthetic experience, characteristics that are subdued in other experiences are dominant; those that are subordinate are controlling—namely, the characteristics in virtue of which the experience is an integrated complete experience on its own account.

In every integral experience there is form because there is dynamic organization. I call the organization dynamic because it takes time to complete it, because it is a growth. There is inception, development, fulfillment. Material is ingested and digested through interaction with that vital organization of the results of prior experience that constitutes the mind of the

worker. Incubation goes on until what is conceived is brought forth and is rendered perceptible as part of the common world. An esthetic experience can be crowded into a moment only in the sense that a climax of prior long enduring processes may arrive in an outstanding movement which so sweeps everything else into it that all else is forgotten. That which distinguishes an experience as esthetic is conversion of resistance and tensions, of excitations that in themselves are temptations to diversion, into a movement toward an inclusive and fulfilling close.

Experiencing like breathing is a rhythm of intakings and outgivings. Their succession is punctuated and made a rhythm by the existence of intervals, periods in which one phase is ceasing and the other is inchoate and preparing. William James aptly compared the course of a conscious experience to the alternate flights and perchings of a bird. The flights and perchings are intimately connected with one another; they are not so many unrelated lightings succeeded by a number of equally unrelated hoppings. Each resting place in experience is an undergoing in which is absorbed and taken home the consequences of prior doing, and, unless the doing is that of utter caprice or sheer routine, each doing carries in itself meaning that has been extracted and conserved. As with the advance of an army, all gains from what has been already effected are periodically consolidated, and always with a view to what is to be done next. If we move too rapidly, we get away from the base of supplies—of accrued meanings—and the experience is flustered, thin, and confused. If we dawdle too long after having extracted a net value, experience perishes of inanition.

The *form* of the whole is therefore present in every member. Fulfilling, consummating, are continuous functions, not mere ends, located at one place only. An engraver, painter, or writer is in process of completing at every stage of his work. He must at each point retain and sum up what has gone before as a whole and with reference to a whole to come. Otherwise there is no consistency and no security in his successive acts. The series of doings in the rhythm of experience give variety and movement; they save the work from monotony and useless repetitions. The undergoings are the corresponding elements in the rhythm, and they supply unity; they save the work from the aimlessness of a

mere succession of excitations. An object is peculiarly and dominantly esthetic, yielding the enjoyment characteristic of esthetic perception, when the factors that determine anything which can be called *an* experience are lifted high above the threshold of perception and are made manifest for their own sake.

## CHAPTER V

# THE EXPRESSIVE OBJECT

**E**XPRESSION, like construction, signifies both an action and its result. The last chapter considered it as an act. We are now concerned with the product, the object that is expressive, that says something to us. If the two meanings are separated, the object is viewed in isolation from the operation which produced it, and therefore apart from individuality of vision, since the act proceeds from an individual live creature. Theories which seize upon "expression," as if it denoted simply the object, always insist to the uttermost that the object of art is purely representative of other objects already in existence. They ignore the individual contribution which makes the object something new. They dwell upon its "universal" character, and upon its meaning—an ambiguous term, as we shall see. On the other hand, isolation of the act of expressing from the expressiveness possessed by the object leads to the notion that expression is merely a process of discharging personal emotion—the conception criticized in the last chapter.

The juice expressed by the wine press is what it is because of a prior act, and it is something new and distinctive. It does not merely represent other things. Yet it has something in common with other objects and it is made to appeal to other persons than the one who produced it. A poem and picture present material passed through the alembic of personal experience. They have no precedents in existence or in universal being. But, nonetheless, their material came from the public world and so has qualities in common with the material of other experiences, while the product awakens in other persons new perceptions of the meanings of the common world. The oppositions of individual and universal, of subjective and objective, of freedom and order, in which philosophers have reveled, have no place in the work of art. Expression as personal act and as objective result are organically connected with each other.

It is not necessary, therefore, to go into these metaphysical questions. We may approach the matter directly. What does it mean to say that a work of art is representative, since it must be representative in some sense if it is expressive? To say in general that a work of art is or is not representative is meaningless. For the word has many meanings. An affirmation of representative quality may be false in one sense and true in another. If literal reproduction is signified by "representative" then the work of art is not of that nature, for such a view ignores the uniqueness of the work due to the personal medium through which scenes and events have passed. Matisse said that the camera was a great boon to painters, since it relieved them from any apparent necessity of copying objects. But representation may also mean that the work of art tells something to those who enjoy it about the nature of their own experience of the world: that it presents the world in a new experience which they undergo.

A similar ambiguity attends the question of meaning in a work of art. Words are symbols which represent objects and actions in the sense of standing for them; in that sense they have meaning. A signboard has meaning when it says so many miles to such and such a place, with an arrow pointing the direction. But meaning in these two cases has a purely external reference; it stands for something by pointing to it. Meaning does not belong to the word and signboard of its own intrinsic right. They have meaning in the sense in which an algebraic formula or a cipher code has it. But there are other meanings that present themselves directly as possessions of objects which are experienced. Here there is no need for a code or convention of interpretation; the meaning is as inherent in immediate experience as is that of a flower garden. Denial of meaning to a work of art thus has two radically different significations. It may signify that a work of art has not the kind of meaning that belongs to signs and symbols in mathematics—a contention that is just. Or it may signify that the work of art is without meaning as nonsense is without it. The work of art certainly does not have that which is had by flags when used to signal another ship. But it does have that possessed by flags when they are used to decorate the deck of a ship for a dance.

Since there are presumably none who intend to assert that

works of art are without meaning in the sense of being senseless, it might seem as if they simply intended to exclude external meaning, meaning that resides outside the work of art itself. Unfortunately, however, the case is not so simple. The denial of meaning to art usually rests upon the assumption that the kind of value (and meaning) that a work of art possesses is so unique that it is without community or connection with the contents of other modes of experience than the esthetic. It is, in short, another way of upholding what I have called the esoteric idea of fine art. The conception implied in the treatment of esthetic experience set forth in the previous chapters is, indeed, that the work of art has a unique *quality*, but that it is that of clarifying and concentrating meanings contained in scattered and weakened ways in the material of other experiences.

The problem in hand may be approached by drawing a distinction between expression and statement. Science states meanings; art expresses them. It is possible that this remark will itself illustrate the difference I have in mind better than will any amount of explanatory comment. Yet I venture upon some degree of amplification. The instance of a signboard may help. It directs one's course to a place, say a city. It does not in any way supply experience of that city even in a vicarious way. What it does do is to set forth some of the conditions that must be fulfilled in order to procure that experience. What holds in this instance may be generalized. Statement sets forth the conditions under which an experience of an object or situation may be had. It is a good, that is, effective, statement in the degree in which these conditions are stated in such a way that they can be used as *directions* by which one may arrive at the experience. It is a bad statement, confused and false, if it sets forth these conditions in such a way that when they are used as directions, they mislead or take one to the object in a wasteful way.

"Science" signifies just that mode of statement that is most helpful as direction. To take the old standard case—which science today seems bent upon modifying—the statement that water is H<sub>2</sub>O is primarily a statement of the conditions under which water comes into existence. But it is also for those who understand it a direction for producing pure water and for testing anything that is likely to be taken for water. It is a "better"

statement than popular and pre-scientific ones just because in stating the conditions for the existence of water comprehensively and exactly, it sets them forth in a way that gives direction concerning generation of water. Such, however, is the newness of scientific statement and its present prestige (due ultimately to its directive efficacy) that scientific statement is often thought to possess more than a signboard function and to disclose or be "expressive" of the inner nature of things. If it did, it would come into competition with art, and we should have to take sides and decide which of the two promulgates the more genuine revelation.

The poetic as distinct from the prosaic, esthetic art as distinct from scientific, expression as distinct from statement, does something different from leading to an experience. It constitutes one. A traveler who follows the statement or direction of a sign-board finds himself in the city that has been pointed towards. He then may *have* in his own experience some of the meaning which the city possesses. We may have it to such an extent that the city has expressed itself to him—as Tintern Abbey expressed itself to Wordsworth in and through his poem. The city might, indeed, be trying to express itself in a celebration attended with pageantry and all other resources that would render its history and spirit perceptible. Then there is, if the visitor has himself the experience that permits him to participate, an expressive object, as different from the statements of a gazetteer, however full and correct they might be, as Wordsworth's poem is different from the account of Tintern Abbey given by an antiquarian. The poem, or painting, does not operate in the dimension of correct descriptive statement but in that of experience itself. Poetry and prose, literal photograph and painting, operate in different media to distinct ends. Prose is set forth in propositions. The logic of poetry is super-propositional even when it uses what are, grammatically speaking, propositions. The latter have intent; art is an immediate realization of intent.

Van Gogh's letters to his brother are filled with accounts of things he has observed and many of which he painted. I cite one of many instances. "I have a view of the Rhone—the iron bridge at Trinquetaille, in which sky and river are the color of absinthe, the quays a shade of lilac, the figures leaning on the parapet, blackish, the iron bridge an intense blue, with a note of

vivid orange in the background, and a note of intense malachite." Here is statement of a sort calculated to lead his brother to a like "view." But who, from the words alone—"I am trying to get something utterly heart-broken"—could infer the transition that Vincent himself makes to the particular *expressiveness* he desired to achieve in his picture? These words taken by themselves are not the expression; they only hint at it. The expressiveness, the esthetic meaning, is the picture itself. But the difference between the description of the scene and what he was striving for may remind us of the difference between statement and expression.

There may have been something accidental in the physical scene itself which left Van Gogh with the impression of utter desolation. Yet the meaning is there; it is there as something beyond the occasion of the painter's private experience, something that he takes to be there potentially for others. Its incorporation is the picture. Words cannot duplicate the expressiveness of the object. But words *can* point out that the picture is *not* "representative" of just a particular bridge over the Rhone River, nor yet of a broken heart, not even of Van Gogh's own emotion of desolation that happened somehow to be first excited and then absorbed by (and into) the scene. He aimed, through pictorial presentation of material that any one on the spot might "observe," that thousands had observed, to present a *new* object experienced as having its own unique meaning. Emotional turmoil and an external episode fused in an object which was "expressive" of neither of them separately nor yet of a mechanical junction of the two, but of just the meaning of the "utterly heart-broken." He did not pour forth the emotion of desolation; that was impossible. He selected and organized an external subject matter with a view to something quite different—an expression. And in the degree in which he succeeded the picture is, of necessity, expressive.

Roger Fry, in commenting upon the characteristic features of modern painting, has generalized as follows: "Almost any turn of the kaleidoscope of nature may set up in the artist a detached and esthetic vision, and, as he contemplates the particular field of vision, the (esthetically) chaotic and accidental contemplation of forms and colours begins to crystallize into a harmony; and, as this harmony becomes clear to the artist, his actual vision becomes distorted by the emphasis of the rhythm that is set up

within him. Certain relations of line become for him full of meaning; he apprehends them no longer curiously but passionately, and these lines begin to be so stressed and stand out so clearly from the rest that he sees them more distinctly than he did at first. Similarly, colours which in nature have almost always a certain vagueness and elusiveness, become so definite and clear to him, owing to their now so necessary relation to other colours, that, if he chooses to paint his vision, he can state it positively and definitely. In such a creative vision, the objects as such tend to disappear, to lose their separate unities and to take their place as so many bits in the whole mosaic of vision."

The passage seems to me an excellent account of the sort of thing that takes place in artistic perception and construction. It makes clear two things: Representation is not, if the vision has been artistic or constructive (creative), of "objects as such," that is of items in the natural scene as they literally occur or are recalled. It is *not* the *kind* of representation that a camera would report if a detective, say, were preserving the scene for his own purpose. Moreover, the reason for this fact is clearly set forth. Certain relations of lines and colors become important, "full of meaning," and everything else is subordinated to the evocation of what is implied in these relations, omitted, distorted, added to, transformed, to convey the relationships. One thing may be added to what is said. The painter did not approach the scene with an empty mind, but with a background of experiences long ago funded into capacities and likes, or with a commotion due to more recent experiences. He comes with a mind waiting, patient, willing to be impressed and yet not without bias and tendency in vision. Hence lines and color crystallize in this harmony rather than in that. This especial mode of harmonization is not the exclusive result of the lines and colors. It is a function of what is in the actual scene in its interaction with what the beholder brings with him. Some subtle affinity with the current of his own experience as a live creature causes lines and colors to arrange themselves in one pattern and rhythm rather than in another. The passionateness that marks observation goes with the development of the new form—it is the distinctly esthetic emotion that has been spoken of. But it is not independent of some prior emotion that has stirred in the

artist's experience; the latter is renewed and recreated through fusion with an emotion belonging to vision of esthetically qualified material.

If these considerations are borne in mind, a certain ambiguity that attaches to the passage quoted will be cleared up. He speaks of lines and their relations being full of meaning. But for anything explicitly stated, the meaning to which he refers might be *exclusively* of lines in their relations to one another. Then the meanings of lines and colors would completely replace all meanings that attach to this and any other experience of natural scene. In that case, the meaning of the esthetic object is unique in the sense of separation from meanings of everything else experienced. The work of art is then expressive only in the sense that it expresses something which belongs exclusively to art. That something of this kind is intended may be inferred from another statement of Mr. Fry's that is often quoted, to the effect that "subject matter" in a work of art is always irrelevant, if not actually detrimental.

Thus the passages quoted bring to a focus the problem of the nature of "representation" in art. The emphasis of the first passage upon emergence of new lines and colors in new relations is needed. It saves those who heed it from the assumption, usual in practice if not in theory especially in connection with painting, that representation signifies either imitation or agreeable reminiscence. But the statement that subject-matter is irrelevant commits those who accept it to a completely esoteric theory of art. Mr. Fry goes on to say: "In so far as the artist looks at objects only as parts of a whole field of vision which is his own potential theory, he can give no account of their esthetic value." And he adds: "... the artist is of all men the most constantly observant of his surroundings, and the least affected by their intrinsic esthetic value." Otherwise, how explain the tendency of the painter to turn away from scenes and objects that possess obvious esthetic value to things that stir him because of some oddity and form? Why is he more likely to paint Soho than St. Paul's?

The tendency to which Mr. Fry refers is an actual one, just as is the tendency of critics to condemn a picture on the ground that its subject matter is "sordid," or eccentric. But it is equally true, that any authentic artist will avoid material that

has previously been esthetically exploited to the full and will seek out material in which his capacity for individual vision and rendering can have free play. He leaves it to lesser men to go on saying with slight variations what has already been said. Before we decide that such considerations as these do not explain the tendency to which Mr. Fry refers, before we draw the particular inference he draws, we must return to the force of a consideration already noted.

Mr. Fry is intent upon establishing a radical difference between esthetic values that are intrinsic to things of ordinary experience and the esthetic value with which the artist is concerned. His implication is that the former is directly connected with subject matter, the latter with form that is separated from any subject matter, save what is, esthetically, an accident. Were it possible for an artist to approach a scene with no interests and attitudes, no background of values, drawn from his prior experience, he might, theoretically, see lines and colors exclusively in terms of their relationships as lines and colors. But this is a condition impossible to fulfill. Moreover, in such a case there would be nothing for him to become passionate about. Before an artist can develop his reconstruction of the scene before him in terms of the relations of colors and lines characteristic of his picture, he observes the scene with meanings and values brought to his perception by prior experiences. These are indeed remade, transformed, as his new esthetic vision takes shape. But they cannot vanish and yet the artist continue to see an object. No matter how ardently the artist might desire it, he cannot divest himself, in his new perception, of meanings funded from his past intercourse with his surroundings, nor can he free himself from the influence they exert upon the substance and manner of his present seeing. If he could and did, there would be nothing left in the way of an object for him to see.

Aspects and states of his prior experience of varied subject-matters have been wrought into his being; they are the organs with which he perceives. Creative vision modifies these materials. They take their place in an unprecedented object of a new experience. Memories, not necessarily conscious but retentions that have been organically incorporated in the very structure of the self, feed present observation. They are the nutriment that gives

body to what is seen. As they are rewrought into the matter of the new experience, they give the newly created object expressiveness.

Suppose the artist wishes to portray by means of his medium the emotional state or the enduring character of some person. By the compelling force of his medium, he will, if an artist—that is, if a painter, with disciplined respect for his medium—modify the object present to him. He will resee the object in terms of lines, colors, light, space—relations that form a pictorial whole, that is, that create an object immediately enjoyed in perception. In denying that the artist attempts to represent in the sense of literal reproduction of colors, lines, etc., as they already exist in the object, Mr. Fry is admirably right. But the inference that there is no re-presentation of any meanings of any subject matter whatever, no presentation that is of a subject matter having a meaning of its own which clarifies and concentrates the diffused and dulled meanings of other experiences does not follow. Generalize Mr. Fry's contention regarding painting by extension to drama or poetry and the latter cease to be.

The difference between the two kinds of representation may be indicated by reference to drawing. A person with a knack can easily jot down lines that suggest fear, rage, amusement, and so on. He indicates elation by lines curved in one direction, sorrow by curves in the opposite direction. But the result is not an object of *perception*. What is seen passes at once over into the thing suggested. The drawing is similar in kind though not in its constituents to a signboard. The object indicates rather than contains meaning. Its value is like that of the signboard to the motorist in the direction it gives to further activity. The arrangement of lines and spaces is not enjoyed in perception because of its own experienced quality but because of what it reminds us of.

There is another great difference between expression and statement. The latter is generalized. An intellectual statement is valuable in the degree in which it conducts the mind to many things all of the same kind. It is effective in the extent to which, like an even pavement, it transports us easily to many places. The meaning of an expressive object, on the contrary, is individualized. The diagrammatic drawing that suggests grief does not convey the grief of an individual person; it exhibits the *kind* of

facial "expression" persons in general manifest when suffering grief. The esthetic portrayal of grief manifests the grief of a particular individual in connection with a particular event. It is *that* state of sorrow which is depicted, not depression unattached. It has a *local* habitation.

A state of beatitude is a common theme in religious paintings. Saints are presented as enjoying a condition of blissful happiness. But in most of the earlier religious paintings, this state is indicated rather than expressed. The lines that set it forth for identification are like propositional signs. They are almost as much of a set and generalized nature as the halo that surrounds the heads of saints. Information is conveyed of an edifying character by symbols as conventional as those which are brought in to distinguish various St. Catherines or to mark the different Marys at the foot of the cross. There is no necessary relation, but only an association cultivated in ecclesiastical circles between the generic state of bliss and the particular figure in question. It may arouse a similar emotion in persons who still cherish the same associations. But instead of being esthetic, it will be of the kind described by William James: "I remember seeing an English couple sit for more than an hour on a piercing February day in the Academy in Venice before the celebrated 'Assumption' by Titian; and when I, after being chased from room to room by the cold, concluded to get into the sunshine as fast as possible and let the pictures go, but before leaving drew reverently near to them to learn with what superior forms of susceptibility they might be endowed, all I overheard was the woman's voice murmuring: 'What a *deprecatory* expression her face wears! What self-abnegation! How *unworthy* she feels of the honor she is receiving.'"

The sentimental religiosity of Murillo's paintings affords a good example of what happens when a painter of undoubted talent subordinates his artistic sense to associated "meanings" that are artistically irrelevant. Before his paintings, the type of remark that was wholly out of place in the case of Titian would be pertinent. But it would carry with it a lack of esthetic fulfillment.

Giotto painted saints. But their faces are less conventional; they are more individual and hence more naturally port-

trayed. At the same time they are more esthetically presented. The artist now uses light, space, color and line, the media, to present an object that belongs of itself in an enjoyed perceptual experience. The distinctive human religious meaning and the distinctive esthetic value interpenetrate and fuse; the object is truly expressive. This part of the picture is as unmistakably a Giotto as the saints of Masaccio are Masaccios. Bliss is not a stencil transferable from one painter's work to that of another, but bears the marks of its individual creator, for it expresses *his* experience as well as that presumed to belong to a saint in general. Meaning is more fully expressed, even in its essential nature, in an individualized form than in a diagrammatic representation or in a literal copy. The latter contains too much that is irrelevant; the former is too indefinite. An artistic relationship between color, light, and space in a portrait is not only more enjoyable than is an outline stencil but it says more. In a portrait by Titian, Tintoretto, Rembrandt, or Goya, we seem to be in the presence of essential character. But the result is accomplished by strictly plastic means, while the very way in which backgrounds are handled gives us something more than personality. Distortion of lines and departures from actual color may not only add to esthetic effect but result in increased expressiveness. For then material is not subordinated to some particular and antecedent meaning entertained about the person in question (and a literal reproduction can give only a cross-section exhibited at a particular moment), but it is reconstructed and reorganized to express the artist's imaginative vision of the whole being of the person.

There is no more common misunderstanding of painting than attends the nature of drawing. The observer, who has learned to recognize but not to perceive esthetically, will stand before a Botticelli, an El Greco, or Cezanne and say "What a pity the painter has never learned to draw." Yet drawing may be the artist's forte. Dr. Barnes has pointed out the real function of drawing in pictures. It is not a means for securing expressiveness in general but a very special value of expression. It is not a means of assisting recognition by means of exact outline and definite shading. Drawing is drawing *out*; it is extraction of what the subject matter has to say in particular to the painter in his integrated experience. Because the painting is a unity of inter-

related parts, every designation of a particular figure has, moreover, to be drawn *into* a relation of mutual reënforcement with all other plastic means—color, light, the spatial planes and the placing of other parts. This integration may, and in fact does, involve what is, from the standpoint of the shape of the real thing, a physical distortion.\*

Linear outlines that are used to reproduce with accuracy a particular shape are of necessity limited in expressiveness. They express either just one thing, "realistically" as it is sometimes said, or they express a generalized kind of thing by which we recognize the species—being a man, a tree, a saint, or whatever. Lines esthetically "drawn" fulfill many functions with corresponding increase of expressiveness. They embody the meaning of volume, of room and position; solidity and movement; they enter into the force of all other parts of the picture, and they serve to relate all parts together so that the value of the whole is energetically expressed. No mere skill in draughtsmanship can make lines that will fulfill all these functions. On the contrary, isolated skill in this respect is practically sure to end in a construction wherein linear outlines stand out by themselves, thus marring the expressiveness of the work as a whole. In the historical development of painting, the determination of shapes by drawing has steadily progressed from giving a pleasing indication of a particular object to become a relationship of planes and a harmonious merging of colors.

"Abstract" art may seem to be an exception to what has been said about expressiveness and meaning. Works of abstract art are asserted by some not to be works of art at all, and by others to be the very acme of art. The latter estimate them by their remoteness from representation in its literal sense; the former deny they have any expressiveness. The solution of the matter is found, I think, in the following statement of Dr. Barnes. "Reference to the real world does not disappear from art as forms cease to be those of actually existing things, any more than objectivity disappears from science when it ceases to talk in terms of earth, fire, air and water, and substitutes for these things the less easily recognizable 'hydrogen,' 'oxygen,' 'nitrogen,'

\* Barnes, "The Art in Painting," pp. 86 and 126, and "The Art of Matisse," the chapter on Drawing, especially pp. 81-82.

and 'carbon.' . . . When we cannot find in a picture representation of any particular object, what it represents may be the qualities which *all* particular objects share, such as color, extensity, solidity, movement, rhythm, etc. All particular things have these qualities; hence what serves, so to speak, as a paradigm of the visible essence of all things may hold in solution the emotions which individualized things provoke in a more specialized way." \*

Art does not, in short, cease to be expressive because it renders in visible form relations of things, without any more indication of the particulars that have the relations than is necessary to compose a whole. Every work of art "abstracts" in some degree from the particular traits of objects expressed. Otherwise, it would only, by means of exact imitation, create an illusion of the presence of the things themselves. The ultimate subject matter of still life painting is highly "realistic"—napery, pans, apples, bowls. But a still life by Chardin or Cezanne presents these materials in terms of relations of lines, planes and colors inherently enjoyed in perception. This re-ordering could not occur without some measure of "abstraction" from physical existence. Indeed, the very attempt to present three-dimensional objects on a two-dimensional plane demands abstraction from the usual conditions in which they exist. There is no *a priori* rule to decide how far abstraction may be carried. In a work of art the proof of the pudding is decidedly in the eating. There are still-lifes of Cezanne in which one of the objects is actually levitated. Yet the expressiveness of the whole to an observer with esthetic vision is enhanced not lowered. It carries further a trait which every one takes for granted in looking at a picture; namely, that no object in the picture is *physically* supported by any other. The support they give to one another lies in their respective contributions to the perceptual experience. Expression of the readiness of objects to move, although temporarily sustained in equilibrium, is intensified by abstraction from conditions that are physically and externally possible. "Abstraction" is usually associated with distinctively intellectual undertakings. Actually it is found in every work of art. The difference is the interest in which and purpose for which abstraction takes place in science and art respectively.

\* "The Art in Painting," p. 52. The origin of the idea is referred to Dr. Buermeyer.

In science it occurs for the sake of effective statement, as that has been defined; in art, for the sake of expressiveness of the object, and the artist's own being and experience determine *what* shall be expressed and therefore the nature and extent of the abstraction that occurs.

It is everywhere accepted that art involves selection. Lack of selection or undirected attention results in unorganized miscellany. The directive source of selection is interest; an unconscious but organic bias toward certain aspects and values of the complex and variegated universe in which we live. In no case can a work of art rival the infinite concreteness of nature. An artist is ruthless, when he selects, in following the logic of his interest while he adds to his selective bent an efflorescence or "abounding" in the sense or direction in which he is drawn. The one limit that must not be overpassed is that some reference to the qualities and structure of things in environment remain. Otherwise, the artist works in a purely private frame of reference and the outcome is without sense, even if vivid colors or loud sounds are present. The distance between scientific forms and concrete objects shows the extent to which different arts may carry their selective transformations without losing reference to the objective frame of reference.

The nudes of Renoir give delight with no pornographic suggestion. The voluptuous qualities of flesh are retained, even accentuated. But conditions of the physical existence of nude bodies have been abstracted from. Through abstraction and by means of the medium of color, ordinary associations with bare bodies are transferred into a new realm, for these associations are practical stimuli which disappear in the work of art. The esthetic expels the physical, and the heightening of qualities common to flesh with flowers ejects the erotic. The conception that objects have fixed and unalterable values is precisely the prejudice from which art emancipates us. The intrinsic qualities of things come out with startling vigor and freshness just because conventional associations are removed.

The moot problem of the place of the ugly in works of art seems to me to receive its solution when its terms are seen in this context. That to which the word "ugly" is applied is the object in its customary associations, those which have come to

appear an inherent part of some object. It does not apply to what is present in the picture or drama. There is transformation because of emergence in an object having its own expressiveness: exactly as in the case of Renoir's nudes. Something which was ugly under other conditions, the usual ones, is extracted from the conditions in which it was repulsive and is transfigured in quality as it becomes a part of an expressive whole. In its new setting, the very contrast with a former ugliness adds piquancy, animation, and, in serious matters, increases depth of meaning in an almost incredible way.

The peculiar power of tragedy to leave us at the end with a sense of reconciliation rather than with one of horror forms the theme of one of the oldest discussions of literary art.\* I quote one theory which is relevant to the present discussion. Samuel Johnson said: "The delight of tragedy proceeds from our consciousness of fiction; if we thought murders and treasons real they would please us no more." This explanation seems to be constructed on the model of the small boy's statement that pins had saved many persons' lives "on account of their not swallowing them." The absence of reality in the dramatic event is, indeed, a negative condition of the effect of tragedy. But fictitious killing is not therefore pleasant. The positive fact is that a particular subject matter in being removed from its practical context has entered into a new whole as an integral part of it. In its new relationships, it acquires a new expression. It becomes a qualitative part of a new qualitative design. Mr. Colvin after quoting from Johnson the passage just cited, adds: "So does our peculiar consciousness of pleasure in watching the fencing match in '*As You Like It*,' depend on our consciousness of fiction." Here, too, a negative condition is treated as a positive force. "Consciousness of fiction" is a backhanded way of expressing something that in

\*I cannot but think that the amount of thought which has been devoted to finding ingenious explanations for the Aristotelian idea of catharsis is due rather to the fascination of the topic than to any subtlety on Aristotle's part. The sixty or more meanings that have been given to it seem unnecessary in view of his own literal statement that persons are given to excessive emotion, and that as religious music cures people in religious frenzy "like persons cured by a drug," so the excessively timid and compassionate, and all suffering from over-intense emotions, are purged by melodies, and the relief is agreeable.

itself is intensely positive: the consciousness of an integral whole in which an incident gets a new qualitative value.

IN discussing the act of expression, we saw that the conversion of an act of immediate discharge into one of expression depends upon existence of conditions that impede direct manifestation and that switch it into a channel where it is coördinated with other impulsions. The inhibition of the original raw emotion is not a suppression of it; restraint is not, in art, identical with constraint. The impulsion is modified by collateral tendencies; the modification gives it added meaning—the meaning of the whole of which it is henceforth a constituent part. In esthetic perception, there are two modes of collateral and coöperative response which are involved in the change of direct discharge into an act of expression. These two ways of subordination and reënforcement explain the expressiveness of the perceived object. By their means, a particular incident ceases to be a stimulus to direct action and becomes a value of a perceived object.

The first of these collateral factors is the existence of motor dispositions previously formed. A surgeon, golfer, ball player, as well as a dancer, painter, or violin-player has at hand and under command certain motor sets of the body. Without them, no complex skilled act can be performed. An inexpert huntsman has buck fever when he suddenly comes upon the game he has been pursuing. He does not have effective lines of motor response ready and waiting. His tendencies to action therefore conflict and get in the way of one another, and the result is confusion, a whirl and blur. The old hand at the game may be emotionally stirred also. But he works off his emotion by directing his response along channels prepared in advance: steady holding of eye and hand, sighting of rifle, etc. If we substitute a painter or a poet in the circumstances of suddenly coming upon a graceful deer in a green and sun-specked forest, there is also diversion of immediate response into collateral channels. He does not get ready to shoot, but neither does he permit his response to diffuse itself at random through his whole body. The motor coördinations that are ready because of prior experience at once render his perception of the situation more acute and intense and incorporate

into it meanings that give it depth, while they also cause what is seen to fall into fitting rhythms.

I have been speaking from the standpoint of the one who acts. But precisely similar considerations hold from the side of the perceiver. There must be indirect and collateral channels of response prepared in advance in the case of one who really sees the picture or hears the music. This motor preparation is a large part of esthetic education in any particular line. To know what to look for and how to see it is an affair of readiness on the part of motor equipment. A skilled surgeon is the one who appreciates the artistry of another surgeon's performance; he follows it sympathetically, though not overtly, in his own body. The one who knows something about the relation of the movements of the piano-player to the production of music from the piano will hear something the mere layman does not perceive—just as the expert performer "fingers" music while engaged in reading a score. One does not have to know much about mixing paints on a palette or about the brush-strokes that transfer pigments to canvas to see the picture in the painting. But it is necessary that there be ready defined channels of motor response, due in part to native constitution and in part to education through experience. Emotion may be stirred and yet be as irrelevant to the act of perception as it is to the action of the hunter seized by buck-fever. It is not too much to say that emotion that lacks proper motor lines of operation will be so undirected as to confuse and distort perception.

But something is needed to coöperate with defined motor lines of response. An unprepared person at the theater may be so ready to take an active part in what is going on—in helping the hero and foiling the villain as he would like to do in real life—as not to see the play. But a blasé critic may permit his trained modes of technical response—ultimately always motor—to control him to such an extent that, while he skillfully apprehends *how* things are done, he does not care for *what* is expressed. The other factor that is required in order that a work may be expressive to a percipient is meanings and values extracted from prior experiences and funded in such a way that they fuse with the qualities directly presented in the work of art. Technical responses, if not held in balance with such secondary supplied

material, are so purely technical that the expressiveness of the object is narrowly limited. But if the allied material of former experiences does not directly blend with the qualities of the poem or painting, they remain extraneous suggestions, not part of the expressiveness of the object itself.

I have avoided the use of the word "association" because traditional psychology supposes that associated material and the immediate color or sound that evokes it remain separate from one another. It does not admit of the possibility of a fusion so complete as to incorporate both members in a single whole. This psychology holds that direct sensuous quality is one thing, and an idea or image which it calls out or suggests is another distinct mental item. The esthetic theory based on this psychology cannot admit that the suggesting and the suggested may interpenetrate and form a unity in which present sense quality confers vividness of realization while the material evoked supplies content and depth.

The issue that is involved has a much greater import for the philosophy of esthetics than appears at first sight. The question of the relation that exists between direct sensuous matter and that which is incorporated with it because of prior experiences, goes to the heart of the expressiveness of an object. Failure to see that what takes place is not external "association" but is internal and intrinsic integration has led to two opposed and equally false conceptions of the nature of expression. According to one theory, *esthetic* expressiveness belongs to the direct sensuous qualities, what is added by suggestion only rendering the object more interesting but not becoming a part of its esthetic being. The other theory takes the opposite tack, and imputes expressiveness wholly to associated material.

The expressiveness of lines as mere lines is offered as proof that esthetic value belongs to sense qualities in and of themselves; their status may serve as a test of the theory. Different kinds of lines, straight and curved, and among the straight the horizontal and vertical, and among curves those that are closed and those that droop and rise, have different immediate esthetic qualities. Of this fact there is no doubt. But the theory under consideration holds that their peculiar expressiveness can be explained without any reference beyond the immediate sensory

apparatus directly involved. It is held that the dry stiffness of a straight line is due to the fact that the eye in seeing tends to change direction, to move in tangents, so that it acts under coercion when compelled to move straight on, so that, in consequence, the experienced result is unpleasant. Curved lines, on the other hand, are agreeable because they conform to the natural tendencies of the eye's own movements.

It is admitted that this factor probably does have something to do with the mere pleasantness or unpleasantness of the experience. But the problem of expressiveness is not touched. While the optical apparatus may be isolated in anatomical dissection, it never *functions* in isolation. It operates in connection with the hand in reaching for things and in exploring their surface, in guiding manipulation of things, in directing locomotion. This fact has for its consequence the other fact that the sense-qualities coming to us by means of the optical apparatus are simultaneously bound up with those that come to us from objects through collateral activities. The roundness seen is that of balls; angles perceived are the result not just of switches in the eye-movements but are properties of books and boxes handled; curves are the arch of the sky, the dome of a building; horizontal lines are seen as the spread of the ground, the edges of things around us. This factor is so continually and so unfailingly involved in every use of the eyes that the visually experienced qualities of lines cannot possibly be referred to the action of the eyes alone.

Nature, in other words, does not present us with lines in isolation. As experienced, they are the lines of objects; boundaries of *things*. They define the shapes by which we ordinarily recognize objects about us. Hence lines, even when we try to ignore everything else and gaze upon them in isolation, carry over the meaning of the objects of which they have been constituent parts. They are expressive of the natural scenes they have defined for us. While lines demarcate and define objects, they also assemble and connect. One who has run into a sharply projecting corner will appreciate the aptness of the term "acute" angle. Objects with widely spreading lines often have that gaping quality so stupid that we call it "obtuse." That is to say, lines express the ways in which things act upon one another and upon us; the ways in which, when objects act together, they reënforce

and interfere. For *this* reason, lines are wavering, upright, oblique, crooked, majestic; for this reason they seem in direct perception to have even moral expressiveness. They are earth-bound and aspiring; intimate and coldly aloof; enticing and repellent. They carry with them the properties of objects.

The habitual properties of lines cannot be got rid of even in an experiment that endeavors to isolate the experience of lines from everything else. The properties of objects that lines define and of movements they relate are too deeply embedded. These properties are resonances of a multitude of experiences in which, in our concern with objects, we are not even aware of lines as such. Different lines and different relations of lines have become subconsciously charged with all the values that result from what they have done in our experience in our every contact with the world about us. The expressiveness of lines and space relations in painting cannot be understood upon any other basis.

The other theory denies that immediate sense qualities have *any* expressiveness; it holds that sense serves merely as an external vehicle by which other meanings are conveyed to us. Vernon Lee, herself an artist of undoubted sensitiveness, has developed this theory most consistently, and in a way, which, while it has something in common with the German theory of *Einfuehlung* or empathy, avoids the idea that our esthetic perception is a projection into objects of an internal mimicry of their properties, one which we dramatically enact when we look at them—a theory that, in turn, is hardly more than an animistic version of the classic theory of representation.

According to Vernon Lee, as well as to some other theorists in the field of esthetics, "art" signifies a group of activities that are, respectively, recording, constructive, logical and communicative. There is nothing esthetic about art itself. The products of these arts become esthetic "in response to a totally different desire having its own reasons, standard, imperative." This "totally different" desire is the desire for *shapes*, and this desire arises because of the need for satisfaction of congruous relations among our modes of *motor* imagery. Hence direct sensuous qualities like those of color and tone are irrelevant. The demand for shapes is satisfied when our motor imagery reenacts the *relations* em-

bodied in an object—as, for example, “the fan-like arrangement of sharply convergent lines and exquisitely phrased skyline of hills, picked up at intervals into sharp crests and dropping down merely to rush up again in long rapid concave curves.”

Sensory qualities are said to be non-esthetic because, unlike the relations we actively enact, they are forced upon us and tend to overwhelm us. What counts is what we *do*, not what we receive. The essential thing esthetically is our own mental activity of starting, traveling, returning to a starting point, holding on to the past, carrying it along; the movement of attention backwards and forwards, as these acts are executed by the mechanism of motor imagery. The resulting relations define *shape* and shape is *wholly* a matter of relations. They “transform what would otherwise be meaningless juxtapositions or sequences of sensations into the significant entities which can be remembered and cognized even when their constituent sensations are completely altered, namely, into shapes.” The outcome is empathy in its true meaning. It deals not “directly with mood and emotion but with dynamic conditions which enter into moods and emotions and take their names from them.... The various and variously combined dramas enacted by lines and curves and angles take place not in the marble or pigment embodying the contemplated shapes, but *solely in ourselves*.... And since we are their only real actors, these empathic dramas of lines are bound to affect us, whether as corroborating or as thwarting our vital needs and habits.” (Italics not in the original text.)

The theory is significant in the thoroughness with which it separates sense and relations, matter and form, the active and the receptive, phases of experience, and in its logical statement of what happens when they are separated. The recognition of the rôles of relations and of activity on our part (the latter being physiologically mediated in all probability by our motor mechanisms) is welcome in contrast with theories that recognize only sense-qualities as they are passively received and undergone. But a theory that regards color in painting as esthetically irrelevant, that holds that tones in music are merely something upon which esthetic relations are superimposed, hardly seems to need refutation.

The two theories that have been criticized complement

each other. But the truth of esthetic theory cannot be arrived at by a mechanical addition of one theory to the other. The expressiveness of the object of art is due to the fact that it presents a thorough and complete interpenetration of the materials of undergoing and of action, the latter including a reorganization of matter brought with us from past experience. For, in the interpenetration, the latter is material not added by way of external association nor yet by way of superimposition upon sense qualities. The expressiveness of the object is the report and celebration of the complete fusion of what we undergo and what our activity of attentive perception brings into what we receive by means of the senses.

The reference to corroboration of our vital needs and habits deserves notice. Are these vital needs and habits purely formal? Can they be satisfied through relations alone, or do they demand to be fed by the matter of color and sound? That the latter is the case seems to be implicitly admitted when Vernon Lee goes on to say that "art so far from delivering us from the sense of really living, intensifies and amplifies those states of serenity of which we are given the sample, too rare, too small and too alloyed in the course of our normal practical life." Exactly so. But the experiences that art intensifies and amplifies neither exist solely inside ourselves, nor do they consist of relations apart from matter. The moments when the creature is both most alive and most composed and concentrated are those of fullest intercourse with the environment, in which sensuous material and relations are most completely merged. Art would not amplify experience if it withdrew the self into the self nor would the experience that results from such retirement be expressive.

BOTH of the theories considered separate the live creature from the world in which it lives; lives by interaction through a series of related doings and undergoings, which when they are schematized by psychology, are motor and sensory. The first theory finds in organic activity isolated from the events and scenes of the world a sufficient cause of the expressive nature of certain sensations. The other theory locates the esthetic element "solely in ourselves," through enacting of motor relations in "shapes."

But the process of living is continuous; it possesses continuity because it is an everlastingly renewed process of acting upon the environment and being acted upon by it together with institution of relations between what is done and what is undergone. Hence experience is necessarily cumulative and its subject matter gains expressiveness because of cumulative continuity. The world we have experienced becomes an integral part of the self that acts and is acted upon in further experience. In their physical occurrence, things and events experienced pass and are gone. But something of their meaning and value is retained as an integral part of the self. Through habits formed in intercourse with the world, we also in-habit the world. It becomes a home and the home is part of our every experience.

How, then, can objects of experience avoid becoming expressive? Yet apathy and torpor conceal this expressiveness by building a shell about objects. Familiarity induces indifference, prejudice blinds us; conceit looks through the wrong end of a telescope and minimizes the significance possessed by objects in favor of the alleged importance of the self. Art throws off the covers that hide the expressiveness of experienced things; it quickens us from the slackness of routine and enables us to forget ourselves by finding ourselves in the delight of experiencing the world about us in its varied qualities and forms. It intercepts every shade of expressiveness found in objects and orders them in a new experience of life.

Because the objects of art are expressive, they communicate. I do not say that communication to others is the intent of an artist. But it is the consequence of his work—which indeed lives only in communication when it operates in the experience of others. If the artist desires to communicate a *special* message, he thereby tends to limit the expressiveness of his work to others—whether he wishes to communicate a moral lesson or a sense of his own cleverness. Indifference to response of the immediate audience is a necessary trait of all artists that have something new to say. But they are animated by a deep conviction that since they can only say what they have to say, the trouble is not with their work but those who, having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not. Communicability has nothing to do with popularity.

I can but think that much of what Tolstoi says about

immediate contagion as a test of artistic quality is false, and what he says about the kind of material which can alone be communicated is narrow. But if the time span be extended, it is true that no man is eloquent save when some one is moved as he listens. Those who are moved feel, as Tolstoi says, that what the work expresses is as if it were something one had oneself been longing to express. Meantime, the artist works to create an audience to which he does communicate. In the end, works of art are the only media of complete and unhindered communication between man and man that can occur in a world full of gulfs and walls that limit community of experience.

## CHAPTER XI

# THE HUMAN CONTRIBUTION

BY THE phrase, "the human contribution," I mean those aspects and elements of esthetic experience that are usually called psychological. It is theoretically conceivable that discussion of psychological factors is not a necessary ingredient of a philosophy of art. Practically, it is indispensable. For historic theories are full of psychological terms, and these terms are not used in a neutral sense, but are charged with interpretations read into them because of psychological theories that have been current. Expunge special meanings given to such terms as sensation, intuition, contemplation, will, association, emotion, and a large part of esthetic philosophy would disappear. Moreover, each one of these terms has different meanings given to it by different schools of psychology. "Sensation," for example, has been treated in ways as far apart as the notion that it is the sole original constituent of experience and the idea that it is a heritage from low forms of animal life, and hence something to be minimized in human experience. Esthetic theories are filled with fossils of antiquated psychologies and are overlaid with débris of psychological controversies. Discussion of the psychological aspect of esthetics is unavoidable.

Naturally the discussion must be confined to the more generic features of the human contribution. Because of the individual interest and attitude of the artist, because of the individualized character of every concrete work of art, the specifically personal contribution must be sought in works of art themselves. But in spite of the immense disparity of these unique products, there is a constitution common to all normal individuals. They have the same hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions; they are fed with the same foods, hurt by the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same remedies, warmed and cooled by the same variations in climate.

To understand the basic psychological factors and to protect ourselves against the errors of false psychologies that play havoc with esthetic philosophies, we recur to our basic principles: Experience is a matter of the interaction of organism with its environment, an environment that is human as well as physical, that includes the materials of tradition and institutions as well as local surroundings. The organism brings with it through its own structure, native and acquired, forces that play a part in the interaction. The self acts as well as undergoes, and its undergoing are not impressions stamped upon an inert wax but depend upon the way the organism reacts and responds. There is no experience in which the human contribution is not a factor in determining what actually happens. The organism is a force, not a transparency.

Because every experience is constituted by interaction between "subject" and "object," between a self and its world, it is not itself either merely physical nor merely mental, no matter how much one factor or the other predominates. The experiences that are emphatically called, because of the dominance of the internal contribution, "mental," have reference, direct or remote, to experiences of a more objective character; they are the products of discrimination, and hence can be understood only as we take into account the total normal experience in which both inner and outer factors are so incorporated that each has lost its special character. In an experience, things and events belonging to the world, physical and social, are transformed through the human context they enter, while the live creature is changed and developed through its intercourse with things previously external to it.

This conception of the production and structure of an experience is, then, the criterion that will be used to interpret and judge the psychological conceptions that have played a chief rôle in esthetic theory. I say "judge," or criticize, because so many of these conceptions have their source in a separation of organism and environment; a separation that is alleged to be native and original. Experience is supposed to be something that occurs exclusively inside a self or mind or consciousness, something self-contained and sustaining only external relations to the objective scene in which it happens to be set. Then all psychological states

and processes are not thought of as functions of a live creature as it lives in its natural surroundings. When the linkage of the self with its world is broken, then also the various ways in which the self interacts with the world cease to have a unitary connection with one another. They fall into separate fragments of sense, feeling, desire, purpose, knowing, volition. Intrinsic connection of the self with the world through reciprocity of undergoing and doing; and the fact that all distinctions which analysis can introduce into the psychological factor are but different aspects and phases of a continuous, though varied, interaction of self and environment, are the two main considerations that will be brought to bear in the discussion that follows.

Before setting out on any detailed discussion, I shall, however, refer to the way in which sharp psychological distinctions historically originated. They were at first formulations of differences found among the portions and classes of society. Plato provides an almost perfect example of this fact. He openly derived his three-fold division of the soul from what he observed in the communal life of his day. He did consciously what many psychologists have done in their classifications without being aware of their source, taking them from differences socially observable while they thought to arrive at them by pure introspection. From mind as it was manifest in the large print version of the community, Plato discriminated the sensuously appetitive and acquisitive faculty, exhibited in the mercantile class; the "spirited" faculty, that of generous outgoing impulse and will, he derived from citizen-soldiers loyal to law and right belief, even at the expense of their personal existence; the rational faculty he found in those who were fit for the making of laws. He found these same differences dominant in different racial groups, the Oriental, the northern barbarians, and the Athenian Greeks.

There are no intrinsic psychological divisions between the intellectual and the sensory aspects; the emotional and ideational; the imaginative and the practical phases of human nature. But there are individuals and even classes of individuals who are dominantly executive or reflective; dreamers or "idealists" and doers, sensualists and the humanely minded; egoists and unselfish; those who engage in routine bodily activity and those who specialize in intellectual inquiry. In a badly ordered

society such divisions as these are exaggerated. The well-rounded man and woman are the exception. But just as it is the office of art to be unifying, to break through conventional distinctions to the underlying common elements of the experienced world, while developing individuality as the manner of seeing and expressing these elements, so it is the office of art in the individual person, to compose differences, to do away with isolations and conflicts among the elements of our being, to utilize oppositions among them to build a richer personality. Hence the extraordinary ineptitude of a compartmentalized psychology to serve as an instrument for a theory of art.

Extreme instances of the results of separation of organism and the world are not infrequent in esthetic philosophy. Such a separation lies behind the idea that esthetic quality does not belong to objects as objects but is projected into them by mind. It is the source of the definition of beauty as "objectified pleasure" instead of as pleasure in the object, so much *in* it that the object and pleasure are one and undivided in the experience. In other fields of experience a preliminary distinction between self and object is not only legitimate but necessary. An investigator must constantly distinguish as best he can between those parts of an experience that come from himself in the way of suggestions and hypotheses, and the influence of personal desire for a certain result, and the properties of the object inquired into. Improvements in scientific technique are devised for the express purpose of facilitating this distinction. Prejudice, preconceptions and desire influence native tendencies in judgment to such an extent that especial pains must be taken to become aware of them so that they may be eliminated.

A like obligation is imposed upon those engaged in manipulation of materials and execution of projects. They need to maintain the attitude of saying "this belongs to me while that inheres in the objects dealt with." Otherwise they will not keep their eye "upon the ball." The fuzzy sentimentalist is one who permits his own feelings and wishes to color that which he takes to be the object. An attitude that is indispensable to success in thinking and in practical planning and execution becomes a deep-seated habit. A person can hardly cross a street where traffic is swift and crowded save as he keeps in mind differences which phi-

Iosophers formulate in terms of "subject" and "object." The professional thinker (and naturally he is the one who writes treatises on esthetic theory) is the one who is most perpetually haunted by the difference between self and the world. He approaches discussion of art with a reënforced bias, and one, which, most unfortunately, is just the one most fatal to esthetic understanding. For the uniquely distinguishing feature of esthetic experience is exactly the fact that no such distinction of self and object exists in it, since it is esthetic in the degree in which organism and environment coöperate to institute an experience in which the two are so fully integrated that each disappears.

When an experience is once recognized to be causally dependent upon the way in which self and objects interact, there is no mystery about what is called "projection." When a landscape is seen as yellow with yellow spectacles or by jaundiced eyes, there is no shooting of yellow, like a projectile, into the landscape from the self. The organic factor in causal interaction with the environmental produces the yellow of the landscape, in the same way in which hydrogen and oxygen when interacting produce water that is wet. A writer on psychiatry tells a story of a man who complained of the discordant sound of church bells when in fact the sound was musical. Examination showed that his betrothed had jilted him to marry a clergyman. Here was "projection" with a vengeance. Not, however, because something psychical was miraculously extruded from the self and shot into the physical object, but because the *experience* of the sound of bells was dependent upon an organism that was so twisted as to *act* abnormally as a factor in certain situations. Projection in fact is a case of transferred values, "transfer" being accomplished through the organic participation of a being that has been made what it is and caused to act as it does through organic modifications due to prior experiences.

It is a familiar fact that colors of a landscape become more vivid when seen with the head upside down. The change of physical position does not cause a new psychical element to be injected, but it does signify that a somewhat different organism is acting, and difference in the cause is bound to make a difference in the effect. Instructors in drawing strive to bring about a recovery of the original innocency of the eye. Here it is a question

of affecting a disassociation of elements that have, in prior experience, got so bound together that an experience is induced which works against representation upon a two-dimensional surface. The organism that is set to experience in terms of touch has to be reconditioned to experience space-relations as nearly as possible in terms of the eye. The kind of projection usually involved in esthetic vision involves an analogous relaxation of a strain built up in pursuit of special ends so that the whole personality may interact freely without deflection or restriction so as to reach a particular and preconceived outcome. First hostile reactions to a new mode in an art are usually due to unwillingness to perform some needed disassociation.

The misconception of what takes place in what is called projection is, in short, wholly dependent upon failure to see that self, organism, subject, mind—whatever term is used—denotes a factor which interacts causally with environing things to produce an experience. The same failure is found when the self is regarded as the bearer or carrier of an experience instead of a factor absorbed in what is produced, as once more in the case of the gases that produce water. When *control* of formation and development of an experience is needed, we have to treat the self as its bearer; we have to acknowledge the causal efficacy of the self in order to secure responsibility. But this emphasis upon the self is for a special purpose, and it disappears when the need for control in a specified predetermined direction no longer exists—as it assuredly does not exist in an esthetic experience, although in case of the new in art it may be a preliminary to having an esthetic experience.

As intelligent a critic as I. A. Richards falls into the fallacy. He writes: "We are accustomed to say that the picture is beautiful instead of saying that it causes an experience in us which is valuable in certain ways.... When what we ought to say is that they (certain objects) cause effects in us of one kind or another, the fallacy of projecting the effect and making it a part of the cause tends to recur." What is overlooked is that it is *not* the painting as a *picture* (that is, the object in esthetic experience) that causes certain effects "*in us*." The painting as a picture is *itself* a *total effect* brought about by the interaction of external and organic causes. The external causal factor is vibra-

tions of light from pigments on canvas variously reflected and refracted. It is ultimately that which physical science discovers—atoms, electrons, protons. The *picture* is the integral outcome of their interaction with what the mind through the organism contributes. Its "beauty," which, I agree with Mr. Richards, is simply a short term for certain valued qualities, in being an intrinsic part of the total effect, belongs to the picture just as much as do the rest of its properties.

The reference to "in us" is as much an abstraction from the total experience, as on the other side it would be to resolve the picture into mere aggregations of molecules and atoms. Even anger and hate are partly caused *by* us rather than *in* us. Not that we are the sole cause, but that our own make-up is a contributing causal factor. It is true that most art, up to the time of the Renaissance, seems to us impersonal, dealing with "universal" phases of the experienced world, in comparison with the rôle of the individual's experience in modern art. Not perhaps till the nineteenth century did *consciousness* of the rightful place of the strictly personal factor play any large rôle in plastic and literary arts. The novel of the "stream of consciousness" marks a definite date in the course of changing experience, as much so as impressionism in painting. The longer course of every art is marked by shifts of emphasis. Already we are in the presence of a reaction toward the impersonal and the abstract. These shifts in art are connected with large rhythms in human history. But even the art that allows least play to individual variations—like, say, the religious painting and sculpture of the twelfth century—is not mechanical and hence it bears the stamp of personality; and the classicist paintings of the seventeenth century reflect, like those of Nicholas Poussin, a personal predilection in substance and form, while the most "individualized" paintings never get away from some aspect or phase of the objective scene.

Variations in what we may call the *ratio* of personal and impersonal, subjective and objective, concrete and abstract factors, are perhaps the very things that lead the psychological aspect of esthetic theory and criticism astray. Writers in each period tend to take as what is uppermost in the art tendencies of their own day as the normal psychological base of all art. The consequence is that those eras and aspects of the past and of alien

countries most similar and dissimilar to existing tendencies undergo waves of appreciation and depreciation. A catholic philosophy based on understanding of the constant relation of self and world amid variations in their actual contents would render enjoyment wider and more sympathetic. We could then enjoy Negro sculpture as well as Greek; Persian paintings as well as those of the sixteenth century by Italian painters.

Whenever the bond that binds the living creature to his environment is broken, there is nothing that holds together the various factors and phases of the self. Thought, emotion, sense, purpose, impulsion fall apart, and are assigned to different compartments of our being. For their unity is found in the coöperative rôles they play in active and receptive relations to the environment. When elements united in experience are separated, the resulting esthetic theory is bound to be one-sided. I may illustrate from the vogue which the concept of contemplation, understood in a narrow way, has enjoyed in esthetics. At first sight, "contemplation" appears to be about as inept a term as could be selected to denote the excited and passionate absorption that often accompanies experience of a drama, a poem, or a painting. Attentive observation is certainly one essential factor in all genuine perception including the esthetic. But how does it happen that this factor is reduced to the bare act of contemplation?

The answer, so far as psychological theory is concerned, is to be found in Kant's "Critique of Judgment." Kant was a past-master in first drawing distinctions and then erecting them into compartmental divisions. The effect upon subsequent theory was to give the separation of the esthetic from other modes of experience an alleged scientific basis in the constitution of human nature. Kant had referred knowledge to one division of our nature, the faculty of understanding working in conjunction with sense-materials. He had referred ordinary conduct, as prudential, to desire which has pleasure for its object, and moral conduct to the Pure Reason operating as a demand upon Pure Will.\* Having disposed of Truth and the Good, it remained to find a niche for Beauty, the remaining term in the classic trio. Pure Feeling remained, being "pure" in the sense of being isolated and

\* The effect upon German thought of Capitalization has hardly received proper attention.

self-enclosed; feeling free from any taint of desire; feeling that strictly speaking is non-empirical. So he bethought himself of a faculty of Judgment which is not reflective but intuitive and yet not concerned with objects of Pure Reason. This faculty is exercised in Contemplation, and the distinctively esthetic element is the pleasure which attends such Contemplation. Thus the psychological road was opened leading to the ivory tower of "Beauty" remote from all desire, action, and stir of emotion.

Although Kant gives no evidence in his writings of any special esthetic sensitivity, it is possible that his theoretic emphasis reflects the artistic tendencies of the eighteenth century. For that century was, generally speaking, till towards its close, a century of "reason" rather than of "passion," and hence one in which objective order and regularity, the invariant element, was almost exclusively the source of esthetic satisfaction—a situation that lent itself to the idea that contemplative judgment and the feeling connected with it are the peculiar differentia of esthetic experience. But if we generalize the idea and extend it to all periods of artistic endeavor, its absurdity is evident. It not only passes over, as if it were irrelevant, the doing and making involved in the production of a work of art (and the corresponding active elements in the appreciative response), but it involves an extremely one-sided idea of the nature of perception. It takes as its cue to the understanding of perception what belongs only to the act of recognition, merely broadening the latter to include the pleasure that attends it when recognition is prolonged and extensive. It is thus a theory peculiarly appropriate to a time when the "representative" nature of art is especially marked and when the subject-matter represented is of a "rational" nature—regular and recurrent elements and phases of existence.

Taken at its best, that is to say, with a liberal interpretation, contemplation designates that aspect of perception in which elements of seeking and of thinking are subordinated (although not absent) to the perfecting of the process of perception itself. To define the emotional element of esthetic perception merely as the pleasure taken in the act of contemplation, independent of what is excited by the matter contemplated, results, however, in a thoroughly anæmic conception of art. Carried to its logical conclusion, it would exclude from esthetic perception most of the

subject-matter that is enjoyed in the case of architectural structures, the drama, and the novel, with all their attendant reverberations.

Not absence of desire and thought but their thorough incorporation into perceptual experience characterizes esthetic experience, in its distinction from experiences that are especially "intellectual" and "practical." The uniqueness of the object perceived is an obstacle rather than an aid to the investigator. He is interested in it as far as it leads his thought and observation to something beyond itself; to him the object is datum or evidence. Nor does the man whose perception is *dominated* by desire or appetite enjoy it for its own sake; his interest in it is because of a particular act to which as a consequence his perception may lead; it is a stimulus, rather than an object in which perception may rest with satisfaction. The esthetic percipient is free from desire in the presence of a sunset, a cathedral, or a bouquet of flowers in the sense that his desires are fulfilled in the perception itself. He does not want the object for the sake of something else.

In reading, say, Keats' "St. Agnes Eve," thought is active but at the same time its demands are fully met. The rhythm of expectancy and satisfaction is so internally complete that the reader is not aware of thought as a separate element, certainly not of it as a labor. The experience is marked by a greater inclusiveness of all psychological factors than occurs in ordinary experiences, not by reduction of them to a single response. Such a reduction is an impoverishment. How can an experience that is rich as well as unified be reached by a process of exclusion? A man who finds himself in a field with an angry bull has but one desire and thought: to attain a place of safety. Once in security, he may enjoy the spectacle of untamed power. His satisfaction in his present act, in contrast with that of the effort to escape, may be called one of contemplation; but the latter act marks the fulfillment of many obscure active tendencies, and the pleasure taken is not in the act of contemplation but in the fulfillment of these tendencies in the subject-matter perceived. More imagery and "ideas" are included than attend the act of escape; while if emotion means something *conscious* and not the mere excited energy of escape, there is much more emotion.

One trouble with the Kantian psychology is that it sup-

poses all "pleasure," save that of "contemplation," to consist wholly of personal and private gratification. Every experience, including the most generous and idealistic, contains an element of seeking, of pressing forward. Only when we are dulled by routine and sunk in apathy does this eagerness forsake us. Attention is built out of an organization of these factors, and a contemplation that is not an aroused and intensified form of attention to material in perception presented through the senses is an idle stare.

"Sensations" are necessarily involved, and are not mere external incidents of the act of perception. The traditional psychology that puts sensation first and impulsion second reverses the actual state of the case. We consciously experience colors because the impulse to look is performed; we hear sounds because we are satisfied in listening. Motor and sensory structure form a single apparatus and effect a single function. Since life is activity, there is always desire whenever activity is obstructed. A painting satisfies because it meets the hunger for scenes having color and light more fully than do most of the things with which we are ordinarily surrounded. In the kingdom of art as well as of righteousness it is those who hunger and thirst who enter. The very dominance of intense sensuous qualities in esthetic objects is itself proof, psychologically speaking, that appetition is there.

Seeking, desire, need, can be fulfilled only through material external to the organism. The hibernating bear cannot live indefinitely upon its own substance. Our needs are drafts drawn upon the environment, at first blindly, then with conscious interest and attention. To be satisfied, they must intercept energy from surrounding things and absorb what they lay hold of. Surplus energy, so-called, of the organism only increases restlessness save as it can feed upon something objective. While instinctive need is impatient and hurries to its discharge (as a spider whose spinning is interfered with will spin itself to death), impulse that has become conscious of itself tarries to amass, incorporate, and digest congenial objective material.\*

Perception is therefore at its lowest and its most obscure

\* The reader will note that I am saying here, in different terms, what was found to be involved in the "Expressive Act."

in the degree that only instinctive need operates. Instinct is in too much haste to be solicitous about its environing relations. Nevertheless instinctive demands and responses serve a double purpose after transformation into conscious demand for congenial matter has supervened. Many impulses of which we are not distinctively aware give body and breadth to the conscious focus. Even more important is the fact that primitive need is the source of attachment to objects. Perception is born when solicitude for objects and their qualities brings the organic demand for attachment to consciousness. If we judge on the basis of production of works of art, instead of that of a preconceived psychology, the absurdity of supposing that need, desire, and affection are excluded together with action from esthetic experience is evident, unless the artist is the one person who has no esthetic experience. Perception that occurs for its own sake is full realization of all the elements of our psychological being.

Here, of course, is the explanation of the balance, the composure, that is characteristic of much esthetic appreciation. As long as light stimulates only the eye, experience of it is thin and poor. When the tendency to turn the eyes and head is absorbed into a multitude of other impulses and it and they become the members of a single act, all impulses are held in a state of equilibrium. Perception instead of some specialized reaction then occurs, and what is perceived is charged with value.

This state *may* be described as one of contemplation. It is not practical, if by "practical" is meant an action undertaken for a particular and specialized end outside the perception, or for some external consequence.\* In the latter case, perception does not exist for its own sake but is limited to a recognition exercised in behalf of ulterior considerations. But this conception of "practical" is a limitation of its significance. Not only is art itself an operation of doing and making—a *poiesis* expressed in the very word poetry—but esthetic perception demands, as we have seen, an organized body of activities, including the motor elements necessary for full perception.

The chief objection to the associations usually connected

\* Compare what was said about the difference between external means and a medium, p. 197.

with the term "contemplation" is, of course, its seeming aloofness from passionate emotion. I have spoken of a certain internal equilibrium of impulsions found in the act of perception. But even the word "equilibrium" may give rise to a false conception. It may suggest a balance so calm and sedate as to exclude rapture by an absorbing object. It signifies, in fact, only that different impulsions mutually excite and reënforce one another so as to exclude the kind of overt action that leads away from emotionalized perception. Psychologically, deep-seated needs cannot be stirred to find fulfillment in perception without an emotion and affection that, in the end, constitute the unity of the experience. And, as I have noted in other connections, the emotion aroused attends the subject-matter that is perceived, thus differing from crude emotion because it is attached to the movement of the subject-matter toward consummation. To limit esthetic emotion to the pleasure attending the act of contemplation is to exclude all that is most characteristic of it.

It is worth while to quote from Keats a passage already cited in part: "As to the poetical character itself . . . it is not itself—it has no self. It is everything and nothing—it enjoys light and shade; it lives in gusto, be it fair or foul, high or low, rich or poor, mean or elevated. It has as much delight in conceiving an Iago as an Imogen. What shocks the virtuous philosopher delights the chameleon poet. It does not harm from its relish for the dark side of things, any more than from its taste for the bright one, because they both end in speculation [Imaginative perception]. A poet is the most unpoetical of anything in existence, because he has no identity—he is continually in and for, and filling some other body. . . . When I am in a room with people, if I am ever free from speculating on creations of my own brain, then, not myself goes home to myself, but the identity of every one in the room begins to press upon me, so that I am in a very little time annihilated—not only among men; it would be the same in a nursery of children."

The ideas of disinterestedness, detachment and "psychical distance," of which much has been made in recent esthetic theory, are to be understood in the same way as contemplation. "Disinterestedness" cannot signify uninterestedness. But it may be used as a roundabout way to denote that no specialized interest

holds sway. "Detachment" is a negative name for something extremely positive. There is no severance of self, no holding of it aloof, but fullness of participation. Even "attachment" fails to convey fully the right idea, for it suggests that self and the esthetic object continue to exist separately although in close connection. Participation is so thoroughgoing that the work of art is detached or cut off from the kind of specialized desire that operates when we are moved to consume or appropriate a thing physically.

The phrase "psychical distance" has been employed to indicate much the same fact. The illustration of the man who enjoys the spectacle of the angry bull is in point. He is not overtly engaged in the scene. He is not stirred to the performance of a particular and special act beyond the perception itself. Distance is a name for a participation so intimate and balanced that no particular impulse acts to make a person withdraw, a completeness of surrender in perception. The person who enjoys a storm at sea unites his impulses with the drama of rushing seas, roaring gale and plunging ship. "Diderot's paradox" exemplifies a similar situation. An actor on the stage is not cold and unmoved in his part, but impulses that would be dominant, were he actually in the scenes that he represents, are transformed by coördination with the interests belonging to him as an artist. Disinterestedness, detachment, psychical distance, all express ideas that apply to raw primitive desire and impulse, but that are irrelevant to the matter of experience artistically organized.

The psychological conceptions that are implied in "rationalistic" philosophies of art are all associated with a fixed separation of sense and reason. The work of art is so obviously sensuous and yet contains such wealth of meaning, that it is defined as a cancellation of the separation, and as an embodiment through sense of the logical structure of the universe. Ordinarily, and apart from fine art, according to the theory, sense conceals and distorts a rational substance that is the reality behind appearances—to which sense perception is limited. The imagination, by means of art, makes a concession to sense in employing its materials, but nevertheless uses sense to suggest underlying ideal truth. Art is thus a way of having the substantial cake of reason while also enjoying the sensuous pleasure of eating it.

But, in fact, the distinction of quality as sensuous and meaning as ideational is not primary but secondary and methodological. When a situation is construed as being or as containing a problem, we set facts that are given through perception on one side and possible meanings for these facts on the other. The distinction is a necessary instrumentality of reflection. The distinction between some elements of subject-matter as rational and others as sensible is always intermediary and transitive. Its office is to lead in the end to a perceptual experience in which the distinction is overcome—in which what were once conceptions become the inherent meanings of material mediated through sense. Even scientific conceptions have to receive embodiment in sense-perception to be accepted as more than ideas.

All observed objects that are identified without reflection (although their recognition may give rise to further reflection) exhibit an integral union of sense quality and meaning in a single firm texture. We recognize with the eye the green of the sea as belonging to the sea, not to the eye, and as a different quality from the green of a leaf; and the gray of a rock as different in quality from that of the lichen growing upon it. In all objects perceived for what they are without need for reflective inquiry, the quality *is* what it means, namely, the object to which it belongs. Art has the faculty of enhancing and concentrating this union of quality and meaning in a way which vivifies both. Instead of canceling a separation between sense and meaning (asserted to be psychologically normal), it exemplifies in an accentuated and perfected manner the union characteristic of many other experiences through finding the exact qualitative media that fuse most completely with what is to be expressed. The remark previously made concerning differing ratios of the two factors is applicable in this connection. There are whole periods of art, as well as individual works, in which one element predominates as compared with the other. But when the result is art, integration is always effected. In impressionistic painting, an immediate quality dominates. In Cezanne, relations, meanings, with their inevitable tendency toward abstraction, dominate. But, nevertheless, when Cézanne succeeds esthetically the work is accomplished wholly in terms of the qualitative and sensuous medium.

ORDINARY experience is often infected with apathy, lassitude and stereotype. We get neither the impact of quality through sense nor the meaning of things through thought. The "world" is too much with us as burden or distraction. We are not sufficiently alive to feel the tang of sense nor yet to be moved by thought. We are oppressed by our surroundings or are callous to them. Acceptance of this sort of experience as normal is the chief cause of acceptance of the idea that art cancels separations that inhere in the structure of ordinary experience. Were it not for the oppressions and monotones of daily experience, the realm of dream and reverie would not be attractive. No complete and enduring suppression of emotion is possible. Repelled by the dreariness and indifference of things which a badly adjusted environment forces upon us, emotion withdraws and feeds upon things of fantasy. These things are built up by an impulsive energy that cannot find outlet in the usual occupations of existence. It may well be under such circumstances that multitudes have recourse to music, theater and the novel to find easy entrance into a kingdom of free floating emotions. But this fact is no ground for the assertion by philosophic theory of an inherent psychological separation of sense and reason, desire and perception.

When, however, theory frames its conception of experience from the situations that drive so many persons to find relief and excitation in the purely fanciful, it is inevitable that the idea of the "practical" should stand in opposition to the properties that belong to a work of art. Much of the current opposition of objects of beauty and use—to use the antithesis most frequently used—is due to dislocations that have their origin in the economic system. Temples have a use; the paintings in them have a use; the beautiful city halls found in many European cities are used for the conduct of public business, and it is not necessary to rehearse the multitude of things produced by peoples we call savages and peasants which charm the eye and touch as well as serve the utilities of partaking of food and of protection. The commonest cheap plate and bowl made by a Mexican potter for domestic use has its own unstereotyped charm.

It has been contended, however, that there is a psychological opposition between objects employed for practical purposes and those that contribute to direct intensity and unity of

experience. It has been urged that there is an antithesis in the very structure of our being between the fluent action of practice and the vivid consciousness of esthetic experience. It is said that production and use of goods involve the worker and the user in action that is fluent in the sense of being as mechanical and automatic as possible, while the intense and robust consciousness of a work of art demands the presence of resistances that inhibit such action.\* About the latter fact there is no doubt.

It is stated that "utensils can only, through some ceremonial effort, or when imported from some far time or countries, become the source of heightened consciousness, because we flow from a utensil smoothly into the action for which it is designed." As for the producer of utensils, the fact that so many artisans in all times and places have found and taken time to make their products esthetically pleasing seems to me a sufficient answer. I do not see how there could be better proof that prevailing social conditions, under which industry is carried on, are the factors that determine the artistic or non-artistic quality of utensils, rather than anything inherent in the nature of things. As far as the one who uses the utensil is concerned, I do not see why in drinking tea from a cup he is necessarily estopped from enjoying its shape and the delicacy of its material. Not every one gulps his food and drink in the shortest possible time in obedience to some necessary psychological law.

Just as there is many a mechanic under present industrial conditions who stops to admire the fruit of his labors, holding it off to admire its shape and texture and not merely to examine into its efficiency for practical purposes, and as there is many a milliner and dressmaker who is the more engaged in her work because of appreciation of its esthetic qualities, so those who are not crowded by economic pressure, or who have not given way completely to habits formed in working on a moving belt in a speeded-up industry, have a vivid consciousness in the very process of using utensils. I suppose all of us have heard some men boast of the beauty of their cars and of the esthetic qualities

\* The division between fine and useful art has many supporters. The psychological argument to which the text refers is that of Max Eastman in his "Literary Mind," pp. 205-206. As to the nature of the esthetic experience, I am glad to find myself in close accord with what he says.

of its performance, even though fewer in numbers than those who brag of the number of miles it can cover in a given time.

The compartmentalized psychology that holds to an intrinsic separation between completeness of perceptual experience is, then, itself a reflection of dominant social institutions that have deeply affected both production and consumption or use. Where the worker produces in different industrial conditions from those which prevail today, his own impulsions tend in the direction of creation of articles of use that satisfy his urge for experience as he works. It seems to me absurd to suppose that preference for mechanically effective execution by means of completely smooth running mental automatisms, and at the expense of quickened consciousness of what he is about, is ingrained in psychological structure. And if our environment, as far as it is constituted by objects of use, consisted of things that are themselves contributory to a heightened consciousness of sight and touch, I do not think any one would suppose that the act of use is such as to be anesthetic.

A sufficient refutation of the idea in question is supplied by the action of the artist himself. If painter and sculptor have an experience in which action is not automatic, but emotionally and imaginatively dyed, there is in that one fact proof of the invalidity of the notion that action is so fluent as to exclude the elements of resistance and inhibition necessary to heightened consciousness. There may have been a time when the scientific inquirer sat still in his chair to excogitate science. Now his action occurs in a place significantly called a laboratory. If the action of a teacher is so fluent as to exclude emotional and imaginative perception of what he is doing, he may be safely set down as a wooden and perfunctory pedagogue. The same is true of any professional man, a lawyer or doctor. Not only do such actions demonstrate the falsity of the psychological principle laid down, but their experiences often become definitely esthetic in nature. The beauty of a skilled surgical operation is felt by the operator as well as by an onlooker.

POPULAR psychology and much so-called scientific psychology have been pretty thoroughly infected by the idea of the separate-

ness of mind and body. This notion of their separation inevitably results in creating a dualism between "mind" and "practice," since the latter must operate through the body. The idea of the separation perhaps arose, in part at least, from the fact that so much of mind at a given time is aloof from action. The separation, when it is once made, certainly confirms the theory that mind, soul, and spirit can exist and go through their operations without any interaction of the organism with its environment. The traditional notion of leisure is thoroughly infected by contrast with the character of onerous labor.

It seems to me, accordingly, that the idiomatic use of the word "mind" gives a much more truly scientific, and philosophic, approach to the actual facts of the case than does the technical one. For in its non-technical use, "mind" denotes every mode and variety of interest in, and concern for, things: practical, intellectual, and emotional. It never denotes anything self-contained, isolated from the world of persons and things, but is always used with respect to situations, events, objects, persons and groups. Consider its inclusiveness. It signifies memory. We are reminded of this and that. Mind also signifies attention. We not only keep things in mind, but we bring mind to bear on our problems and perplexities. Mind also signifies purpose; we have a mind to do this and that. Nor is mind in these operations something purely intellectual. The mother minds her baby; she cares for it with affection. Mind is care in the sense of solicitude, anxiety, as well as of active looking after things that need to be tended; we mind our step, our course of action, emotionally as well as thoughtfully. From giving heed to acts and objects, mind comes also to signify, to obey—as children are told to mind their parents. In short "to mind" denotes an activity that is intellectual, to *note* something; affectational, as caring and liking, and volitional, practical, acting in a purposive way.

Mind is primarily a verb. It denotes all the ways in which we deal consciously and expressly with the situations in which we find ourselves. Unfortunately, an influential manner of thinking has changed modes of action into an underlying substance that performs the activities in question. It has treated mind as an independent entity *which* attends, purposes, cares, notices, and remembers. This change of ways of responding to the environment

into an entity from which actions proceed is unfortunate, because it removes mind from necessary connection with the objects and events, past, present and future, of the environment with which responsive activities are inherently connected. Mind that bears only an accidental relation to the environment occupies a similar relation to the body. In making mind purely immaterial (isolated from the organ of doing and undergoing), the body ceases to be living and becomes a dead lump. This conception of mind as an isolated being underlies the conception that esthetic experience is merely something "in mind," and strengthens the conception which isolates the esthetic from those modes of experience in which the body is actively engaged with the things of nature and life. It takes art out of the province of the live creature.

In the idiomatic sense of the word "substantial," as distinct from the metaphysical sense of a substance, there is something substantial about mind. Whenever anything is undergone in consequence of a doing, the self is modified. The modification extends beyond acquisition of greater facility and skill. Attitudes and interests are built up which embody in themselves some deposit of the meaning of things done and undergone. These funded and retained meanings become a part of the self. They constitute the capital with which the self notes, cares for, attends, and purposes. In this substantial sense, mind forms the background upon which every new contact with surroundings is projected; yet "background" is too passive a word, unless we remember that it is active and that, in the projection of the new upon it, there is assimilation and reconstruction of both background and of what is taken in and digested.

This active and eager background lies in wait and engages whatever comes its way so as to absorb it into its own being. Mind as background is formed out of modifications of the self that have occurred in the process of prior interactions with environment. Its animus is toward further interactions. Since it is formed out of commerce with the world and is set toward that world nothing can be further from the truth than the idea which treats it as something self-contained and self-enclosed. When its activity is turned upon itself, as in meditation and reflective speculation, its withdrawal is only from the immediate scene of the world

during the time in which it turns over and reviews material gathered from that world.

Different kinds of minds are named from the different interests that actuate the gathering and assemblage of material from the encompassing world: the scientific, the executive, the artistic, the business mind. In each there is a preferential manner of selection, retention, and organization. The native constitution of the artist is marked by peculiar sensitiveness to some aspect of the multiform universe of nature and man and by urge to the remaking of it through expression in a preferred medium. These inherent impulsions become mind when they fuse with a particular background of experience. Of this background, traditions form a large part. It is not enough to have direct contacts and observations, indispensable as these are. Even the work of an original temperament may be relatively thin, as well as tending to the bizarre, when it is not informed with a wide and varied experience of the traditions of the art in which the artist operates. The organization of the background with which immediate scenes are approached cannot otherwise be rendered solid and valid. For each great tradition is itself an organized habit of vision and of methods of ordering and conveying material. As this habit enters into native temperament and constitution it becomes an essential ingredient of the mind of an artist. Peculiar sensitiveness to certain aspects of nature is thereby developed into a power.

"Schools" of art are more marked in sculpture, architecture, and painting than in the literary arts. But there has been no great literary artist who did not feed upon the works of the masters of drama, poetry, and eloquent prose. In this dependence upon tradition there is nothing peculiar to art. The scientific inquirer, the philosopher, the technologist, also derive their substance from the stream of culture. This dependence is an essential factor in original vision and creative expression. The trouble with the academic imitator is not that he depends upon traditions, but that the latter have not entered into his mind; into the structure of his own ways of seeing and making. They remain upon the surface as tricks of technique or as extraneous suggestions and conventions as to the proper thing to do.

Mind is more than consciousness, because it is the abiding

even though changing background of which consciousness is the foreground. Mind changes slowly through the joint tuition of interest and circumstance. Consciousness is always in rapid change, for it marks the place where the formed disposition and the immediate situation touch and interact. It is the continuous readjustment of self and the world in experience. "Consciousness" is the more acute and intense in the degree of the readjustments that are demanded, approaching the nil as the contact is frictionless and interaction fluid. It is turbid when meanings are undergoing reconstruction in an undetermined direction, and becomes clear as a decisive meaning emerges.

"Intuition" is that meeting of the old and new in which the readjustment involved in every form of consciousness is effected suddenly by means of a quick and unexpected harmony which in its bright abruptness is like a flash of revelation; although in fact it is prepared for by long and slow incubation. Oftentimes the union of old and new, of foreground and background, is accomplished only by effort, prolonged perhaps to the point of pain. In any case, the background of organized meanings can alone convert the new situation from the obscure into the clear and luminous. When old and new jump together, like sparks when the poles are adjusted, there is intuition. This latter is thus neither an act of pure intellect in apprehending rational truth nor a Crocean grasp by spirit of its own images and states.

Because interest is the dynamic force in selection and assemblage of materials, products of mind are marked by individuality, just as products of mechanism are marked by uniformity. No amount of technical skill and craftsmanship can take the place of vital interest; "inspiration" without it is fleeting and futile. A trivial and badly ordered mind accomplishes things like unto itself in art as well as elsewhere, for it lacks the push and centralizing energy of interest. Works of art are measured by display of virtuosity when criteria are carried over from the field of technical invention. Judgment of them on the basis of sheer inspiration overlooks the long and steady work done by an interest always at work below the surface. The perceiver, as much as the creator, needs a rich and developed background which, whether it be painting in the field of poetry, or music, cannot be achieved except by consistent nurture of interest.

IN what precedes, I have said nothing about imagination. "Imagination" shares with "beauty" the doubtful honor of being the chief theme in esthetic writings of enthusiastic ignorance. More perhaps than any other phase of the human contribution, it has been treated as a special and self-contained faculty, differing from others in possession of mysterious potencies. Yet if we judge its nature from the creation of works of art, it designates a quality that animates and pervades all processes of making and observation. It is a *way* of seeing and feeling things as they compose an integral whole. It is the large and generous blending of interests at the point where the mind comes in contact with the world. When old and familiar things are made new in experience, there is imagination. When the new is created, the far and strange become the most natural inevitable things in the world. There is always some measure of adventure in the meeting of mind and universe, and this adventure is, in its measure, imagination.

Coleridge used the term "esemplastic" to characterize the work of imagination in art. If I understand his use of the term, he meant by it to call attention to the welding together of all elements, no matter how diverse in ordinary experience, into a new and completely unified experience. "The poet," he said, "diffuses a tone and spirit of unity that (as it were) fuses each to each the faculties of the soul with the subordination of each according to relative dignity and worth, by that synthetic and magical power to which I would exclusively appropriate the name of imagination." Coleridge used the vocabulary of his philosophic generation. He speaks of faculties that are fused and of imagination as if it were another power acting to draw them together.

But one may pass over his verbal mode, and find in what he says an intimation not that imagination is the power that does certain things, but that an imaginative experience is what happens when varied materials of sense quality, emotion, and meaning come together in a union that marks a new birth in the world. I do not profess to an exact understanding of what Coleridge meant by his distinction between imagination and fancy. But there can be no doubt of the difference between the kind of experience just indicated and that in which a person deliberately gives familiar experience a strange guise by clothing it in unusual garb, as of a supernatural apparition. In such cases, mind and

material do not squarely meet and interpenetrate. Mind stays aloof for the most part and toys with material rather than boldly grasping it. The material is too slight to call forth the full energy of the dispositions in which values and meanings are embodied; it does not offer enough resistance, and so mind plays with it capriciously. At the best, the fanciful is confined to literature wherein the imaginative too easily becomes the imaginary. One has only to think of painting—to say nothing of architecture—to see how remote it is from essential art. Possibilities are embodied in works of art that are not elsewhere actualized; this *embodiment* is the best evidence that can be found of the true nature of imagination.

There is a conflict artists themselves undergo that is instructive as to the nature of imaginative experience. The conflict has been set forth in many ways. One way of stating it concerns the opposition between inner and outer vision. There is a stage in which the inner vision seems much richer and finer than any outer manifestation. It has a vast and enticing aura of implications that are lacking in the object of external vision. It seems to grasp much more than the latter conveys. Then there comes a reaction; the matter of the inner vision seems wraith-like compared with the solidity and energy of the presented scene. The object is felt to say something succinctly and forcibly that the inner vision reports vaguely, in diffuse feeling rather than organically. The artist is driven to submit himself in humility to the discipline of the objective vision. But the inner vision is not cast out. It remains as the organ by which outer vision is controlled, and it takes on structure as the latter is absorbed within it. The interaction of the two modes of vision is imagination; as imagination takes form the work of art is born. It is the same with the philosophic thinker. There are moments when he feels that his ideas and ideals are finer than anything in existence. But he finds himself obliged to go back to objects if his speculations are to have body, weight, and perspective. Yet in surrendering himself to objective material he does not surrender his vision; the object just as an object is not his concern. It is placed in the context of ideas and, as it is thus placed, the latter acquire solidity and partake of the nature of the object.

Trains of what by courtesy are called ideas become mechanical. They are easy to follow, too easy. Observation as well as overt action is subject to inertia and moves in the line of least resistance. A public is formed that is inured to certain ways of seeing and thinking. It likes to be reminded of what is familiar. Unexpected turns then arouse irritation instead of adding poignancy to experience. Words are particularly subject to this tendency towards automatism. If their almost mechanical sequence is not too prosaic, a writer gets the reputation of being clear merely because the meanings he expresses are so familiar as not to demand thought by the reader. The academic and eclectic in any art is the outcome. The peculiar quality of the imaginative is best understood when placed in opposition to the narrowing effect of habituation. Time is the test that discriminates the imaginative from the imaginary. The latter passes because it is arbitrary. The imaginative endures because, while at first strange with respect to us, it is enduringly familiar with respect to the nature of things.

The history of science and philosophy as well as of the fine arts is a record of the fact that the imaginative product receives at first the condemnation of the public, and in proportion to its range and depth. It is not merely in religion that the prophet is at first stoned (metaphorically at least) while later generations build the commemorative monument. With respect to painting, Constable stated, with almost undue moderation, the universal fact when he said: "In art there are two modes by which men aim at distinction. In the one by a careful application to what others have accomplished, the artist imitates their works or selects and combines their various beauties; in the other, he seeks excellence at its primitive source-nature. In the first, he forms a style upon the study of pictures, and produces either imitative or eclectic art; in the second, by a close observation of nature, he discovers qualities existing in her which have never been portrayed before, and thus forms a style which is original. The results of the one mode, as they repeat that with which the eye is already familiar, are soon recognized and estimated, while the advance of the artist in a new path must necessarily be slow, for few are able to judge of that which deviates from the usual course,

or are qualified to judge original studies." \* Here is the contrast between the inertia of habit and the imaginative; that is the mind that seeks and welcomes what is new in perception but is enduring in nature's possibilities. "Revelation" in art is the quickened expansion of experience. Philosophy is said to begin in wonder and end in understanding. Art departs from what has been understood and ends in wonder. In this end, the human contribution in art is also the quickened work of nature in man.

Any psychology that isolates the human being from the environment also shuts him off, save for external contacts, from his fellows. But an individual's desires take shape under the influence of the human environment. The materials of his thought and belief come to him from others with whom he lives. He would be poorer than a beast of the fields were it not for traditions that become a part of his mind, and for institutions that penetrate below his outward actions into his purposes and satisfactions. Expression of experience is public and communicating because the experiences expressed are what they are because of experiences of the living and the dead that have shaped them. It is not necessary that communication should be part of the deliberate intent of an artist, although he can never escape the thought of a potential audience. But its function and consequence are to effect communication, and this not by external accident but from the nature he shares with others.

Expression strikes below the barriers that separate human beings from one another. Since art is the most universal form of language, since it is constituted, even apart from literature, by the common qualities of the public world, it is the most universal and freest form of communication. Every intense experience of friendship and affection completes itself artistically. The sense of communion generated by a work of art may take on a definitely religious quality. The union of men with one another is the source of the rites that from the time of archaic man to the present have commemorated the crises of birth, death, and

\* It may be that Constable is here using the word "nature" in a somewhat limited sense, corresponding to his interest as a landscape painter. But the contrast between first-hand experience and the second-hand and imitative remains when "nature" is broadened to include all the phases, aspects, and structures of existence.

marriage. Art is the extension of the power of rites and ceremonies to unite men, through a shared celebration, to all incidents and scenes of life. This office is the reward and seal of art. That art weds man and nature is a familiar fact. Art also renders men aware of their union with one another in origin and destiny.

## CHAPTER XIV

### ART AND CIVILIZATION

ART is a quality that permeates an experience; it is not, save by a figure of speech, the experience itself. Esthetic experience is always more than esthetic. In it a body of matters and meanings, not in themselves esthetic, *become* esthetic as they enter into an ordered rhythmic movement toward consummation. The material itself is widely human. So we return to the theme of the first chapter. The material of esthetic experience in being human—human in connection with the nature of which it is a part—is social. Esthetic experience is a manifestation, a record and celebration of the life of a civilization, a means of promoting its development, and is also the ultimate judgment upon the quality of a civilization. For while it is produced and is enjoyed by individuals, those individuals are what they are in the content of their experience because of the cultures in which they participate.

The Magna Carta is held up as the great political stabilizer of Anglo-Saxon civilization. Even so, it has operated in the meaning given it in imagination rather than by its literal contents. There are transient and there are enduring elements in a civilization. The enduring forces are not separate; they are functions of a multitude of passing incidents as the latter are organized into the meanings that form minds. Art is the great force in effecting this consolidation. The individuals who have minds pass away one by one. The works in which meanings have received objective expression endure. They become part of the environment, and interaction with this phase of the environment is the axis of continuity in the life of civilization. The ordinances of religion and the power of law are efficacious as they are clothed with a pomp, a dignity and majesty that are the work of imagination. If social customs are more than uniform external modes of action, it is because they are saturated with story and transmitted meaning. Every art in some manner is a medium of this transmission while

its products are no inconsiderable part of the saturating matter

"The glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome" for most of us, probably for all but the historical student, sum up those civilizations; glory and grandeur are esthetic. For all but the antiquarian, ancient Egypt is its monuments, temples and literature. Continuity of culture in passage from one civilization to another as well as within the culture, is conditioned by art more than by any other one thing. Troy lives for us only in poetry and in the objects of art that have been recovered from its ruins. Minoan civilization is today its products of art. Pagan gods and pagan rites are past and gone and yet endure in the incense, lights, robes, and holidays of the present. If letters devised for the purpose, presumably, of facilitating commercial transactions, had not developed into literature, they would still be technical equipments, and we ourselves might live amid hardly a higher culture than that of our savage ancestors. Apart from rite and ceremony, from pantomime and dance and the drama that developed from them, from dance, song and accompanying instrumental music, from the utensils and articles of daily living that were formed on patterns and stamped with insignia of community life that were akin to those manifested in the other arts, the incidents of the far past would now be sunk in oblivion.

It is out of the question to do more than suggest in bare outline the function of the arts in older civilizations. But the arts by which primitive folk commemorated and transmitted their customs and institutions, arts that were communal, are the sources out of which all fine arts have developed. The patterns that were characteristic of weapons, rugs and blankets, baskets and jars, were marks of tribal union. Today the anthropologist relies upon the pattern carved on a club, or painted on a bowl to determine its origin. Rite and ceremony as well as legend bound the living and the dead in a common partnership. They were esthetic but they were more than esthetic. The rites of mourning expressed more than grief; the war and harvest dance were more than a gathering of energy for tasks to be performed; magic was more than a way of commanding forces of nature to do the bidding of man; feasts were more than a satisfaction of hunger. Each of these communal modes of activity united the practical, the social, and the educative in an integrated whole having esthetic form.

They introduced social values into experience in the way that was most impressive. They connected things that were overtly important and overtly done with the substantial life of the community. Art was *in* them, for these activities conformed to the needs and conditions of the most intense, most readily grasped and longest remembered experience. But they were more than just art, although the esthetic strand was ubiquitous.

In Athens, which we regard as the home par excellence of epic and lyric poetry, of the arts of drama, architecture and sculpture, the idea of art for art's sake would not, as I have already remarked, have been understood. Plato's harshness toward Homer and Hesiod seems strained. But they were the moral teachers of the people. His attacks upon the poets are like those which some critics of the present day bring against portions of Christian scriptures because of evil moral influence attributed to them. Plato's demand of censorship of poetry and music is a tribute to the social and even political influence exercised by those arts. Drama was enacted on holy-days; attendance was of the nature of an act of civic worship. Architecture in all its significant forms was public, not domestic, much less devoted to industry, banking, or commerce.

The decay of art in the Alexandrian period, its degeneracy into poor imitations of archaic models, is a sign of the general loss of civic consciousness that accompanied the eclipse of city-states and the rise of a conglomerate imperialism. Theories about art and the cultivation of grammar and rhetoric took the place of creation. And theories about art gave evidence of the great social change that had taken place. Instead of connecting arts with an expression of the life of the community, the beauty of nature and of art was regarded as an echo and reminder of some supernal reality that had its being outside social life, and indeed outside the cosmos itself—the ultimate source of all subsequent theories that treat art as something imported into experience from without.

As the Church developed, the arts were again brought into connection with human life and became a bond of union among men. Through its services and sacraments, the Church revived and adapted in impressive form what was most moving in all prior rites and ceremonies.

The Church, even more than the Roman Empire, served as the focus of unity amid the disintegration that followed the fall of Rome. The historian of intellectual life will emphasize the dogmas of the Church; the historian of political institutions, the development of law and authority by means of the ecclesiastic institution. But the influence that counted in the daily life of the mass of the people and that gave them a sense of unity was constituted, it is safe to surmise, by sacraments, by song and pictures, by rite and ceremony, all having an esthetic strand, more than by any other one thing. Sculpture, painting, music, letters were found in the place where worship was performed. These objects and acts were much more than works of art to the worshipers who gathered in the temple. They were in all probability much less works of art to them than they are today to believers and unbelievers. But because of the esthetic strand, religious teachings were the more readily conveyed and their effect was the more lasting. By the art in them, they were changed from doctrines into living experiences.

That the Church was fully conscious of this extra-esthetic effect of art is evident in the care it took to regulate the arts. Thus in 787 A.D., the Second Council of Nicea officially ordained the following:

"The substance of religious scenes is not left to the initiative of artists; it derives from the principles laid down by the Catholic Church and religious tradition.... The art alone belongs to the painter; its organization and arrangement belongs to the clergy." \* The censorship desired by Plato held full sway.

There is a statement of Machiavelli that has always seemed to me symbolic of the spirit of the Renaissance. He said that when he was through with the business of the day, he retired into his study and lost himself in absorption of the classic

\* Quoted from Lippmann's "A Preface to Morals," p. 98. The text of the chapter from which the passage is cited gives examples of the specific rules by which the painter's work was regulated. The distinction between "art" and "substance" is similar to that drawn by some adherents of a proletarian dictatorship of art between technique or craft that belongs to the artist and subject-matter dictated by the needs of the "party line" in furthering the cause. A double standard is set up. There is literature that is good or bad as mere literature, and literature that is good or bad according to its bearing upon economic and political revolution.

literature of antiquity. This statement is doubly symbolic. On the one hand, ancient culture would not be lived. It could only be studied. As Santayana has well said, Greek civilization is now an ideal to be admired, not one to be realized. On the other hand, knowledge of Greek art, especially of architecture and sculpture, revolutionized the practice of the arts, including painting. The sense of naturalistic shapes of objects and of their setting in the natural landscape was recovered; in the Roman school painting was almost an attempt to produce the feelings occasioned by sculpture, while the Florentine school developed the peculiar values inherent in line. The change affected both esthetic form and substance. The lack of perspective, the flat and profile quality of Church art, its use of gold, and a multitude of other traits were not due to mere lack of technical skill. They were organically connected with the particular interactions in human experience that were desired as the consequence of art. The secular experiences that were emerging at the time of the Renaissance and that fed upon antique culture involved of necessity the production of effects demanding new form in art. The extension of substance from Biblical subjects and the lives of saints to portrayal of scenes of Greek mythology and then to spectacles of contemporary life that were socially impressive inevitably ensued.\*

THESE remarks are intended merely to be a bare illustration of the fact that every culture has its own collective individuality. Like the individuality of the person from whom a work of art issues, this collective individuality leaves its indelible imprint upon the art that is produced. Such phrases as the art of the South Sea islands, of the North American Indian, of the Negro, Chinese, Cretan, Egyptian, Greek, Hellenistic, Byzantine, Moslem, Gothic, Renaissance, art have a veridical significance. The undeniable fact of the collective cultural origin and import of works illustrates the fact, previously mentioned, that art is a strain in experience rather than an entity in itself. A problem has been made out of the fact, however, by a recent school of thought. It is contended that since we cannot actually reproduce the ex-

\* See *ante*, p. 141.

perience of a people remote in time and foreign in culture, we cannot have a genuine appreciation of the art it produced. Even of Greek art it is asserted that the Hellenic attitude toward life and the world was so different from ours that the artistic product of Greek culture must esthetically be a sealed book to us.

In part an answer to this contention has already been given. It is doubtless true that the total experience of the Greeks in presence of, say, Greek architecture, statuary, and painting is far from being identical with ours. Features of their culture were transient; they do not now exist, and these features were embodied in their experience of their works of art. But experience is a matter of the interaction of the artistic product with the self. It is not therefore twice alike for different persons even today. It changes with the same person at different times as he brings something different to a work. But there is no reason why, in order to be esthetic, these experiences should be identical. So far as in each case there is an ordered movement of the matter of the experience to a fulfillment, there is a dominant esthetic quality. *Au fond*, the esthetic quality is the same for Greek, Chinese and American.

This answer does not, however, cover the whole ground. For it does not apply to the total human effect of the art of a culture. The question, while wrongly framed with respect to the distinctively esthetic, suggests the question of what the art of another people may mean for our total experience. The contention of Taine and his school that we must understand art in terms of "race, milieu and time" touches the question, but hardly more than touches it. For such understanding may be purely intellectual, and so on the level of the geographical, anthropological and historical information with which it is accompanied. It leaves open the question of the significance of foreign art for the experience characteristic of present civilization.

The nature of the problem is suggested by Mr. Hulme's theory of the basic difference between Byzantine and Moslem art on one side and Greek and Renascence art on the other. The latter, he says, is vital and naturalistic. The former is geometric. This difference he goes on to explain is not connected with differences in technical capacity. The gulf is made by a fundamental

difference of attitude, of desire and purpose. We are now habituated to one mode of satisfaction and we take our own attitude of desire and purpose to be so inherent in all human nature as to give the measure of all works of art, as constituting the demand which all works of art meet and should satisfy. We have desires that are rooted in longing for an increase of experienced vitality through delightful intercourse with the forms and movements of "nature." Byzantine art, and some other forms of Oriental art, spring from an experience that has no delight in nature and no striving after vitality. They "express a feeling of separation in the face of outside nature." This attitude characterizes objects as unlike as the Egyptian pyramid and the Byzantine mosaic. The difference between such art and that which is characteristic of the Western world is not to be explained by interest in abstractions. It manifests the idea of separation, of disharmony, of man and nature.\*

Mr. Hulme sums up by saying that "art cannot be understood by itself, but must be taken as one element in a general process of adjustment between man and the outside world." Irrespective of the truth of Mr. Hulme's explanation of the characteristic difference between much of Oriental and Occidental art (it hardly applies in any case to Chinese art), his way of stating the matter puts, to my mind, the general problem in its proper context and suggests the solution. Just because art, speaking from the standpoint of the influence of collective culture upon creation and enjoyment of works of art, is expressive of a deep-seated attitude of adjustment, of an underlying idea and ideal of generic human attitude, the art characteristic of a civilization is the means for entering sympathetically into the deepest elements in the experience of remote and foreign civilizations. By this fact is explained also the human import of their arts for ourselves. They effect a broadening and deepening of our own experience, rendering it less local and provincial as far as we grasp, by their means, the attitudes basic in other forms of experience. Unless we arrive at the attitudes expressed in the art of another civilization, its products are either of concern to the "esthete" alone, or else they do not impress us esthetically. Chinese art then seems "queer," because of its unwonted schemes

\* T. E. Hulme, "Speculations," pp. 83-87, *passim*.

of perspective; Byzantine art, stiff and awkward; Negro art, grotesque.

In the reference to Byzantine art, I put the term nature in quotation marks. I did so because the word "nature" has a special meaning in esthetic literature, indicated especially by the use of the adjective "naturalistic." But "nature" also has a meaning in which it includes the whole scheme of things—in which it has the force of the imaginative and emotional word "universe." In experience, human relations, institutions, and traditions are as much a part of the nature in which and by which we live as is the physical world. Nature in this meaning is not "outside." It is in us and we are in and of it. But there are multitudes of ways of participating in it, and these ways are characteristic not only of various experiences of the same individual, but of attitudes of aspiration, need and achievement that belong to civilizations in their collective aspect. Works of art are means by which we enter, through imagination and the emotions they evoke, into other forms of relationship and participation than our own.

The art of the late nineteenth century was characterized by "naturalism" in its restricted sense. The productions most characteristic of the early twentieth century were marked by the influence of Egyptian, Byzantine, Persian, Chinese, Japanese, and Negro art. This influence is marked in painting, sculpture, music, and literature. The effect of "primitive" and early medieval art is a part of the same general movement. The eighteenth century idealized the noble savage and the civilization of remote peoples. But aside from Chinoiseries and some phases of romantic literature, the *sense* of what is back of the arts of foreign people did not affect the actual art produced. Seen in perspective, the so-called pre-Raphaelite art of England is the most typically Victorian of all the painting of the period. But in recent decades, beginning in the nineties, the influence of the arts of distant cultures has entered intrinsically into artistic creation.

For many persons, the effect is doubtless superficial, merely providing a type of objects enjoyable in part because of their individual novelty, and in part because of an added decorative quality. But the idea that would account for the production of contemporary works by mere desire for the unusual, or eccentric or even charm is more superficial than this kind of

enjoyment. The moving force is genuine participation, in some degree and phase, in the type of experience of which primitive, Oriental, and early medieval objects of art are the expression. Where the works are merely imitative of foreign works, they are transient and trivial. But at their best they bring about an organic blending of attitudes characteristic of the experience of our own age with that of remote peoples. For the new features are not mere decorative additions but enter into the *structure* of works of art and thus occasion a wider and fuller experience. Their enduring effect upon those who perceive and enjoy will be an expansion of *their* sympathies, imagination, and sense.

This new movement in art illustrates the effect of all genuine acquaintance with art created by other peoples. We understand it in the degree in which we make it a part of our own attitudes, not just by collective information concerning the conditions under which it was produced. We accomplish this result when, to borrow a term from Bergson, we install ourselves in modes of apprehending nature that at first are strange to us. To some degree we become artists ourselves as we undertake this integration, and, by bringing it to pass, our own experience is re-oriented. Barriers are dissolved, limiting prejudices melt away, when we enter into the spirit of Negro or Polynesian art. This insensible melting is far more efficacious than the change effected by reasoning, because it enters directly into attitude.

The possibility of the occurrence of genuine communication is a broad problem of which the one just dealt with is one species. It is a fact that it takes place, but the nature of community of experience is one of the most serious problems of philosophy—so serious that some thinkers deny the fact. The existence of communication is so disparate to our physical separation from one another and to the inner mental lives of individuals that it is not surprising that supernatural force has been ascribed to language and that communion has been given sacramental value.

Moreover, events that are familiar and customary are those we are least likely to reflect upon; we take them for granted. They are also, because of their closeness to us, through gesture and pantomime, the most difficult to observe. Communication through speech, oral and written, is the familiar and constant feature of social life. We tend, accordingly, to regard

it as just one phenomenon among others of what we must in any case accept without question. We pass over the fact that it is the foundation and source of all activities and relations that are distinctive of internal union of human beings with one another. A vast number of our contacts with one another are external and mechanical. There is a "field" in which they take place, a field defined and perpetuated by legal and political institutions. But the consciousness of this field does not enter our conjoint action as its integral and controlling force. Relations of nations to one another, relations of investors and laborers, of producers and consumers, are interactions that are only to a slight degree forms of communicative intercourse. There are interactions between the parties involved, but they are so external and partial that we undergo their consequences without integrating them into an experience.

We hear speech, but it is almost as if we were listening to a babel of tongues. Meaning and value do not come home to us. There is in such cases no communication and none of the result of community of experience that issues only when language in its full import breaks down physical isolation and external contact. Art is a more universal mode of language than is the speech that exists in a multitude of mutually unintelligible forms. The language of art has to be acquired. But the language of art is not affected by the accidents of history that mark off different modes of human speech. The power of music in particular to merge different individualities in a common surrender, loyalty and inspiration, a power utilized in religion and in warfare alike, testifies to the relative universality of the language of art. The differences between English, French and German speech create barriers that are submerged when art speaks.

Philosophically speaking, the problem with which we are confronted is the relation of the discrete and the continuous. Both of them are stubborn facts and yet they have to meet and blend in any human association that rises above the level of brute intercourse. In order to justify continuity, historians have often resorted to a falsely named "genetic" method, wherein there is no genuine genesis, because everything is resolved into what went before. But Egyptian civilization and art were not just a preparation for Greek, nor were Greek thought and art mere

reëdited versions of the civilizations from which they so freely borrowed. Each culture has its own individuality and has a pattern that binds its parts together.

Nevertheless, when the art of another culture enters into attitudes that determine our experience genuine continuity is effected. Our own experience does not thereby lose its individuality but it takes unto itself and weds elements that expand its significance. A community and continuity that do not exist physically are created. The attempt to establish continuity by methods which resolve one set of events and one of institutions into those which preceded it in time is doomed to defeat. Only an expansion of experience that absorbs into itself the values experienced because of life-attitudes, other than those resulting from our own human environment, dissolves the effect of discontinuity.

The problem in question is not unlike that we daily undergo in the effort to understand another person with whom we habitually associate. All friendship is a solution of the problem. Friendship and intimate affection are not the result of information about another person even though knowledge may further their formation. But it does so only as it becomes an integral part of sympathy through the imagination. It is when the desires and aims, the interests and modes of response of another become an expansion of our own being that we understand him. We learn to see with his eyes, hear with his ears, and their results give true instruction, for they are built into our own structure. I find that even the dictionary avoids defining the term "civilization." It defines civilization as the state of being civilized and "civilized" and "being in a state of civilization." However, the verb "to civilize" is defined as "to instruct in the arts of life and thus to raise in the scale of civilization." Instruction in the arts of life is something other than conveying information about them. It is a matter of communication and participation in values of life by means of the imagination, and works of art are the most intimate and energetic means of aiding individuals to share in the arts of living. Civilization is uncivil because human beings are divided into non-communicating sects, races, nations, classes and cliques.

THE brief sketch of some historical phases of the connection of art with community life set forth earlier in this chapter suggests contrast with present conditions. It is hardly enough to say that the absence of obvious organic connection of the arts with other forms of culture is explained by the complexity of modern life, by its many specializations, and by the simultaneous existence of many diverse centers of culture in different nations that exchange their products but that do not form parts of an inclusive social whole. These things are real enough, and their effect upon the status of art in relation to civilization may be readily discovered. But the significant fact is widespread disruption.

We inherit much from the cultures of the past. The influence of Greek science and philosophy, of Roman law, of religion having a Jewish source, upon our present institutions, beliefs and ways of thinking and feeling is too familiar to need more than mention. Into the operation of these factors two forces have been injected that are distinctly late in origin and that constitute the "modern" in the present epoch. These two forces are natural science and its application in industry and commerce through machinery and the use of non-human modes of energy. In consequence, the question of the place and rôle of art in contemporary civilization demands notice of its relations to science and to the social consequences of machine industry. The isolation of art that now exists is not to be viewed as an isolated phenomenon. It is one manifestation of the incoherence of our civilization produced by new forces, so new that the attitudes belonging to them and the consequences issuing from them have not been incorporated and digested into integral elements of experience.

Science has brought with it a radically novel conception of physical nature and of our relation to it. This new conception stands as yet side by side with the conception of the world and man that is a heritage from the past, especially from that Christian tradition through which the typically European social imagination has been formed. The things of the physical world and those of the moral realm have fallen apart, while the Greek tradition and that of the medieval age held them in intimate union—although a union accomplished by different means in the two

periods. The opposition that now exists between the spiritual and ideal elements of our historic heritage and the structure of physical nature that is disclosed by science, is the ultimate source of the dualisms formulated by philosophy since Descartes and Locke. These formulations in turn reflect a conflict that is everywhere active in modern civilization. From one point of view the problem of recovering an organic place for art in civilization is like the problem of reorganizing our heritage from the past and the insights of present knowledge into a coherent and integrated imaginative union.

The problem is so acute and so widely influential that any solution that can be proposed is an anticipation that can at best be realized only by the course of events. Scientific method as now practiced is too new to be naturalized in experience. It will be a long time before it so sinks into the subsoil of mind as to become an integral part of corporate belief and attitude. Till that happens, both method and conclusions will remain the possession of specialized experts, and will exercise their general influence only by way of external and more or less disintegrating impact upon beliefs, and by equally external practical application. But even now it is possible to exaggerate the harmful effect exercised by science upon imagination. It is true that physical science strips its objects of the qualities that give the objects and scenes of ordinary experience all their poignancy and preciousness, leaving the world, as far as scientific rendering of it is concerned, without the traits that have always constituted its immediate value. But the world of immediate experience in which art operates, remains just what it was. Nor can the fact that physical science presents us with objects that are wholly indifferent to human desire and aspiration be used to indicate that the death of poetry is imminent. Men have always been aware that there is much in the scene in which their lives are set that is hostile to human purpose. At no time would the masses of the disinherited have been surprised at the declaration that the world about them is indifferent to their hopes.

The fact that science tends to show that man is a part of nature has an effect that is favorable rather than unfavorable to art when its intrinsic significance is realized and when its mean-

ing is no longer interpreted by contrast with beliefs that come to us from the past. For the closer man is brought to the physical world, the clearer it becomes that his impulsions and ideas are enacted by nature within him. Humanity in its vital operations has always acted upon this principle. Science gives this action intellectual support. The sense of relation between nature and man in some form has always been the actuating spirit of art.

Moreover, resistance and conflict have always been factors in generating art; and they are, as we have seen, a necessary part of artistic form. Neither a world wholly obdurate and sullen in the face of man nor one so congenial to his wishes that it gratifies all desires is a world in which art can arise. The fairy tales that relate situations of this sort would cease to please if they ceased to be fairy tales. Friction is as necessary to generate esthetic energy as it is to supply the energy that drives machinery. When older beliefs have lost their grip on imagination—and their hold was always there rather than upon reason—the disclosure by science of the resistance that environment offers to man will furnish new materials for fine art. Even now we owe to science a liberation of the human spirit. It has aroused a more avid curiosity, and has greatly quickened in a few at least alertness of observation with respect to things of whose existence we were not before even aware. Scientific method tends to generate a respect for experience, and even though this new reverence is still confined to the few, it contains the promise of a new kind of experiences that will demand expression.

Who can foresee what will happen when the experimental outlook has once become thoroughly acclimatized in a common culture? The attainment of perspective with reference to the future is a most difficult task. We are given to taking features that are most prominent and most troublesome at a given time as if they were the clews to the future. So we think of the future effect of science in terms derived from the present situation in which it occupies a position of conflict and disruption with reference to great traditions of the western world, as if these terms defined its place necessarily and forever. But to judge justly, we have to see science as things will be when the experimental attitude is thoroughly naturalized. And art in particular will always

be distracted or else soft and overrefined when it lacks familiar things for its material.

So far, the effect of science as far as painting, poetry, and the novel are concerned, has been to diversify their materials and forms rather than to create an organic synthesis. I doubt if there were at any time any large number of persons who "saw life steadily and saw it whole." And, at the very worst, it is something to have been freed from syntheses of the imagination that went contrary to the grain of things. Possession of a quickened sense of the value for esthetic experience of a multitude of things formerly shut out, is some compensation amid the miscellany of present objects of art. The bathing beaches, street corners, flowers and fruits, babies and bankers of contemporary painting are after all something more than mere diffuse and disconnected objects. For they are the fruits of a new vision.\*

I suppose that at all times a great deal of the "art" that has been produced has been trivial and anecdotal. The hand of time has winnowed much of this away, while in an exhibition to-day we are faced with it *en masse*. Nevertheless, the extension of painting and the other arts to include matter that was once regarded as either too common or too out of the way to deserve artistic recognition is a permanent gain. This extension is not directly the effect of the rise of science. But it is a product of the same conditions that led to the revolution in scientific procedure.

Such diffuseness and incoherence as exist in art today are the manifestation of the disruption of consensus of beliefs. Greater integration in the matter and form of the arts depends consequently upon a general change in culture in the direction of attitudes that are taken for granted in the basis of civilization and that form the subsoil of conscious beliefs and efforts. One

\* Mr. Lippmann has written as follows: "One goes to a museum and comes out with the feeling that one has beheld an odd assortment of nude bodies, copper kettles, oranges, tomatoes, and zinnias, babies, street corners and bathing beaches, bankers and fashionable ladies. I do not say that this person or that may not find a picture immensely significant to him. But the general impression for any one, I think, is of a chaos of anecdotes, perceptions, fantasies and little commentaries which may be all well enough in their way, but are not sustaining and could readily be dispensed with."—"A Preface to Morals," pp. 103-104.

thing is sure; the unity cannot be attained by preaching the need of returning to the past. Science is here, and a new integration must take account of it and include it.

The most direct and pervasive presence of science in present civilization is found in its applications in industry. Here we find a more serious problem regarding the relation of art to present civilization and its outlook than in the case of science itself. The divorce of useful and fine art signifies even more than does the departure of science from the traditions of the past. The difference between them was not instituted in modern times. It goes as far back as the Greeks when the useful arts were carried on by slaves and "base mechanics" and shared in the low esteem in which the latter were held. Architects, builders, sculptors, painters, musical performers were artisans. Only those who worked in the medium of words were esteemed artists, since their activities did not involve the use of hands, tools and physical materials. But mass production by mechanical means has given the old separation between the useful and fine a decidedly new turn. The split is reënforced by the greater importance that now attaches to industry and trade in the whole organization of society.

The mechanical stands at the pole opposite to that of the esthetic, and production of goods is now mechanical. The liberty of choice allowed to the craftsman who worked by hand has almost vanished with the general use of the machine. Production of objects enjoyed in direct experience by those who possess, to some extent, the capacity to produce useful commodities expressing individual values, has become a specialized matter apart from the general run of production. This fact is probably the most important factor in the status of art in present civilization.

There are, however, certain considerations that should deter one from concluding that industrial conditions render impossible an integration of art in civilization. I am not able to agree with those who think that effective and economical adaptation of the parts of an object to one another with respect to use automatically results in "beauty" or esthetic effect. Every well-constructed object and machine has form, but there is esthetic form only when the object having this external form fits into a larger experience. Interaction of the material of this experience

with the utensil or machine cannot be left out of account. But adequate objective relationship of parts with respect to most efficient use at least brings about a condition that is *favorable* to esthetic enjoyment. It strips away the adventitious and superfluous. There is something clean in the esthetic sense about a piece of machinery that has a logical structure that fits it for its work, and the polish of steel and copper that is essential to good performance is intrinsically pleasing in perception. If one compares the commercial products of the present with those of even twenty years ago, one is struck by the great gain in form and color. The change from the old wooden Pullman cars with their silly encumbering ornamentations to the steel cars of the present is typical of what I mean. The external architecture of city apartments remains box-like but internally there is hardly less than an esthetic revolution brought about by better adaptation to need.

A more important consideration is that industrial surroundings work to create that larger experience into which particular products fit in such a way that they get esthetic quality. Naturally, this remark does not refer to the destruction of the natural beauties of the landscape by ugly factories and their begrimed surroundings, nor to the city slums that have followed in the wake of machine production. I mean that the habits of the eye as a medium of perception are being slowly altered in being accustomed to the shapes that are typical of industrial products and to the objects that belong to urban as distinct from rural life. The colors and planes to which the organism habitually responds develop new material for interest. The running brook, the greensward, the forms associated with a rural environment, are losing their place as the primary material of experience. Part at least of the change of attitude of the last score of years to "modernistic" figures in painting is the result of this change. Even the objects of the natural landscape come to be "ap-*perceived*" in terms of the spatial relations characteristic of objects the design of which is due to mechanical modes of production; buildings, furnishings, wares. Into an experience saturated with these values, objects having their own internal functional adaptations will fit in a way that yields esthetic results.

But since the organism hungers naturally for satisfaction in the material of experience, and since the surroundings which man has made, under the influence of modern industry, afford less fulfillment and more repulsion than at any previous time, there is only too evidently a problem that is still unsolved. The hunger of the organism for satisfaction through the eye is hardly less than its urgent impulsion for food. Indeed many a peasant has given more care to the cultivation of a flower plot than to producing vegetables for food. There must be forces at work that affect the mechanical means of production that are extraneous to the operation of machinery itself. These forces are found, of course, in the economic system of production for private gain.

The labor and employment problem of which we are so acutely aware cannot be solved by mere changes in wage, hours of work and sanitary conditions. No permanent solution is possible save in a radical social alteration, which effects the degree and kind of participation the worker has in the production and social disposition of the wares he produces. Only such a change will seriously modify the content of experience into which creation of objects made for use enters. And this modification of the nature of experience is the finally determining element in the esthetic quality of the experience of things produced. The idea that the basic problem can be solved merely by increase of hours of leisure is absurd. Such an idea merely retains the old dualistic division between labor and leisure.

The important matter is a change that will reduce the force of external pressure and will increase that of a sense of freedom and personal interest in the operations of production. Oligarchical control from the outside of the processes and the products of work is the chief force in preventing the worker from having that intimate interest in what he does and makes that is an essential prerequisite of esthetic satisfaction. There is nothing in the nature of machine production *per se* that is an insuperable obstacle in the way of workers' consciousness of the meaning of what they do and enjoyment of the satisfactions of companionship and of useful work well done. The psychological conditions resulting from private control of the labor of other men for the sake of private gain, rather than any fixed psychological or eco-

nomic law, are the forces that suppress and limit esthetic quality in the experience that accompanies processes of production.

As long as art is the beauty parlor of civilization, neither art nor civilization is secure. Why is the architecture of our large cities so unworthy of a fine civilization? It is not from lack of materials nor from lack of technical capacity. And yet it is not merely slums but the apartments of the well-to-do that are esthetically repellent, because they are so destitute of imagination. Their character is determined by an economic system in which land is used—and kept out of use—for the sake of gain, because of profit derived from rental and sale. Until land is freed from this economic burden, beautiful buildings may occasionally be erected, but there is little hope for the rise of general architectural construction worthy of a noble civilization. The restriction placed on building affects indirectly a large number of allied arts, while the social forces that affect the buildings in which we subsist and wherein we do our work operate upon all the arts.

Auguste Comte said that the great problem of our time is the organization of the proletariat into the social system. The remark is even truer now than when it was made. The task is impossible of achievement by any revolution that stops short of affecting the imagination and emotions of man. The values that lead to production and intelligent enjoyment of art have to be incorporated into the system of social relationships. It seems to me that much of the discussion of proletarian art is aside from the point because it confuses the personal and deliberate intent of an artist with the place and operation of art in society. What is true is that art itself is not secure under modern conditions until the mass of men and women who do the useful work of the world have the opportunity to be free in conducting the processes of production and are richly endowed in capacity for enjoying the fruits of collective work. That the material for art should be drawn from all sources whatever and that the products of art should be accessible to all is a demand by the side of which the personal political intent of the artist is insignificant.

THE moral office and human function of art can be intelligently discussed only in the context of culture. A particular work of

art may have a definite effect upon a particular person or upon a number of persons. The social effect of the novels of Dickens or of Sinclair Lewis is far from negligible. But a less conscious and more massed constant adjustment of experience proceeds from the total environment that is created by the collective art of a time. Just as physical life cannot exist without the support of a physical environment, so moral life cannot go on without the support of a moral environment. Even technological arts, in their sum total, do something more than provide a number of separate conveniences and facilities. They shape collective occupations and thus determine direction of interest and attention, and hence affect desire and purpose.

The noblest man living in a desert absorbs something of its harshness and sterility, while the nostalgia of the mountain-bred man when cut off from his surroundings is proof how deeply environment has become part of his being. Neither the savage nor the civilized man is what he is by native constitution but by the culture in which he participates. The final measure of the quality of that culture is the arts which flourish. Compared with their influence things directly taught by word and precept are pale and ineffectual. Shelley did not exaggerate when he said that moral science only "arranges the elements that poetry has created," if we extend "poetry" to include all products of imaginative experience. The sum total of the effect of all reflective treatises on morals is insignificant in comparison with the influence of architecture, novel, drama, on life, becoming important when "intellectual" products formulate the tendencies of these arts and provide them with an intellectual base. An "inner" rational check is a sign of withdrawal from reality unless it is a reflection of substantial environing forces. The political and economic arts that may furnish security and competency are no warrants of a rich and abundant human life save as they are attended by the flourishing of the arts that determine culture.

Words furnish a record of what has happened and give direction by request and command to particular future actions. Literature conveys the meaning of the past that is significant in present experience and is prophetic of the larger movement of the future. Only imaginative vision elicits the possibilities that are interwoven within the texture of the actual. The first stirrings

of dissatisfaction and the first intimations of a better future are always found in works of art. The impregnation of the characteristically new art of a period with a sense of different values than those that prevail is the reason why the conservative finds such art to be immoral and sordid, and is the reason why he resorts to the products of the past for esthetic satisfaction. Factual science may collect statistics and make charts. But its predictions are, as has been well said, but past history reversed. Change in the climate of the imagination is the precursor of the changes that affect more than the details of life.

THE theories that attribute direct moral effect and intent to art fail because they do not take account of the collective civilization that is the context in which works of art are produced and enjoyed. I would not say that they tend to treat works of art as a kind of sublimated *Æsop's fables*. But they all tend to extract particular works, regarded as especially edifying, from their milieu and to think of the moral function of art in terms of a strictly personal relation between the selected works and a particular individual. Their whole conception of morals is so individualistic that they miss a sense of the *way* in which art exercises its humane function.

Matthew Arnold's dictum that "poetry is criticism of life" is a case in point. It suggests to the reader a moral intent on the part of the poet and a moral judgment on the part of the reader. It fails to see or at all events to state *how* poetry is a criticism of life; namely, not directly, but by disclosure, through imaginative vision addressed to imaginative experience (not to set judgment) of possibilities that contrast with actual conditions. A sense of possibilities that are unrealized and that might be realized are when they are put in contrast with actual conditions, the most penetrating "criticism" of the latter that can be made. It is by a sense of possibilities opening before us that we become aware of constrictions that hem us in and of burdens that oppress.

Mr. Garrod, a follower of Matthew Arnold in more senses than one, has wittily said that what we resent in didactic poetry is not that it teaches, but that it does not teach, its incompetency. He added words to the effect that poetry teaches as friends and

life teach, by being, and not by express intent. He says in another place, "Poetical values are, after all, values in a human life. Yet cannot mark them off from other values, as though the nature of man were built in bulkheads." I do not think that what Keats has said in one of his letters can be surpassed as to the way in which poetry acts. He asks what would be the result if every man spun from his imaginative experience "an airy citadel" like the web the spider spins, "filling the air with a beautiful circuiting." For, he says, "man should not dispute or assert, but whisper results to his neighbor, and thus, by every germ of spirit sucking the sap from mold ethereal, every human being might become great, and Humanity instead of being a wide heath of Furze and briars with here and there a remote Pine or Oak, would become a grand democracy of Forest Trees!"

It is by way of communication that art becomes the incomparable organ of instruction, but the way is so remote from that usually associated with the idea of education, it is a way that lifts art so far above what we are accustomed to think of as instruction, that we are repelled by any suggestion of teaching and learning in connection with art. But our revolt is in fact a reflection upon education that proceeds by methods so literal as to exclude the imagination and one not touching the desires and emotions of men. Shelley said, "The imagination is the great instrument of moral good, and poetry administers to the effect by acting upon the causes." Hence it is, he goes on to say, "a poet would do ill to embody his own conceptions of right and wrong, which are usually those of his own time and place, in his poetical creations. . . . By the assumption of this inferior office . . . he would resign participation in the cause"—the imagination. It is the lesser poets who "have frequently affected a moral aim, and the effect of their poetry is diminished in exact proportion as they compel us to advert to this purpose." But the power of imaginative projection is so great that he calls poets "the founders of civil society."

The problem of the relation of art and morals is too often treated as if the problem existed only on the side of art. It is virtually assumed that morals are satisfactory in idea if not in fact, and that the only question is whether and in what ways art should conform to a moral system already developed. But

Shelley's statement goes to the heart of the matter. Imagination is the chief instrument of the good. It is more or less a commonplace to say that a person's ideas and treatment of his fellows are dependent upon his power to put himself imaginatively in their place. But the primacy of the imagination extends far beyond the scope of direct personal relationships. Except where "ideal" is used in conventional deference or as a name for a sentimental reverie, the ideal factors in every moral outlook and human loyalty are imaginative. The historic alliance of religion and art has its roots in this common quality. Hence it is that art is more moral than moralities. For the latter either are, or tend to become, consecrations of the *status quo*, reflections of custom, reenforcements of the established order. The moral prophets of humanity have always been poets even though they spoke in free verse or by parable. Uniformly, however, their vision of possibilities has soon been converted into a proclamation of facts that already exist and hardened into semi-political institutions. Their imaginative presentation of ideals that should command thought and desire have been treated as rules of policy. Art has been the means of keeping alive the sense of purposes that outrun evidence and of meanings that transcend indurated habit.

Morals are assigned a special compartment in theory and practice because they reflect the divisions embodied in economic and political institutions. Wherever social divisions and barriers exist, practices and ideas that correspond to them fix metes and bounds, so that liberal action is placed under restraint. Creative intelligence is looked upon with distrust; the innovations that are the essence of individuality are feared, and generous impulse is put under bonds not to disturb the peace. Were art an acknowledged power in human association and not treated as the pleasuring of an idle moment or as a means of ostentatious display, and were morals understood to be identical with every aspect of value that is shared in experience, the "problem" of the relation of art and morals would not exist.

The idea and the practice of morality are saturated with conceptions that stem from praise and blame, reward and punishment. Mankind is divided into sheep and goats, the vicious and virtuous, the law-abiding and criminal, the good and bad. To be beyond good and evil is an impossibility for man, and yet as long

as the good signifies only that which is lauded and rewarded, and the evil that which is currently condemned or outlawed, the ideal factors of morality are always and everywhere beyond good and evil. Because art is wholly innocent of ideas derived from praise and blame, it is looked upon with the eye of suspicion by the guardians of custom, or only the art that is itself so old and "classic" as to receive conventional praise is grudgingly admitted, provided, as with, say, the case of Shakespeare, signs of regard for conventional morality can be ingeniously extracted from his work. Yet this indifference to praise and blame because of preoccupation with imaginative experience constitutes the heart of the moral potency of art. From it proceeds the liberating and uniting power of art.

Shelley said, "The great secret of morals is love, or *a going out of our nature* and the identification of ourselves with the beautiful which exists in thought, action, or person, not our own. A man to be greatly good must imagine intensely and comprehensively." What is true of the individual is true of the whole system of morals in thought and action. While perception of the union of the possible with the actual in a work of art is itself a great good, the good does not terminate with the immediate and particular occasion in which it is had. The union that is presented in perception persists in the remaking of impulsion and thought. The first intimations of wide and large redirections of desire and purpose are of necessity imaginative. Art is a mode of prediction not found in charts and statistics, and it insinuates possibilities of human relations not to be found in rule and precept, admonition and administration.

*"But art, wherein man speaks in no wise to man,  
Only to mankind—art may tell a truth  
Obliquely, do the deed shall breed the thought."*