

About the beginning of the XIX century Pugin proclaimed certain ideals in architecture regarding honesty of treatment and directness of design. These ideals were preached again by John Ruskin in the fifties and in the seventies came to some practical realization in the work of William Morris and the school of "Arts and Crafts". They have so strong a resemblance to Ezra Pound's principles for poetry as to encourage some comparison both of the principles themselves and of their results.

Ezra Pound says, to quote from the "Canadian Bookman":
 "There must be no book-words, no periphrases, no inversions....
 "no ~~click~~ clichés, set phrases, no inversions, no straddled
 "adjectives".... His ideals are:-

- "(1) Direct treatment.
- "~~1910x~~(2) Use absolutely no word that does not contribute to the
 "presentation. - Use no superfluous word, no adjective which does
 "not reveal something, avoid abstractions.
- "(3) As regards rhythm, compose in the sequence of the musical
 "~~thought~~ phrase, not in sequence of a metronome. The rhythm
 "must correspond exactly to the shade of emotion to be expressed".

These principles seem truisms, necessary to all good prose and not in the slightest peculiar to poetry, but their application has led Ezra Pound to "free verse".

The architectural principles of the "Arts and Crafts" school are, in corresponding order:-

- (1) Structural treatment. The structure is the architecture.
- (2) Use no ornament that does not contribute to the effect and avoid all meaningless, ~~xxxxxxxx~~ merely archaeological and commonplace ornament.
- (3) A building must correspond exactly in structure and in emotional feeling with its purpose. Its architecture must not ~~xxxxxxxx~~ conceal that purpose.

These principles are as unexceptional as the former yet, though they were proclaimed a century ago, they have not yet revolutionised architecture. They have produced some very charming results in domestic architecture, in furniture and in similar arts, but the monumental building still relies upon old forms.

Of course the two arts are ruled by different conditions.

The poet can write what he likes and publication is not necessary to his art. The architect can only design a building if somebody wants it. A mere paper design is only an embryo; actual building is necessary to develop the design. The difficulty for the architect is not to formulate principles, that was done a century ago, but to practice them.

One school has proclaimed that structure is all in all. If we construct honestly, ignoring mere adhesive ornament, the result will be a truthful expression and therefore beautiful, for "truth is beauty". We must hide nothing, ignore nothing and add nothing. Thus the brick factory building is the "free verse" of architecture. And very like some "free verse" it is. Yet this school has its triumphs. The battleship is constructed on just these principles and, artistically, is an expression of grim power. The Forth Bridge is pure structure and is beautiful.

Quite apart from the client's prejudices, there is difficulty in building a city on these lines. A city hall, well planned and honestly built, of sound yellow brick - and nothing else - would not be satisfactory. Even the most insurgent rebel would acknowledge that the old-fashioned clichés of architecture, the "orders" the columns and pediments, do add something. They may be poor things, they might be improved upon, but they are better than nothing and it is very hard to replace them. The Corinthian capital took about four centuries to design and it is difficult to produce a new one on the spur of the moment.

So let us look at the cliché, the well-worn phrase. Architecture is full of it. The whole apparatus of the "orders" the historic "styles" the crockets and pinnacles and tracery windows, what are they all but clichés. We may try to keep them fresh, to use them honestly and only where necessary, but, at bottom, they are old forms reused and, so far, even great artists have not found it possible to dispense with them.

But has literature - good literature - always done without the cliché. Homer uses it freely. γλαυκῶπις Ἄθηνη
 Δίος Ὀδυσσεύς, τὸν δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη, ὡς ἔφατ' οὐδεν
 Homer is in fact full of early journalese. Even the Bible uses well worn phrases. "Verily, verily I say unto you" and gains power thereby. The "Phrase" has a power. Used in its place it produc-

produces an effect which could not otherwise be produced. It is a justifiable tool, though it may be abused.

But these are problems of all good writing and do not go to the root of poetry. We must come to the more important problems of form and rhythm. Should poetry have a regular form and a continuous rhythm or should form and rhythm vary with the changing thought and emotion of the poem. In architecture we distinguish two ideals.

The Parthenon, the perfect classic building, is complete in form. It cannot be added to, nor can one stone be taken away without destroying the artistic unity of the design. The simple rectangle of columns is bounded below by the steps, above by the ~~the~~ cornice. The roof and eaves are unbroken by spire, tower or pinnacle. The form is single and complete. Built by Greek builders ten centuries later the church of Sta. Sophia at Constantinople is artistically a unit. It is more complex than the Parthenon but it is still an indivisible unit in design. Roman art is dominated by the same spirit. The greatest of all Roman buildings is the Pantheon. It is a unit in design. No part can be taken away, architecturally there are no parts to take. No part can be added, there is no room for an addition, and today it stands as it was built save for decoration.

The Northern Cathedral is different. We may, and our ancestors occasionally did, pull down the western front, add a few bays and build a new facade. We may add a choir, aisles, chapels, cloisters, chantries, in what profusion we wish. The building will be artistically improved, for its beauty is in diversity.

This tendency seems to be stronger as we move from South to North. The French Cathedral has more unity than the English, ~~xx~~ though less than the Parthenon.

It is more than a coincidence that this is also the case in poetry. The strictest forms of poetry, the sonnet, is Italian the looser forms, like the ballad, are northern. Classic poetry is controlled by syllables, English by accents. Perhaps we may even venture upon a definition of those much abused terms "classic" and "romantic". Classic is the formal art of the south, loving perfection and unity, romantic is the looser art of the north, loving richness and diversity. Who shall say that either is the better?

Now as to rhythm. All good architecture is rhythmic. Monumental architecture is intensely and regularly so, and the irregular rhythms are only to be found in domestic and in un-monumental work.

The rhythms of a Cathedral nave are easily analysed in, say, Lincoln. Dominant is the steady slow beat of the nave arches, soaring to a great pause at the crossing, then subsiding to the steady beat, beat, beat of the choir. Above is the doubled beat of the triforium, two beats to each beat of the nave, then a pause whilst we pass the vaulting pier, then again two beats. Beat beat - pause - beat beat - pause. Above this again is the complicated rhythm of clearstorey window and vault, alternating in window - vault bay - window, often very complex but dominated by the steady bass accompaniment of the nave arcade. As in simple music, the ornamentation, the rich melody is above, the rhythmic accompaniment is below. The significant ornaments, the painted stories of saints the armorial bearings of patrons, are all high up and are ruled in form by the simple regular measure of the structure. St. Paul may be more important than St. Peter, his window is just the same size.

The rhythm of the Parthenon is very similar, but simpler and more exact. Below is the steady even beat of the columns, above is the doubled beat of the triglyphs and metopes. two accents to each column bay, above that again the quadruple beat of the mutules all bound in at the top by the single arhythmic line of the cornice. Here too the rich and significant ornament is not at the base but high up on the building in the metopes and pediments. It is controlled by the spacing of the columns and the form of the building. The wars of the Lapiths and the Centaurs have to accommodate themselves to the squares of the metopes; Athena must be born in a triangle. This strict limitation of artistic form is good and right, nor could we imagine it otherwise.

Just as correct metre will not make a fine poem so regular rhythm will not make a fine building. When, in the enthusiasm of the Greek revival, copies of the Parthenon appeared from Edinburgh to Nashville (Tenn) they were all complete failures. The subject matter, the strictly tied ornament, could not be reproduced. The delicacies of curve and refinement underlying the regular columniation were overlooked and without these the copy was lifeless.

These copies are ~~to~~ⁱⁿ architecture what Pope's "Iliad" is ~~to~~ⁱⁿ poetry, they are a good deal too correct. But they were not wrong because they were rhythmic, they were wrong because they were, firstly, uninteresting, and secondly, in the wrong place.

In keeping with the simplicity of all Greek thought, the Parthenon has only one rhythmic form and is a poem in a single metre, varied with the most exquisite skill without ever breaking ~~to~~ the beat. Our English cathedrals have many metres, each suited to its purpose. The rhythms differ in nave and aisles and chapels but in each part the rhythm is consistent and unbroken. A cathedral is a poem of many varying stanzas.

We all know the charm of the irregular rhythm, the picturesque farm group in which each poece expresses its own thought. The comfortable house, slightly formal in its door and windows, the great barn, the low irregular lines of outbuildings and perhaps the sudden soaring of a windmill or a watertower. It ~~is~~ is often very beautiful, with the beauty of natural landscape. We may indeed ask, Is not the love of landscape in art, with its irregular rhythms, another Northern manifestation on a par with the informal poetry of the North? Certainly the modern school of landscape painting arose in England and the great landscape painters ~~are~~ are northern. ^{and classic} Southern art is interested in persons more than in nature, in form more than in colour.

Ezra Pound does not care for the beat of the metronome. Let him listen to the beatings of his own heart and he will find that he is a human metronome. A very slight variation in his own rhythm and he would write poetry no more. It is little wonder then that so much great art is metronomic. The rhythm should ~~be~~ vary with the thought. But should the thought vary with each line. Rhyme has no doubt often suggested thought. How often has the desire for irregular rhythm led to irregular thought? Is not rhythm, regular rhythm, the very essence of poetry. Not ~~the~~ monotonous tum-tamming or perfect scansion, but the steady and sustained beat which dominates and unifies the ornament. In architecture certainly a regular rhythmic form has been found necessary to the greatest art.

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