

Mr Westcott or Mr Whistler?

My brethren, ^{in facing} ~~before~~ such a problem as this
 thoughts crowd upon one, ^{but} ~~and~~ perhaps the
 most instructive if not the most pathetic is that
 both the gentlemen's names which I have just
 read begin with a W. What mystic union
 that similarity may ^{portend} ~~imply~~ I will not now
 discuss, ~~or~~ ^{anyhow} the similarity ends there.

At the present time when the unsteady lights
 of Romanticism after flaring flaming up in lurid
 glory or flickering ^{with} ~~with~~ ^{into} ~~a~~ like a pale electric glow
 have finally sunk down into obscurity - and when ~~only~~
~~the falsified statistics called~~ ~~reason~~ are left in their
~~stead~~ glorified statistical returns of sodomy incest or
 murder are left ~~and~~ to gratify ^{our} ~~man's~~ spiritual &
 aesthetic aspirations, at such a time those who
 would defend pure art from the ^{accusation} ~~suspicion~~ of being
^{the} a futile flourish of a laborious penmanship generally
 adopt one of two attitudes either they say #
 with a look of deprecating apology to the
 strong minded moralist whom they fear & admire

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Of course, of course, all you say is quite true
only you know Art really doesn't find bad
moral corn in these excellently constructed
Philistine ^{yours} mills of ~~Philistia~~, or ~~the~~ else indifferent
to the good opinion or ~~ambitions~~ of the bad
opinion of morality they bid it glory in ~~the~~ ^{the}
stagnation of ^{its own} suburban mediocrity & leave art
to the few who are untrammelled by its authority.
Hence the cry of art for art's sake.

Now I'm not going to take either standpoint
I won't apologize to morality & if it will
only be patient I won't flout it.

Come My dear madam, ~~come~~ and let us reason
together, only ^{please} don't look like that, you remind
me of your step-daughter Mrs. Grundy ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ ^{with}
whose ^{presence} I cannot ^{control} ~~keep~~ my temper and who aggravates
you nearly as much I daresay.

~~And first I will~~ And now we are both quite
calm, I will explain why although extremely
anxious to gain your good opinion I have not
adopted the apologetic tone - I have not asked

you to call to mind Fra Angelico who ~~was~~ kneels down
 & prayed every time he put his brush into the
 paint pot and ~~had~~ ^{had} ^{for} took ^{of} the sacrament ^{before} when he ^{cleaned} ~~set~~
 his palette; nor have I chosen Mr. Watts for
~~an~~ ^{an} antithesis to you, friend Mr. Westcott although
 his name too begins with a W and he has
 illustrated the Pall Mall Gazette ~~relations~~ ^{relations} in
 a manner that must be very ^{edifying} ~~stimulating~~ since
 it is nearly unintelligible (to most people). On the

contrary I have taken an artist into whose pictures
 it is very difficult to insert even with the utmost
 ingenuity more than the very slightest trace of ~~the~~ ^{the}
 "social problems of our day" ^{"This is his idea of a masterpiece"}

(back)
 The fact is there are two kinds of art we will
 call them for convenience pure & suggestive although
~~the~~ I am not using those terms quite in their
 usual sense. ~~Sure~~ With suggestive art you cannot
 possibly have any quarrel - it is the strongest
 weapon in your armoury. It is jam with a powder
 in it, and the jam is there to make the
 powder go down.

The masterpiece shd. appear as the flower to the
painter - perfect in its bud as in its bloom -
with no reason to explain its presence - no mission
to fulfil - a joy to the artist - a delusion to
the philanthropist - a puzzle to the botanist
- an accident of sentiment + alliteration to
the literary man.

As an example of this we ~~might~~ ^{may} take a play of Ibsen or Euripides - in either case ~~whatever~~ whether you like the moral or no the chief ~~outcome~~ result of the performance will be the suggestion possibly the solution of an ethical problem. *You may think the play immoral if you please non-moral you cannot. In such an art no social problem is too large for discussion, Chastity, marriage, Drunkenness, ~~love~~ stock-exchange speculation and ~~the~~ one cannot tell to ~~what~~ how great an effect it may have on the current morality of its time. But Shakspeare, Mozart, ^{Pheidias} Volasquez, Whistler how different it is with them. How complete, how satisfactory - ~~we~~ ^{we} want nothing not even to improve ~~our~~ ^{our} ~~selves~~ ^{selves} much less other people - how refreshing and how - unstimulating. Consider the morality of Shakspeare (Hamlet of course excepted) it is a perfectly fixed standard murder & treachery

are wrong - of course they are wrong, the question
 doesn't interest us, is not ^{even} suggested to us. The
 Dramatic ^{personae} ~~characters~~ act rightly or wrongly, strongly
 or weakly by virtue of their intrinsic characters
 they do not wait for to discuss the ethics of
 their action. Virtue may be there. it is regarded
 merely as a beautiful thing, vice may be there
 it is accepted & forgiven in as much as it is
 picturesque. I can easily understand, Madam,
 why you should dislike such an art more, far more,
 than one which might ^{actively} preach ~~active~~ immorality - it
 does not even do you the favour to attack
 you.

How then shall I justify it to you?
 You know that physical life is the synthesis
 (Hegel like murder with out) of two opposite
 processes anabolism & katabolism, or to put
 it more ^{essentially} ~~plainly~~ nutrition & function.
 Life is the outcome of the balance between these two
 processes which are incessantly alternating with one
 another.

Nutrition is the accumulation of potential energy
 Function is the ^{distinction by} utilization ~~and destruction~~ of that potential energy.

~~The~~ Now it would be impossible to say that either in itself was ~~was~~ an end, they are both means
 Hardly any ^{thing} in this life is an end ^(by the by) Except the society ~~and~~ ^{that} you ~~would~~ ^{can't} understand ^{truly} but you must take my word for it. But I repeat that both are means to an end, which ~~you are~~
 I eat my breakfast (that's nutrition) that I may work (function) but I work that I may eat my breakfast ~~next day~~ - and the end you may call life, though it's only a relative end.

Now by this analogy I want to explain the life of mankind as a whole.

All Ethics and Social science and politics and administration are nutritive that is to say they are storing up of Potential energy, for they have for their end or object the ^{place} of the individual is a position in which he can ^{function} as ^{completely} ~~much~~ ~~of~~ his as is possible to his nature. And potential energy is nothing but an advantageous or commanding position as of a stone at weight at 3/6e

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a height from the ground or a piece of iron
near a magnet.

But when a man perceives or creates or
perceives a beautiful thing or speculates on the
ultimate nature of things or loves an individual
he is making use of that advantageous
position that ethics and politics have given
him in ~~the~~ the stability & wealth of the community

He is using up the nutrition and that is
~~function~~ the using up of the nutrition is
function.

And neither of these things is an end in
itself not even to make men perfectly
moral (oh do keep calm, my dear madam)
nor to enjoy the perfection of beauty but
the end if there is one, at all ~~and~~ events
the end relatively to these two things, is
the growth or the process which results from
the balance of these two.

And it by no means interferes with the analogy that physical death ~~is~~ takes place when the nutrition can no longer keep pace with the function. So in the state when all "the virtue has gone ~~over~~ ^{away in} to virtuosity" as one of your own writers has said the body politic dies of inanition. Like some great alder tree that spends in one summer the ~~whole~~ ^{stands up} ~~forces~~ ^{nutritions} of a ~~thousand~~ hundred years and dies of the ~~excessive~~ ^{too great} splendour of its own flowers.

But as a rule the process is rather different to that for ~~the~~ nutrition & function go on together - though there are ~~times~~ ^{spells} of greater assimilation such as the ~~new~~ Middle Ages and ~~times~~ spells of greater more vigorous realization of past savings such as the Renaissance; But the former is not without its great ~~Arch~~ Giotto and

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the latter has its Savonarola."

This interview which I have ~~for~~ her put into the historic present, took place a short time ago and when I had finished ~~my~~ Morality expressed herself much edified with the discourse + on my mentioning whether I was going she asked to be allowed to accompany me; I was going to consent when I suddenly recollected her family connections, "Are you not?" I said "The Stern daughter of the voice of God?" - "they do call me that sometimes" she faltered, "Ah then I'm afraid I can't take you - we discussed his election some time ago + he was rejected + I doubt whether we can elect any of that family. ~~but~~ I'll mention it however." And with that we parted.