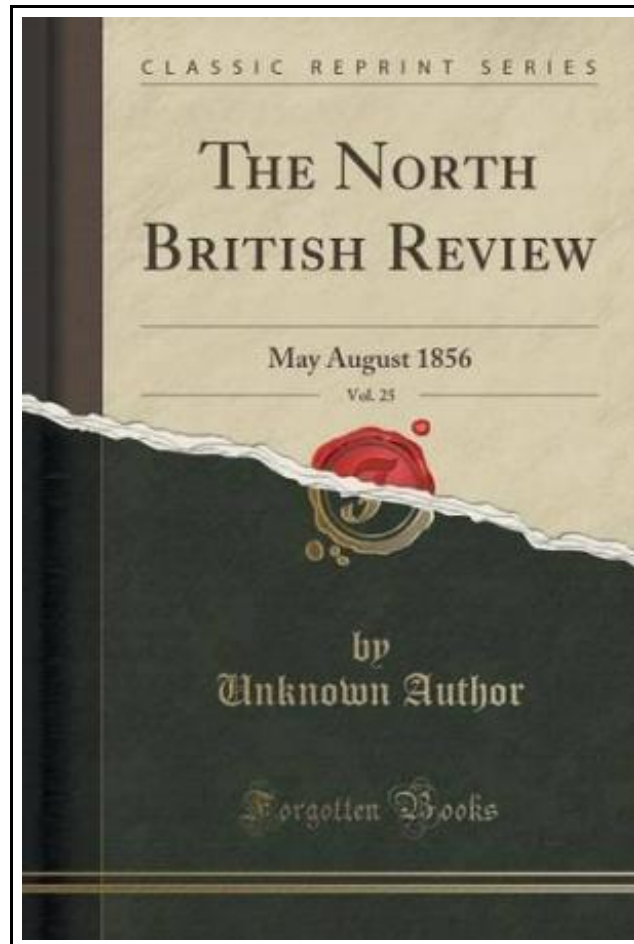


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Meanwhile, in spite of all translations of German AEsthetic treatises, and Kunstnovellen, the mass of the British people cares very little about the matter, and sits contented under the imputation of bad taste. Our stage, long since dead, does not revive; our poetry is dying; our music, like our architecture, only reproduces the past; our painting is only good when it handles landscapes and animals, and will so remain unless Mr. Millais succeed in raising up some higher school: but, meanwhile, nobody cares. Some of the deepest and most earnest minds vote the question, in general, a sham and a snare, and whisper to each other confidentially, that Gothic art is beginning to be a bore, and that Sir Christopher Wren was a very good fellow after all; while the middle classes look on at the Art movement half amused, as with a pretty toy, half sulkily suspicious of Popery and Paganism; and think, apparently, that Art is very well when it means nothing, and is merely used to beautify drawing-rooms and shawl patterns; not to mention that, if there were no painters, Mr. Smith could not hand down to posterity likenesses of himself, Mrs. Smith, and family. But when Art dares to be in earnest, and to mean something, much more to connect itself with religion, Smith s tone alters. He will teach Art to keep in what he considers its place, and if it refuses, take the law of it, and put it into the Ecclesiastical Court. So he says; and what is more, he means what he says; and as all the world,...



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