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THE PRE-RAPHAELITES AND THEIR CRITICS:

A TENTATIVE APPROACH TOWARD THE

AESTHETIC OF PRE-RAPHAELITISM

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THE PRE-RAPHAELITES AND THEIR CRITICS
A TENTATIVE APPROACH TOWARD THE
AESTHETIC OF PRE-RAPHAELITISM

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PREFACE

The purpose of this study is to examine the viewpoints of a sufficient number of critics of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement to arrive at a tentative definition and to place the movement in its proper historical perspective. The primary emphasis will be literary. But since the Pre-Raphaelite Movement began as a movement in painting and so expanded in its later phase that its influence spread to furniture making, interior decoration, tapestry and wall paper design, and book making and illustration, a completely literary study of the movement would be as inadequate as one dealing solely with the painting. Numerous studies have been made of the individual Pre-Raphaelites and of the movement in general. Most of these, however, are devoted to relating biographical facts and to tracing the history of the movement. Critical studies of the aesthetic underlying the movement and motivating the individual members are few in number.

Although Pre-Raphaelitism is well documented, no universal agreement concerning the historical facts of the movement exists. For this reason, the first part of the study is essentially historical, tracing the successive phases through which Pre-Raphaelitism progressed. Part II

is devoted to an examination of the critical opinions of the major apologists and detractors of Pre-Raphaelitism, including the Pre-Raphaelites themselves, in order to arrive at a tentative definition of Pre-Raphaelitism. The third part of the study is a critical bibliography designed to provide as complete a survey as possible, from existing sources, of the large body of research that has been directed at the Pre-Raphaelite Movement.

The underlying thesis of this study is multifaceted, since the object is an attempt to establish Pre-Raphaelitism in its proper critical perspective. More and more, as my investigation of the movement has progressed, Pre-Raphaelitism has assumed a greater significance in the history of English aesthetics than that generally attributed to it. Although it began as a reform in English painting, its basic impulse and its primary influence were essentially literary. As a stage in the history of English aesthetics and ideas, the Pre-Raphaelite Movement is complex; furthermore, it is made doubly important by the fact that it begot other movements in literature and art, not only in England but in America. Pre-Raphaelitism has an intrinsic value for the literary as well as for the art historian for it bridges the gap between the Romantic Movement and that particular point of view known as the fin de siècle, which to so great an extent has determined the artistic

and literary values of the twentieth century.

The extensiveness of the bibliography of a given subject is often an indication of its relative importance--it was indeed one of the first indications that motivated this study--and the amount of research devoted to Pre-Raphaelitism clearly indicates that the movement was more than an ephemeral stage in the development of English aesthetic history. It is in keeping with the spirit of the earlier research that this study has been undertaken.

It would be quite impossible for me here to acknowledge all those who have been of assistance to me, not only in the preparation of this study but in the apprentice years leading up to it. A student's most obvious debt is to his teachers. Among the many members of the faculty of University of Oklahoma who have instructed and advised me, I am especially indebted to Professors Victor A. Elconin, Joseph H. Marshburn, Philip J. Nolan, John P. Pritchard, and John M. Raines of the Department of English and to Professor Stuart R. Tompkins of the Department of History. For reading my dissertation and for making constructive suggestions for improving it I am most grateful to the members of my committee and also to Professor Kester Svendsen, who has contributed his time and bibliographical knowledge to aid me in the solving of documentary problems.

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I can only hope that my wife, Patsy Dale Hines Fredeman, is aware how valuable an assistant she has been in bringing this study to fruition. Her patience and encouragement have often been the necessary incentive to its completion, and it is to her that I am especially indebted for the typing of the reading copy manuscripts.

To Professor Alexander M. Saunders, my director, teacher, and friend, I can only say, inadequately, "Thank you." During my years as a graduate student, I have found Dr. Saunders completely honest and dependable. He has advised me both personally and academically, impressing upon me always the value of scholarship and integrity. In the preparation of the dissertation he has been of invaluable service. In fact, it was in his seminar in Pre-Raphaelitism that I first began to crystallize my ideas about the movement. Dr. Saunders has willingly and readily given his time and effort to make this study better than it would otherwise have been.

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THE PRE-RAPHAELITES AND THEIR CRITICS:
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PART I

A CRITICAL HISTORY OF PRE-RAPHAELITISM

CHAPTER I

THE ANTECEDENTS OF PRE-RAPHAELITE¹ REFORM

Critics and literary historians of the Victorian period have over-simplified the term Pre-Raphaelite to denote only those aspects of Victorian romanticisms revolving about the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. In reality, the term includes three phases of a congeries of literary and artistic creation which have hitherto been used loosely and interchangeably as synonyms--the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, the Pre-Raphaelite Movement, and Pre-Raphaelitism. Actually, they are not mutually inclusive but sequential

¹Numerous variant spellings of the terms "Pre-Raphaelite" and "Pre-Raphaelitism" exist, such as "Præ-Raphaelite," "Preraphaelite," and "Pre-Raffaelite"; the former spellings will be employed throughout this study.

terms that will be employed throughout this study. They are like the ever-widening circles of tiny waves set up when a stone is thrown into a still pond. The farther the waves recede from the center of disturbance, the more their crests diminish and their circumferences increase, until at last they dissipate their energies and cease to be.

The term Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood specifically refers to the pleiad who undertook in 1848 to bring about a revolution in English painting and poetry. Broader in its implications, the Pre-Raphaelite Movement incorporates not only the Brotherhood but all later aesthetic influences emanating from the doctrines of the Brotherhood and culminating in what may be called a historical-critical school. Like Romanticism, Pre-Raphaelitism is even broader as a critical term and more generic in its applications. In fact, it is often convenient to make use of the term "Pre-Raphaelitisms" in much the same sense that Lovejoy employed "Romanticisms." The failure of critics to recognize and employ these distinctions between the phases of Pre-Raphaelitism has almost stripped the terms of any critical significance.

The definitions of Pre-Raphaelitism are almost as numerous as the persons attempting to define it. To their contemporaries the Pre-Raphaelites were either the avant garde of a long-anticipated artistic renaissance or revolutionaries seeking to undermine existing morality and to

destroy the artistic traditions of English art. Modern critics have distorted the critical importance of Pre-Raphaelitism either by trying to popularize the movement or by neglecting it altogether. As an "aesthetic adventure"¹ Pre-Raphaelitism has been dramatized beyond all proportion: it has been staged as both a "comedy"² and a "tragedy";³ and the Pre-Raphaelites have been "aetherialized," like Shelley, although admittedly on "poor" but "splendid wings."⁴

Because of their critical reticence the Pre-Raphaelites are partially responsible for the exaggerated views of their aesthetic. In addition to their manifesto, The Germ, and a few scattered critical documents, they left no canon of criticism whereby they can be identified. Their motives and incentives can be gleaned from either their personal letters or from their paintings and their poetry. The numerous critical reminiscences, memoirs, and autobiographies, in which filial duty often takes precedence over critical acumen and which were written half a century after the demise of the Brotherhood, must be used with caution.

¹William Gaunt, The Aesthetic Adventure (New York: Harcourt Brace and Co., 1945).

²Francis L. Bickley, The Pre-Raphaelite Comedy (New York: Henry Holt Co., 1932).

³William Gaunt, The Pre-Raphaelite Tragedy (New York: Jonathan Cape, 1942).

⁴Frances Winwar, Poor Splendid Wings (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1933).

Had the Pre-Raphaelites succeeded in crystallizing their aesthetic assumptions, confusion about the movement would have been lessened. Unfortunately, most of the Brotherhood were content to let others speak for them or to negligently allow misconceptions and misstatements about themselves to be published without refutation. Thus, the critical objections concerning Ruskin's assumptions and assertions about Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic is a problem of distinguishing between the actual values of the movement and those of Ruskin himself.

Also responsible for the aura of confusion surrounding Pre-Raphaelite scholarship is the failure of critics to recognize the basic complexity of a movement which began as a reform in English painting but whose primary influence in the history of English aesthetics has been largely literary. Pre-Raphaelite art involves in almost every instance the dual media of painting and poetry, and often it creates a strange kind of synthesis that goes beyond the concept of ut pictura poesis. Contingent upon the problem of artistic media is the problem of individual importance and influence. A recent critic, G. H. Ford, states that "as used by literary historians, Pre-Raphaelitism really means 'Rossettiism.'"¹ This may well be the definition of the

¹George H. Ford, Keats and the Victorians (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944), p. 108.

literary historian, but it is a dubious assertion and indicates a superficial and inadequate approach to the movement. The direct literary influence of Pre-Raphaelitism comes primarily through Rossetti, who alone of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood attained literary fame. But there is another level of literary influence that, while not excluding Rossetti, has nothing to do with any of the literature which the Pre-Raphaelites produced. Pre-Raphaelite painting exerted a considerable influence on contemporary and later literature. Somehow, the artistic principles, the techniques, the content, and the underlying spirit or tone so prominent in the paintings of the Pre-Raphaelites were absorbed into a literary context, and this was largely because Pre-Raphaelite art was almost entirely a "narrative" or "literary" phenomenon.

A discussion of the three major phases of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement should be preceded by an examination of its aesthetic antecedents. Pre-Raphaelitism is a synthesis of a variety of influences rather than a wholly new complex of ideas. Few movements exist in a vacuum, and the Pre-Raphaelites initially gave only a quasi-formal organization to ideas current among many artists.

Essentially, Pre-Raphaelitism was a revolt against early Victorian taste. The term "Victorianism" applies properly to a group of economic, social, and moral attitudes rather than to tendencies in literature and art; the

aesthetic of that period is almost wholly a corollary of those attitudes and the ethic they involve. Victorian taste in literature was developed largely in terms of the ideas and social mores of the middle class that had risen to power during the Industrial Revolution. Their literary taste was governed by Benthamite utilitarianism and economic evangelicism. Sincerely devoted to the doctrines of progress and goodness, the early Victorians expected literature to provide them with edification, to support didactically and dogmatically the Victorian concept of the home and the family, and to demonstrate the optimistic faith in the future which the rising materialism seemed to promise.

These values were thoroughly entrenched in the Victorian mind by writers like Macaulay, who substituted censorship for criticism.¹ But the equation works both ways; for the very basis of Macaulay's popularity was that he demonstrated a firm belief in the maintenance of middle class ideals, ideals that stressed faith in progress, in the social superiority of respectability, in an evangelical (both Puritan and economic) concern with salvation, and in the justice of the materialistic slogan that nothing succeeds

¹Macaulay seems to have identified Pre-Raphaelitism with the Oxford Movement. After seeing their pictures at a Royal Academy Exhibition, he wrote in his journal that he was glad to see Pre-Raphaelitism spreading, "glad because it is by spreading that such affectations perish." Richard C. Beatty, Lord Macaulay, Victorian Liberal (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1938), p. 341.

like success. Even in such writers as Carlyle, Arnold, and Ruskin, who dissented from the materialistic point of view, there is an insistence upon morality and the didactic nature of literature. Carlyle attacked utilitarianism because it substituted economic and social for spiritual values. Although he always insisted on the efficacy of work, work to him became the means of attaining spiritual rather than material ends. The most important and influential critic of the age, Matthew Arnold, castigated the Philistines for their concern with materialistic values; but in his personal aesthetic he demanded what he called a "high seriousness" in literature, in which poetry is a criticism of life. Ruskin hated ugliness and squalor, the by-products of industrialism, utilitarianism, and materialism. But, as G. H. Ford correctly observes, his aesthetic standards were as a rule molded by social and ethical considerations.¹

The early Victorian public at large were unconcerned with English art because they were almost unacquainted with it, their taste for contemporary art being almost entirely formed by the exhibitions of the Royal Academy. William Michael Rossetti once wrote that in 1848 English art was in "anything but a vital or lively condition," and he concluded that "on the whole the English school had sunk far below what it had been in the days of Hogarth, Reynolds, Gaines-

¹Ibid., p. 102.

borough, and Blake, and its ordinary average had come to be something for which commonplace is a laudatory term, and imbecility a not excessive one."¹ Despite Rossetti's overstatement of the argument, painting continued to be dominated by the canons of the grand style according to Sir Joshua Reynolds and the seventeenth-century Dutch mannerisms of the genre painters.²

Exactly how responsible the Royal Academy was for the reduction of English art to conventional, dull-toned, unimaginative, formularized, anecdotal imitations of the grand style is debatable. The Academy with its royal patronage was the arbiter of taste. Its limited membership necessarily excluded many painters who traced their grievances directly to it. Oppé quotes from a Select Committee on Arts and Manufactures (1835) the following indictment of the Royal Academy:

Mr. Ewart: What is your opinion of the state of the arts in this country?

Mr. Hurlstone: I consider in no nation that has attained so high a degree of prosperity and

¹William Michael Rossetti (ed.), The Germ, A Facsimile Reprint of the Literary Organ of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, Published in 1850, with an Introduction by W. M. Rossetti (London: Elliot Stock, 1901), Preface, p. 5.

²Graham Hough, The Last Romantics (London: Gerald Duckworth and Co., 1949), pp. 61-62. Acknowledgement should be made in this initial citation of Hough of the excellent criticism of Pre-Raphaelitism which this book contains. Hough's primary interest in the book is in the separate figures whom he identifies as "the last Romantics" but he makes a number of incisive and stimulating observations about Pre-Raphaelitism as well.

civilization, and in which the elegancies of life are generally cultivated as England, are the superior departments of art in so low a state. The works which are produced I consider much below the taste of the higher classes of society, especially since the Continent has been opened, and they have become acquainted with the noble works of the different Italian schools.

Mr. Ewart: To what do you attribute the inferiority of art in England?

Mr. Hurlstone: I consider the Royal Academy the principal if not the sole cause; as at present constituted, it exercezes an unbounded and most depressing influence on art.¹

Oppé discredits the charge that the illiberality of the Royal Academy was responsible for the low state of English painting during the period.² Many persons, however, felt that the Royal Academy was almost entirely responsible for the decline of English art. Ruskin attributed almost all of the weak elements in Turner to the influence of the Academy,³ and throughout his writings he gives utterance to numerous adverse criticisms to indicate his contempt for the traditions of the Academy. William Holman Hunt's attitude is contradictory. A former student at the Academy schools, he was familiar with their methods. In 1906 he reconstructed a conversation with Millais, which he

¹A. P. Oppé, "Art," Early Victorian England, 1830-1865, ed. G. M. Young (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), II, 102.

²Ibid., p. 104.

³E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (eds.), The Works of John Ruskin (London: George Allen, 1902-1912), XXIV, 667. Hereinafter referred to as "Ruskin, Works."

suggested took place before the advent of Pre-Raphaelitism.¹ Both take issue with a number of the Academy's tenets. But in a later, retrospective chapter Hunt avers "that many of the original provisions of the Royal Academy Foundation needed serious rectification was not at that time [1847] our business."² An interesting later opinion is quoted by Hunt from an unsigned article, "The Crimes of the Royal Academy," in The Athenæum.³ It posed a series of rhetorical questions that were a blistering indictment of the alleged malevolent influence of the Royal Academy on English art. It labeled the academicians "mediocrites" and condemned the Academy itself for its materialistic concern with money and for stifling and neglecting genius. The Academy is "a body which has kept art in chains now so large part of a century."⁴ Intimating that Frederic George Stephens, the art critic of the magazine, was the author of the article, Hunt denied its critical strictures and gave it as his opinion that the article in no wise reflected the opinions of the Pre-Raphaelites.

Perhaps the most explicit statement of the method

¹William Holman Hunt, Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (2d ed. rev.; New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1914), I, 56-63.

²Ibid., II, 355.

³Hunt gives only the year of publication, 1859.

⁴Ibid., II, 355-356.

of indoctrinating the young artist in the art conventions of the period was outlined by Ruskin in his pamphlet on Pre-Raphaelitism in 1851:¹

We begin, in all probability, by telling the youth of fifteen or sixteen, that Nature is full of faults, and that he is to improve her; but that Raphael is perfection, and that the more he copies Raphael the better; that, after much copying of Raphael, he is to try what he can do himself in a Raphaellesque, but yet original manner: that is to say, he is to try to do something very clever, all out of his own head, but yet this clever something is to be properly subjected to Raphaellesque rules, is to have a principal light occupying one-seventh of its space, and a principal shadow occupying one-third of the same; that no two people's heads in the picture are to be turned the same way, and that all the personages represented are to possess ideal beauty of the highest order, which ideal beauty consists partly in a Greek outline of nose, partly in proportions expressible in decimal fractions between the lips and chin; but mostly in that degree of improvement which the youth of sixteen is to bestow upon God's work in general. This I say is the kind of teaching which through various channels, Royal Academy lecturings, press criticisms, public enthusiasm, and not least by solid weight of gold, we give to our young men. And we wonder why we have no painters.

When the Pre-Raphaelite Movement began in 1848, English painting was in a transitional and confused state. The Pre-Raphaelites were neither the first nor the only painters to react against the artistic tendencies of the mid-century. Certain painters outside the Pre-Raphaelite group were working much earlier along similar lines of reform that were destined ultimately to countermand the impending doom of English art that Constable had prophesied

¹Ruskin, Works, op. cit., XII, 353.

in 1822.¹ Among them were William Dyce, who pioneered in treatment and subject the same paths the Pre-Raphaelites were later to pursue. John Frederick Lewis, who like Dyce had also come under the influence of the Pre-Raphaelites, had developed earlier a watercolor style that rivalled that of the Pre-Raphaelites in its emphasis on detail and its accuracy of local color. William Mulready's picture, The Sonnet (1836), "continued much of the poetic sentiment and all the concise draughtsmanship of the work of Hunt, Millais, and Rossetti in 1849."² Even the great Turner had been referred to by Ruskin as "the first and greatest Pre-Raphaelite." Two other painters demonstrate clearly in their work an anticipatory kinship with Pre-Raphaelitism. These are Theodor von Holst and Daniel Maclise. The former, a member of the circle that met in the studio of the Scottish sculptor Patric Park, anticipated the primitive and macabre elements of Pre-Raphaelitism;³ and the latter foreshadowed the Pre-Raphaelite mode of expression by his predilection for chivalric themes.⁴ These names represent only a few of the many artists who in one way or another

¹Arthur Fish, John Everett Millais ("Masterpieces of the World"; New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1923), p. 17.

²Robin Ironside and G. Gere, Pre-Raphaelite Painters (London: Phaidon Press, 1948), p. 9.

³Oppé, op. cit., p. 136.

⁴Ironside, op. cit., p. 10.

were anticipating the characteristics that by 1850 would be identified as part of the Pre-Raphaelite reform.

As Oppé points out, "the spark of genius. . . needed to fuse the characteristics of a decade into works of art was supplied, not by one man, but by the momentary convergence of an exceptional group,"¹ the Pre-Raphaelites, before whose advent there had been no well-organized reaction or revolt against the conventionalities of British art. Closely related to the organization of the Pre-Raphaelites were certain artistic coteries or "brotherhoods" like Girton's Club, Chalon's Sketching Society, the Etching Society, the disciples of Blake known as the Ancients, and the circle of Patric Park. These organizations did not have the formal structure, including the collective unanimity of intent--not necessarily purpose--which added force to the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. The Pre-Raphaelites may also have been influenced by the German brotherhood known as the Nazarenes and sometimes referred to as Pre-Raphaelites, who flourished at the beginning of the century. Under the leadership of J. F. Overbeck and Peter von Cornelius the group had gathered together at the deserted monastery of San Isidoro outside Rome, where they sought to live as semi-ascetics and to mirror in their art the alleged simplicity of primitive Christian art. Ford Madox

¹Oppé, op. cit., p. 159.

Brown, who was later closely affiliated with the Pre-Raphaelites, had visited Cornelius in Germany in the forties; but there is little tangible evidence to indicate that either Brown or the Pre-Raphaelites were much influenced by the ideas of the German band. Hunt and Millais vehemently denied any affinity with the group, but their constant concern with "primitive" or "early Christian" elements in Rossetti's art may perhaps indicate an influence of the earlier brotherhood on the personal aesthetic of Rossetti. By and large, the similarities between the German and English Pre-Raphaelites are superficial. Nevertheless, there is a basic organizational resemblance; and it is not improbable that the English Pre-Raphaelites admired the sincerity of the Germans with whom at least they shared this single tenet.

The Pre-Raphaelite Movement, then, represented the first significant and organized reaction against the stereotyped academic traditions of mid-century English art. Such a reaction as that of the Romantic Movement in English literature had never really occurred in English painting; and Pre-Raphaelitism represented both the culmination and the synthesis in England of what Ruskin called the "instinct" that "was urging every painter in Europe at the same moment to his true duty--the faithful representation of all objects of historical interest, or of natural beauty existent at

the period...."¹

¹Ruskin, Works, op. cit., XII, 349.

CHAPTER II

THE P.R.B.--THE COMING TOGETHER

Although it has been extensively employed by literary historians of the Victorian period, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood is too exclusive a term to compass the whole of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement. Much confusion has resulted from a failure to distinguish between the several phases of the movement, as the following statement made about George Edmund Street, the Oxford architect, demonstrates:

...a special interest attaches to him owing to the fact that two young men, who were to become prominent members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, received an architectural training in his office in Beaumont Street at Oxford:¹ these men were Philip Webb and William Morris.

Statements of this sort, which fail to relegate the separate phases of the movement to their proper critical perspective, are characteristic of the weakness of much Pre-Raphaelite criticism. Although Morris and Webb were influential in the later phase of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement, neither had

¹Ralph Dutton, The Victorian Home (London: B. T. Batsford, 1954), p. 95.

any part in the Brotherhood between 1848 and 1853.

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was an outgrowth of the Cyclographic Club, a sketching society to which six of the original Pre-Raphaelites belonged.¹ According to William Michael Rossetti, its members were John Everett Millais, William Holman Hunt, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, John Hancock, William Dennis, N. E. Green, J. T. Clifton, Walter Howell Deverell, J. B. Keene, T. Watkins, James Collinson, Richard Burchett, Frederick George Stephens, Thomas Woolner, and J. A. Vinter.² J. G. Millais, the painter's son, adds to this list the name of Arthur Hughes, who was later to become a fringe-member of the Brotherhood.³ The Cyclographic Club was founded by N. E. Green, Richard Burchett, and Walter Howell Deverell only a short time before the organization of the Brotherhood. Its expressed purpose was "to establish and circulate amongst the members a kind of portfolio of art and criticism. Each member had to contribute once a month a black-and-white drawing, on the back of which the other members were to write critiques."⁴ The group was short-lived because of "the glaring incompetence

¹William Michael Rossetti (ed.), Dante Gabriel Rossetti: His Family Letters with a Memoir by W. M. Rossetti (London: Ellis and Elvey, 1905), I, 122.

²Ibid., p. 121.

³J. G. Millais, The Life and Letters of Sir John Everett Millais (London: Methuen and Co., 1900), I, 65.

⁴Ibid., pp. 62-65.

of about three-quarters of its members, and the unrestrained ridicule of the remainder."¹

The circumstances of the founding of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood have been seriously distorted by petty jealousies and the natural desire of many writers to protect their own interests. The details about which there is considerable dispute relate principally to the position and influence of Dante Gabriel Rossetti in connection with the other two "charter" members, Millais and Hunt. It is now clearly evident that the first bonds existing between the separate Pre-Raphaelites about 1846 or 1847 were between Millais and Hunt.

John Everett Millais (1829-1896) had entered the Royal Academy Schools in 1840 after a two-year training period at Sass's Drawing School, which Rossetti attended a decade later. Regarded as a prodigy, Millais was one of the youngest students ever admitted to the Royal Academy Schools; and he alone of the artists of the original Brotherhood had the technical training and proficiency to qualify him for an artistic career. However, his Pre-Raphaelite period was only a temporary stage in his artistic development, largely because of the critical strictures on many of his Pre-Raphaelite pictures; and in 1853 he was

¹Hunt, *op. cit.*, I, 71. Since six of the seven members of the Brotherhood, including Hunt, were numbered among the ranks of the Cyclographic Club, Hunt's statement seems at best paradoxical.

ected to the Royal Academy. His technique continued to develop but his style degenerated; and he reverted to the sentimental themes of the genre painting against which the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood had rebelled. If his apostasy did not bring him the respect of his colleagues, it did bring him fame and wealth in his lifetime, a baronetcy and the Presidency of the Royal Academy.

Unlike Millais, William Holman Hunt (1827-1910) came from a family unsympathetic with his artistic inclinations. As a result he was, though two years Millais' senior, far behind him in artistic training and knowledge when he entered the Academy Schools in 1844. Hunt's role in the Pre-Raphaelite Movement is relative to his own understanding of the Pre-Raphaelite aims, as he outlines them in his retrospective history of the movement. Many critics have asserted that Hunt alone of the Pre-Raphaelites remained faithful to Pre-Raphaelite ideals; but their assertions suppose that Pre-Raphaelitism was completely static, that it did not develop beyond the narrow bounds of its originally conceived purpose. As Graham Hough says of another moot point concerning Pre-Raphaelitism, "this really will not do!" Pre-Raphaelitism did develop far beyond the rather simple and somewhat vague tenets attributed to it at its inception. Millais' sacrifice of conviction to personal success and Hunt's inability to free himself of his narrow and emotional attitudes toward Pre-

Raphaelitism cannot be regarded as an indictment of the movement itself.

The importance and complexity of the movement are not disregarded by all critics. In a speech at the Art Institute of Chicago in 1907 William Knight insisted that Pre-Raphaelitism "was not only an artistic but a literary revolt, and a poetical renaissance. It was a new way of looking at, of appraising and reproducing both Man and Nature, which found a simultaneous expression in all the departments or sub-sections of the Beautiful; in Poetry, Music, Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, and Decorative Handicraft."¹ Only recently Graham Hough has said that "Pre-Raphaelitism became far more than a school of painting: it became a movement of thought and feeling whose influences soaked deep into the later nineteenth century, and even spread to the next age."²

Despite the fact that Hunt and Millais were perhaps responsible for most of the seminal ideas of the P.R.B. by 1848, the year of young Rossetti's matriculation in the Royal Academy Schools, Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882) plays the most important role in the Pre-Raphaelite Movement. In technical training he was surpassed by Hunt and

¹William Angus Knight, "The Pre-Raphaelites, especially Dante Gabriel Rossetti, with Reminiscences," Nineteenth Century Artists, English and French (Edinburgh: Otto Schulze, 1910), p. 96.

²Hough, op. cit., pp. 42-43.

Millais; but in his shaping hands Pre-Raphaelitism became a dynamic and vital force in English art and literature in place of a vacillating, tentative movement that would have accomplished little. What he lacked in technical ability he made up in a number of other vital qualities. By almost universal consensus he was the impetus behind the movement. Rossetti possessed initiative, leadership, and what would today be called salesmanship. It was Rossetti who gave the group the name of Brotherhood; it was Rossetti who recognized the necessity for a journalistic organ designed to promulgate the ideas of the group; and it was Rossetti who more than any other of the Pre-Raphaelites put forth the energy and effort to keep it going through four issues. Finally, it was Rossetti, far more generally cultivated than either Hunt or Millais, who was responsible for the continued influence and spread of Pre-Raphaelitism long after the Brotherhood had ceased to exist. Hunt never lost sight of the fact that he had been Rossetti's teacher, the importance of which he magnified beyond all proportion. But had Rossetti never gone beyond the pedagogy of Hunt, Pre-Raphaelitism would have long ago ceased to be the concern of anybody. The current interest in the movement and the debatable nature of its influence are ample evidence of its importance in English aesthetics.

Although the other four members of the Brotherhood proved ultimately of less importance than Hunt, Millais,

or Rossetti, they must be associated with the original P.R.B. With the exception of William Michael Rossetti, who had in 1848 recently begun taking lessons in painting at the Royal Academy Life School with his brother, the other four members had been affiliated with the Cyclographic Club.

Frederick George Stephens (1828-1907) was a fellow student of Hunt at the Academy Schools. If Hunt's observation is correct, Stephens had apparently not yet achieved the passionate enthusiasm for painting which Hunt hoped being treated as a real artist would inspire in him.

Stephens painted so few pictures that his reputation as an artist is not great. The Tate Gallery collection of his work includes, besides two small drawings and two unimportant portraits, only three paintings, one of those unfinished. About 1850 Stephens abandoned creative art and became an art critic, first for The Critic (c. 1850-1859) and later for The Athenæum (1859-1901). His abundant and erudite criticism was more influential in the promulgation of Pre-Raphaelite ideals than his paintings would have been had he remained a practicing artist. His contributions to The Germ indicate the truth of William Michael Rossetti's assertion that Stephens was more familiar with the early Italian painters than any other member of the Brotherhood.¹

Thomas Woolner (1825-1892), the only sculptor among

¹Rossetti, Family Letters, op. cit., I, 132.

the original Brotherhood, had exhibited his work before his affiliations with the Pre-Raphaelites. He agreed with them that a reform in all the graphic arts was necessary, and he felt that the Pre-Raphaelite formula for "purifying" art by turning more devotedly to nature offered the only possibility for reform in sculpture.¹ Woolner's departure for Australia in 1852 separated him not only from the Pre-Raphaelites but from their ideals and aspirations, and late in life he became a member of the Royal Academy. Woolner's reputation as a sculptor was never extensive; but his importance as a Pre-Raphaelite is enhanced less by his sculpture than by his poetry, which demonstrates in its subject matter a preoccupation with Pre-Raphaelite ideals.

James Collinson (1825-1881) was the least important member of the original Brotherhood. Considered a "stunner" by Rossetti, who expected great things of him, Collinson was unable to rise above the pedestrian level of genre painting. He officially resigned from the P.R.B. in May of 1850, and his place was unofficially filled by Walter Howell Deverell. Collinson is best remembered for his brief engagement between 1849 and 1850 to Christina Rossetti. She had agreed to marry him only if he abandoned his Roman Catholic faith and became a member of the Church of England, of which she was a devout disciple. When he later reverted

¹Hunt, op. cit., I, 79.

to Catholicism, Christina broke off the engagement. The impact of this relationship is evident throughout Christina's poetry, and one is almost forced to agree with Robin Ironside "that there must have been some hidden quality in Collinson to attract so brilliant a person as Christina Rossetti."¹

William Michael Rossetti (1829-1919) was the only member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood who was never a practicing artist. Like Stephens, William Michael became an art critic, his positions on the staff of The Critic and The Spectator helping to publicize the movement. As amanuensis of the group William Michael kept the "P.R.B. Journal," which is the most valuable document relating to the history of the Brotherhood despite the many expurgations it suffered from both William Michael and Dante Gabriel. William Michael's writings are essential to any study of the Pre-Raphaelites; and it is largely as popularizer, historian, and archivist, and biographer of his brother that he is important.

With the single exception of Frederick George Stephens, introduced by Hunt to the Brotherhood, the other members seem to have been accepted at Rossetti's suggestion. During an absence of Millais Rossetti asked Hunt to consider the three candidates whom he proposed for membership.

¹Ironside, op. cit., p. 26.

In his retrospective history of the Brotherhood Hunt recalled his encounter with Millais upon the latter's return. From the conversation, as Hunt recalls it, it is fairly evident that Millais was somewhat shocked and surprised at the prospect of organizing a formal club, much less a brotherhood.

"Where is your flock? I expected to see them behind you. Tell me all about it. I can't understand so far what you are after. Are you getting up a regiment to take the Academy by storm? I can quite see why Gabriel Rossetti, if he can paint, should join us, but I didn't know his brother was a painter. Tell me. And then there's Woolner. Collinson'll certainly make a stalwart leader of a forlorn hope, won't he? And Stephens, too! Does he paint? Is the notion really to be put in practice?"¹

Hunt then endeavored to explain the situation to Millais. In Millais' absence Rossetti had gone to live with Hunt and had temporarily become Hunt's student. The members proposed by Rossetti had seemed promising. Although none of them had made much progress in the study and practice of painting, they gave indication of attaining success.

Millais: "...all this is a heavy undertaking."

Hunt: "It looks serious, certainly,...but then there is this to be considered. If they fail, I don't see how they can interfere with us; and if they make truly good artists, our body will become the stronger, and we may the more perfectly revolutionize taste. Remember, however, that the whole question now rests with us, and I have said I can agree to nothing finally till

¹Hunt, op. cit., I, 89-90.

your return to town."¹

The implications of this reconstructed conversation are not only interesting but somewhat confusing. Hunt is obviously attempting to de-emphasize the importance of Rossetti in the organization of the movement, but in so doing he de-emphasizes his own role as well and inadvertently gives Rossetti more credit than he intends. Both Hunt and Millais are insistent that they, and not Rossetti, first had the idea of Pre-Raphaelitism. However, it is clear from both their statements of the history of the movement that Rossetti actually fostered--perhaps forced--the formation of a concerted movement and gave to it the additional name of Brotherhood. Hunt himself in the same conversation with Millais admitted that "I determined to put a limit to the number of probationary members, which I did by adding my painting pupil Stephens."² More specifically, Hunt earlier states that the idea of extending the number of members came from Rossetti.³ In the light of this statement and the established role of Rossetti in the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and the later expansion of the movement, J. G. Millais' assertion that Rossetti was never a Pre-Raphaelite is seen to be prejudiced and unfounded.⁴

The Brotherhood seems first to have been organized

¹Idem. ²Idem. ³Ibid., p. 89.

⁴Millais, op. cit., I, 58.

in August or September of 1848.¹ The final decision to organize apparently dated from a meeting held at Millais' house, at which time Millais was to pass on the four allies suggested by Rossetti and Hunt. The subjects for discussion were varied; but the most important event of the evening was the examination of a book of engravings of the frescoes of the Campo Santo at Pisa, which Millais had in his possession. Immediately Hunt recognized an affinity between his ideals and those of the early artists who had imitated Giotto and the quattrocentists. The qualities in the works of these artists that attracted the group were simplicity and truth. Millais suggested that "this is what the Pre-Raphaelite clique should follow,"² and Hunt in his post facto history epitomizes the attitude of the group at the time:

The innocent spirit which had directed the invention of the painter was traced point after point with emulation by each of us who were the workers, with the determination that a kindred simplicity should regulate our own ambition, and we insisted that the naive traits of frank expression and unaffected grace were what had made Italian art so essentially vigorous and progressive, until the showy successors of Michael Angelo had grafted their Dead Sea fruit onto the vital tree just when it was bearing its choicest autumnal ripeness.³

There is some question concerning Millais and

¹Rossetti, Family Letters, op. cit., I, 126.

²Millais, op. cit., I, 51.

³Hunt, op. cit., I, 91.

Rossetti's attitude toward these engravings. Millais was dubious of the advantages of the proposed organization. Yet he no doubt felt that the engravings expressed better than most models the lines along which the movement should proceed. Rossetti was openly skeptical. He belittled the Campo Santo painters to Ford Madox Brown, who advised him to re-examine them and praised them as "the finest thing in the world."¹ At any rate, the meeting at Millais' proved for historical purposes the initiation of the formal movement. William Michael Rossetti concurs with Hunt that "it was the inspection of the Campo Santo engravings, 'at this special time, which caused the establishment of the Præraphaelite Brotherhood.'²

The purpose of the Brotherhood, as it finally came to be called at Rossetti's insistence, is both implicit in each member's understanding of the name Pre-Raphaelite and in the underlying reasons that had brought about the organization of the Brotherhood. The P.R.B. was a concerted effort on the part of the seven members to revolutionize taste in art. In this respect it was recognized by Millais as directed against the Royal Academy. As William Michael Rossetti puts it, the three major Pre-Raphaelites "hated the cant about Raphael and the Great Masters, for utter

¹Oswald Doughty, A Victorian Romantic (London: Frederick Muller Ltd., 1949), p. 69.

²Rossetti, Family Letters, op. cit., I, 125.

cant it was in the mouths of such underlings of the brush as they saw around them, and they determined to make a new start on a firm basis." The basis was to be "serious and elevated invention of subject, along with earnest scrutiny of visible facts, and an earnest endeavor to present them veraciously and exactly."¹

The term Pre-Raphaelite is vague and misleading. Utilized originally as a term of derision,² Pre-Raphaelite was felt by many to be a singularly unhappy and inaccurate choice of name. Had any of the Pre-Raphaelites been better versed in the history of painting and aesthetics, they might easily have found a more expressive and meaningful term to convey their general artistic intent. The first meaning of the term Pre-Raphaelite, at least for Hunt and Millais, was associated with the elevation of the status of art by the truthful representation of nature. By going solely to nature for inspiration they hoped to produce a style of "absolute independence as to art dogma, and convention." "This," Hunt told Millais' son, "we³ called Pre-Raphaelitism."⁴

The use of the term nature in art or literary criticism is always ambiguous, for it is difficult to decide its precise meaning. Ruskin in his first volume of

¹Ibid., p. 126.

²Hunt, op. cit., I, 69.

³Hunt and Millais.

⁴Millais, op. cit., I, 49.

Modern Painters had exhorted young painters to seek their models in nature. And despite the attempt of Millais to discredit Ruskin's influence, it is probable that Hunt had taken his thesis from Ruskin, whom he had read with considerable enthusiasm.¹ If Hunt did not derive his ideas directly from Ruskin, it may be said with certainty that he received from Modern Painters the confirmation he needed.

Nature as Hunt and Millais use it has both positive and negative implications. On the positive side it seems to refer to the truthful representation of natural forms by the utilization of original objects as models. Another use is apparent, however, in Hunt's remark that Rossetti's later painting "neglected with indifference the robust, out-of-door growth of native Pre-Raphaelitism."² If the peculiar bent of Rossetti's genius taught him not to go to nature for his inspiration but to follow the flights of his own fancy,³ he was seldom guilty of the excesses of Millais and Hunt in their pursuit of nature. The corollary to Hunt and Millais' doctrine of nature in art had technical results in the exactness of detail they incorporated into their paintings. But at the same time it did not entail a strict and impractical realism in the representation of natural objects. Hunt observes that "in agreeing to use

¹Hunt, op. cit., I, 52-53.

²Ibid., II, 351.

³Millais, op. cit., I, 58.

the utmost elaboration in painting our first pictures, we never meant more than that the practice was essential for training the eye and the hand of the young artist. We should never have admitted that the relinquishment of this habit of work by a matured painter would make him less of a Pre-Raphaelite."¹

Nature was intended primarily to serve as a guide for the artist, and the representation of exact detail was "conducting to a general air of genuineness and vraisemblance."² William Michael Rossetti draws an interesting distinction between "conventionalism" and "conventionality" that is perhaps useful at this point. Essentially the distinction is made between imitation and copying. "Conventionalism" is "an adherence to certain types, traditions, and preconceptions;" but "conventionality" is "the lifeless application of school-precepts, accepted on authority, muddled in the very fact of acceptance, and paraded with conceited or pedantic self-applause."³ In the Pre-Raphaelites' search for inspiration in nature, inspiration does not refer to servile copying of forms from nature anymore than Pre-Raphaelitism refers to a servile imitation (in the sense of copying) from the original Pre-Raphaelite painters.

In fact, nature and Pre-Raphaelitism were closely

¹Rossetti, Family Letters, op. cit., I, 129.

²Ibid., p. 130.

³Ibid., p. 127.

associated in the minds of the Pre-Raphaelites; for they saw in early Pre-Raphaelite painting "an emotional sincerity, expressed sometimes with a candid naïveté; they saw strong evidences of grace, decorative charm, observation and definition of certain appearance of Nature, and patient and loving but not mechanical labour."¹ They wished to remove from art the artificialities and affectations they associated with the schools since Raphael and especially in their own day with the grand style of the Royal Academy. Hunt and Millais were more eager to disassociate themselves from the techniques of the primitives than was Rossetti, to whom primitive art offered a special kind of attraction, combining as it did simplicity, sensuality, ritual, and mysticism. Hunt and Millais were always disturbed by Rossetti's association of Pre-Raphaelitism with the German Nazarenes and "early Christians." As Graham Hough has pointed out, however, the entire movement was pervaded by an objectless devoutness stemming from the "experience of real medieval religious painting." This "quasi-religious feeling" received by the Pre-Raphaelites from the Pre-Raphael or "early Christian" art is indeed one of the most noticeable ingredients of the movement.²

"Pre-Raphaelitism," said Hunt, "is not Pre-Raphaelism."³ One of the major characteristics of

¹Idem.

²Hough, op. cit., pp. 60-61.

³Hunt, op. cit., I, 94.

Pre-Raphaelitism was a belief in the independence of the artist, and Raphael in his prime was "an artist of the most independent and daring course as to convention." This point is essential as one of the most debatable issues concerning the Pre-Raphaelites: whether or not the Brotherhood included or excluded Raphael by adopting the name Pre-Raphaelites. Raphael, Hunt observes, was not free from deadly artificialities and conventions. During his later career he was forced to lay down rules of work, which his followers, accentuating his poses into postures, adopted and distorted. "They caricatured the turns of his heads and the lines of his limbs, designed their figures in patterns; and they built up their groups into formal pyramids."¹ Raphael's followers, the "Raphaelites," travestied Raphael's failings, and "the traditions that went on throughout the Bolognese Academy (which were introduced at the foundation of all later Schools and enforced by LeBrun, Du Fresnoy, Raphael Mengs, and Sir Joshua Reynolds, to our own time) were lethal in their influence, tending to stifle the breath of design. The name Pre-Raphaelite excludes the influence of such corruptors of perfection, even though Raphael, by reason of certain of his works, be in the list."² This is perhaps the clearest explanation which any of the Pre-Raphaelites offered for their choice of name. It is clear that Hunt

¹Ibid., p. 95.

²Idem.

did not consider the name, as Ruskin did, unfortunate. He explains that there were some critics who suggested that the simplicity of the Pre-Raphaelite aims necessitated no more complex a name than "art naturalists;" but he adds "I see no reason . . . to regret our choice of name. Every art adventurer, however immature he may be in art lore, or however tortuous his theory, declares that Nature is the inspirer of his principles."¹

Finally, William Michael Rossetti offers the best summary of the bond of union among the members of the Brotherhood:²

1. To have genuine ideas to express. The P.R.B. "had the aim of developing such ideas as are suited to the medium of fine art, and of bringing the arts of form into general unison with what is highest in other arts, especially poetry."³
2. To study Nature attentively, so as to know how to express them the ideas .
3. To sympathize with what is direct and serious and heartfelt in previous art, to the exclusion of what is conventional and self-parading and learned by rote.
4. To produce thoroughly good pictures and statues.

The production of good works of art, William Michael asserts, was the foremost aim of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.

¹Idem. ²Rossetti, Family Letters, op. cit., I, 135.

³Ibid., p. 134.

CHAPTER III

THE P.R.B.--AFFINITY AND SEPARATION

For a time the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood became a social and professional focus in the lives of the seven young men, as the following quotation from William Michael Rossetti demonstrates.

As soon as the Præraphaelite Brotherhood was formed it became a focus of boundless companionship, pleasant and touching to recall. We were really like brothers, continually together, and confiding to one another all experience bearing upon questions of art and literature, and many affecting us as individuals. We dropped using the term "Esquire" on letters, and substituted (P.R.B." I do not exaggerate in saying that every member of the fraternity was just as much intent upon furthering the advance and promoting the interests of his "Brothers" as his own. There were monthly meetings at the houses or studios of the various members in succession; occasionally a moonlight walk or a night on the Thames. Beyond this, but very few days can have passed in a year when two or more P.R.B.'s did not foregather for one purpose or another.... We had our thoughts, our unrestrained converse, our studies, aspirations, efforts, and actual doings; and for every P.R.B. to drink a cup or two of tea or coffee, or a glass or two of beer, in the company of other P.R.B.'s . . . was a heart-relished luxury, the equal of which the flow of long years has not presented, I take it, to any of us. Those were the days of youth; and each man in the company, even if he did not project great things of his own, revelled in poetry

or sunned himself in art.¹

The early Brotherhood was similar in many respects to an undergraduate club or fraternity. Their enthusiasm, the spirit of reform animating their activities, and their inability to articulate more clearly the artistic tenets of their revolt indicated their youthful immaturity. Although their sincerity is not to be questioned the primary reason for the ultimate failure of the Brotherhood lay in the immaturity of its members. The "List of Immortals" drawn up sometime in 1848 exemplifies or is at least symptomatic of the youth and immaturity of the group. This list was probably made during the period of the Cyclographic Club and before the formation of the P.R.B. But since all save one of the Pre-Raphaelites belonged to the earlier group, the list may be taken as representative. It was indited by Rossetti in the company of Hunt and others during a studio conclave, at which time it was decided that "there was no immortality for humanity except in reputation gained by man's own genius or heroism."² Different degrees of glory in great men were signified by one, two, three, or four stars. The preface to the list ran as follows:

We, the undersigned, declare that the following list of Immortals constitutes the whole of our Creed, and that there exists no other immortality than what is centered in their names and in the names of their contemporaries, in whom this list

¹Ibid., p. 133.

²Hunt, op. cit., I, 111.

is reflected.¹

The list which follows is incomplete. But even if one disregards the naïveté of the project, the list reveals glaring inconsistencies based on immaturity, inexperience, and an inadequate knowledge of literary and artistic history. Juxtaposed beside the names of great artists and writers are such romantic heroes as Kosciusko, Joan of Arc, Cromwell, Washington (with two stars), and Columbus. The stars seem at best arbitrarily awarded: Christ alone has four, the fourth being added at the insistence of Collinson; and only Shakespeare and the author of the Book of Job are allocated three. A pattern is hardly discernible among those having two stars. It is not quite clear what relationship exists between such disparate figures as Homer, Chaucer, Leonardo da Vinci, Goethe, Shelley, Alfred, Landor, Thackeray, Washington, and Browning. And if consistency could be allowed in the above list, one would be hard-pressed to evaluate the basis of allocating one star each to Raphael, Coventry Patmore, Longfellow, Boccaccio, Mrs. Browning, and Tennyson. The list also contains the names of two contemporary painters, Flaxman and Haydon; and Hunt stated that many names of contemporaries now forgotten have been omitted. "Sic transit gloria mundi."²

It is perhaps too easy and not entirely fair to

¹Idem.

²Ibid., p. 112.

dismiss this list of Immortals as only a naive expression of youth and immaturity, for it does represent an attempt to crystallize attitudes on a variety of subjects. That the attitudes thus indicated would of necessity be transitory and subject to later repudiation would in no way alter the sincerity of the motives which produced the list.

The first artistic efforts of the P.R.B. were made public in May of 1849 at the Academy exhibition in Trafalgar Square. It had been previously agreed that at least for the present the meaning of the secret letters on the paintings would not be divulged to the public. Millais and Hunt sent Lorenzo and Isabella and Rienzi to the Academy exhibition. Rossetti was to have been represented by his The Girlhood of Mary Virgin; but at the last minute he changed his mind without, incidentally, the knowledge of the other P.R.B.'s and sent his picture to the Free Exhibition that had opened a week earlier than the Academy exhibition. Rossetti's motives may have been altogether honorable; nevertheless they were not so received by Hunt and Millais, who regarded Rossetti's act as sedition. Rossetti's exhibited picture was, Hunt says, the most "Overbeckian" of the three designs from which he had made his selection.¹ Exhibited as it was a week earlier than either Hunt's or Millais' pictures, Rossetti's Girlhood was first

¹Ibid., p. 119.

noticed in the press; and both Millais and Hunt were disturbed when they "heard that he was spoken of as a precursor of a new school."¹ Rossetti's picture received considerable notice. Hunt and Millais were perhaps justifiably bothered when the Athenæum critic praised Rossetti for his sincerity and earnestness, which he compared to that of the early Florentine monastic painters. A week later they censored Hunt and Millais' works as antiquarian. But of more import, especially to Hunt, was the fact that Rossetti's painting gave rise to a "wrong interpretation of the term Pre-Raphaelitism which then originated, and which has been in some circles current to this day [1906]."² All things considered, however, this first exhibition was relatively successful. If the public were uneducated to the techniques and style of the pictures, the critics at least saw promise in the production of all three Pre-Raphaelites. All three pictures were eventually sold. Millais received one-hundred and fifty pounds and a suit of clothes for Lorenzo and Isabella; and Hunt's Rienzi and its frame finally found a purchaser for one-hundred guineas. It was perhaps something of a salve to the wounded pride of Hunt and Millais that Rossetti's Girlhood brought only a paltry seventy pounds.

While the artist members of the Brotherhood were

¹Idem.

²Ibid., p. 120.

occupied with the exhibitions of 1849, William Michael Rossetti was making the first entries in the "P.R.B. Journal." During the active life of the Brotherhood his was a silent but historically vital role, and in serving as an amanuensis to the Brotherhood he was most assiduous in his labors on both the "P.R.B. Journal" and later as editor of The Germ. The Journal was to be "a record, from day to day, of the proceedings of all the Members, so far as these were of a professional or semi-professional character."¹ It was to be a personal diary only insofar as it pertained to William Michael as a member of the Brotherhood. Despite the expurgations made in the Journal by both William Michael and Dante Gabriel,² the Journal remains one of the best source documents of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. From the first entry (May, 1849) to the final entry (Saturday, January 29, 1853) the Journal is invaluable for establishing the chronology of certain paintings, writings, and events, for determining the accuracy of certain biographical detail concerning the various members, and for an understanding of the social and professional inter-relations provided by the Brotherhood.

During the exhibitions of 1849 the idea of a Pre-Raphaelite publication first began to be discussed. The

¹William Michael Rossetti, Præ-Raphaelite Diaries and Letters (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1900), p. 207.

²Ibid., p. 208.

impetus seems largely to have come from Rossetti, who alone of the Pre-Raphaelites had demonstrated any marked proficiency in writing. The details of the project were first discussed in July of 1849, at which time it was decided that the price was to be sixpence, that the title was to be "Monthly Thoughts in Literature, Poetry, and Art," and that each number was to contain an etching.¹ All save the last proposal were subsequently abandoned. Rossetti continued to push the venture, and in September of 1849 William Michael Rossetti was nominated and appointed editor. The new proposal was to call the publication "The Pre-Raphaelite Journal," a title ultimately rejected at the insistence of Holman Hunt. Rossetti finally conceived the title, "Thoughts towards Nature," under which the prospectus, arranged by Rossetti with Aylott and Jones, appeared. Finally, on December 19, 1849, a large gathering was held at Rossetti's studio. From a long list of names submitted by Cave Thomas the name "The Germ" was selected, edging out such worthy contenders as "The Harbinger," "The Sower," "The Seed," "The Scroll," and "The Acorn." Appended to the new title was a sub-title that retained in part some of the earlier proposed titles. When the first issue appeared it was called The Germ. Thoughts towards Nature in Poetry, Literature, and Art. At the meeting on December 19th the

¹Rossetti, Germ (Preface), op. cit., p. 8.

members agreed with Thomas Woolner's proposal that all articles should appear unsigned. They felt that "to appear publically as writers, and especially as writers opposing the ordinary current of opinions on fine art, would damage their professional positions, which already involved uphill work more than enough."¹ This was also the reason for Hunt's unwillingness to call the periodical "The Pre-Raphaelite Journal." It is also significant that the name Pre-Raphaelite does not appear in reference to the Brotherhood. The word appears only once, in the dialogue of Orchard, and then in reference to the actual painters before Raphael.

The aesthetic implications of The Germ will be discussed at some length below, since The Germ represents one of the few public statements of purpose attempted by the Pre-Raphaelites during the life of the Brotherhood. Historically, therefore, The Germ is of extreme importance. Its publication history was brief. The first issue of 700 copies, printed by Messrs. Tupper and Sons, appeared about January 1, 1850. But when only two-hundred were sold, the second issue was reduced to five-hundred. It was even less successful than the first issue. The practice of anonymous authorship was abandoned by most of the contributors. Since all the Brothers, with perhaps the exception of Collinson,

¹Ibid., p. 10.

were jointly responsible for the financial status of The Germ, the question of discontinuing the publication was seriously considered after failure of the second issue. Tupper and Sons alleviated this necessity by assuming final responsibility for two more numbers. Hoping to make the magazine more appealing to the public, Alexander Tupper suggested that the title of the last two issues of the magazine be called Art and Poetry, being Thoughts towards Nature, conducted principally by Artists. Dickinson and Company, the print-sellers, consented to join their name as publishers to that of Aylott and Jones.¹ The third number did not appear until March 31, 1850, almost a month late; and the fourth issue appeared on April 30th (dated May). Thus there is no April issue in the completed set. The periodical terminated after the fourth issue with a total indebtedness for the first two issues of thirty-three pounds, which was shared by the Pre-Raphaelites. On the last two issues Tupper and Sons appear to have lost around thirty pounds. Financially The Germ had been a failure. John Tupper's dirge on The Germ is worth noting as a satire on the defunct magazine and its disillusioned proprietors:

"Dedicated to the P.R.B. on the Death of 'The Germ,' otherwise known as 'Art and Poetry.'

"Bring leaves of yew to intertwine
With 'leaves' that evermore are dead,

¹Idem.

Those leaves as pallid-hued as you
 Who wrote them never to be read:
 And let them hang across a thread
 Of funeral-hemp, that, hanging so,
 Made vocal if a wind should blow,
 Their requiem shall be anthemed.

"Ah rest, dead leaves!--Ye cannot rest
 Now ye are in your second state;
 Your first was rest so perfect, fate
 Denies you what ye then possessed.
 For you, was not a world of strife,
 And seldom were ye seen of men:
 If death be the reverse of life,
 You never will have peace again.

"Come, Early Christians, bring a knife,
 And cut these woful pages down:
 Ye would not have them haunt the town
 Where butter or where cheese is rife!
 No, make them in a foolscap-crown
 For all whose inexperience utter
 Believes High Art can once go down
 Without considerable butter.

"Or cut them into little squares
 To curl the long locks of those Brothers
 Præraphaelite who have long hairs--
 Tremendous long, compared with others.
 As dust should still return to dust,
 The P.R.B. shall say its prayers
 That come it will or come it must--

"A time Sordello shall be read,
 And arguments be clean abolished,
 And scripture punched upon the head,
 And mathematics quite demolished;
 And Art and Poetry instead
 Come out without a word of prose in,
 And all who paint as Slosua did
 Have all their sloshy fingers frozen."¹

No amount of effort on the part of those connected
 with The Germ could turn it into a successful venture. The
 public simply refused to buy it, and without supporters it

¹Rossetti, Family Letters, op. cit., I, 156.

could not survive. In many respects, however, the magazine was not so great a failure as its financial report or the gentle humor of Tupper's satire would indicate. Numerous critical notices in the reviews indicated that The Germ found considerable favor among the critics. One or two examples will perhaps suffice to indicate the general nature of its reception. The Guardian for August 20, 1850 contained the following "obituary" of The Germ:

We are very sorry to find that, after a short life of four monthly numbers, this magazine is not likely to be continued. Independently of the great ability displayed by some of its contributors, we have been anxious to see the rising school of young and clever artists find a voice, and tell us what they are aiming at, and how they propose to reach their aim. This magazine was to a great extent connected with the Pre-Raphaelite Brethren, whose paintings have attracted this year a more than ordinary quantity of attention, and an amount of praise and blame perhaps equally extravagant

It is a pity that the publication is to stop. English artists have hitherto worked each one by himself, with too little of common purpose, too little of mutual support, too little of distinct and steadily pursued intellectual object Here, at last, we have a school, ignorant it may be, conceited possibly, as yet with but vague and unrealised objects, but working together with a common purpose, according to certain admitted principles, and looking to one another for help and sympathy. This is new in England, and we are very anxious it should have a fair trial. Its aim, moreover, however imperfectly attained as yet, is high and pure. No one can walk along our streets and not see how debased and sensual our tastes have become A school of artists who attempt to bring back the popular taste to the severe draperies and pure forms of early art are at least deserving of encouragement. Success in

their attempt would be a national blessing.¹

Earlier (February 15, 1850) The Critic had given The Germ special notice as a periodical which had "peculiar and uncommon claims to attention."² After commenting on the general quality of periodicals devoted primarily to poetry and on the nonsense of most "fugitive magazine poetry," The Critic concluded that in The Germ "an affected title and an unpromising theme really hides a great deal of genius; mingled however, we must admit, with many conceits which youth is prone to, but which time and experience will assuredly tame. The Germ has our heartiest wishes for its success; but we scarcely dare to hope that it may win the popularity it deserves. The truth is that it is too good for the time. It is not material enough for the age." On June 1, 1850, apparently before it became generally known that the publication had been permanently abandoned, The Critic gave notice of the new Germ, Art and Poetry in a serious review that was favorable toward the Pre-Raphaelites: "we cannot contemplate this young and rising school in art and literature without the most ardent anticipations of something great to grow from it, something new and worthy of our age, and we bid them God speed upon the path they have adventured."³

¹Rossetti, Germ (Preface), op. cit., p. 12.

²Idem.

³Ibid., p. 13.

Such favorable press notices more than compensated for the financial loss of the Brotherhood and gave welcome encouragement to the Pre-Raphaelite cause, especially after the exhibition of 1850, when the movement met with the general disfavor of the art world. The tone of the critics in 1850 changed from the "fatherly admonitions of 1849" to "virulent and outrageous abuse."¹

The direct reason behind this avalanche of critical hostility was the sudden discovery of the meaning of the cryptic symbol P.R.B., which had gone unnoticed on the pictures of 1849. Again Rossetti was the immediate if innocent cause of the disaster. He had casually revealed the meaning of the letters to Alexander Munro, the sculptor, who in turn confided the secret to a journalist on the staff of The Illustrated London Times, Angus B. Reach. Once the meaning of the letters became public, Pre-Raphaelitism became anathema to the artistic world. Critics who had seen promise in the pictures of 1849 and who had treated the young Pre-Raphaelites sympathetically and even encouragingly suddenly became aware that a formal conspiracy was in the offing; and the name Pre-Raphaelite, twisted into any number of inaccurate definitions, became synonymous with the most scurrilous and depraved tendencies and techniques in art.

¹Bickley, op. cit., p. 172.

In 1850 Rossetti again exhibited at the Free Exhibition rather than at the Royal Academy. He submitted his Ecce Ancilla Domini. Millais and Hunt exhibited at the Royal Academy Christ in the House of His Parents (sometimes known as The Carpenter's Shop) and Christian Priests Escaping from Druid Persecution. Both pictures were harshly and unfairly criticized, but Millais' was the chief target. It was condemned by every critic who noticed it. The critic of The Athenæum thought it contained a "circumstantial art language from which we recoil with loathing and disgust." He referred to it as a "pictorial blasphemy," in which the "imitative talents have been perverted to the use of an eccentricity both lamentable and revolting."¹ The critic of The Times said that it was, "to speak plainly, revolting," and made special reference to the "loathsome minuteness," which by this time had been identified as the most salient characteristic of Pre-Raphaelitism. The critic of Blackwood's was equally harsh. But the most outspoken and brutal attack came from the great Dickens in an article entitled "New Lamps for Old," which appeared in his newly-begun Household Words for June 15, 1850.² His criticism

¹Hunt, op. cit., I, 145.

²"You come—in this Royal Academy Exhibition . . . to the contemplation of a Holy Family. You will have the goodness to discharge from your minds all Post-Raphael ideas, all religious aspirations, all elevating thoughts; all tender, awful, sorrowful, ennobling, sacred, graceful,

was unfair and uninformed. He did not know art well enough to criticize the artistic merits of the picture. His sarcastic article expressed little more than moral indignation.

The various attacks undoubtedly contributed to the decline of the Brotherhood. They may well have forced Rossetti into a kind of artistic isolation, as has often been alleged; they most certainly contributed to the ultimate desertion of Millais to the Royal Academy. But their most lasting effect was that they pointed the way to a succession of later attacks, which even the support of Ruskin could not ameliorate.

The favorable reception accorded The Germ was hardly sufficient to offset the abuse that had resulted from the exhibition of 1850. It came too late to offer any real help to the Pre-Raphaelite cause; had it survived The Germ would most certainly have felt the brunt of the antipathy against Pre-Raphaelitism that the exhibition had engendered in the public mind. The exhibition of 1851 did little to improve the critical reputation of Pre-Raphaelitism in the minds of the critics. Millais' and Hunt's entries were again abused. New adversaries came forward, and Pre-

(cont.) or beautiful associations; and to prepare yourselves, as befits such a subject--Pre-Raphaelly considered--for the lowest depths of what is mean, odious, repulsive, and revolting Wherever it is possible to express ugliness of feature, limb, or attitude, you have it expressed." Reprinted in D.S.R. Welland, The Pre-Raphaelites in Literature and Art (London: George G. Harrap & Co., 1953), pp. 174-175.

Raphaelitism was denounced by the teachers of the Royal Academy Schools. Only The Spectator praised the works of the Pre-Raphaelites, but the critic for that journal cannot be considered impartial. According to William Michael Rossetti, the editor of The Spectator was somewhat puzzled by "the difference of tone concerning Millais in my preliminary observations of last week, and the reviews of previous years."¹ Rossetti also hinted that the affair might result in the termination of his post as critic.

Ruskin's letter in defense of Pre-Raphaelitism, appearing in The Times on Tuesday, May 13, 1851, marked the first honest examination of the true issues which Pre-Raphaelitism had received in the press for some time.

Ruskin was not at the time personally associated with any of the Pre-Raphaelites. His letter, though solicited by Coventry Patmore and long-anticipated by the Pre-Raphaelites, was more of a protest against the unfairness of the attacks on Pre-Raphaelitism than it was an actual defense of the movement. Ruskin's understanding of many of the tenets of the group was faulty. But the Pre-Raphaelites were not then in a position to quibble, though the possibility of a proposed answer to Ruskin's charge of "Romanism" at least occurred to William Michael Rossetti.² It was however prudently decided that it was better for their

¹Rossetti, Diaries, op. cit., p. 298.

²Ibid., p. 302.

cause to wait at least until the appearance of a second letter promised by Ruskin. The content of the letters and the importance of Ruskin in the history of Pre-Raphaelitism will be examined more fully below.¹ At this point it is sufficient to say that Ruskin's effect on the Pre-Raphaelites and on the contemporary reputation of the movement is difficult to overstate. Provoking considerable debate in the press, the letters gradually siphoned off much of the antagonism toward the Pre-Raphaelites. Ruskin's real importance as art adviser and patron to many of the Pre-Raphaelites reached its greatest proportions after the dissolution of the actual Brotherhood.

The P.R.B. was in its period of decline when Ruskin came to its aid. Collinson had written to Dante Gabriel in May of 1850 that as a sincere Catholic he could not longer allow himself to be called P.R.B. "in the brotherhood sense of the term."² Although chosen to succeed Collinson, Walter Howell Deverell was never officially a P.R.B. His role in the discovery of the "Stunner," Elizabeth Siddal, however, was perhaps a greater contribution to the movement than Collinson had ever made.

In December of 1850 Stephens and William Michael Rossetti discussed "the shamefully obsolete condition into which P.R.B. meetings have fallen."³ In January of the next

¹See infra, Chapter VI. ²Ibid., p. 275.

³Ibid., p. 289.

year four of the six remaining members of the Brotherhood met with the purpose of rejuvenating the moribund organization. They drew up the "Rules of the Brotherhood," the first formal rules to be adopted by the P.R.B. They were perhaps necessitated by the decline of the initial enthusiasm that had inspired the P.R.B. in the beginning and had made rules unnecessary. Millais questioned the propriety of continuing with the name Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and it was decided that each member present should prepare a manifesto "declaring the sense in which he accepts the name"¹ to be read at the next meeting. Although William Michael notes in the Journal that he prepared his manifesto, it is not extant; and there is no evidence that any of the other members even took the trouble to perform the exercise.

Most of the twenty-three "Rules" set down at this meeting were perfunctory, relating more to the business than to the aesthetic side of the Brotherhood. They made possible the election of new members, established William Michael as secretary and editor of the "P.R.B. Journal," designated the first Friday of the month as the time of the P.R.B. meetings, imposed a fine of 2/6 for non-attendance, and made the observance of Shakespeare's birthday as obligatory as a P.R.B. meeting. The "Rules" also instigated an annual review of the work of every member to assure that

¹Ibid., p. 293.

each would remain loyal to the ideals of the Brotherhood. Rule twenty-three seems to have been directed against the absent Rossetti:

23. That, in case any P.R.B. should feel disposed to adopt publicly any course of action affecting the Brotherhood, the subject be in the first instance brought before the other members.¹

The "Rules" were a last resort, but they came too late to prevent the decline of the Brotherhood. As William Michael observes, "the day when we codified proved also to be the day when no code was really in requisition."² The "Rules" had been adopted with virtuous intentions, "but they were forthwith disobeyed, and the Præraphaelite Brotherhood, as a practical working organization, and something more than a knot of friends, may be regarded as from that date sinking into desuetude."³

The final dissolution was swift. The meetings of the P.R.B. became less and less frequent. In the published version of the "P.R.B. Journal" there is no record of any Pre-Raphaelite activity between May, 1851, and January, 1853. The six surviving members of the original Brotherhood split into three cliques and went their several ways. Woolner sailed for Australia in July of 1852. Hunt was by then talking of his proposed pilgrimage to the Holy Land,

¹Rossetti, Family Letters, op. cit., I, 139.

²Ibid., p. 139.

³Ibid., p. 137.

though he did not actually leave England until December, 1853. United by a new and a mutual interest, William Michael and Stephens were critics and close friends. Millais, often in the company of Ruskin, was moving nearer to the Royal Academy. Rossetti saw little of the other members except Ford Madox Brown and Deverell, with whom he maintained a close friendship until the latter's death in 1854. Finally, Millais was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy (November, 1853) and substituted the letters A.R.A. for P.R.B. after his name. Actually, the election of Millais to the camp of the "enemy" was only the anti-climax in the decline of the Brotherhood. In a letter to Christina on the day of Millais' election, Rossetti quoted the conclusion of Tennyson's "The Passing of Arthur": "So now the whole Round Table is dissolved."¹ Christina responded with an epitaph in the form of a sonnet, "The P.R.B."

The P.R.B. is in its decadence:
 For Woolner in Australia cooks his chops,
 And Hunt is yearning for the land of Cheops;
 D. G. Rossetti shuns the vulgar optic;
 While William M. Rossetti merely lops
 His B's in English disesteemed as Coptic;
 Calm Stephens in the twilight smokes his pipe,
 But long the dawning of his public day;
 And he at last the champion great Millais,
 Attaining Academic opulence,
 Winds up his signature with A.R.A.
 So rivers merge in the perpetual sea;
 So luscious fruit must fall² when over-ripe;
 And so the consummated P.R.B.

¹Ibid., II, 120.

²Ibid., I, 138.

On Hunt's departure from England Rossetti presented him with a daguerrotype of his The Girlhood of Mary and two sonnets on the same subject. On the picture Rossetti inscribed the following lines from Taylor's Philip van Artevelde:¹

There's that betwixt us been, which men remember
Till they forget themselves, till all's forgot,
Till the deep sleep falls on them in that bed
From which no morrow's mischief knocks them up.

In one of the last entries in the "P.R.B. Journal" for January, 1853, William Michael Rossetti states that "Though both Pre-Raphaelitism and the Brotherhood are as real as ever, and purpose to continue so, the P.R.B. is not and cannot be so much a matter of social intercourse as it used to be."² By January of the next year the P.R.B. was wholly defunct. Pre-Raphaelitism was not, however, a dead issue. The Brotherhood had failed. But it had given rise to new conceptions about art and literature, which were to be elaborated into a wider, more extensive movement by Rossetti. As William Michael Rossetti notes, "the members got to talk less and less of Pre-Raphaelitism, the public more and more."³ The irony of the entire movement is that during the brief life of the Brotherhood, through which Pre-Raphaelitism made its debut into art, Pre-Raphaelitism met

¹Hunt, op. cit., p. 269.

²Rossetti, Diaries, op. cit., p. 308.

³Rossetti, Family Letters, op. cit., I, 137.

only with notoriety and disrepute. Only after the abandonment of the Brotherhood--an abandonment determined to a great extent by the unfavorable reception of Pre-Raphaelite standards--did Pre-Raphaelitism become an influential force on the mainstream of English aesthetic thought and art.

CHAPTER IV

THE PRE-RAPHAELITE MOVEMENT AND ITS AFTERMATH

The evolution of Pre-Raphaelitism was a complex and involved process characterized by the influence of Rossetti and Ruskin, the application of Pre-Raphaelite principles to a greater number of artistic endeavors, the appearance of new artistic personalities, and the elaboration of original ideals into a romantic concern alien to the thinking of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, especially to Millais and Hunt. A limited definition of Pre-Raphaelitism is inadequate; for unless one is willing to grant that the Brotherhood developed into a movement, the history of Pre-Raphaelitism must end about 1853. Historically this conception of Pre-Raphaelitism is not valid, because it fails to account for the many writers and painters who were influenced by the ideals promulgated by the new Pre-Raphaelitism. Some critics have terminated the movement with the dissolution of the Brotherhood and have substituted the term "Rossettiism" to account for the continued existence of the term Pre-

Raphaelite throughout the nineteenth century;¹ but this point of view denies to Pre-Raphaelitism the potentiality of development and growth and relegates Pre-Raphaelitism to the narrow boundaries ascribed to it by Hunt and Millais.

In this phase of the discussion the question of Rossetti's role becomes the most important one, for it is around Rossetti that most of the controversy is centered. Two opposing groups have insisted that Rossetti was not a Pre-Raphaelite. Millais and Hunt, wishing to take credit for an aesthetic influence beyond the scope of their limited ideas, sought to discredit Rossetti's importance in the P.R.B. On the other hand, the defenders of Rossetti, realizing that his personal aesthetic went far beyond the ideals of the P.R.B., denied that Pre-Raphaelitism was ever a very serious force in Rossetti's art. In 1870 Rossetti himself lent credence to both these views when he was asked if he were the "Pre-Raphaelite Rossetti." "Madam," he answered, "I am not an 'ite' of any kind; I am only a painter."² Ten years later he told Hall Caine:

As for all the prattle about Præraphaelitism I confess to you I am weary of it, and long have been. Why should we go on talking about the visionary vanities of half-a-dozen boys? . . .

¹This is the critical view of Ford Madox Ford in his two monographs, Rossetti (1896) and The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (1907), and of Evelyn Waugh in his biography of Rossetti (1928).

²Rossetti, Family Letters, op. cit., I, 135-136.

What you call the movement was serious enough, but the banding together under the title was a joke.¹

On the other hand, William Michael Rossetti, who often reveals a rare and sensitive insight into his brother's motives, says that "in 1848 and for some years afterwards he meant a good deal by calling himself Præraphaelite, and meant it very heartily."² Yet Rossetti never fully accepted, not even in his contributions to The Germ, Hunt's and Millais' artistic ideals. This being so, the personal aesthetic of Rossetti is no less important to the idea of Pre-Raphaelitism than the personal aesthetic of Hunt and Millais. Furthermore, Hunt and Millais, aware that Rossetti's aesthetic differed widely from their own, were willing to accept him into the Brotherhood. Rossetti, like the other members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, desired to bring about a revolution in English taste by stressing the seriousness and sincerity of the artist. That his aesthetic was more involved, more imaginative, and perhaps more fully developed than that of Hunt and Millais seems rather to lend dignity and stature to the Brotherhood than to indicate that Rossetti was a Pre-Raphaelite in name only. Not only individual but general tendencies must be allowed in the Pre-Raphaelite Movement. The latter must be broad

¹Hall Caine, Recollections of Dante Gabriel Rossetti (London: Elliot Stocks, 1882), p. 219.

²Rossetti, Family Letters, op. cit., I, 136.

enough to encompass such disparate figures as Holman Hunt, Rossetti, William Morris, and Burne-Jones. Pre-Raphaelitism developed concurrently in the realms of poetry and painting, whereas Romanticism began with poetry and afterwards added painting. An adequate definition of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, therefore, must allow for differences not only among the individual figures associated with the movement but for the natural diversity inherent in painting, poetry, sculpture, and the crafts in general.

The dissolution of the P.R.B., then, was only the termination of the first phase of Pre-Raphaelitism. The major Pre-Raphaelites adhered to their own ideals of the basic principles of Pre-Raphaelitism. The formal organization of the Brotherhood was too rigid to allow for diversity even among the three or four members who staunchly believed in its basic creed. Their divergent conceptions of Pre-Raphaelitism after its dissolution are due as much to their maturity as artists as to their individual differences. However, not all the members of the P.R.B. shared in the elaboration of the movement. Rossetti alone carried the movement beyond its original limits. Hunt and Woolner remained true to Pre-Raphaelitism in the Brotherhood sense for the rest of their lives. Stephens and William Michael Rossetti are not personally involved in the later phase of Pre-Raphaelitism, although each served it as

apologist and defender. The epithets "staunch" and "transitory," used by Percy Bate¹ to refer to the degree of Pre-Raphaelitism attained by Hunt and Millais, were accurate. He characterized Rossetti as "Pre-Raphaelite and Idealist." Since Hunt was in the Holy Land and Millais in the ranks of the Royal Academy, Rossetti became the instigator of what some writers have hesitantly called the Pre-Raphaelite Aesthetic Movement.

Although the aesthetic of the Pre-Raphaelites will be more fully discussed below,² the basic aesthetic distinctions between the first and second phase of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement are essential here to clarify the changes that took place between 1848 and 1853. The aesthetic of the original Brotherhood (Hunt and Millais) was too limited to bring about more than minor reforms in technique, composition, arrangement, and the use of color. Initially, Pre-Raphaelitism defined only a mutually-dependent technique and purpose: a technique that was truthful (or realistic) in its representation (a technique which followed "nature") and a purpose that insisted upon the sincerity of the artist. The principal iconoclasm of the P.R.B. was its desire to exist independently of the Royal

¹Percy H. Bate, The English Pre-Raphaelite Painters (London: George Bell and Sons, 1899).

²See infra, Chapter V.

Academy, a philosophical position antithetical to the Victorian point of view and hence regarded as revolutionary. Besides this, there is little very new or really very unconventional in the art and aesthetic of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. In their art they employed the anecdotal and moralistic conventions of their predecessors. Even Rossetti's art at this time exhibited a religiosity not apparent in his later work. In short, the Pre-Raphaelitism of the Brotherhood was too conventional and too Victorian to carry to completion the reform they had initiated. The obscurity of their aesthetic creed and their inability to make their aims explicit even to their fellow members reduced the importance of the group and led to misunderstandings among them. It has been pointed out that the antagonism toward Pre-Raphaelitism engendered by the exhibitions of 1849 and 1850 was in part the result of false association and attributing purposes to the painters inconsistent with their actual aims. Misunderstanding, the price often paid for reticence, and the secretive nature of the P.R.B. made the aims of the group doubly suspicious. Even Ruskin was disturbed by what he saw to be their Roman Catholic tendencies. This impression was fortified by the charges made by other critics that they were medieval, primitive, and "early Christian." Furthermore, the P.R.B. occurred too soon after the Oxford Movement and employed ~~too many of the superficial characteristics of that schism~~

to allow even the most tenuous and obscure suggestion of Romanism to go unnoticed.

The entire Pre-Raphaelite Movement offered few positive substitutes for the attitudes of the mid-century. Osbert Burdett,¹ tracing the theme of disillusionment in the works of the major writers of the Victorian Age, has shown that the concern with beauty, which became increasingly noticeable as the century progressed, was an attempt of poets and artists to escape the deposit that the "ugliest century in history" had laid upon the human imagination. The failure of the P.R.B. lay primarily in the attempt of the Brothers to utilize values that were only a part of the Victorian mask of respectability. Lacking the imagination necessary to fulfill their dream of escape, they made the dream a kind of end in itself. The P.R.B. sought rather to reform existing traditions than to actually incite a revolution. They preached and contributed to a reform they were powerless to bring about. In the later phase of Pre-Raphaelitism the artists sought to popularize beauty and to make it respectable. They possessed the necessary creative imagination; but the passivity of their labors and the increasing isolation of the artist culminated not in reform but in the isolation of art itself, or

¹Osbert Burdett, The Beardsley Period (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1925), p. 8.

Art for Art's Sake. On a lower and more practical plane, however, the arts and crafts movement changed the taste of the people in the practical arts. When the revolt of the eighties and nineties came, blending native and foreign traditions, the Victorian age was in its decline. The artists and writers of the fin de siècle, misinterpreting Pre-Raphaelitism and overlooking the successes it had met with in reforming taste, went too far in their relentless satires of Victorian values. What came to be known as the aesthetic type was in reality a caricature by reversed or inverted analogy of the Victorian concept of the artist. The abuse of the nineties seems excessive against the straw man of Victorian values. The reform that had been gathering momentum since 1848 backfired; and art and the artists, both now decadent, retreated to an isolation from which they have not even yet quite returned.

ii

The history of the second phase of Pre-Raphaelitism necessitates at this point a brief account of activities of the major Pre-Raphaelites after the dissolution of the P.R.B.

William Holman Hunt, who held that a meticulous fidelity to nature was the essence of Pre-Raphaelitism, spent the years 1854 and 1855 in the Holy Land gathering

local color for his picture The Scapegoat. The critics and the public, however, failed to grasp its symbolism and underestimated the labor and deprivation which had gone into the picture. Unlike Millais, Holman Hunt never faltered in his high ideals of art. He was, indeed, the "staunch" Pre-Raphaelite; "an artist striving to depict the actuality of things," and "the teacher aiming to inculcate a moral lesson."¹ But Hunt's greatest strength was also his greatest weakness. Just as he never abandoned the artistic ideals of his youth, so he refused to see Pre-Raphaelitism in terms one bit broader than his understanding of it. Although he never accepted the full implications of Pre-Raphaelitism, Hunt remained the only member of the defunct P.R.B. until his death.

Millais, newly accepted Associate of the Royal Academy, continued to stress in his works the photographic accuracy of detail. Between 1853 and 1858 he painted such pictures in the Pre-Raphaelite tradition as Sir Isumbras at the Ford (1857), remembered because of Frederick Sandys' caricature "The Nightmare," and The Escape of a Heretic (1857). But neither was half so good as his greatest Pre-Raphaelite work, Ophelia (1852). In general, Millais drifted more and more toward the sentimental and conventional. The Order of Release (1853), The Blind Girl

¹Bate, op. cit., p. 28.

(1856),¹ and Autumn Leaves (1856) exhibit a masterful concern with detail and a beauty of coloration. Yet in the last analysis they do not express the sentiment of Millais' Pre-Raphaelite period. Ultimately giving way to popular demand, Millais abandoned his artistic principles and advised Hunt to do the same. Millais had never shared the complete contempt of Hunt, Rossetti, and the other Pre-Raphaelites for the Royal Academy. He had tried to become a member as early as 1850, and his acceptance by the Academy in 1853 was the turning point in his career. His earlier affiliation with the Pre-Raphaelites and his continued interest in doctrines considered heretical by many of the older members of the Academy may have been largely responsible for the postponement of his election to full membership for almost a decade. However, it has been suggested that Millais' election indicated at least a partial acceptance of the ideals of Pre-Raphaelitism and a minor victory for the Brotherhood.² Between 1859, when Millais' The Vale of Rest appeared--the first of Millais' paintings that indicated an abrupt reversal in treatment, subject, and tone--and his election to full membership in 1863, Millais' art underwent a conscious and noticeable metamorphosis. Although many of the earlier tendencies continued to be

¹Rossetti called The Blind Girl "one of the most touching and perfect things I know." Fish, op. cit., p. 90.

²Ibid., p. 80.

evident in his work, around 1858 he succumbed to the popular and journalistic prejudice about his works and decided henceforth to give the public what it wanted "instead of what I know will be best for them."¹

In the later phase of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement the respective roles of Hunt and Millais are not conspicuous, although their names never ceased to be associated with it. In his address at the exhibition of Pre-Raphaelite paintings held at the Municipal Art Gallery of Birmingham in 1891, William Morris professed himself a member of the Pre-Raphaelite school and "stated as his deliberate conviction that its principal masters, Rossetti, Millais, Holman Hunt, and Burne-Jones, were names that ranked alongside of the very greatest in the great times of art."² It is ironical that Hunt and Millais were technically superior to Rossetti and to many of the later Pre-Raphaelites. They might have rendered the movement a far greater service than they did, but Hunt's lack of imagination and Millais' lack of courage deprived the movement of two of its most potential leaders.

Since the purpose of this section is to trace in broad lines the evolution of an aesthetic movement, it is

¹ A. C. Gissing, William Holman Hunt (London: Duckworth, 1936), p. 143.

² J. W. Mackail, The Life of William Morris (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1912), II, p. 284.

not feasible to discuss in great detail the particular history of any single figure. However, it is impossible to examine the history of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement without considering the special role played by Dante Gabriel Rossetti. The years 1853-1855 were highly productive for Rossetti and for the Pre-Raphaelite Movement. During these years Rossetti came more and more under the influence of John Ruskin, whose patronage enabled him to live relatively free from the penury which had marked his Brotherhood period. Ruskin was also influential in a variety of other ways. He not only purchased Rossetti's work himself but recommended other purchasers. One of these was Mr. McCracken, a ship-broker from Belfast, who commissioned some of Rossetti's best work during this period, including Found (1854), which some critics have called his only Pre-Raphaelite painting. Ruskin also induced Rossetti to teach an art class at the Working Men's College in London, a task to which the latter applied himself sporadically from 1854 to 1862. Under the tutelage of Ruskin, Rossetti's style, if not his technique, matured. Both apparently benefited from the relationship. Pre-Raphaelitism, on the other hand, suffered somewhat by being almost wholly identified with Ruskin's statements of its principles.

As early as 1848 Leigh Hunt had written to advise Rossetti to concentrate his creative efforts on painting rather than poetry. "Poetry," Hunt said, "even the very

best--nay, the best, in this respect [financially], is apt to be the worst--is not a thing for a man to live upon while he is in the flesh, however immortal it may render him in spirit."¹ That Rossetti at this period devoted himself primarily to painting can be partially explained by his decision, following the advice of Leigh Hunt, to be a painter rather than a poet. There were, however, other reasons which will later become apparent, that are focal to the aesthetic and motivated all his artistic endeavors. Nevertheless, Rossetti continued in the literary-pictorial tradition established early by the Pre-Raphaelites; and his paintings between 1853 and 1855 reflect an interest in Dante and Arthurian Romance. It was the literary quality of Rossetti's paintings that first attracted him to the young men at Oxford, notably Burne-Jones and William Morris, who were destined under Rossetti's direction to graft new branches on the Pre-Raphaelite tree.

The most important years, however, in the later phase of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement were 1856 and 1857, which were years of culmination and transition. Besides specific paintings expressive of the new tendency in art, the movement was publicized by The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine, by the two "Pre-Raphaelite Exhibitions" (as they came to be called) in London and New York, by the appearance

¹Rossetti, Family Letters, op. cit., I, 123.

of Moxon's Pre-Raphaelite-illustrated edition of Tennyson, and by the painting of murals on the walls of the newly-erected Oxford Union Debating Hall.

Not Rossetti but Ruskin first influenced William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones, who had come to Exeter College, Oxford, in 1853. Sharing a common enthusiasm for poetry and literature in general, the pair had joined a group of Pembroke students from Birmingham to form the nucleus of a new brotherhood. This "set," as they called it, consisted of William Fulford, Cormell Price, Charles Joseph Faulkner, Richard Walter [later Canon] Dixon, and eventually a few students from Trinity College, Cambridge, who were united by their common intention to take Holy Orders. However, this intention was not, according to Canon Dixon, their common bond of allegiance. "The bond was poetry and indefinite artistic and literary aspiration: but not of a selfish character, or rather not of a self-seeking character. We all had the notion of doing great things for man: in our own way, however: according to our own will and bent."¹ Both Morris and Burne-Jones had received their indoctrination in aesthetics from the two volumes of Modern Painters published at that time and particularly from the chapter "Of the Nature of Gothic" in The Stones of Venice, which appeared in 1853. It was not until 1854, when

¹Mackail, op. cit., I, 45.

Ruskin's "Edinburgh Lectures" were published, that the two young men became aware of the work of Rossetti and the Pre-Raphaelites.

The Oxford Brotherhood quickly became a center of activity in the lives of all connected with it. In its earlier stages it reflected the religious aspirations of its members, and in many respects it leaned heavily toward the monastic and spiritual impulses of the German Pre-Raphaelites. But the principal difference between the members of the Oxford group and those of the P.R.B. was in the range of their activities, especially of Morris and Burne-Jones, who had shared initially a common interest in poetry and later in art. There were joint readings of Tennyson, Milton, and Shakespeare. Tennyson was for the Oxford group what Keats had been for Rossetti and the Pre-Raphaelites, "the end of all things in poetry."¹ Even Morris seems to have subscribed to this opinion until he read the poetry of Rossetti in a copy of The Germ that he acquired in 1855. Their knowledge of painting was, as Burne-Jones notes, extremely limited. What they eventually learned of painting came from Ruskin's writings, from the prints of the newly founded Arundel Society, from the new art of photography, from continental tours, and from Thomas Coombe of the Clarendon Press, who owned a number of Pre-Raphaelite

¹Ibid., p. 48.

paintings. Morris shared with Burne-Jones his interest in brasses and his knowledge of architecture. Morris never became an accomplished architect, nor did he indeed ever build a house. For him architecture was transcendental in its implications. "Connected at a thousand points with all the other specific arts which ministered to it out of a thousand sources, it was itself the tangible expression of all the order, the comeliness, the sweetness . . . even the mystery and the law, which sustain man's world and make human life what it is."¹ The reading of the group widened to include Keats, Browning, Mrs. Browning, Shelley, and (especially important to Morris) Chaucer. In 1854 Morris wrote his first, now non-extant, poem, "The Willow and the Red Cliff." This he followed with other poems until the publication of The Defence of Guenevere in 1858. He also began sometime in 1855 to try his hand at the prose tale. So, too, Burne-Jones occupied much of his time in idle drawings, though he had no serious intention of becoming a professional painter.

As one might expect, the ultimate effect of all these activities was secularization. Morris and Burne-Jones abandoned their clerical intention. Others of the group remained steadfast in their devotion: ". . . the idea of a common organized effort by the whole group toward a higher

¹Ibid., p. 81.

life . . . gradually shifted from the form of a monastic to that of a social brotherhood."¹

By the end of 1855 the Oxford Brotherhood, in conjunction with Vernon Lushington and Wilfred Heeley of Cambridge, had crystallized their plan for a publication to disseminate their ideas. Morris undertook to finance the entire project. The first number of The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine, Conducted by Members of the Two Universities consisted of essays, tales, poetry, and notices of books. After the first issue Morris relinquished the editorship to Fulford and agreed to pay him a salary of £100 a year. After twelve issues the drain upon Morris' pocketbook became so great that the project was abandoned. The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine, though a financial fiasco like The Germ, was not a complete failure. It received the warmest encouragement from Ruskin; and Tennyson, on whose poetry a series of three articles by Fulford ultimately appeared, praised the articles he had read for their truthfulness and earnestness. About two-thirds of the contents of the magazine were the contributions of the Oxford Brotherhood; the remainder came from the Cambridge group and from other sources solicited by Fulford. By far the most important work appearing in the magazine was that of William Morris: eight prose tales, five poems, two articles (on

¹Ibid., p. 63.

Amiens Cathedral and on the engravings of Alfred Rethel), and a review of Browning's recently published Men and Women. Three of Rossetti's best poems also appeared in the magazine, "The Burden of Ninevah," a revision of "The Blessed Damozel," and "The Staff and the Scrip."

Shortly after the appearance of the first issue of The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine, Burne-Jones went to London to seek out Rossetti, the new idol of the Oxford group. Jones returned to Oxford to read for his Final Schools, but at Easter he left Oxford without taking a degree and went to London to make a career in art and to be near Rossetti. In January of 1856 Morris signed his apprentice articles with George Street, the Oxford architect, in whose firm Philip Webb was senior clerk. With the magazine in Fulford's hands, Morris had time to apply himself to his wide range of interests. He became interested in clay modelling, wood and stone carving, and book illumination--indeed, in almost every form of art handicraft. During the months that he remained at Street's, Morris established what was to become a life-long friendship with Philip Webb, who was important in the formation of Morris and Company. He also became a friend of Norman Shaw, Webb's successor at Street's. To these three men largely--and only incidentally to Rossetti and Burne-Jones--the marked changes in architecture and interior decoration apparent in late nineteenth century houses may be attributed.

During the weekends that Morris spent with Burne-Jones and Rossetti he met others of the Pre-Raphaelite school, including Madox Brown and Holman Hunt. Before many weeks had passed, Morris was almost completely converted to the Pre-Raphaelite ideal in art. Through this association Rossetti was also induced to contribute his poems to the magazine of the Oxford group. Convinced by Rossetti that he should take up painting, Morris for a period of two or more years devoted his energies to painting at the expense of his special interests. During the day he worked in Street's office, which at the end of the summer had moved to London, and at night he painted. Sharing rooms with Burne-Jones, Morris more and more centered his activities around the Pre-Raphaelite circle. Rossetti became a daily companion, and Arthur Hughes and Thomas Woolner became friendly with Morris. Morris was in effect serving two apprenticeships; and he and Burne-Jones were coming under the gradual influence of the ever-widening circle of Pre-Raphaelitism.

Late in 1856 Morris resigned from Street's and temporarily gave up his interest in architecture. He had finally succumbed to Rossetti's peculiar theory of the superiority of painting to the rest of the arts. Rossetti had admired Morris' poems; but he felt and told Burne-Jones often: "If any man has poetry in him, he should paint, for ~~it has all been said and written, and they have scarcely~~

begun to paint it."¹ It is clear that in this statement Rossetti was making a transference rather than a denial of the existence of poetry as art. The particular effects germane to poetry in the presentation and handling of human experience and emotion were only transferred to painting by what Rossetti saw to be necessity. That the "literary" or "poetic" transfer was insufficient is nowhere better demonstrated, however, than in Rossetti's poetry, in which the pictorial quality is most characteristic.

Rossetti's influence on Morris was not, however, completely deleterious, as some of his defenders have supposed. The groundwork of much of Morris' later perfection in the arts and crafts movement and in the two firms designed to turn out artifacts demonstrating the validity of his artistic ideas was laid in what may be called the "Red Lion" period of Morris' life. While he and Burne-Jones shared rooms in Rossetti and Deverell's old studio, Morris had an opportunity to put many of the ideas into practice that were later to consume all his energies.

The climax of Rossetti's relationship with the Oxford group came in 1857 with the Oxford Union experiment. Rossetti had talked with Benjamin Woodward, the Oxford architect, in 1855 about decorating the Oxford Museum; but nothing had come of the proposal. In 1857 Rossetti and

¹Ibid., p. 114.

Morris went down to Oxford to arrange with Woodward for the decoration of the walls of the Debating Hall of the Union, which was not yet fully completed. Rossetti planned ten murals, each to depict a scene from the Morte d'Arthur. Morris, Burne-Jones, Arthur Hughes, Val Prinsep, and Hungerford Pollen were to paint single murals. Madox Brown, who had earlier refused to join the P.R.B., declined Rossetti's invitation to paint one of the panels. Brown's disinclination to join in organized activity is somewhat paradoxical in the light of his later plan to organize a kind of Pre-Raphaelite art colony for married couples, a proposal that caused considerable dissension between Gabriel and Elizabeth Siddal.

The story of the ensuing failure of the Oxford Union venture, which has been made the subject of a small booklet,¹ is too complicated and involved to be discussed here. Suffice it to say, the venture was an absolute failure: the young artists had a surplus of enthusiasm and a paucity of skill. Many of their pictures were never completed; the others, painted rather naïvely on unprepared walls, soon chipped and faded beyond recognition. Attempts to restore them were unsuccessful. The actual work dragged on until well into 1858, and the Oxford Union Committee as late as 1869 were still debating what to do about the murals

¹Infra, pp. 78-79.

and negotiating with Rossetti and Morris for some kind of help. Fortunately both proposals made by the committee were rejected, and the murals were neither whitewashed as Rossetti recommended in 1870 nor covered with wall paper designed by William Morris. While they lasted, the murals were nonetheless beautiful and resplendent with a color as "sweet, bright, and pure as a cloud in the sunrise," and "so brilliant as to make the walls look like the margin of an illuminated manuscript."¹ Rossetti's fragmentary "Sir Lancelot's Vision of the Sangrail" belonged, Burne-Jones said, "to the best time and highest character of his work";² and Morris' design for the ceiling, redone by him in 1875, was exquisite in both design and execution. Beyond the ephemeral beauty of the work, the mural venture served also to bring the Pre-Raphaelites together in a concerted effort that was to be an important factor in determining the later course of their work. The Oxford Union murals were restored in 1936 by Professor Tristram, and they remain today a lasting tribute to the movement. As J. E. Alden says: "This episode of the colourful history of the Pre-Raphaelites must always stand out as typifying their enthusiasm for art, their belief that public rooms should be decorated in a splendid manner, and last but not least, because in the

¹Coventry K. D. Patmore, "Walls and Wall Painting at Oxford," The Saturday Review, IV (December 26, 1857), 583.

²Mackail, op. cit., I, 126.

choice of subjects the artists added Malory's great epic to their medieval loyalties already given to Chaucer and Dante."¹

The two "Pre-Raphaelite Exhibitions" of 1857 were influential in the continued development of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement and an excellent index to the accomplishments the movement had already made. The first of these exhibitions, held in London (Number 4 Russell Place, Fitzroy Square), was a semi-public exhibition to which Rossetti contributed numerous water-colors (including Dante's Dream, Dante Drawing an Angel in Memory of Beatrice) and a number of pen and ink sketches. Also represented were the work of Millais, Holman Hunt, Brown, Elizabeth Siddal, Hughes, Inchbold, Collins, Brett, William Davis, Windus, and the late Thomas Seddon. The exhibition aroused considerable comment and served "to confirm the impression that something was still going on in the country very different from what could be seen in the ordinary picture-shows."² The tone of the criticism engendered by the Pre-Raphaelite exhibition of 1857 was considerably more favorable than it had been in 1851. In general, it reflected the rising interest in the movement and the realization of both its merits and influence. The Saturday Review found the

¹J. E. Alden, The Pre-Raphaelites and Oxford (Oxford: Alden and Co., 1948), p. 36.

²Rossetti, Family Letters, op. cit., I, 200.

exhibition "especially interesting as showing what are the real views and aims of the people calling themselves Pre-Raphaelites" and praised the quality of all the paintings exhibited, "resulting from the artist's simple and sincere endeavour to render his genuine and independent impression of nature."¹ Likewise, the critic of The Athenæum, presumably F. G. Stephens, noted that "Preraphaelitism has taught us all to be exact and thorough, that everything is still unpainted, and that there is no finality in art." The errors, eccentricities, and aberrations of early Pre-Raphaelitism he found "fast modifying and softening. Its large hands and feet, ugly, hard, mean faces, gaudy colours, and streaky stipplings have subsided into common sense, good taste, and discretion."² The exhibition of 1857 and its reception by the critics and the public in general is tangible proof that Pre-Raphaelitism had finally overcome the prejudice of critical opinion and had won recognition as a sincere and significant movement in art.

The American exhibition was equally important in the spreading of Pre-Raphaelite ideas and techniques. The movement had already received some attention in American art circles in the criticisms of W. J. Stillman in The

¹"A Pre-Raphaelite Exhibition," The Saturday Review, IV (July 4, 1857), 11-12.

²Oswald Doughty, A Victorian Romantic: Dante Gabriel Rossetti (London: Frederick Muller Ltd., 1949), p. 216. Cited from article in Athenæum for 1857.

Crayon. On a visit to England in 1848 Stillman had met Ruskin and the artists in his circle. He did not actually meet any of the Pre-Raphaelites; but he saw some of their work and took home a firm conviction "that if ever English figure painting rose out of mediocrity it would be through the work of the P.R.B."¹ The Crayon, edited jointly by W. J. Stillman and John Durand, was one of the first American magazines devoted wholly to art. During Stillman's editorship Pre-Raphaelitism occupied more and more space in The Crayon. On Ruskin's recommendation William Michael Rossetti was commissioned to contribute a regular column to be called "Art News from London." In 1855 and 1856 Stillman contributed a number of editorials and articles on Pre-Raphaelitism. In addition to his own works he printed numerous articles by those directly and indirectly associated with the movement, such as F. G. Stephens and Mary Howitt, and letters from the great Ruskin, regarded by Americans as the progenitor of the whole idea of Pre-Raphaelitism. Original poems by such other minor-fringe Pre-Raphaelites as William Bell-Scott and William Allingham also appeared in The Crayon; and after the exhibition of 1857 Durand, then sole editor, reprinted Rossetti's three poems from The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine. As a result, the American art world was made aware of the movement,

¹W. J. Stillman, Autobiography of a Journalist.

though perhaps its influence had not as yet spread far beyond the readers of The Crayon.¹

The American Exhibition was not limited to Pre-Raphaelite entries. The project had been arranged by Augustus A. Ruxton, a retired British Army officer who had given William Michael Rossetti the responsibility of making the selections for the exhibition. William Michael, as Dickason points out, quite naturally exercised his own prejudice in making the selections. As a result, the exhibition was rather overloaded with Pre-Raphaelite paintings by Arthur Hughes, Ford Madox Brown, Holman Hunt, Bell Scott, and Elizabeth Siddal. Neither Millais nor Rossetti was represented. The consensus of American critical opinion was that the pictures were poorly chosen (a condescension to American taste on William Michael's part?), and the work of the Pre-Raphaelites was certainly by comparison the best at the exhibition. Unfortunately, there were few sales, although Dante Rossetti, without even exhibiting, did secure a commission from Charles Eliot Norton. The immediate result of the exhibition was to familiarize the American public with Pre-Raphaelite art; in so doing the exhibition

¹The history of Pre-Raphaelitism in America is admirably outlined in the only book on the subject: Davis Howard Dickason, The Daring Young Men, The Story of the American Pre-Raphaelites (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana Press, 1953). This book is standard and not likely to be superseded. It is, of course, the principal source of the material in this study on that aspect of the subject.

was partially responsible for a rather extensive art movement in America that modelled itself after Pre-Raphaelite examples and constituted perhaps the only major influence exerted by the Pre-Raphaelite Movement outside England.

The year 1857, then, represents the high-water mark of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement. The London and New York exhibitions, The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine, and the painting of the Oxford murals indicate its increasing influence and popularity. It was also furthered by the appearance in 1857 of Moxon's edition of Tennyson illustrated by the Pre-Raphaelite painters. Beyond its obvious evidence of Pre-Raphaelite activity, the book is one of the best examples of Pre-Raphaelite illustration. Book and story illustration, which represent one of the major forms of Pre-Raphaelite art, is part of the literary force behind the movement that will be discussed more fully in a later chapter. Pre-Raphaelite interest in book illustration had its origin in the sketches in The Germ, and its influences may be traced in the delicate and expertly made decorations and illustrations that Morris was later to produce at the Kelmscott Press.

But if the year 1857 is a kind of culmination within the Pre-Raphaelite Movement, it is also a year of violent transition. It marked, for example, the final defection of Millais, owing largely to the outburst of critical disfavor provoked by Frederick Sandys' "The

Nightmare," a caricature of Millais' Sir Isumbras at the Ford. Sandys' caricature portrays Millais (in shining armor), Rossetti, and Holman Hunt (holding desperately to Millais) crossing a ford astride a braying ass branded "J R Oxon." Among other articles suspended from Millais' waist are a sceptre, two peacock feathers, and a paint bucket labelled "P.R.B." The satire was too violent for Millais, who, only recently (1855) married to Ruskin's ex-wife Effie Gray, had committed himself to a career of public and financial success. Especially vexed by the praise received by the Pre-Raphaelites from the Pre-Raphaelite Exhibition, Millais (from 1857 onward) had nothing more to do with the Pre-Raphaelite cause.

Between 1857 and 1860 even Ruskin began to qualify his association with Rossetti and with Pre-Raphaelitism. The tone of his letters became more and more impersonal. Then, for no apparent reason, Elizabeth Siddal refused any longer to accept Ruskin's annual commission. The ultimate reason for the final defection of Ruskin may well have been the increasing illness of Elizabeth Siddal and her jealousy of Rossetti's activities and friends. Perhaps she had reason to be jealous. No satisfactory explanation has ever been offered for Rossetti's failure to marry her until 1860 after an engagement of almost a decade. The prolonged engagement had produced violent emotional changes in both of them. Rossetti remained devoted to Elizabeth Siddal

during their two-year marriage and for a number of years beyond her death, but it is certain that by 1860 she no longer symbolized for him the ideal woman of the beatific vision.

In 1859 William Morris married Jane Burden, whom Rossetti and Burne-Jones had first seen at a theater in Oxford during the summer vacation of 1857. Rossetti induced Jane to model for him and the group. Her beauty was similar to that of Elizabeth Siddal in 1850; and she seems to have excited in Rossetti a passion similar to that he had felt for Elizabeth Siddal. But Rossetti's feeling of guilt and duty in respect to Elizabeth Siddal were stronger than any infatuation he may have had for Jane Burden. Still, Morris' marriage to Jane constituted, as Mackail accurately notes, "the last scene in the Oxford life of the Brotherhood."¹

iii

Pre-Raphaelitism in literature continued in the tradition established by the Romantic poets at the beginning of the century. Its positive literary side was first manifested in the poetry printed in The Germ in 1850. The poems of Dante Rossetti, Christina Rossetti, William Michael Rossetti, Thomas Woolner, and William Bell Scott established

¹Mackail, op. cit., I, 142.

the pattern that Pre-Raphaelite poetry would follow. Only a few Pre-Raphaelite poems were published between 1850 and 1870, the date of Rossetti's Poems, although the poems of William Bell Scott, William Allingham, and Arthur O'Shaughnessy may be said to represent a minor wing of Pre-Raphaelite art. Rossetti published some poems in periodicals; but, except for Sir Hugh the Heron (1843) and some privately printed poems, none of his work was available to the public. Certainly there was no volume that adequately illustrated Pre-Raphaelitism in poetry. His Early Italian Poets (1861) brought Rossetti prestige in literary circles, although it was a translation rather than original poetry. It should be noted, however, that some of Rossetti's finest poems and often his most felicitous phrasing are contained in such translations as Villon's "Ballad of Dead Ladies."

For Rossetti the publication of poetry was an arduous business. Unlike Morris, he did not find writing poetry "damned easy"; Morris depended on a kind of spontaneity directly opposed to Rossetti's habit of constant revision. Rossetti slaved over revisions, avoiding direct recognizable borrowing and constantly seeking the right word and image. That much of his poetry is harsh, rough, and irregular, with imperfect and faulty rimes may be owing to an inherent lack of rhythm or to a natural preference for assonance over rime. Rossetti's poetry suffers from the severe psychological strain of the last twenty years of his

life. The publication of his first volume was made doubly onerous by the psychological recriminations accompanying the exhumation of his wife's casket, to which he had committed his manuscript seven years before. Tormented by strange misgivings and feelings of guilt, coupled with paranoic tendencies, Rossetti developed physical debilities, such as chronic insomnia, that led in his later years to an addiction to chloral. All these influences on Rossetti the man find expression in the literary and plastic productions of the artist. They are largely responsible for his pre-occupation with portraits of women and poems dealing almost exclusively with love. His later poetry and painting reiterates a single theme in a more diffused and abstract technique. At the same time, his art is idealistic in its remoteness, as if he were trying desperately to catch up with the past. Paradoxically, though his periods of creativity from 1860 until his death were sporadic, his last twenty years were artistically and poetically his most productive years.

The poetry of Christina Rossetti exemplifies many of the characteristics of Pre-Raphaelitism. Although not a member of the Brotherhood and in no formal way connected with the movement--certainly not as the "Pre-Raphaelite Queen"--Christina was influenced by her associations with the Pre-Raphaelites. Her poetry, far-removed from Gabriel's, reveals the same sincere fidelity to inner experience

characteristic of his poetry and of Pre-Raphaelite art. Her poetry displays a devoutness not in her brother's poetry, but she shows the same concern with love, the past, the exotic, and the pictorial. There is also the same pervasive mysticism, though Christina's is religious rather than erotic. Both poets fuse the earthly and the heavenly, bridging the hiatus between the two with a sensual and mystical imagery. Christina, after all, shared Gabriel's inherited background and home environment; like most of the family she shared an interest in Dante and she grew up in an atmosphere of mysticism and intrigue. Her religious devotion, which intensified her sense of the mystical, forced her to reject many avenues pursued by her brother. It is certain that the two poets exerted and received a kind of mutual influence. The many similarities in their poetry cannot be explained by the familiar argument of nationalistic and family ties.

The first complete volume of poems to develop from the Pre-Raphaelite Movement was William Morris' small volume, The Defence of Guenevere, published in 1858. Although it included only one or two of Morris' better known poems, it demonstrated the identical interests of Morris' Pre-Raphaelite paintings: the same concern with medievalism, Arthurian legend, and themes of love and honor. Like most Pre-Raphaelite art, they are narrative. They reflect the influence of his apprenticeship to Rossetti and

the same common pursuit of the medieval, the sensational, and the exotic shared by Morris with the Pre-Raphaelites. Even the heroine of "The Haystack in the Floods," Godmar, assumes the pose characteristically associated with Pre-Raphaelite representations of women:

A wicked smile
Wrinkled her face, her lips grew thin,
A long way out she thrust her chin;¹

Morris consciously emulated in the volume a number of Pre-Raphaelite ideals and techniques. The philosophical point of view of the poems reconstructs, in the midst of the materialism of the age, a society of social and moral values, not yet Utopian, in which real people move and live under nobler conditions than those of the 19th century. Although not so consciously modelled after Pre-Raphaelite patterns, Morris' later poetry does contain many characteristics common to the movement in which his artistic and poetic impulses found their first expression.

In 1861, when the Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Company firm was founded, a number of Pre-Raphaelites were listed among its patrons and stock holders. Besides the members listed in the name of the company, the firm had as its patrons Rossetti, Madox Brown, Burne-Jones, and Philip Webb. It is important that Morris' most immediate affiliations before the formation of the company were with the Pre-

¹The italics are mine.

Raphaelites, for Morris and Company was one of the first and most important manifestations of the arts and crafts movement. In its incipient stages this movement was an attempt to express in the practical arts the ideals of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement.

As in so many of the organized activities of the Pre-Raphaelites, Rossetti, together with Ford Madox Brown, seems to have been one of the instigators of the company. The principal employment of the new firm was to be church decoration. Owing to the aesthetic-Catholic revival in 19th century church building and redecoration, there was a demand for glass, tiles, altar-cloths, and all sorts of furnishings as well as decoration.¹ The prospectus issued by the firm is worth quoting because it is not only typical of the extravagance of youth but indicative of the breadth of the group's artistic intentions:

The growth of Decorative Art in this country, owing to the efforts of English Architects, has now reached a point at which it seems desirable that Artists of reputation should devote their time to it The Artists whose names appear above Having among their number men of varied qualifications, . . . will be able to undertake any species of decoration, mural or otherwise, from pictures, properly so called, down to the consideration of the smallest work susceptible of art beauty. It is anticipated that by such co-operation, the largest amount of what is essentially the artist's work, along with his constant supervision, will be secured at the smallest possible expense, while the work done must necessarily be of much more complete order, than if any

¹Mackail, op. cit., I, 151.

single artist,¹ were incidentally employed in the usual manner.

Despite numerous difficulties and the jealousy of other London decorating firms, Morris and Company prospered. Rossetti's work was limited to a few designs for glass and tile. Most of the members were equally restricted in their activities. Morris was accomplished in such a variety of arts and crafts that his versatility seems today almost unbelievable. The firm continued as a joint partnership until 1875, when the rather unsavory legal proceedings initiated by Brown, Marshall, and Rossetti for their share of the firm's capital earnings forced Morris to dissolve and reorganize the company. Morris operated it under his sole proprietorship but retained the original name. When Morris founded the Kelmscott Press in 1890, he severed his connections with the business end of the firm. Morris & Company survived until bankruptcy in 1940 drove it out of existence.

Morris' activities were always multifarious. In addition to his work in the company and his writing, Morris also took an active interest in politics, founded the Socialistic League, and edited the Commonweal for eight years. Morris was also one of the organizers of the socialistic movement in England. He gave numerous lectures and public talks in the interest of socialism, and he was many

¹Ibid., pp. 155-156.

times arrested. It is not as a social reformer, however, that he made his greatest contribution. His foremost concern was with the arts and crafts--though it is true that he fitted them beautifully into his socialistic scheme--and he did more to bring about a change in taste in houses and furnishings than any single person in the century. Morris made the people of his age conscious of the "house beautiful," and in many respects he may rightly be called the father of modern interior decoration. His ideas concerning architecture and interior decoration represented a refinement of original Pre-Raphaelite intentions: he wished to discard the sham, the convention, and the ugliness of Victorian houses and to re-establish architecture and interior decoration so that they would be both useful and beautiful. This phase of Pre-Raphaelitism was indeed the "tap-root from which the modern arts have developed."¹

Just as Morris' later part in the arts and crafts movement was built upon an essentially Pre-Raphaelite foundation, so too Morris' particular brand of socialism as it emerges in News from Nowhere (1891) is dependent upon the axioms of beauty and moral reform as they were articulated by Ruskin and implicitly stated in the works of the Pre-Raphaelites. Morris' art was not cloistered, nor was Morris himself an isolated artist. He was trying to recreate an

¹Dutton, op. cit., p. 96.

art that would not be the appanage of a class but an art that would really spring from the life of the people.¹ He was interested in the external appearances of things, in an outward beauty that should reflect a general public awareness of aesthetic value. But his contribution to English aesthetics is not merely superficial because it is primarily decorative. His cause, as he said, was the "Democracy of Art," the principal theme of News from Nowhere and the essential element in his socialism. Art for Morris was craftsmanship. And the joy of art was the joy of actually doing, of working in the medium of the beautiful. He was repelled by the later Impressionism of Whistler and the concept of Art for Art's Sake. They were incompatible with Morris' belief. To him art was useful: "Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful."² In all this Morris is revolutionary and reactionary in a far more active way than the Pre-Raphaelites had ever been, though many of his propositions originated with the Pre-Raphaelites.

Unfortunately, Morris' aesthetic, inextricably linked with his socialism, suffers, as Graham Hough has pointed out, from an ironic contradiction within its own ideology. "He wants beautiful and well-made things: yet he

¹Hough, op. cit., p. 95.

²William Morris, Hopes and Fears for Art (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901), p. 108.

is committed to the belief that art can only be the expression of the society that produces it. The society of his own time can produce no real art: his own products grow up in hot-house isolation and are quite hopelessly out of touch with the real spirit of the age."¹ In precisely the same way Morris' poetic idealization of the Middle Ages comes to nought. The failure of Morris' aesthetic was the failure of his vision. The revolution never came. And had it come, it is not likely that it would have followed the lines outlined for it by Morris.

iv

It is not possible to say precisely when the Pre-Raphaelite Movement terminated. Chronologically, perhaps the date of Rossetti's death (1882) is as convenient a date as any to ascribe to it, although it is quite evident that Pre-Raphaelitism had become a generic influence long before that date. Pre-Raphaelitism had begun to run its course as early as 1860. Absorbed into other movements, its basic tenets became inextricably linked with those of the movements that absorbed it.

Rossetti had met Swinburne in 1857 at Oxford. After Rossetti moved to Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, in 1862, Swinburne

¹Ibid., p. 99.

became a sub-tenant, as did Meredith. It was at Cheyne Walk that Swinburne wrote Atalanta in Calydon and many of the poems of Poems and Ballads (1866). Rossetti's influence on Swinburne is not so extensive as Swinburne's praise of Rossetti's poetry might lead one to expect. But that Rossetti had a tremendous influence on Swinburne is evident in the attack of Robert Buchanan's The Fleshly School of Poetry (1871/72). On his visit to Paris in 1863 Swinburne had met the American artist Whistler and the French Impressionist Manet. When he was attacked by John Morley in The Saturday Review and other critics for the libidinousness of Poems and Ballads, Swinburne countered with his Notes on Poems and Reviews. He advocated the French doctrine of l'art pour l'art, which in England was to reach its ultimate application in the critical theories of Oscar Wilde and the writers of the fin de siècle.

From Rossetti Swinburne derived an aesthetic sensuousness and an enthusiasm for the beautiful. While Rossetti was in perfect agreement with the attitude of Swinburne and the later aesthetician Walter Pater on the nature of beauty and the belief that art is the expression of the individual artist, it is doubtful that he accepted Art for Art's Sake as an aesthetic creed. However, he inadvertently contributed to its popularity in England more than he was aware. By 1881, however, when Rossetti published his second volume of poetry, Ballads and Sonnets,

Impression and Art for Art's Sake had gained considerable vogue in England through the influence of Whistler and the aesthetic writings of Walter Pater. In the same year Oscar Wilde, who carried the doctrine to its ultimate limits, published his first volume of Poems; and Gilbert's Patience parodied both the Pre-Raphaelites and the aesthetes indiscriminately. The year of Rossetti's death saw Wilde in America proselytizing for the Aesthetic Movement and tracing the origin of that movement from Keats and the Pre-Raphaelites. It is interesting to note that in referring to the Aesthetic Movement Wilde chose the term "Renaissance," the great aesthetic anathema of Ruskin and the P.R.B.

The role of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement in the history of English aesthetics in the nineteenth century is that of an interregnum phase between the Romantic Movement and the Aesthetic Renaissance. Drawing heavily from the early movement in which it had been nurtured, Pre-Raphaelitism adopted as its basic tenet a true devotion to beauty in all its forms and a belief that beauty had moral overtones that linked it permanently with truth. Many of the aesthetic principles of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement were identified with those of Wilde and the fin de siècle, but there were a number of aesthetic principles which the fin de siècle aesthetes traced to the Pre-Raphaelites that were never actually a part of Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic doctrine.

The decadence of the nineties with some characteristics generally associated with it does not belong to even the most extreme of the Pre-Raphaelites; however, other characteristics parallel those of Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic practice. The following are the most obvious tendencies of fin de siècle aesthetic belief:

1. An actual moral decadence demonstrated by a pre-occupation with sexual and psychological aberrations, Satanism and supernaturalism, and inexhaustible variations on human depravity.
2. A preciousity in treatment, an artificiality in manner, coupled with an interest in the gouche, the bizarre, the exotic, the sensual, and the sensational.
3. A belief in the individuality of the artist and that art expresses this individuality.
4. A belief in absolute Beauty as a means to intensity of pleasure.
5. A tendency to confuse genres or to intermingle art forms.
6. A general emphasis on form rather than on content.
7. A belief in the doctrine of Art for Art's Sake.

The Pre-Raphaelites certainly attempted to intermingle the arts, to achieve in one art form what properly belonged to the realm of another. But at the same time Pre-Raphaelite art was essentially narrative or "literary," and the emphasis of Pre-Raphaelite art is almost always on narrative content rather than on pure form or technique. Since Pre-Raphaelite art is basically didactic, as fin de siècle art only is in a negative sense, Art for Art's Sake

is basically incompatible with it. In Pre-Raphaelite art beauty is not an absolute but a means of attaining an end. While this end may vary with Hunt, Rossetti, Morris, and Ruskin, for example, it is commonly a higher moral or spiritual truth that becomes the absolute. As for the decadence of the Pre-Raphaelites, there is little in their private lives to compare with that of Wilde in the nineties. Rossetti more nearly approaches the kind of spiritual degeneration suggested by the fin de siècle, but ultimately he, too, must be exonerated.

The Pre-Raphaelite Movement failed in many respects; yet its contribution to the history of English aesthetics is important. As a begetter of aesthetic movements and as a protest against mid-Victorian taste in literature and art, Pre-Raphaelitism will always maintain its historical importance. So, too, the great industrial cities of England with their extensive Pre-Raphaelite collections will always serve to perpetuate the movement, since it was against the ugliness of cities like Manchester, Liverpool, and Birmingham that Pre-Raphaelitism was directed. As the Victorian "revival" progresses, the various movements within the century will be reconsidered and new perspectives will emerge. What the ultimate evaluation of Pre-Raphaelite art may be no one can foretell, but like all art it must be periodically re-examined and re-evaluated.

PART II

THE CRITICS OF PRE-RAPHAELITISM

CHAPTER V

THE PRE-RAPHAELITES AS SELF-CRITICS

i

Pre-Raphaelite self-criticism is a mosaic composed of four principal sources: The Germ, letters and diaries, formal literary and art criticism, and memoirs and reminiscences. Besides these four sources the paintings and poems are invaluable aids in tracing the personal aesthetic of the separate Pre-Raphaelites as well as the aesthetic denominators common to the movement. Although the historical background forms an additional source, it is best considered as a back-drop against which the separate sources can be weighed and evaluated. The purpose of this chapter is not to examine each of these sources in systematic detail but rather to consider their controlling ideas as they are vital to the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic.

The Germ, which points toward the later controlling

ideas of the movement, is an important source of the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic. Despite its short life, its obscure statement of aims, and its inconsistencies, The Germ is nevertheless the most nearly complete statement of Pre-Raphaelite purposes. Nor is its importance limited wholly to the first phase of Pre-Raphaelitism. Within its pages the basic thoughts permeating both phases of the movement and implicit in the generic application of Pre-Raphaelitism to art and literature are evident in varying degree. Hence, it is convenient to use The Germ as a springboard for examining the controlling ideas of the whole movement.

Although The Germ contains the seeds of future development, it also evinces the ultimate weakness of the Brotherhood: disunity in their aims and purposes. They were too much concerned with preserving their anonymity and not enough with promulgating their ideas. "Pre-Raffaelle art" is discussed in only one article in The Germ, and its reference is to historical, "early Christian" Pre-Raphaelitism. Neither the Brotherhood nor their tenets are mentioned. The contributors to the first number were not identified by name until the appearance of the third issue. Even then Christina Rossetti and Frederick George Stephens clung to their pen names of "Ellen Alleyn" and "Laura Savage." "Pre-Raphaelite" was not employed in the title of the magazine, and the sketches in each number were printed without the symbol "P.R.B." Such persistent anonymity

certainly mitigated against the magazine's propagation of Pre-Raphaelite ideals.

The contents of The Germ may be divided into four major classifications: drawings, poems, criticisms, and book reviews. The pen and ink sketches are defective examples of Pre-Raphaelite art. Their crudity of workmanship is consistent, however, with the unattractive make-up of the magazine. Perhaps the most striking characteristic of The Germ, which Graham Hough identifies as the first of the little reviews devoted entirely to the arts,¹ is the preponderance of poetry over prose. Nine of the twelve selections in the first issue are poems, and the ratio of poetry to prose in succeeding issues is almost as high. Except for Rossetti's "The Blessed Damozel" (No. 2) and "My Sister's Sleep" (No. 1), the poetry in The Germ is experimental and inferior. The poems of Christina are not distinguished, and the contributions of Woolner, Bell-Scott, William Michael Rossetti, Collinson, and Tupper are too pious and unimaginative to warrant serious consideration. However, since The Germ was a journal "conducted principally by artists,"² the amount of poetry is significant and consistent with the literary or narrative aspect of Pre-Raphaelite art.

¹Graham Hough, "Books in General," The New Statesman and Nation, XXXVI (August 7, 1948), 117.

²~~Part of the sub-title of The Germ.~~

The prose of The Germ is somewhat better than the poetry. Most of the articles treat subjects dealing with art, though there is only slight effort made to enunciate the tenets of Pre-Raphaelitism, of which The Germ was to be the manifesto. The major articles that will be discussed in this section are Coventry Patmore's "Macbeth," George Tupper's "The Subject of Art," F. G. Stephens' "The Purpose and Tendency of Early Italian Art" and "Modern Giants," F. M. Brown's "On the Mechanism of a Historical Picture," John Orchard's "A Dialogue on Art," and Dante Gabriel Rossetti's "Hand and Soul."

Coventry Patmore's "Macbeth," the only article in The Germ concerned with literary criticism, purports "to demonstrate the existence of a very important error in the hitherto universally adopted interpretation of the character of Macbeth." "We shall prove," says Patmore, "that a design of illegitimately obtaining the crown of Scotland had been conceived by Macbeth, and that it had been communicated by him to his wife, prior to his first meeting with the witches, who are commonly supposed to have suggested that design."¹ In a footnote, Patmore claims to be the first to hold this position; but, as William Michael Rossetti points out, "it certainly seems strange that the train of reasoning which

¹Rossetti, The Germ, op. cit., III, 99. Part of this quotation appears in italics, which have not been reproduced here.

he furnishes in this essay . . . should not have presented itself to the mind of some earlier writer."¹ Despite Patmore's remoteness from the Pre-Raphaelite Movement, the appearance of his article in The Germ had a certain prestige value since his reputation as a minor poet had been established by 1850.

Numbers I and IV of The Germ contain installments of George Tupper's article, "The Subject of Art." In these rather general papers Tupper maintains two principal theses: first, "that the subject in a work of art affects the beholder in the same sort of way as the same subject, occurring as a fact or aspect of Nature, affects him"; second, "that subjects of our own day should not be discarded in favour of those of a past time."² In advancing these theses Tupper echoed Rossetti's own position in "Hand and Soul" and paralleled the position of Christian and Sophon in John Orchard's "A Dialogue on Art." William Michael Rossetti points out that the views expressed by Tupper were his own and not necessarily those of the Brotherhood, but he notes that the members "must . . . have agreed with several of his utterances, and sympathized with others, apart from strict agreement."³

Frederick George Stephens contributed two articles

¹Ibid., Preface, pp. 23-24.

²Ibid., p. 16.

³Ibid., p. 18.

to The Germ: "The Purpose and Tendency of Early Italian Art" (No. 2) and "Modern Giants" (No. 4). More than any other article in The Germ, the former is probably a direct outgrowth of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Stephens stresses the value of independent endeavor and the importance of a close study of and a strict adherence to nature. To him, the early Italian painters are superior because they adhere more closely to fact and hence are less artificial in their reproductions. In "Modern Giants" Stephens emphasizes the value of imagination and makes a plea for a more exact observation of nature in modern painting. Nature, he says, has its own original powers of perception; and the function of poetry and painting is to recapture the natural beauty that was lost in "the murky old masters, with dismally demoniac trees, and dull waters of lead, colourless and like ice" Paintings should be a "transcript of day itself, with the purple shadow upon the mountains, and across the still lake."¹

In the second issue of The Germ appeared Ford Madox Brown's "On the Mechanism of a Historical Picture." In several respects Brown's essay diverges from Pre-Raphaelite standards. Art, he declared, "has beauties of its own, which neither impair nor contradict the beauties of nature; but which are not of nature, and yet are, inasmuch as art

¹Ibid., IV, 172-173.

itself is but a part of nature: and of such, the beauties of the nature of art, is the feeling for constructive beauty."¹ Brown's method is too formal, too conservative to be completely Pre-Raphaelite. He advocates the same restraint of individual expression that two years earlier had driven Rossetti from the bottles Brown had given him to paint. Brown seems to have realized what most of the Pre-Raphaelites did not know: that art cannot exist completely independent of rule and convention and that the artist must be conscious of technical perfection. Concern with technique cannot be taught by theory, Brown says. Technique "is a feeling for proportion" that prevents the artist from creating an unlikely order or an improbable symmetry (even though it may be the exception in nature); "it is a germ planted in the breast of the artist, that gradually expands by cultivation."²

The only other article of importance in The Germ besides Rossetti's "Hand and Soul," which will be discussed below, is John Orchard's "A Dialogue on Art." This article, published posthumously, was, like Brown's article, intended as the first in a series. Even as a fragment it is the longest single selection in The Germ. Orchard's only other contribution to the journal was a highly artificial ballad called "On a Whit-sunday morn in the month of May." The

¹Ibid., II, 73.

²Idem.

subject of the "Dialogue on Art" is nature, discussed by four speakers whose names indicate their point of view:¹ Kalon represents the aesthetic viewpoint, Sophon the philosophical, Kosmon the worldly, and Christian, who speaks for Orchard himself, the Christian point of view. Orchard was not affiliated in any way with the Pre-Raphaelites. "He expressed opinions of his own which may indeed have assimilated in some points to theirs, but he was not in any degree the mouthpiece of their organization, nor prompted by any member of the Brotherhood."² Dante Gabriel appended to the dialogue a brief biographical and critical sketch of Orchard in which he praised the artistic efforts of the young, dead artist. Speaking of the dialogue, Rossetti said that Orchard "gave to the 'seeing eye,' token of that ability and earnestness which the 'hearing ear' will not fail to recognize."³

Since Orchard's personal point of view is represented by the speeches of Christian, the conclusion of the dialogue distorts to some degree the aims of the Pre-Raphaelites. Christian insists on a purism in art that only Collinson, and perhaps Hunt, would have allowed. Collinson, it will be remembered, later abandoned the

¹Orchard points out in a note appended to the dialogue that the characters are so named that "the great phases of art could be represented idio-syncratically." Ibid., IV, 146.

²Ibid., Preface, p. 26.

³Ibid., IV, 146.

Brotherhood because it was too secular. Christian decries any use of sensualism, passion, indecency, and brutality in art. The artist

should deem his art a sacred treasure, intrusted to him for the common good; and over it he should build of the most precious materials, in the simplest, chastest, and truest proportions, a temple fit for universal worship; . . . let him think of Christ; and what he would not show to as pure a nature as His; let him never be seduced to work on, or expose to the world.

Few Pre-Raphaelites could worship in the temple of art that Christian envisions. Kosmon's rebuttal expresses a duality that is certainly characteristic of much Pre-Raphaelite art:

Christian wants art like Magdalen Hospitals, where the windows are so contrived that all of earth is excluded, and only heaven is seen. Wisdom is not only in the soul, but also in the body: the bones, nerves, muscles, are quite as wonderful in idea as is the corporeal essence which rules them. And the animal part of man wants as much caring for as the spiritual: God made both, and is equally praised through each.²

It is interesting here to compare Kosmon's statement with that of Browning's Fra Lippo Lippi, who in many respects echoes Kosmon's position. Fra Lippo Lippi yearns for the same kind of emancipation from convention sought by the Pre-Raphaelites, and much of what he says of art would certainly have validity for the Pre-Raphaelites. Commanded to "daub away," Lippi filled the walls from his imagination, painting what he saw with a fidelity to nature that would

¹Ibid., p. 150.

²Ibid., p. 154.

have done honor to any Pre-Raphaelite. When his work was unveiled,

The monks closed in a circle and praised loud
Till checked, taught what to see and not to see,
Being simple bodies--"That's the very man!

.
There betters took their turn to see and say;
The Prior and the learned pulled a face
And stopped all that in no time. "How? What's here?
Quite from the mark of painting, bless us all!
Faces, arms, legs, and bodies like the true
As much as pea and pea! It's devil's-game!
Your business is not to catch men with show,
With homage to the perishable clay,
But lift them over it, ignore it all,
Make them forget there's such a thing as flesh.
Your business is to paint the souls of men--

.
Give us no more of body than shows soul!

.
Why put all thoughts of praise out of our head
With wonder at lines, colors, and what not?
Paint the soul, never mind the legs and arms!"

Fra Lippo Lippi's own concepts of painting appear in the next section, and they are amazingly parallel to those of the Pre-Raphaelites.

. . . Now is this sense, I ask?
A fine way to paint soul, by painting body
So ill, the eye can't stop there, must go further
And can't fare worse! Thus, yellow does for white
When what you put for yellow's simply black,
And any sort of meaning looks intense
When all beside itself means and looks naught.
Why can't a painter lift each foot in turn,
Left foot and right foot, go a double step,
Make his flesh liker and his soul more like,
Both in their order? Take the prettiest face,
The Prior's niece . . . patron-saint--it is so
pretty
You can't discover if it means hope, fear,
Sorrow or joy? Won't beauty go with these?
Suppose I've made her eyes all right and blue,
Can't I take breath and try to add life's flash,

passage, Kosmon, speaking of one group of Pre-Raphaelites, has inadvertently hit upon the weakness of the Pre-Raphaelites of the 19th century Brotherhood, immaturity. What he defines is not actually descriptive of the artists before Raphael, but in many respects it is typical of the work of many of the painters associated with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.

Orchard's dialogue is remarkable. As Graham Hough has pointed out, parts of the discussion "show more understanding of the way the world was going than any other contribution to The Germ."¹ Misinterpreting Pre-Raphaelitism, Orchard puts too much emphasis on its early Christian aspects; but Rossetti's praise of the dialogue perhaps indicates that Orchard's point of view was sufficient to this temporary stage in the development of Rossetti's own conception of the movement. Considering Hunt's attitude toward religious painting and his lifelong dedication to moralistic and didactic art, the dialogue applies more to Hunt than to Rossetti and the later Pre-Raphaelites.

One final group of articles in The Germ provides some insight into the practical criticism of the Pre-Raphaelites or, more accurately, of William Michael Rossetti, who composed all the book reviews in The Germ. In each of the four successive issues the works of Arnold,

¹Hough, "Books in General," op. cit., p. 117.

Clough, John Cayley, and Browning are reviewed. The reviews are undistinguished as criticism. The review of Browning's Christmas Eve and Easter Day offers the most amusing illustration of the method of the reviewer. It is especially remarkable in the light of the contribution that the Pre-Raphaelite's enthusiasm for Browning's work made to his literary reputation between the years 1847 and 1856.¹ No mention is made of the poetry in question. Rather, the article is a general survey of the status of poetry in 1850 and an acknowledgment of the general excellence of Browning's work as a whole. After six pages the reader is suddenly confronted with the following rather surprising paragraph:

We have been desirous to explain and justify the state of feeling in which we enter on the consideration of a new poem by Robert Browning. Those who already feel with us will scarcely be disposed to forgive the prolixity which, for the present, has put it out of our power to come at the work itself: but, if earnestness of intention will plead our excuse, we need seek for no other.²

This apology begs the question as ably as any critic might who has just undertaken to write a six-page review of a collection of poems he has not even seen. The other reviews are admittedly better, but in each case William

¹M. B. Cramer, "What Browning's Literary Reputation Owed to the Pre-Raphaelites 1847-1856," ELH, VIII (1941), passim.

²Rossetti, The Germ, op. cit., IV, 192.

Michael Rossetti assumes and justifies a favorable opinion of the work in question. As examples of Pre-Raphaelite criticism the reviews do not deserve serious consideration; yet the subjects for review perhaps indicate the literary tastes of the Brotherhood in 1850.

This abbreviated summary and analysis of the contents of The Germ is perhaps sufficient to indicate the overall quality and nature of the journal. At best it is an inadequate statement of the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic. However, necessity and the exigencies of publisher's deadlines may have played a greater part in determining the course of the magazine than can now be discerned. At face value The Germ is a tour de force. Often it has been called a manifesto, but it appears to be a manifesto only in retrospect. The Germ was certainly the organ of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.¹ Many of the ideas contained in the articles in The Germ do not support the basic ideas generally associated with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood; many indeed are antithetical. But the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was actually an incubation period for most of the focal ideas of Pre-Raphaelitism, and The Germ does contain in embryonic stage the basic ideas and most of the

¹Oswald Doughty's rather off-hand attitude toward The Germ (*op. cit.*, pp. 88-98) is untenable. The limitations of the publication are obvious, but it was far more than just "the commonplace and dreary setting for the earliest jewels of Christina and the good paste gems of Gabriel." (p. 97).

superficial characteristics and tendencies of Pre-Raphaelite art.

ii

The controlling ideas of Pre-Raphaelitism may be subsumed under two major classifications, both of which found partial expression in The Germ: first, an insistence that the artist maintain a fidelity to inner experience, and, second, an alliance between literature and painting, culminating in the fusion of the two arts. These classifications may seem at first too limited and arbitrary for a movement as far-reaching as Pre-Raphaelitism. However, the movement existed in a near-artistic-vacuum. Despite the Pre-Raphaelite reaction against the materialism of their age, the Brotherhood, and to some degree the members of the later movement, lived outside the issues vital to it. Collectively, they were unconcerned with science, religion, politics, social reform, economics, or other fields bearing more immediately on Victorian life than art. Many of the ideas basic to Pre-Raphaelitism, such as the desire for reform itself, were germane not to Pre-Raphaelitism but to its parent movement, Romanticism. And while these ideas were influential in the development of Pre-Raphaelite aesthetics, they are not peculiar to the movement.

The only positive aesthetic doctrine that emerges from The Germ pertains to the first of the controlling

This sonnet, which William Bell Scott said "would need almost a Browning Society's united intellects to master,"¹ indicated "for writers, much the same principle which the P.R.B. professed for painters,--individual genuineness in the thought, reproductive genuineness in the presentment."²

"A writer ought to think out his subject honestly and personally, not imitatively, and ought to express it with directness and precision; if he does this, we should respect his performance as truthful, even though it may not be important."³

The advertizements in each issue were consistent with the point of view expressed in William Michael's sonnet: "The endeavor held in view throughout the writings on Art will be to encourage and enforce an entire adherence to the simplicity of nature."⁴ After the title of The Germ was changed in the third issue to Art and Poetry, the advertizement was altered to conform with the new emphasis indicated in the title: the periodical "is intended to enunciate the principal of those who, in the true spirit of Art, enforce a rigid adherence to the simplicity of Nature

¹W. Minto (ed.), Autobiographical Notes of the Life of William Bell Scott (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1892), I, 324-325.

²Rossetti, The Germ, op. cit., Preface, p. 16.

³Idem.

⁴Ibid., Nos. I & III, end page.

in Art and Poetry."¹

In The Germ nature is considered the guiding spirit motivating the artist. F. G. Stephens, in his article, "The Purpose and Tendency of Early Italian Art," speaks of the marked attempt of the new school, by which he presumably means Pre-Raphaelitism, "to lead the taste of the public into a new channel by producing pure transcripts and faithful studies from nature, instead of conventionalities and feeble reminiscences from the Old Masters; an entire seeking after originality in a more humble manner than has been practised since the decline of Italian Art in the Middle Ages."² This is perhaps one of the clearest statements available of the basic aesthetic creed of the Brotherhood. The term "nature" remains vague, and the equation which Stephens finally derived casts only too little light on its meaning as it was employed by the Pre-Raphaelites. "Truth in every particular," Stephens writes, "ought to be the aim of the artist. Admit no untruth: let the priest's garment be clean."³ "Let the artist be content to study nature alone, and not dream of elevating any of her works, which are alone worthy of representation."⁴ Thus, as Stephens outlines it in his article

¹Ibid., Nos. II & IV, end page.

²Ibid., II, 58.

³Ibid., p. 61.

⁴Ibid., p. 62.

Nature = Truth = Art

becomes the working equation of the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic.

The attitude toward nature and artistic truth outlined in The Germ should be contrasted with Wordsworth's aesthetic manifesto prefaced to the second edition of Lyrical Ballads (1800), in which a fidelity to nature is also insisted upon. As an aesthetic document, Wordsworth's "Preface" is much more formal and systematic in the presentation of its doctrines. Wordsworth stated the object of Lyrical Ballads:

to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect; and further, and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature.

Throughout the "Preface" Wordsworth's emphasis is on the simple ("Humble and rustic life was generally chosen"), the emotional ("the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature"), and the truthful ("My purpose was to imitate, and, as far as possible, to adopt the very language of men"--further qualified by "a selection of the language really spoken by men").

Wordsworth demonstrates that he is rebelling against the traditions and conventionalities that had reduced the natural language of poetry to a meaningless and artificial

diction. Although Wordsworth's definition of poetry, and presumably of art, is more philosophical than that of the Pre-Raphaelites, the affinities between the two aesthetic documents are readily apparent. Diction in poetry may be roughly equated with technique in painting. Just as Wordsworth was concerned with reviving a fresh and truthful diction in poetry, so the Pre-Raphaelites were attempting to evolve a technique that would restore to painting the values of light, color, and close observation of detail in order to better convey the truthful representation of natural forms.

Thus there are technical additions to the Pre-Raphaelite idea that the artist must go to nature for his models. These technical innovations may be analyzed under the three headings mentioned above: light, color, and the close observation of detail.

1. Light. For a time the Pre-Raphaelites painted on a wet white background¹ in order to lighten the overall

¹"The process may be described thus. Select a prepared ground originally for its brightness, and renovate it, if necessary, with fresh white when first it comes into the studio, white to be mixed with a very little amber or copal varnish. Let this last coat become of a thoroughly stone-like hardness. Upon this surface, complete with exactness the outline of the part in hand. On the morning for the painting, with fresh white (from which all superfluous oil has been extracted by means of absorbent paper, and to which again a small drop of varnish has been added) spread a further coat very evenly with a palette knife over the part of the day's work, of such density that the drawing should faintly show through. In some cases the

effect of the painting and to give body to the overlaid color. Revolting against the established rules of chiaroscuro and dull-toned backgrounds, they took their art outdoors and sought to substitute for the older coloring the light of natural day.

2. Color. For the browns and darks of conventional paintings the Pre-Raphaelites substituted bright, vivid colors, which if often inharmonious nevertheless give life and freshness to their reproductions and incidentally preserved in them more of local color and verisimilitude.

3. Detail. The Pre-Raphaelites insisted upon absolute accuracy in both foreground and background.

These techniques, carried over into poetry, are of major importance in the final estimate of Pre-Raphaelite influence. The first two technical concerns, light and color, were of prime importance to the French Impressionists and to the symbolists in poetry, whose ideas were later to combine with those of the Pre-Raphaelites in influencing the aesthetic attitudes of the fin de siècle.

(cont.) thickened white may be applied to the forms needing brilliance with a brush, by the aid of rectified spirits. Over this wet ground, the colours (transparent and semi-transparent) should be laid with light sable brushes, and the touches must be made so tenderly that the ground below shall not be worked up, yet so far enticed to blend with the superimposed tints as to correct the qualities of thinness and staininess, which over a dry ground transparent colours inevitably exhibit. Painting of this kind cannot be retouched except with an entire loss of luminosity." Hunt, op. cit., I, 197-198.

Color, the principal "character" in a painting, according to Manet, was equally important to the Pre-Raphaelites. In Rossetti's paintings, for example, color is often used as a symbolic device (the red dove in Beata Beatrix) and plays an organic role in the total impression invoked by the picture. Critical strictures to the contrary, Pre-Raphaelitism extricated English painting from the shadows of its former conventions and brought it into the natural light of day.

Finally, the technical imperfection of the Pre-Raphaelites must not be overlooked in evaluating their overall contribution to English aesthetics. William Michael Rossetti suggested the numerous potential pitfalls in Pre-Raphaelitism in The Spectator (1851): First, there is the danger that "in the effort after unadulterated truth, the good of conventional rules should be slighted, as well as their evil avoided. The second danger is that detail and accessory should be insisted on to a degree detracting from the importance of the chief subject and action."¹ If, Rossetti, says, the artist has any original or inventive power he will not easily fall into this trap. Unfortunately, however, many of the Pre-Raphaelites were often guilty of this very fault. Hunt's trip to the Holy Land in search of local color for The Scapegoat is dangerously close to a mis-

¹W. M. Rossetti, Fine Art, Chiefly Contemporary (London: Macmillan and Co., 1867), pp. 172-173.

application of the Pre-Raphaelite principle of fidelity to nature. The third and final danger is that of an "injurious choice of model," a danger recognized even by William Michael as a characteristic of Pre-Raphaelite art. The creed of the Pre-Raphaelite is truth, "which in art means appropriateness in the first place, scrupulous fidelity in the second." If true to himself, he will search diligently for the best attainable model. When he attains his quest, he must render as conformably as possible with his conception but as truly as possible also to the fact before him. "Not that he will copy the pimples or the freckles; but transform, disguise, 'improve,' he may not."¹

The Pre-Raphaelite creed of fidelity to nature incorporated in part at least the view expressed in Rossetti's "Hand and Soul," as the last quotation from William Michael demonstrates. In general, Rossetti did not concur with the Pre-Raphaelite concern with nature,² though both his paintings and poems evince a preoccupation with detail; he does insist, however, on a fidelity to the inner

¹Ibid., p. 174. That the artist does not transform, disguise, or improve his model does not deny the necessity and importance of selectivity as Ruskin implied in his criticism of Pre-Raphaelitism.

²In an undated letter to Rossetti, Ruskin writes: "I never should think of your sitting out to paint from nature. Merely look at the place; make memoranda fast, work at home at the inn, and walk among the hills." W. M. Rossetti, Ruskin: Rossetti: Pre-Raphaelitism; Papers 1854-1862 (London: George Allen, 1899), p. 104.

experience of the artist. Truth for Rossetti meant imaginative experience. This basic distinction in the aesthetic of Rossetti and that of the other Pre-Raphaelites makes his art, despite his technical deficiencies, not only different from theirs but in many ways superior to it. His art is not, however, on the basis of this distinction, any less Pre-Raphaelite than theirs.

"Hand and Soul" is a metaphorical analysis of artistic truth. Chiaro dell' Erma, the allegorical artist, had felt from his childhood a strong devotion to art and yearned for the fulfillment of an undefined goal. He pursues fame, faith, and moral greatness in an attempt to salve the disquiet in the way of his self-fulfillment. In the midst of his despair a vision of a beautiful woman appears to Chiaro, and "he knew her hair to be the golden veil through which he beheld his dreams." Announcing herself as the image of his soul, the vision explains to Chiaro that "Fame sufficed not, for that thou didst seek fame: seek thine own conscience (not thy mind's conscience, but thine heart's), and all shall approve and suffice." Faith, the vision tells him, did not fail him but was insufficient because Chiaro had struck the point between love and faith. "Be not nice to seek out division; but possess thy love in sufficiency; assuredly this is faith, for the heart must believe first. What He hath set in thine heart to do, ~~that do thou: and then though thou do it without~~

thought of Him, it shall be well done" And his soul chides him for saying coldly to the mind what God has said warmly to the heart. "In all that thou doest," she admonishes Chiaro, "work from thine own heart simply; . . . take now thine Art to thee, and paint me thus, as I am, to know me: weak, as I am, and in the weeds of this time; only with eyes which seek out labour; and with a faith, not learned, yet jealous of prayer. Do this; so shall thy soul stand before thee always, and perplex thee no more."¹

"Hand and Soul" is the most serious artistic manifesto in The Germ.

It amounts to saying, the only satisfactory works of art are those which exhibit the very soul of the artist. To work for fame or self-display is a failure, and to work for direct moral proselytizing is a failure; but to paint that which your own perceptions and emotions urge you to paint promises to be success for yourself, and hence a benefit to the mass of beholders This was the core of the 'Præraphaelite' creed; with the adjunct (which hardly came within the scope of Rossetti's tale, and yet may be partly traced there) that the artist cannot sustain to adequate self-expression save through a stern study and realization of natural appearances. And it may be said that to this core of the Præraphaelite creed Rossetti always adhered throughout his life, greatly different though his later works are from his earlier ones in the externals of artistic style.²

Thus, fidelity to inner experience, so vital to Rossetti's personal aesthetic and to the core of the Pre-

¹Rossetti, The Germ, op. cit., I, 23-33.

²Ibid., Preface, pp. 18-19. Italics are my own.

Raphaelite creed, became the main doctrine of the later movement. It was the antithesis of the artistic convention against which the Pre-Raphaelites revolted, and it accounts for the sincerity and seriousness so evidently a part of Pre-Raphaelite expression. More significant than a rather vague design to follow nature, this single precept is central to the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic. The insistence on the essential truth of individual experience enabled the Pre-Raphaelites to bring "English painting again in touch with the most vivid imaginative life of their time."¹

iii

The literary bond had always been strong among the Pre-Raphaelites. The first Pre-Raphaelite painting exhibited by Millais was a subject from Keats; Hunt records in his history that "It was our common enthusiasm for Keats which brought us [Hunt and Rossetti] into intimate relation."² Indeed, Hunt confessed to Rossetti in the early period of their acquaintance that he too often wrote verses "to record impressions of Nature"; Rossetti's proficiency as a poet, however, "effectually discouraged any further

¹Hough, The Last Romantics, op. cit., p. 67.

²Hunt, op. cit., I, 74. Hunt had exhibited The Eve of St. Agnes in 1848, one of the earliest subjects painted from Keats. G. F. Watts had appended lines from Keats for his Echo earlier.

indulgence . . . in verse of any form" by Hunt.¹ Together, Hunt and Rossetti on a visit to Greenwich read Monckton Milne's Life and Letters of Keats; many of the meetings recorded in the P.R.B. Journal were spent reading aloud the works of Keats, Tennyson, Browning, and Shakespeare; and regardless of how one evaluates the "List of Immortals" drawn up by the group, it is not without importance that the names of literary figures make up half the list. The fact that The Germ was devoted to art and poetry indicates that the interests of the Brotherhood were not exclusively artistic and also points to the development of literary Pre-Raphaelitism in the later phase of the movement. The Germ provides, however, almost no aesthetic basis for an analysis of the literary doctrines of the Pre-Raphaelites; it is, therefore, necessary to examine other sources in order to discuss the remaining major classification of the controlling ideas of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement.

The direct influences on the Pre-Raphaelite Movement were almost exclusively from literature rather than art. Abandoning the traditions of painting, the Pre-Raphaelites drew from literary sources in establishing their aesthetic tenets. Keats, Dante, Shakespeare, Blake—between whom and Rossetti there are many parallels²—Chatterton, Chaucer,

¹Ibid., p. 78.

²A number of studies have been made comparing Rossetti and Blake. Among these are: J. C. E. Bassalik—de

the Romantic poets in general, and the whole body of Arthurian legend became the artistic models of Pre-Raphaelite art rather than Raphael, Michelangelo, and the "old masters." Nor did they neglect contemporary models. Browning was for Rossetti the supreme poet, and Tennyson's "Palace of Art" and "Lady of Shalott" seemed forerunners of the Pre-Raphaelite ideal. Their literary activities were extensive. The natural affinity that existed for them between painting and poetry enabled the movement to become predominantly literary in its later phase and resulted in the literary influence exerted by the movement in the latter part of the century. The Pre-Raphaelites were highly influential in establishing the reputation of many literary figures in the nineteenth century.¹ In this capacity they determined English taste in literature as well as in painting.

(cont.)

Vries, William Blake in his Relation to Dante Gabriel Rossetti (Basel: Brin, 1911); B. J. Morse "Dante Gabriel Rossetti and William Blake," Englische Studien (LXVI, March, 1932), 364-372; Jacob Walter, William Blakes Nachleben in der englischen Literatur des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts (Schaffhausen: Bachmann, 1927).

¹William Michael Rossetti was perhaps the most active person in England in spreading the reputation of Walt Whitman. In 1868 he edited a selection of Whitman's poems, and he furthered the cause of Whitman in America when the ailing old poet had long suffered the neglect of the American public. Rossetti's interest and activity concerning Whitman is amply outlined in Clarence Gohdes and Paull Franklin Baum, Letters of William Michael Rossetti Concerning Whitman, Blake, and Shelley (Durham, N.C., Duke University Press, 1934).

Rossetti, whose interests were almost exclusively literary,¹ leaned more toward poetry than prose. His reading in English poetry, especially in that of the Romantic School, and his enthusiasm for Dante provided him with subjects and themes for his poems and paintings.² The literary qualities in the paintings of most of the other members of the Brotherhood were partially inherited from the earlier tradition of the historical romance and historical painting, which axiomatically offered the concept that the painting should tell a story and the story paint a picture. In this sense a considerable amount of the art of the Brotherhood is anecdotal. But one basic distinction is obvious between the anecdotal painters and the Pre-Raphaelites: Pre-Raphaelite painting is a narrative and dramatic rendering of the subject. In this sense it cannot be classed with the tableaux of the anecdotal tradition. Pre-Raphaelite art, at least that consciously derived from

¹Albert Morton Turner, "Rossetti's Reading and his Critical Opinions," PMLA (XLIII, No. 2, June, 1927), 464-491, passim.

²William Michael Rossetti, Dante Gabriel Rossetti as Designer and Writer (London: Cassell and Co., 1889), pp. 268-269. Out of a total of 377 pictures catalogued by subject, 27 are sacred, 20 historical or legendary, 43 in illustration of Dante, 35 in illustration of other writers (including Shakespeare, Byron, Coleridge, Browning, Keats, Allingham, Tennyson, Christina Rossetti, the Arabian Nights, and old ballads); 11 treat material from Arthurian legend, 147 are inventive, and 94 are portraits (including the gallery of women who predominate in Rossetti's painting after 1862).

literary sources, presents the literary situation dramatically, portraying not the frozen moment in time, as in Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn," but an interruption of continuity that relates the present to both past and the ensuing action. Metaphorically, a painting like Millais' Ophelia might be compared to a single frame from a motion picture film dependent upon its context. Since most Pre-Raphaelite art is not genre painting dealing with the contemporary scene, it depends almost entirely on the connotations derived from literary context expressed in terms of the only figure of speech available to the painter, symbol, often elaborated into allegory. This conscious concern with movement and narration in Pre-Raphaelite art and the essentially literary impetus that controls it not only accounts for the subjects which the Pre-Raphaelites utilized but explains the paucity of still-life and conventional portraits among their work.

It is easier to weigh the relative poetic or literary quality in the works of Rossetti, the poet-painter (the hyphen is significant!) than in the works of Millais and Hunt, who worked only in a single medium. At its best, Pre-Raphaelite art interprets rather than illustrates the literary source that inspires it. In the category of poems that Rossetti called "Sonnets on Pictures"¹ and in Hunt's

¹In The Germ (op. cit., IV, 180-182) Rossetti included six "Sonnets for Pictures." One section of his

poetical rendering of impressions of nature for pictures¹
 the process is not illustrative but a transliteration of
 the subject ultimately expressed in the fusion of art media.
 "Picture and poem," Rossetti said, "bear the same relation
 to each other as beauty does in man and woman: the point of
 meeting where the two are most identical is the supreme
 perfection."²

The individual differences between personalities
 must be carefully considered in evaluating the Pre-
 Raphaelite aesthetic. Certainly, many of Millais' later
 paintings are little more than artistic parables designed
 as commercial pot-boilers; and Holman Hunt's pious alle-
 gories are often completely devoid of even superficial
 literary content. But in much of Rossetti's best work--

(cont.)

Works, ed. W. M. Rossetti (London: Ellis and Elvey, 1886)
 is called "Sonnets on Pictures" and another "Sonnets and
 Verses for Rossetti's own Works of Art." These represent a
 kind of poetic illustration, exactly the reverse of the
 normal process generally associated with Pre-Raphaelitism.
 They are even on the most superficial level an excellent
 example of the affinity between the two arts which existed
 in Rossetti's mind.

¹See Infra., p. 14.

²Rossetti, Works, op. cit., I, 510. cf. Buchanan's
 statement in The Fleshly School of Poetry: "In the first
 few verses of the 'Damozel' we have the subject, or part of
 the subject, of a picture, and the inventor should either
 have painted it or left it alone altogether; and, had he
 done the latter, the world would have lost nothing. Poetry
 is something more than painting; and an idea will not
 become a poem, because it is too smudgy for a picture." In
 Albert Mordell, Notorious Literary Attacks (New York: Boni
 and Liveright, 1926), p. 197.

before his art deteriorated into a mechanical duplication of his beatific vision--in Beata Beatrix, for example, the literary experience, recounted in the highest possible symbolic (or figurative) terms, is transmuted by a kind of imaginative synthesis into a plastic or dimensional experience. The result is what might be attained were it hypothetically possible to photograph a poem, delineating all the multifarious patterns of image, color, sound, music, and light; in short, the visual embodiment of the hundreds of subtleties and nuances that make up the synthesis called a poem.

Rossetti's own interpretation of his poem "The Blessed Damozel" offers an extremely interesting example of the fusion of the poetic and the visual. The crowded canvas of the oil painting The Blessed Damozel suggests both the symbolic and narrative levels of experience in the poem: "the Damosel is robed heavily in blue, with pale pink stars in her hair. Three angels fill the space below the golden bar. Beneath them the lover is seen lying in his loneliness near a stream in a dark wood. Above the Damosel, in the thick groves of Paradise, couples of reunited lovers, about the size of birds, in dark blue robes, are seen embracing among the greenery with an amusing fervor. The whole coloring is dark and rich. Every inch of space is filled, and great bunches of roses are massed along the

parapet, lest there should be a gap."¹ The painting retains the same visual symbols of the poem, written almost thirty years before: the golden bar, the stars in the hair of the Damozel, and the souls "mounting up to God" like thin flames. The painting and the poem offer together the most vivid single statement of Rossetti's use of Platonic symbols. The Damozel stands as the midway catalyst between man and the mystical vision. The vision, however, is incomplete in Rossetti's art. He never transcends love-mysticism, focusing always on the vision not of God but of the Damozel. Thus the half-mystical experience is expressed in terms of the sensual, akin to what Ruth Wallerstein calls "aesthetic religiosity."²

Of primary importance to a comparison of the poem and the painting is the almost exclusive use of visual and symbolic images. The fusion of literary and artistic experience in the work of Rossetti and the Pre-Raphaelites resulted not only in the prevalence of narrative subjects

¹Helen Bigelow Merriman, "English Pre-Raphaelite and Poetical School," Andover Review I, No. 6 (June, 1884), 608.

²Compare Ruth Wallerstein, "Personal Experience in Rossetti's 'House of Life,'" PMLA, XLII, No. 2 (June, 1927), 500. F. W. H. Meyers has called the same impulse in Rossetti's poetry and painting the "religion of beauty." F. W. H. Meyers, "Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Religion of Beauty," The Cornhill Magazine, XLVII, (Feb., 1883), 213-224, passim. For a discussion of Rossetti's mysticism, cf. B. C. Bröers, Mysticism in the Neo-Romanticists (Amsterdam: H. J. Paris, 1923).

in the paintings but also in the use of visual images and description rather than figurative language in the poetry. The majority of Rossetti's poetry is also narrative, often autobiographical in the most personal sense of the term.¹ Rossetti relies on two principal verse forms, the ballad and the sonnet, as vehicles of narration. He uses the former on an overt level to tell a story or adventure and the latter to recount the experiences of his own psyche. As Rossetti employs it, the sonnet is essentially dramatic, a coin whose "face reveals/ The Soul, --its converse, to what Power 'tis due." It is, as he phrases it in the introductory sonnet to The House of Life, a "Memorial from the Soul's eternity/ To one dead deathless hour"; combined in a series or sequence, a tradition familiar to Rossetti from his reading in English poetry but more importantly from its predominant use by the Italian poets, it becomes, like a Pre-Raphaelite painting, dependent upon the broader, narrative context.

The individual aesthetic of no single Pre-Raphaelite can be taken as characteristic of the movement as a whole. Rossetti's personal aesthetic creed has more validity in the light of the later phase of the movement, but his personal aesthetic must be reconciled with that of the Brotherhood phase. The purpose of this discussion has been

¹Wallenstein, op. cit., pp. 492-504, passim.

to indicate the relative perspective of the individual Pre-Raphaelites of both phases. The later phase of the movement produced no major critical works comparable to The Germ. Therefore, the general direction of the aesthetic that motivated the later phase must be deduced from historical and other sources. In its later stages Pre-Raphaelitism became increasingly a literary movement, and its influences after Rossetti's death in 1882 were almost wholly literary. However, it did have positive artistic influence. In the hands of Morris, Burne-Jones, and Rossetti Pre-Raphaelitism became largely decorative; its influence on all levels of interior decoration and on aesthetic design in general have already been traced. Much of the decorative aspect of the later movement was absorbed into the poetry of the eighties and the nineties, as were many essentially technical characteristics such as color and interest in detail. The fin de siècle writers rightly traced their origins to the Pre-Raphaelites with whom the Aesthetic Movement in England properly begins.

The controlling ideas of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement were extremely limited. The extent to which their reticence contributed to a general misunderstanding of the movement will be more fully treated below. Not being aesthetic theorists, the Pre-Raphaelites influenced by example; and the imitators of the movement, those, for example, who

carried the truthful rendering of detail to such absurd lengths, were guilty of an inaccurate comprehension of what the Pre-Raphaelites were trying to do. Pre-Raphaelitism was not simply an aesthetic pose. The preciosity and isolation of the artist that eventually occurred was in part a misunderstanding of Pre-Raphaelite Medievalism, in part accidental. But, as Graham Hough has observed, even "the attitude of the cloistered and devoted aesthete is healthier for art than that of the rank commercial popularizer"¹; "if the English people after this date were again to regard art with indifference and sometimes with hostility, at least they were never again to regard it as the comfortable apotheosis of their commonest tastes and sentiments."²

¹Hough, The Last Romantics, op. cit., p. 67.

²Idem.

CHAPTER VI

RUSKIN AND PRE-RAPHAELITISM

None of the many critics of Pre-Raphaelitism between 1848 and 1882 are of more importance than John Ruskin. Although only unofficially associated in his capacity of "champion" with either of the major phases of the movement, Ruskin definitely shaped the theory that would later become identified with Pre-Raphaelitism; and the generic application of Pre-Raphaelitism necessarily incorporates many ideas peculiar to him. Ruskin was more than simply the patron of the Pre-Raphaelites. In his first defense he was less concerned with the aesthetic than with the artistic rights of a sincere group disparaged by journalist critics he distrusted and detested. In his attempt to analyze the aesthetic of the movement in succeeding works, he gradually fitted it into his own moral-aesthetic concept of art. His position is characteristically dogmatic; he speaks not as one who understands what the Pre-Raphaelites are about but as a law-giver who sees in Pre-Raphaelitism the application of his own theories.

In 1851 Ruskin first came to the aid of the Pre-Raphaelites in two letters to the Times. Although he was acquainted with Coventry Patmore, who had befriended Woolner and Millais and had contributed to The Germ, he had not as yet met any of the group. The letters to the Times were not, however, unsolicited; for, without the efforts of Patmore, Ruskin might never have come to know the Pre-Raphaelites. It is quite clear that his letters were instrumental in preserving for a short time the solidarity of the Brotherhood. His role in the Pre-Raphaelite Movement is vital in a number of ways. First, he had admonished young artists as early as 1843, in the first volume of Modern Painters,¹ to go solely to nature for their inspiration and guidance; and this admonition may have been the initial incentive behind the original ideas of Hunt and Millais, though Hunt alone had read Ruskin. Second, Ruskin's defense in the letters to the Times and in the pamphlet of 1851 helped to allay some of the critical antagonism directed against the Brotherhood. In 1851 the published sections of Modern Painters had already gained him recognition as an art critic, and his patronage gave the Pre-Raphaelites considerable prestige in a number of

¹"They should go to nature in all singleness of heart, and walk with her laboriously and trustingly, having no other thought but how best to penetrate her meaning; rejecting nothing, selecting nothing, and scorning nothing." Ruskin, Works, op. cit., XII, 339.

English art circles. His comments on Pre-Raphaelitism did not go unchallenged. In becoming its patron he perforce became its apologist. Third, Ruskin's personal relationship with Millais, Rossetti, Elizabeth Siddal, and later with Burne-Jones and Morris brought him into close contact with the developing movement. Fourth, since Ruskin's ideas and artistic doctrines were not completely alien, the Pre-Raphaelites learned from him much technical precision and an interest in detail. Finally, Ruskin helped to propagandize the ideals of the two phases of the movement. Late in life he still continued to publish in their interest. In his Arrows of the Chase (1880), a collection of scattered letters, he included the two letters to the Times (1851), two letters on Holman Hunt's paintings (1854), a letter on "Generalization and the Scotch Pre-Raphaelites" (1858). Thus Ruskin's contribution to the history and aesthetic of the movement was highly significant. If he misinterpreted some of their aspects and attributed them to the wrong source or even overestimated his own role, he was nevertheless one of the few sympathetic and judicious critics of Pre-Raphaelitism in its incipient stages.

In Ruskin's collected works are innumerable references to Pre-Raphaelitism and to the works and personalities of the Pre-Raphaelites. His major writings on the subject are in four works published between 1851 and 1878: "The

Pre-Raphaelite Artists" (letters to the Times for May 13 and May 30, 1851); an anonymous pamphlet, Pre-Raphaelitism, "by the author of Modern Painters" (1851); a lecture, "Pre-Raphaelitism" (delivered at Edinburgh, November 18, 1853, and published with an "Addenda" in 1854, the last in a series of four lectures); and "The Three Colours of Pre-Raphaelitism" (Nineteenth Century for November and December, 1878), an abstruse essay on three aspects of the movement illustrated by reproductions of a painting by Rossetti, Millais, and Burne-Jones. These four sources are an important amplification and clarification of the aesthetic that the Pre-Raphaelites themselves were either unable or unwilling to articulate.

In his first letter to the Times, a letter long anticipated by the abused Pre-Raphaelites, Ruskin stressed the fidelity of Hunt and Millais¹ "to a certain order of truth."² He resented the attitude of the critics because he felt the two artists "to be at a most critical period of their career--at a turning point, from which they may either sink into nothingness or rise to very real greatness."³ He praised their technical efforts and admired

¹At the time of the letters Ruskin knew Pre-Raphaelitism only through the works of Millais and Hunt. William Michael says that Ruskin's association with Rossetti began around February, 1853 (Ruskin: Rossetti: Pre-Raphaelitism, op. cit., p. 1); E. T. Cook says 1854 (Ruskin, Works, XXXVI, op. cit., Introduction, xliii).

²Ruskin, Works, op. cit., XII, 319.

³Idem.

their sincerity. He disparaged the statement of the Times' critic, who had maintained that the Pre-Raphaelites "sacrifice truth as well as feeling to eccentricity."¹ By truth in painting Ruskin obviously meant accuracy of detail. In this first letter he was impressed by the botanical study of the water plant, Alisma Plantago, in Charles Collins' Convent Thoughts and by the correctly painted drapery folds in Millais' Mariana. Such truthful rendering of detail, Ruskin held, had not been seen in painting since the days of Albert Dürer.²

Ruskin's comprehension of the purpose of Pre-Raphaelite art was incisive, especially since he was unacquainted with any members of the school. Only in ascribing to them "Romanist and Tractarian tendencies" did Ruskin err in defining at least the superficial aims of the Brotherhood.³ Although he did not agree with their choice

¹Ibid., p. 321.

²"The spurious imitations of Pre-Raphaelite work represent the most minute leaves and other objects with sharp outlines, but with no variety of colour, and with none of the concealment, none of the infinity of nature." Ibid., pp. 331-332.

³Ibid., p. 320. W. M. Rossetti entered in the "P.R.B. Journal": "Altogether the letter is very satisfactory; . . . One point which I think it might be advantageous to notice in a letter from some of ourselves to The Times is that Ruskin says something of P.R.B. 'Romanist and Tractarian tendencies,' . . . Such tendencies, as utterly nonexistent in fact, it might not be amiss to repudiate; . . . But perhaps it will be preferable to wait for Ruskin's sequel." Rossetti, Præraphaelite Diaries and Letters,

of a name,¹ he understood far better than the Times' critic what they intended by it. They "do not," he said, "desire nor pretend in any way to imitate antique paintings as such."²

As far as I can judge of their aims--for, as I said, I do not know the men themselves--the Pre-Raphaelites intend to surrender no advantage which the knowledge or inventions of the present time can afford to their art. They intend to return to early days in this one point only--that, as far as in them lies, they will draw either what they see, or what they suppose might have been the actual facts of the scene they desire to represent, irrespective of any conventional rules of picture-making; and they have chosen their unfortunate though not inaccurate

(cont.)

op. cit., p. 302. Someone wrote directly to Ruskin on the matter, however, for he notes in his second letter: "I had . . . something to urge respecting what I supposed to be the Romanizing tendencies of the painters; but I have received a letter assuring me that I was wrong in attributing to them anything of the kind." Ruskin, Works, op. cit., XII, 327.

¹Besides the reference to "their unfortunate though not inaccurate name" (Infra, p. 7), there are two important notices of the name Pre-Raphaelite in Modern Painters. Referring to "The Pre-Raphaelite brethren, as they unfortunately call themselves," Ruskin adds parenthetically, "I heartily wish they would be content to paint well without calling themselves names." Ibid., III, p. 599n. Again, he speaks of Holman Hunt, Millais, and "other members of a society which unfortunately, or rather unwisely, has given itself the name 'Pre-Raphaelite;' unfortunately, because the principles on which its members are working are neither pre- nor post-Raphaelite, but everlasting. They are endeavoring to paint, with the highest possible degree of completion, what they see in nature, without reference to conventional or established rules; but by no means to imitate the style of any past epoch. Ibid., p. 62ln.

²Ibid., XII, 321.

name because all artists did this before Raphael's time, and after Raphael's time did not this, but sought to paint fair pictures, rather than represent stern facts; of which the consequence has been that, from Raphael's time to this day, his¹ historical art has been in acknowledged decadence.

Ruskin's second letter to the Times was less flattering and more critical of Pre-Raphaelite technique. He censured Hunt for portraying a commonness of feature in Valentine defending Sylvia Two Gentlemen of Verona ; in Millais' Dove Returning to the Ark he saw the model as a "type far inferior to that of average humanity, and unredeemed by any expression save that of dull self-complacency."² He pronounced the coloring of the paintings inadequate, owing perhaps to an "attempt to obtain too much transparency." So, too, he felt the paintings suffered from a want of shade. But, all things considered, Ruskin acknowledged that the fault lay more with the other pictures in the Academy than with the Pre-Raphaelites. He wished them good luck and gave them his benediction:

if they temper the courage and energy which they have shown in the adoptions of their systems with patience and discretion in framing it, and if they do not suffer themselves to be driven by harsh or careless criticism into rejection of the ordinary means of obtaining influence over the minds of others, they may, as they gain experience, lay in our England the foundations of a school of art nobler than the world has seen for three hundred years.³

Ruskin's pamphlet on Pre-Raphaelitism (1851) is too

¹Ibid., pp. 321-322.

²Ibid., p. 325.

³Ibid., p. 327.

digressive and too much concerned with his moral aesthetic to offer much genuine insight into the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic. He devotes only a few pages to the Pre-Raphaelites. Again, as in the letters to the Times, he focuses entirely on Millais and Hunt.¹ In the first eighteen sections of the sixty-section essay he fails to mention Pre-Raphaelitism, confining himself to a moralistic analysis of the nature of work, the role of the artist in relation to his work, and the general state of art education in England. In section nineteen he returns to the defense of the Pre-Raphaelites, lambasting especially the Academicians who failed to support a movement based on sincerity and truth. Elaborating on his own definition of Pre-Raphaelitism, hardly modified since the Times' letters, he systematically reduces to absurdity the three principal faults attributed by the critics to the group.²

1. . . . that the Pre-Raphaelites imitated the errors of early painters. A falsehood of this kind could not have obtained credence anywhere but in England, few English people, comparatively, having ever seen a picture of early Italian Masters. If they had they would have known that the Pre-Raphaelite pictures are just as superior to the early Italian in skill of manipulation, power of drawing, and knowledge of effect, as inferior to them in grace of design; and that in a word, there is not a shadow of resemblance between the two styles. The Pre-Raphaelites imitate

¹Ruskin speaks in his preface of a "group of men," but he does not elaborate on the works of any other members of the P.R.B.

²Ibid., p. 357-358.

no pictures: they paint from nature only. But they have opposed themselves as a body, to that kind of teaching above described [supra, p.11], which only began after Raphael's time: and they have opposed themselves as sternly to the entire feeling of the Renaissance schools; a feeling compounded of indolence, infidelity, sensuality, and shallow pride. Therefore they have called themselves Pre-Raphaelite. If they adhere to their principles, and paint nature as it is around them, with the help of modern science, with the earnestness of the men of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, they will, as I said, found a new and noble school in England. If their sympathies with the early artists lead them into mediævalism or Romanism, they will of course come to nothing. But I believe there is no danger of this, at least for the strongest among them. There may be some weak ones, whom the Tractarian heresies may touch; but if so, they will drop off like decayed branches from a strong stem. I hope all things from the school.

2. . . . that the Pre-Raphaelites did not draw well. This was asserted, and could have been asserted only by persons who had never looked at the pictures.

3. . . . that they had no system of light and shade. To which it may be simply replied that their system of light and shade is exactly the same as the Sun's which is, I believe, likely to outlast that of the Renaissance, however brilliant.

After nearly thirty pages of uninterrupted digression on modern painters, Turner in particular, ("the first and greatest of the Pre-Raphaelites"¹) Ruskin pontificates that "Pre-Raphaelitism and Raphaelitism and Turnerism, are all one and the same, so far as education can influence them. They are different in their choice, different in their faculties, but are the same in this, that Raphael himself, so far as he was great, and all who preceded or followed him who ever were great, became so by painting the

¹Ibid., p. 159.

truths around them as they appeared to each man's own mind, not as he had been taught to see them except by the God who made both him and them."¹ The Pre-Raphaelites, Ruskin concluded, "are working too hard."

There is evidence in failing portions of their pictures, showing that they have wrought so long upon them that their very sight has failed for weariness, and that the hand refused any more to obey the heart. And besides this, there are certain qualities of drawing which they miss from over-carefulness. For, let them be assured, there is a great truth lurking in that common desire of men to see things done in what they call a 'masterly,' or 'bold,' or 'broad,' manner: a truth oppressed and abused . . . but an eternal one nevertheless; and whatever mischief may have followed from men's looking for nothing else but this facility of execution, and supposing that a picture was assuredly all right if only it were done with broad dashes of the brush, still the truth remains the same:--that because it is not intended that men shall torment or weary themselves with any earthly labour, it is appointed that the noblest results should only be attainable by a certain ease and decision of manipulation.²

The Pre-Raphaelites, Ruskin implies, can learn much by studying their great precursor, Turner, who best exemplifies in his later work the full-flowering of those techniques and characteristics subscribed to by the Pre-Raphaelites and the moral sincerity and fidelity to nature so intimately a part of Ruskin's own moral-aesthetic.

The lecture, "Pre-Raphaelitism," from the Edinburgh series on Painting and Architecture (1853) contains the first reference in Ruskin's work to Rossetti as a Pre-

¹Ibid., p. 385.

²Ibid., p. 388.

Raphaelite and is noticeably more dogmatic. Pre-Raphaelitism has obviously become a vehicle for the conveyance of his own ideas. Classifying the epochs of history into Classicalism, Medievalism, and Modernism, Ruskin demonstrates the moral superiority of Medievalism over Modernism. Medieval art, to which, according to Ruskin, the Pre-Raphaelites had subscribed, confessed Christ, whereas modern art denied Christ; art in the Middle Ages was brought into the service of religion. "Whether or not Christianity be the purer for lacking the service of art is disputable . . .; but that art is the impurer for not being in the service of Christianity, is indisputable."¹ Medieval art is moral; modern art is immoral. Thus medieval art took as its first object truth, whereas modern art takes as its first object beauty.² Like their medieval prototypes, the Pre-Raphaelites have "but one principle, that of absolute, uncompromising truth in all that it does, obtained by working everything, down to the most minute detail, from nature, and from nature only"³ Every Pre-Raphaelite land-

¹Ibid., p. 143.

²Ibid., p. 145.

³"Or, where imagination is necessarily trusted to, by always endeavouring to conceive a fact as it really was likely to have happened, rather than as it most prettily might have happened. The various members of the school are not all equally severe in carrying out its principles, some of them trusting their memory or fancy very far; only all agreeing in the effort to make their memories so accurate as to seem like portraiture, and their fancy so probable as to seem like memory." Ibid., p. 157.

scape background is painted to the last touch, in the open air, from the thing itself. Every Pre-Raphaelite figure, however studied in expression, is a true portrait of some living person. Every minute accessory is painted in the same manner."¹ Ruskin qualified his praise, as in the essay of 1851, only in regard to the scope of Pre-Raphaelite painting: ". . . the Pre-Raphaelites have enormous powers of imagination, as well as of realization, and do not yet themselves know of how much they would be capable if they sometimes worked on a larger scale, and with a less laborious finish."²

In the "Addenda" to this lecture on Pre-Raphaelitism, Ruskin answers the objection that the principle of Pre-Raphaelitism is adverse to all exertion of imaginative power. This he partially admits to be true.

. . . so long as the Pre-Raphaelites only paint from nature, however carefully selected and grouped, their pictures can never have the characters of the highest class of compositions. But, on the other hand, the shallow and conventional arrangements commonly called 'compositions' by the artists of the present day, are infinitely farther from great art than most of the patient work of the Pre-Raphaelites. That work is, even in its humblest form, a secure foundation, capable of infinite superstructure; a reality of true value, as far as it reaches, while the common artistical effects and groupings are a vain effort at superstructure without foundation--utter negative and fallacy from beginning to end. But more than this, the very faithfulness of the Pre-Raphaelites arises from

¹Ibid., pp. 157-158.

²Ibid., p. 159.

the redundancy of their imaginative power. Not only can all the members of the school compose a thousand times better than the men who pretend to look down upon them, but I question whether even the greatest men of old times possessed more exhaustless invention than either Millais or Rossetti; and it is partly the very ease with which they invent which leads them to despise invention.¹

Applying the implications of Carlyle's statement on literature to art,² Ruskin defined a "higher knowledge" as the touchstone of all great art, including that of the Pre-Raphaelites. Pre-Raphaelite paintings, Ruskin said at the end of his lecture, "with all their faults³ . . . are,

¹Ibid., pp. 161-162.

²Ibid., p. 163. Quoted from Carlyle's Diderot: "Day after Day, looking at the high destinies which yet await literature, which literature will ere long address herself with more decisiveness than ever to fulfil, it grows clearer to us that the proper task of literature lies in the domain of BELIEF, within which, poetic fiction, as it is charitably named, will have to take a quite new figure, if allowed a settlement there. Whereby were it not reasonable to prophesy that this exceeding great multitude of novel writers and such like, must, in a new generation, gradually do one of two things, either retire into nurseries, and work for children, minors, and semi-fatuous persons of both sexes, or else, what were far better, sweep their novel fabric into the dust cart, and betake them, with such faculty as they have, to understand and record what is true, of which surely there is and for ever will be a whole infinitude unknown to us, of infinite importance to us? Poetry will more and more come to be understood as nothing but higher knowledge, and the only genuine Romance for grown persons, Reality."

³"I don't say therefore—I never have said—that their pictures are faultless,—many of them have gross faults; but the modern pictures of the generalist school, which are opposed to them, have nothing else but faults: they are not pictures at all, but pure daubs and perfect blunders; nay, they have never had aim enough to be called anything so honourable as blunders; they are mere emptinesses,—thistledown without seeds, and bubbles without

since Turner's death, the best—incomparably the best—on the walls of the Royal Academy"¹

Ruskin's last major work on Pre-Raphaelitism was written many years after the Brotherhood had evolved into a broad and much altered movement. "The Three Colours of Pre-Raphaelitism" clearly indicated that Ruskin only partially recognized and understood the nature of the changes that had occurred. His method in this essay, by far the most abstruse he produced on Pre-Raphaelitism, is an analysis of three paintings which for him represent three schools within the Pre-Raphaelite Movement: Rossetti's Annunciation, Millais' The Blind Girl, and Burne-Jones' Bridal. The school of which Rossetti is the chief representative and to which Ruskin relegates Hunt professed a learned purpose: "to represent things which happened long

(cont.)

colour; whereas the worst Pre-Raphaelite picture has something in it; and the great ones, . . . will hold their own with the most noble pictures of all time." The Pre-Raphaelites are apt, Ruskin says, "to put too much into their pictures—for love's sake, and then not to bring this much into perfect harmony; not yet being able to bridle their thoughts entirely with the master's hand." ("Generalization and the Scotch Pre-Raphaelites," a letter to The Witness, Edinburgh, March 27, 1858). Ibid., XIV, 330.

¹Ibid., pp. 159-160. Cf. Ruskin's letter, "Pre-Raphaelitism in Liverpool," released by Alfred Hunt to The Liverpool Albion and printed therein January 11, 1858. "Since Turner's death I consider that any average work from the hand of any of the four leaders of Pre-Raphaelitism . . . is, singly, worth at least three of any other pictures whatever by living artists." Ibid., p. 328.

ago, in a manner credible to any moderns who were interested in them."¹ Millais' school,² the central and uneducated branch of the movement were surpassed in literary power by Wordsworth. "Its mental power consisted in discerning what was lovely in present nature, and in moral emotion concerning it. Its physical power, in an intense veracity of direct recognition of the eye."³ The third school, that of Burne-Jones,⁴ "is that into which the greatest masters of all ages are gathered, and in which they are all walled round as in Elysian fields, unapproachable but by the reverent and loving souls, in some sort already among the Dead."⁵ This last school, the highest for Ruskin, is

¹Ibid., XXXIV, 167-168.

²Ruskin calls Millais "Our best painter (among the living) . . . ; no question has ever been of that. Since Van Eyck and Dürer there has nothing been seen so well done in laying of clear oil-colour within definite line. And what he might have painted for us, if we had only known what we would have of him! Heaven only knows. But we none of us knew,—nor he neither; and on the whole the perfectest of his works, and the representative picture of that generation—was no Annunciate Maria bowing herself; but only a Newsless Mariana stretching herself: which is indeed the best symbol of the mud-moated Nineteenth century; in its Grange, Stable—Stye, or whatever name of dwelling may best befit the things it calls Houses and Cities" Ibid., 165-166.

³Ibid., p. 167.

⁴Ruskin refers to Burne-Jones as "the greatest master whom that school has yet produced." Ibid., p. 148.

⁵Ibid., p. 169.

essentially mystical and religious, teaching "what higher creatures exist between Him and us."¹ The one message these artists bear is the commandment of the Eternal Charity.² These three schools, all "colours" of Pre-Raphaelitism, were to Ruskin a kind of Lutheran challenge to the accepted teachers in all European schools of Art nailed to the Academy gates.³

Ruskin's writings on Pre-Raphaelitism reveal that his essential concept of the movement was extremely limited. He recognized only the superficial aspects of the underlying aesthetic of the movement; apparently he was unaware of the more important motivations in Pre-Raphaelite art. Ruskin's assertions about Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic are more generally pertinent to the Brotherhood phase of the movement than to its later stages. He failed to recognize, for example, the literary basis of the movement; his interest in literary Pre-Raphaelitism extends no further than encouraging Rossetti in the writing of poetry. Ruskin's limited view and his dogmatic pronouncements on Pre-Raphaelitism doubtless contributed to a general misunderstanding of the nature of the movement. While Ruskin never ventured to acclaim himself the founder of the movement, he often emphasized that many of the tenets of Pre-Raphaelite art were germane to his own thinking and had appeared in his

¹Idem.

²Idem.

³Ibid., p. 152.

writing long before the organization of the P.R.B.¹ Critics of the movement, knowing little about Ruskin and less about Pre-Raphaelitism, assumed Ruskin to be the leading inspiration behind the movement and tended, therefore, to identify him not only as the spokesman of the movement but as the supreme Pre-Raphaelite. The Pre-Raphaelites naturally resented such an assumption of overlordship, just as Hunt and Millais resented Ruskin's tendency to give Rossetti credit for founding the Brotherhood.² Thus Ruskin,

¹In "The Three Colours of Pre-Raphaelitism" Ruskin states: "Without claiming,—nay, . . . utterly disclaiming—any personal influence over, or any originality of suggestion to, the men who founded our presently realistic schools, I may yet be permitted to point out the sympathy and the more or less active fellowship with it, which unrecognized, I have held from the beginning." Ibid. XXXIV, p. 162. In his own copy of Modern Painters, Ruskin wrote in the margin opposite a paragraph treating finish in painting, "Note this as one of the important passages leading to Pre-Raphaelitism." In a later note in Modern Painters (III), he refers to it as "having been written years before Pre-Raphaelitism was thought of." Ibid., III, p. 178n. Ruskin wrote in 1886: "I must . . . broadly efface any impression that . . . my criticisms . . . have been of any service to the Pre-Raphaelite school, except in protecting it against vulgar outcry. The painters . . . rightly resented the idea of misjudging friends that I was either their precursor or their guide; they were entirely original in their thoughts, and independent in their practice. From Notes on Millais. Ibid., XIV, 495.

²Ruskin wrote to Rossetti in 1854: "Now, as to the original suggestion of the power which there is in modern life if honestly treated, I firmly believe that, to whomsoever it may belong in priority of time, it belongs to all three of you rightly in right possession. I think that you, Hunt, and Millais, would every one of you, have made the discovery, without assistance or suggestion from the other. One might make it quicker or slower than another, and, I suppose that, actually, you were the first who did it." W. M. Rossetti, Ruskin: Rossetti: Pre-Raphaelitism, op. cit., pp. 11-12.

perhaps unintentionally, was responsible for many of the distorted attitudes toward the Pre-Raphaelite Movement.

Ruskin's pamphlet of 1851 and his lecture of 1853 prompted a number of replies from the critics of Pre-Raphaelitism.¹ Few of these are important as criticism of the movement, but they clearly indicate that relatively early in the history of the movement "Ruskinism" became identified with Pre-Raphaelitism. This confusion was, of course, partially due to the critical reticence of the Pre-Raphaelites, who were contented to allow Ruskin to be their aesthetic spokesman. Eventually, Pre-Raphaelitism became linked with Ruskin's moralistic and didactic theories of reform; and in the public mind, to which Pre-Raphaelitism was already anathema, the movement became doubly suspect.

One or two examples will perhaps suffice to indicate how closely Pre-Raphaelitism was identified with Ruskin. John Ballantyne published in 1856 a short pamphlet called What is Pre-Raphaelitism? Ballantyne states that "It is impossible to speak or write upon this subject without citing the name of the great apostle and advocate of Pre-Raphaelitism, Mr. Ruskin; and that accomplished writer's pamphlet upon it must necessarily furnish us with texts to discourse upon, as it is almost the only,—certainly the

¹See especially in Bibliography: Edward Young, E. V. Ripplingille, and John Ballantyne.

most forcible and elaborate, response to the question that has appeared."¹ Ballantyne's pamphlet is plainly an answer only to Ruskin's assertions about Pre-Raphaelitism and is in no way an attempt to answer adequately the question posed in his title and twice elsewhere within the essay. Pre-Raphaelitism, Ballantyne asserts, might well have amounted to very little if it had not been aided by its able interpreter Ruskin. The Reverend George Young of Trinity College, Cambridge, who had written earlier, taking Ruskin's own word out of context, "Woe, woe, woe! to 'exceedingly young men of stubborn instincts,'² calling themselves Pre-Raphaelites," published in 1857 his long treatise, Pre-Raffaelitism; or A Popular Inquiry into some newly Asserted Principles connected with the Philosophy, Poetry, Religion, and Revolution of Art. The first section of Young's treatise is devoted exclusively to a discussion of Turner; in the remaining sections, entitled "The Philosophy of Art," "The Poetry of Art," and the like, he treats various aspects of Ruskin's artistic theories. Never once does he actually focus on Pre-Raphaelitism. The so-called attacks on Pre-Raphaelitism, directed chiefly at Ruskin, had only a

¹John Ballantyne, What is Pre-Raphaelitism? (London: Blackwood and Sons, 1856), p. 3. He may also have been the author of an article entitled "The Pre-Raphaelites," which appeared in the Art Journal for July, 1851, by "J. B."

²Edward Young, Art, Its Constitution and Capacities (Bristol: Chilcott, 1854).

negative influence. As documents revealing the popular association of Ruskin and Pre-Raphaelitism they are of primary importance. Ruskin's definition of Pre-Raphaelitism became the popular definition; and the artistic tenets of Pre-Raphaelitism, tempered by Ruskin's own concepts and promulgated by him, have been perpetuated as part even of the present-day understanding of the aesthetic of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement.

The greatest single effect of Ruskin's writings on Pre-Raphaelitism, however, is evident in the rise of a group of American Pre-Raphaelites, the body of artists and writers whom David H. Dickason calls "The Daring Young Men."¹ W. J. Stillman, the co-editor of the first Pre-Raphaelite publication in America, had been first made aware of the Pre-Raphaelites by Ruskin; and his conception of the movement was molded by Ruskin's own attitudes. So, too, the founder of the "Society for the Advancement of Truth in Art," Thomas Charles Farrer, an Englishman, had studied art under Ruskin and was his ardent supporter. The organ of the Society, New Path, evoked from Ruskin the following comment: "I . . . have too long delayed the expression of my sympathy with you, both in the labor you

¹Dickason, op. cit. I am indebted to Dickason's book for the content if not the treatment and conclusions of this section on the American Pre-Raphaelites.

have set yourself,¹ and in the feelings with which you undertake it:—no less than of my thanks for the help you are giving me in carrying forward and illustrating the views which I have hitherto endeavoured to maintain almost singlehanded"² The American group made Pre-Raphaelitism synonymous with naturalism.³ Drawing their inspiration largely from Modern Painters, they avowed: "We do not believe that mere faithful transcript from nature can ever be the greatest art: but we believe and positively affirm, that there can never be any degree of greatness without this as a basis Naturalism is not all we believe in, but we know it must come first."⁴ In their "Articles of Organization" the American Pre-Raphaelites held that "the right course for young Artists is faithful and loving representations of Nature, 'selecting nothing and rejecting nothing,' seeking only to express the greatest possible amount of fact."⁵ This quotation from Ruskin

¹"We exist," stated the New Path in 1863, "for the purpose of stirring up strife; of breeding discontent; of pulling down unsound reputations; of making the public dissatisfied with the work of most of the artists, and, better still, of making the artists dissatisfied with themselves. . . . We refuse our respect to popular verdicts And we utterly deny the value of the greater number of Academic laws, believing that they and the Academies which made them and uphold them have done harm, and only harm, to the sacred cause of true Art." Ibid., p. 73.

²Ibid., p. 73.

³Ibid., p. 76.

⁴Ibid., p. 75.

⁵Idem.

concerning selection is particularly interesting in the light of William Michael Rossetti's contradiction of it in his 1851 essay, "Pre-Raphaelitism." Referring to Ruskin's statement, Rossetti said it would "while it assumes to beg too much in their favour, carry their condemnation in it, . . . indeed, strict non-selection cannot, in the nature of things, be taken as the rule in a picture of character or incident."¹

Although Ruskin was not the sole inspirer of American Pre-Raphaelitism, he was certainly its godfather. His influence continued to be important as the movement became more socialistic and concerned with the reform of institutions other than art. The Ruskin Commonwealth in Tennessee (1894) and the later Ruskin society in Georgia, which combined this group with the American Settler's Co-operative Association,² were only two external manifestations of Ruskin's influence in America. American Pre-Raphaelitism was, however, far less restrictive in its activities and broader in its scope than Ruskin's aesthetic theory. Dickason indicates the way in which the American group applied their aesthetic tenets to literature as well as art. The mission of the "Society for the Advancement of Truth," the equivalent in America of the Pre-Raphaelite

¹Rossetti, Fine Art, op. cit., p. 174n.

²Dickason, op. cit., Chapter 16, "The Ruskin Commonwealth," pp. 188-192, passim.

Brotherhood in England in the formality of its organization,¹ was "to put into marble or music or verse or painted form whatever they see imaged on the retina of their mental vision."² For, they further declared, "the Poet and the Artist have the same errand in the world."³ "Pre-Raphaelitism has saved the art of England, and made it the first art of the modern world, and Pre-Raphaelitism will save our art, yet, if we can but have the modesty and patience to obey its teachings."⁴ To a great degree the teachings of Pre-Raphaelitism were embodied in the works of Ruskin,⁵ but other and often better teachers than Ruskin—Rossetti, Burne-Jones, Morris—were to engender the same breadth of artistic development in American Pre-Raphaelitism that had

¹The seven original members, according to Dickason, were: Thomas Charles Farrer, Clarence Cook, Clarence King, Peter B. Wight, Russell Sturgis, Charles Herbert Moore, and Eugene Schuyler. Ibid., Chapter 8, "The P.R.B. in the U.S.A.: Charter Members," pp. 83-124, passim.

²Ibid., p. 97.

³Idem.

⁴Ibid., p. 74.

⁵Charles Herbert Moore's statement in the New Path (1863) substantiates the role of Ruskin in the founding of American Pre-Raphaelitism: "The revival of the Pre-Raphaelite principles is only beginning to dawn . . . yet, some works of consummate excellence have been already accomplished We are called by some 'weak mockers of Ruskin,' and it is said that our principles are not born of original conviction. Be that as it may, the principles are not affected either way. By the mercy of God, Ruskin has been sent to open our eyes and loose the seals of darkness." Ibid., p. 117.

already transpired in the English movement. Eventually, the influence of Pre-Raphaelitism spread not only to American painting but to American poetry, architecture, and crafts. The American intellectual leaders of the mid-century were crying for independence and originality in American art and letters. In their insistence on the complete individuality of the artist and his rejection of traditional rules in art the Pre-Raphaelites enabled the American artist to achieve independence of the fettering bonds of tradition.

In both England and America Ruskin was certainly one of the outstanding spokesmen for Pre-Raphaelitism. As its formal critic his role was somewhat ambiguous. While he promulgated its ideals and aided in enhancing its popularity, he was also responsible for a number of misapprehensions about its basic aesthetic. The Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic that emerges from Ruskin's writings is not always accurate or complete. In general, it is too limited and too suffused with his own moral-aesthetic. But the impact of a strong and didactic critic like Ruskin perhaps saved Pre-Raphaelitism from an obscurity that its own inarticulate disciples were helpless to prevent.

CHAPTER VII

FROM PRE-RAPHAELITISM TO AESTHETICISM

The extensive body of criticism relating to various phases of Pre-Raphaelitism between 1848 and 1928 indicates its importance and influence on successive generations of artists, writers, and critics. Much of the criticism, especially in periodicals contemporary with the early stages of the movement and the extensive critical replies inspired by Ruskin's works on Pre-Raphaelitism, has already been discussed.¹ This chapter will be concerned with critical omissions and attempt to further clarify and trace the influence of the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic between its inception in 1848 and the full-flowering of the Aesthetic Movement.

Before Buchanan's attack on the "Fleshly School" in 1871 most critics of Pre-Raphaelitism had concentrated on its artistic productions. The poetry in The Germ received only casual mention in the periodicals, since Pre-Raphaelitism was regarded as merely a movement in painting.

¹See supra, Chapter VI.

Few critics since that time have recognized Pre-Raphaelitism as essentially a literary movement, although ironically the "literary" quality¹ of Pre-Raphaelite paintings has often been cited as their most salient fault. Although literary interests were always apparent in the Pre-Raphaelite Movement, an active poetic phase was not really evident until the publication of Rossetti's Poems in 1870.² Before the appearance of Rossetti's volume Pre-Raphaelite poetry was limited to The Germ and The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine; Morris' Defence of Guinevere (1858); Christina Rossetti's Goblin Market (1864) and The Prince's Progress (1866); and Swinburne's Poems and Ballads (1866). Swinburne's first volume evoked a critical tirade against his sensualism and vulgarity. But with the appearance in print of the arch-Pre-Raphaelite, Rossetti, those qualities ascribed in 1866 to Swinburne's perverseness, now apparent in Rossetti, were obviously peculiar to neither poet but to their common membership in the Pre-Raphaelite or "Fleshly" school of poetry.

¹"How easy it is to forget," wrote Eric Newton in 1848, "that it is not longer necessary to defend them from the outmoded charge of being 'literary.' Of course they are literary. So was Wagner. So was Giotto. So is most art." Eric Newton, In My View (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1950), p. 243.

²Many of the poems had been ready for publication before Elizabeth Siddal's death in 1862 and had circulated widely in manuscript form.

The "fleshly controversy"¹ probably had its immediate origins in Buchanan's anonymous attack in 1866 on Swinburne's Poems and Ballads. At this time Swinburne, more than Rossetti, was the literary representative of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement. In his indictment of Swinburne Buchanan was also indicting the movement, which may explain William Michael Rossetti's later attack on Buchanan. Not content with his earlier criticism of Swinburne's poetry, Buchanan offered another portrait of him in "A Session of the Poets," published in The Spectator of September 15, 1866:

Up jumped, with his neck stretching out like a gander,
 Master Swinburne and squeal'd, glaring out through
 his hair,
 "All Virtue is bosh! Hallellujah for Landor!
 I disbelieve wholly in everything!--There."²

In "Notes on Poems and Reviews," in which he defended Poems and Ballads, Swinburne kept his criticism on an impersonal basis, making no mention of Buchanan's attacks. In the same year William Michael Rossetti also published a defense of Poems and Ballads,³ in which, with

¹See John A. Cassidy, "Robert Buchanan and the Fleshly Controversy," PMLA, LXVII, No. 2, (March, 1952), 65-93. Cassidy's article is the most thorough and entertaining treatment of the subject available. Cf., Harriet Jay, Robert Buchanan (London: Unwin, 1903).

²Ibid., p. 68.

³William Michael Rossetti, Swinburne's Poems and Ballads. A Criticism (London: John Camden Hotten, 1866).

less forbearance and tolerance, he struck out at "so poor and pretentious a poetaster as a Robert Buchanan" for stirring storms in teapots. For various reasons, largely owing to the death of Buchanan's father and his own nervous breakdown, the controversy lay dormant until 1870. In that year an unsigned review of William Michael's edition of Shelley was published in the Athenæum. The critic accused Rossetti of not having sufficient material, critical insight, or the good taste requisite to the task of editing Shelley.¹ Thus, by the time Dante Gabriel Rossetti published his Poems in 1870, preceded by prearranged favorable criticisms in all the best reviews, an attack by Buchanan was anticipated by all the Pre-Raphaelites.

The expected attack did not appear, however, until October, 1871, when Buchanan, writing under the pseudonym of Thomas Maitland, published "The Fleshly School of Poetry; Mr. D. G. Rossetti" in the Contemporary Review.² Buchanan began by casting various poets of the day for roles in Hamlet. To Browning and Tennyson he assigned the leading

¹Cassidy, op. cit., p. 71. In "The Fleshly School of Poetry," Buchanan refers to William Michael Rossetti, "who . . . will perhaps be known to bibliographers as the editor of the worst edition of Shelley which has yet seen the light." Albert Mordell, Notorious Literary Attacks (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1926), p. 190.

²Reprinted in Albert Mordell, op. cit., pp. 185-213. Buchanan enlarged his original article and published it as a pamphlet, The Fleshly School of Poetry and Other Phenomena of the Day (London: Strahan and Co., 1872).

role on alternate nights; he cast himself as Cornelius; and Swinburne, Morris, and Rossetti he relegated the roles of Rosencranz, Guildenstern, and Osric. He belittled the Pre-Raphaelites, the "walking gentlemen," for "making themselves fully as prominent as the leading character"; for obtruding their lesser identities and parading "their idiosyncrasies in the front rank of leading performers."¹ The Fleshly or Pre-Raphaelite School, to which he ascribed "spasmodic ramifications in the erotic direction," Buchanan classified as "one of the many sub-Tennysonian schools expanded to supernatural dimensions, and endeavoring by affectations all its own to overshadow its connection with the great original."²

. . . the fleshly gentlemen have bound themselves by solemn league and covenant to extol fleshliness as the distinct and supreme end of poetic and pictorial art; to aver that poetic expression is greater than poetic thought, and by inference that the body is greater than the soul, and sound superior to sense; and that the poet, properly to develop his poetic faculty, must be an intellectual hermaphrodite, to whom the very fact of day and night are lost in a whirl of aesthetic terminology.³

After this brief treatment of the school Buchanan centered his attention on Rossetti's poetry. Rossetti "is an artist who conceives unpleasantly and draws ill,"⁴ his

¹Mordell, op. cit., p. 185.

²Ibid., p. 186.

³Ibid., pp. 186-187.

⁴Ibid., p. 188.

capabilities as a colorist in verse and painting being his only distinction. Rossetti was inferior to Morris and Swinburne, but all three constitute a "Mutual Admiration School." Rossetti's poetry was more animalistic, nastier, and openly and unashamedly sensuous than Swinburne's; and Morris was at least saved by his ability to tell a pleasant story. The sonnet "Nuptial Sleep" was singled out as the prime example of Rossetti's fleshliness. It was "simply nasty," containing "so sickening a desire to reproduce the sensual mood, so careful a choice of epithet to convey mere animal sensations. . . ." ¹ However, not all Rossetti's poems are trash.

Some of them are as noteworthy for delicacy of touch as others are for shamelessness of exposition. They contain some exquisite pictures of nature, occasional passages of real meaning, much beautiful phraseology, lines of peculiar sweetness, and epithets chosen with true literary cunning. ²

"But the fleshly feeling is everywhere." "The Blessed Damozel," which is "the nearest approach to a perfect whole," in the volume, has "a few lines of real genius," although it contains not "one single note of sorrow." Its "general effect is that of a queer old painting in a missal, very affected and very old." ³ "Jenny," is "in some respects the finest poem in the volume." Its first two lines are

¹Ibid., pp. 192-193.

²Ibid., p. 193.

³Ibid., p. 196.

perfect; the rest is coarse and heartless, "fascinating less through its human tenderness than because it . . . possessed an inherent quality of animalism." It is, in short, a soliloquy delivered by an "emasculated Browning."¹

Returning to the "Fleshly School," Buchanan accused the poets of a "protracted hankering of the other sex; it seems the meat, drink, thought, sinew, religion of the fleshly school."² He is shocked by "females who bite, scratch, scream, bubble, munch, sweat, writhe, wriggle, foam, and in a general way slaver over their lovers . . ." They must surely "possess some extraordinary qualities to counteract their otherwise most offensive mode of conducting themselves." At times "in reading such books as this, one cannot help wishing that things had remained forever in the asexual state described in Mr. Darwin's great chapter on Palingenesis."³

The poets of the fleshly school have many imitators,⁴ who "seem to have no difficulty whatever in writing nearly, if not quite, as well as their masters."

It is not bad imitation they offer us, but poems which read just like the originals; the fact being that it is easy to reproduce sound when it has not strict connection with sense, and simple enough to

¹Ibid., pp. 202-203.

²Ibid., p. 201.

³Ibid., p. 200.

⁴Ibid., p. 207. Buchanan mentions Arthur W. E. O'Shaughnessy, John Payne, and Philip Bourke Marston.

cull phraseology not hopelessly interwoven with thought and spirit. The fact that these gentlemen are so easily imitated is the most damning proof of their inferiority.¹

The effect of Buchanan's severe strictures on the Pre-Raphaelites is somewhat tempered in his closing comparison, which reveals his own critical limitations and literary perspicacity.

The great strong current of English poetry rolls on, ever mirroring in its bosom new prospects of fair and wholesome thought. Morbid deviations are endless and inevitable; there must be marsh and stagnant mere as well as mountain and wood. Glancing backward into the shady places of the obscure, we see the once prosperous nonsense-writers each now consigned to his own little limbo—Skelton and Gower still playing fantastic tricks with the mother-tongue; Gascoigne outlasting the applause of all, and living to see his own works buried before him; Silvester doomed to oblivion by his own fame as a translator; Carew the idol of courts, and Donne the beloved of schoolmen, both buried in the same oblivion; the fantastic Fletchers winning the wonder of collegians, and fading out through sheer poetic impotence; Cowley shaking all England with his pindarics, and perishing with them; Waller, the famous, saved from oblivion by the natural note of one single song—and so on, through league after league of a flat and desolate country which once was prosperous, till we come again to these fantastic figures of the fleshly school, with the droll mediæval garments, their funny archaic speech, and the fatal marks of literary consumption in every pale and delicate visage.²

Buchanan's attack on Rossetti in "The Fleshly School of Poetry" is identical in tone with his earlier attack on Swinburne's Poems and Ballads. Swinburne, "the Absalom of modern bards,—long-ringleted, flippant-lipped,

¹Idem.

²Ibid., pp. 211-212.

down-cheeked, amorous lidded," is accused of deliberate and impertinent artistic insincerity. He "has no splendid individual emotions to reveal, and is unclean for the mere sake of uncleanliness."¹ Rossetti, he says in a paraphrase of Johnson on Sheridan, "is affected, naturally affected, but it must have taken him a great deal of trouble to become what we now see him—such an excess of affectation is not in nature."² Buchanan's critical yardstick, essentially moralistic, is extremely biased toward Pre-Raphaelite poetry and art. Yet his motivations were not wholly critical or moralistic; for, as Cassidy suggests,³ he was at least partially motivated by professional jealousy. His own volume, The Book of Orm, was published in the same year as Rossetti's Poems. When his work was censured and Rossetti's poems were compared favorably with those of Shakespeare and Goethe,⁴ Buchanan could not

¹Cassidy, op. cit., p. 66. Quoted from the Athenæum, 1866.

²Mordell, op. cit., p. 198.

³Cassidy, op. cit., p. 72. Harriett Jay, in her biography, Robert Buchanan (London: Unwin, 1903), pp. 162-163, states: "His motive was, I know, primarily revenge, his opinions dictated by a wrath which he considered righteous, as well as by a literary antipathy which he considered just. He had not long to wait before learning that he had thrust his staff into a hornet's nest" Quoted in S. N. Ghose, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Contemporary Criticism (1849-1882) (Dijon: Imprimerie Darontiere, 1929), p. 154.

⁴Idem.

restrain from striking back at the old enemy, the Pre-Raphaelites.

The violent repercussions that followed Buchanan's attack are not the immediate concern of the present chapter, since they are adequately outlined in Cassidy's article on the "Fleshly Controversy." Rossetti wrote but did not publish a libelous and vitriolic answer to Buchanan's article. The reply that he did publish, "The Stealthy School of Criticism," in the Athenæum (December 16, 1871), is neither a personal assault on Buchanan nor a critical statement of his own artistic creed. It is rather a systematic refutation of Buchanan's attack arguments. He relies only occasionally on wit for its effect. On one point, however, Rossetti was incapable of restraint. Buchanan had charged Rossetti, who made a special effort to avoid literary echoes, with plagiarizing the subject of "Jenny" from one of his own poems, "Artists and Models."¹ To this charge of the "minstrel in mufti," Rossetti replied: "This question can, fortunately be settled with ease by others who have read my critic's poems; and thus I need the less regret that, not happening myself to be in that position, I must be content to rank with those who cannot pretend to an opinion on the subject."² The remainder of the article is

¹Mordell, op. cit., p. 201.

²William M. Rossetti (ed.), The Collected Works of Dante Gabriel Rossetti (London: Ellis and Elvey, 1887), II, 485.

fairly unimpassioned. Rossetti carefully presents the examples of his own poetry that Buchanan had distorted in their proper context and disparages Buchanan for hiding behind a pseudonymous mask.

Buchanan's attack had all the characteristics of an ambush. As Cassidy has shown, the price Buchanan paid was public disgrace in his own time and permanent anonymity in literary history. His criticism of the so-called fleshly school was neither fair nor judicious. Despite its unfairness, his attack is important in that it reflects the increasing critical antagonism toward Pre-Raphaelitism and the incipient Aesthetic Movement and its stress upon the literary doctrine of Art for Art's Sake. Much of this antagonism, like Buchanan's,¹ was misinformed about the aesthetic aims of the later Pre-Raphaelites and suffered the slings and arrows of many an outrageous and outraged critic.

In his essay on Morris' Defence of Guinevere (1868) Walter Pater first employed the term "aesthetic poetry" to refer to Pre-Raphaelitism. In a parallel between medieval asceticism and sensualism, Pater showed the imaginative and psychological paradox whereby an artist can employ the

¹Buchanan later retracted his accusation of fleshliness in Rossetti's poetry, declaring Rossetti to have been an ennobling and refining literary influence of which the Philistines, to which he relegates himself, stand always in need. Quoted from Buchanan's novel God and Man by Cassidy, op. cit., p. 89.

symbols and sentiments of Christianity and at the same time rebel against it to produce an essentially pagan effect. One characteristic of the pagan spirit so prominent in "aesthetic" Pre-Raphaelite poetry, and especially noticeable in the poetry of Rossetti, is "the continual suggestion, pensive or passionate, of the shortness of life. This is contrasted with the bloom of the world, and gives new seduction to it—the sense of death and the desire of beauty: desire of beauty quickened by the sense of death."¹

Pater explained the psychology of what Buchanan was three years later to call "fleshliness" in Pre-Raphaelite poetry and painting. What Buchanan failed to comprehend is that the two extremes of sensualism and asceticism are almost always fused in art that is essentially mystical,² such as in the art of Blake and Rossetti. Pater's explanation not only offers a psychological basis for Pre-Raphaelite medievalism but also clarifies the essential distinction between the aestheticism of the Pre-Raphaelites and that of the late nineteenth century. The distinction also makes clear the way in which Pater's aesthetic theory

¹Walter Pater, "Aesthetic Poetry," The Bibelot (Portland, Maine: Thomas B. Mosher, 1899), V, 319.

²B. C. Broers, Mysticism in the Neo-Romanticists (Amsterdam: H. J. Paris, 1923). Broers' published dissertation contains interesting studies of a number of figures and aspects of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement.

was distorted by Oscar Wilde and the later aesthetes.¹ The Pre-Raphaelites did not in general subscribe to Art for Art's Sake as a working doctrine, though Swinburne, influenced more by French Impressionistic and Symbolist thinking than Rossetti or Morris, accepted it as early as the mid-seventies. Belonging as it does to the early phase of the Aesthetic Movement, Pre-Raphaelitism is less closely related to Wilde than to Keats, to whom beauty in art finds its most complete expression in the sentimentalized symbols of Platonic idealism. Beauty in Pre-Raphaelite art is not an aesthetic pose but a vehicle of imaginative, symbolic, and mystical expression. Nor is beauty isolated in Pre-Raphaelite art as it is in the later Aesthetic Movement. Often, as in Morris' theory of crafts derived from Ruskin, beauty tempered with overtones of morality is practical, a means to an obvious end: it inculcates in mankind the higher values concomitant with beauty and produces a utopia, where the Good, the True, and the Beautiful coalesce to provide man with ideal happiness. Thus, the implication of Ruskin's chapter "The Nature of Gothic" in The Stones of Venice, the chapter that was so influential

¹"In life and letters they [the aesthetes] cultivated languor, eccentricity, paradox, and extravagance of speech and dress. It was their aim to exploit, as a social asset and a means to the achievement of notoriety, the creed of artistic emotion which had been formulated by Pater." Charles L. Graves, Mr. Punch's History of England (London: Waverley Book Co., n.d.), III, 255-256.

on Morris' thinking, is that the aesthetic value of art has its validity in the political, the social, the economic, and the moral well-being of the artist and the artisan. On another level, as a revolt against the materialism of ascetic Christianity,¹ Pre-Raphaelitism is essentially metaphysical, portraying the beauty of the spirit by the representation of the physical, as in Rossetti's poetry and painting. Rossetti was "an artist who, both by the very intensity of his artistic vision, and by some inborn bent towards symbol and mysticism, stands on the side of those who see in material things a spiritual significance, and utters words of universal meaning from the fulness of his own heart."² But seldom does Pre-Raphaelitism adhere to a concept of beauty devoid of other values. Wilde's statement that "those who do not love Beauty more than Truth never know the inmost shrine of Art"³ exemplifies the vast hiatus that exists between Pre-Raphaelitism and pure Aestheticism.

¹ Esther Wood, Dante Rossetti and the Pre-Raphaelite Movement (London: Sampson Low, Marston and Co., 1894), p. 40. "To deny the dignity and sanctity of the physical as the garment of the spiritual world is surely as blank a materialism as that which makes the physical sufficient and supreme. To see no spirit in the flesh is to be no less blind than they who see no spirit beyond the flesh."

² W. H. Meyers, "Rossetti and the Religion of Beauty," The Bibelot (Portland, Maine: Thomas B. Mosher, 1902), VIII, p. 351.

³ The Prose of Oscar Wilde (New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, 1906), p. 586.

One characteristic almost universally recognized by critics is the sincerity of Pre-Raphaelite art--"a perfect sincerity, taking effect in the deliberate use of the most direct and unconventional expression, for the conveyance of a poetic sense which recognized no conventional standards of what poetry was called upon to be."¹ W. H. Myers has pointed out that much of Rossetti's art was spent "in the effort to communicate the incommunicable."² Bearing a close relationship to the mystical worship of beauty of conventional religious expressions, his pictures and poems are "the sacred pictures of a new religion."³ Myers shows the danger of representing Rossetti simply as a sensualist and draws a distinction between aestheticism, the pursuit of pleasure through art, and hedonism, the pursuit of pleasure simply as pleasure.⁴ This distinction further explains the aestheticism of Pre-Raphaelitism and the aestheticism of the fin de siècle, for the art of the later period pursues both aestheticism and hedonism at the same time under the guise of Art for Art's Sake. Rossetti and the Pre-Raphaelites were concerned with art and beauty, not as ends to preserve the isolation of the artist but as

¹Walter Pater, "Dante Gabriel Rossetti," The Bibelot (V, 1899), 322.

²Myers, op. cit., p. 355.

³Ibid., p. 356.

⁴Ibid., p. 365.

means toward an imaginative expression of the truth and validity of individual experience.

Pre-Raphaelitism was certainly a movement in the direction of what Wilde called the "Aesthetic Renaissance," since it contained within itself many of the seeds of the later movement. But, as Myers saw in 1883, Rossetti's sentiment was far removed from that of Gautier and Baudelaire. "There is no trace in him of that deliberate worship of Baal and Ashtoreth; no touch of the cruelty which is the characteristic note of natures in which the sexual instincts have become haunting and dominant."¹ The conversion of London by sensualism into a Sodom and Gemorrah that Buchanan had seen in 1872² was premature and not in reality pertinent to Pre-Raphaelitism.

Between 1870 and 1882 Pre-Raphaelitism gradually gave way to the Aesthetic Movement. Many critics consider that its major work had been accomplished by 1870. A critic wrote in the Nation, a New York periodical, in 1865:

¹Ibid., pp. 394-350. Cf. The Atlantic Monthly (XXVI, 1870), pp. 115-118, quoted by Ghose, op. cit., p. 123. "Rossetti has a painter's joy in beauty, and an indifference to what beauty, or whose, it is; and his celebration of love is chiefly sensuous, but beauty and love are both highly honored at their highest by him. Yet here and there, as in the sonnet Nuptial Sleep, we feel that we are too few removes from Mr. Whitman's alarming frankness, and it is but a step or two from 'turning aside and living with the cattle'"

²Robert Buchanan, The Fleshly School of Poetry and Other Phenomena of the Day (London: Strahan & Co., 1872). Quoted in Ghose, op. cit., p. 161.

Pre-Raphaelitism has gone through the first phase of its life and has entered on its second. It is hard now to distinguish and draw a line between the new school (made up of the followers of the P.R.B.) and the old. [The parenthetical phrase seems misplaced; it should perhaps follow "old" and may be a printer's error. Otherwise the passage is hardly intelligible.] Under the strong and self-confident teaching of the reformers, the art of England has changed its nature, and to day, in England, it is inaccurate to call any painter a Pre-Raphaelite, unless the word is used to denote a member of the original P.R.B. For between a crowd of well-meaning and hard-working artists and the great chief Dant Rossetti himself, there is no gulf or visible separation. Realistic, painstaking, purposeful work is the rule with so many painters that set the fashion. Pre-Raphaelitism, as it once was exists no longer, having done its work.¹

By the year of Rossetti's death the term Pre-Raphaelitism had degenerated into either a general term for any of a variety of artistic tendencies or a synonym for "aestheticism." In fact, the term had been used in such a variety of meanings that William Sharp ("Fiona McLeod") in an essay, "Pictorialism in Verse," in the Portfolio for 1882 questioned the justifiable application of the term.²

The tendency to associate and to confuse Pre-Raphaelitism with the extreme aestheticism of the eighties and nineties may be explained in a number of ways. In the first place, the two movements did have in common a number of superficial characteristics,³ the most salient being the

¹Ghose, op. cit., p. 95.

²Ibid., p. 233.

³Supra, Chapter IV.

confusion of art forms. Whistler's famous statement to Rossetti after he had seen one of his sonnets for a picture is indicative of this tendency toward the fusion of artistic media. "Why trouble to paint the picture at all?" Whistler asked, "Why not simply frame the sonnet?"¹ As early as 1870 the Atlantic Monthly wondered "whether Mr. Rossetti had not better have painted his poems and written his pictures; there is so much that is purely sensuous in the former, and so much that is intellectual in the latter."² The second major reason for the confusion of the two movements lay in the general misinterpretations and misrepresentation of Pre-Raphaelitism. Numerous articles in Punch referred to the Pre-Raphaelites and aesthetes indiscriminately, and Gilbert's operetta Patience (1881) satirized both types in the characters of Reginald Bunthorne (a Fleshly Poet) and Archibald Grosvenor³ (an Idyllic Poet). Another popular play of the day, The Colonel by F. C. Burnand, was also guilty of the same kind of association.

As early as the mid-seventies Du Maurier began to satirize aestheticism in Punch; and by 1881 Rossetti and Wilde, the principal representatives of aestheticism in the

¹Hough, Last Romantics, op. cit., p. 178.

²Ghose, op. cit., p. 122.

³After the Grosvenor Gallery, opened 1877, where some Pre-Raphaelite and much Aesthetic art was exhibited.

popular mind, became the chief targets for satire and parody. The famous song from Patience on the aesthetic young man "who walks down Piccadilly with a poppy or a lily" in his medieval hand is obviously a burlesque aimed at Rossetti, Swinburne, and Wilde. Gilbert's satire had its parallels in Punch. But satire only mirrors in jest its serious counterpart, as the following definition of Aestheticism from Punch testifies:

Let us be clearly understood. The word "Aestheticism" has been perverted from its original meaning; i.e. the perception of all that is good, pure, and beautiful in Nature and Art, and, as now vulgarly applied, it has come in a slang sort of way to stand for an effeminate, invertebrate, sensuous, sentimentally Christian, but thoroughly Pagan taste in literature and art, which delights in the idea of resuscitation of the Great God Pan, in Swinburnian songs at their highest fever-pitch, in the mystic ravings of a Blake, the affectation of a Rossetti, the Charmides and revolting pantheistic Rosa Mystica of Oscar Wilde, the Songs of Passion and Pain and other similar mock-hysterical imitations of the "Mighty Masters." Victor Hugo, Ouida, Swinburne, Burne-Jones have much to answer for.

This Aestheticism, as it has gradually come to be known, is the reaction from Kingsley's muscular Christianity. Exaggerated muscular Christianity, in its crusade against canting and whining religion, in its bold attempt to show that the practice of true religion was for men, as well as for women, trampled on the Christian Lily, emblem of perfect purity; and what Athleticism trod under foot, Æstheticism picked up, cherished, and then, taking the sign for the reality, paid to it the extravagant honours of a Pagan devotion; and the worship of the Lily was substituted for the veneration paid to the sacred character, in whose hand Christian Art had originally placed it. To this was added the worship of the Peacock's Feather. It is this false Æstheticism

which we have persistently attacked, and will persistently attack to the bitter end, and henceforward those who misunderstand us do so willfully, and it may be maliciously.¹

In its attack on Aestheticism Punch by definition excludes the Pre-Raphaelites, but by implication it considers them at least as linear ancestors of the aesthetes. In tracing their immediate origin to the Pre-Raphaelites, the aesthetes were themselves at least partially responsible for the tendency to confuse the two movements. Oscar Wilde's acknowledgement in a speech made in New York during his American tour in 1882 is characteristic of the association made by the aesthetes:

. . . it is in Keats that one discerns the beginning of the artistic renaissance of England. Byron was a rebel, and Shelley a dreamer; but in the calmness and clearness of his vision, his self-control, his unerring sense of beauty, and his recognition of a separate realm for the imagination, Keats was the pure and serene artist, the forerunner of the Pre-Raphaelite school, and so of the great romantic movement of which I am to speak.

If you ask nine-tenths of the British public about the Pre-Raphaelites, you will hear something about an eccentric lot of young men to whom belong a sort of divine crookedness and holy awkwardness in drawing all the chief objects of art. To know nothing about their great men is one of the necessary elements of English education. Indeed, the average Englishman will tell you that æstheticism is the French for affectation, or the German for dado. The Pre-Raphaelites were a number of young poets and painters who banded together in London about thirty years since to revolutionize English poetry and painting. They had three things which the English public never forgive—youth, power,

¹Quoted from Punch (1882) by Graves, op. cit., III, 329-330.

and enthusiasm. Satire paid them the homage which mediocrity pays to genius. Their detractors blinded the public, but simply confirmed the artists in their convictions. To disagree with three-fourths of all England on all points is one of the first elements of sanity.

Pre-Raphaelitism was above all things a return to nature—to draw and paint nothing but what was seen. With the joining of William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones to the original board came changes. The latter brought to painting a more exquisite choice, a more faultless devotion to beauty, a more intense seeking after perfection. He felt that the close imitation of nature was a disturbing element in imaginative art. To Morris we owe poetry whose perfect precision and clearness of word and vision have not been excelled in the literature of our country. This revolution was not one of ideas, but of creations. The poetry of Morris, Swinburne, and Rossetti shows a style flawless and fearless, a sustaining consciousness of the musical value of each word, a distinct advance in technique, which is the characteristic of all great eras.¹

In the year of Rossetti's death (1882) Walter Hamilton published The Aesthetic Movement in England. A premature study, coming as it did in the early stages of the Aesthetic Movement, the book is largely devoted to Rossetti, Ruskin, and the Pre-Raphaelites.² Although his book is a serious and sympathetic treatment of the Aesthetic Movement, Hamilton fails to point out the essential distinction between aestheticism and Pre-Raphaelitism. But in his analyses of the individual authors and painters he makes the distinction obvious. However, in 1882 the Aesthetic

¹Walter Hamilton, The Aesthetic Movement in England (London: Reeves & Turner, 1882), pp. 105-106. Quoted from Wilde's speech as printed in the New York World.

²Only one chapter is devoted to Wilde.

Movement was not yet tarnished by its later aspects of sham and pose. Hamilton clearly indicates that Aestheticism had definite and noble artistic functions to perform. "I think," he concluded, that "it may safely be predicted that the poetry of the Aesthetic school will come to be regarded as a distinct growth typical of the later half of the nineteenth century, as the Lake School of Poetry was of the earlier half. The Lake writers have outlived the scorn of their contemporaries, and in the same way people will live to see how much there is of the good, the beautiful, and the true, in the Aesthetic movement, and to recognize the beneficial influence it has had upon modern life in the cultivation of good taste in art."¹

Hamilton's remarks were not directed exclusively toward the Pre-Raphaelites. But by 1882 Pre-Raphaelitism or its remains made up perhaps the strongest element in the Aesthetic Movement. Hamilton could not foresee the future development of Aestheticism in England, a development toward a decadence and degeneration that culminated in the fin de siècle. Nor could he foresee that the ultimate nature of Aestheticism would be incompatible with the basic tenets and ideals of Pre-Raphaelitism.

The Aesthetic Movement found its first expression in the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. With the extremes of

¹Ibid., p. 125.

Art for Art's Sake, moral degeneration and the fetishism of the fin de siècle Pre-Raphaelitism had little to do. Max Nordau,¹ to whom any tendency toward medievalism or mysticism was a sign of "degeneration," justly says that Pre-Raphaelitism degenerated into Aestheticism. But one need not agree with him that the Pre-Raphaelites themselves were degenerate. The road leading to the "yellow nineties" was a circuitous one, and Pre-Raphaelitism was only one of the many paths leading into it. More immediate among the influences on the fin de siècle were the French traditions imported from Gautier, Baudelaire, the Impressionists, and the Symbolists. Whatever the nineties borrowed from Pre-Raphaelitism they colored from a hundred new and different sources, the art that emerges being thereby twice removed from its original source. Pre-Raphaelitism was an early and major phase in the development of the Aesthetic Movement, but it is wholly distinct from the aesthetic phenomenon known as the fin de siècle.

¹Max Nordau, Degeneration (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1895).

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

Although the Pre-Raphaelite Movement included among its ranks such prominent figures as Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Christina Rossetti, John Ruskin, and William Morris, the movement has not been adequately considered by literary historians, art historians, and critics. Actually, the movement, a mid-nineteenth century manifestation of Romanticism, is a highly important transitional stage between High Victorianism and Aestheticism. It had its roots in the reaction against the materialism of the Industrial Revolution, and it affirmed and reasserted the values of individuality in an age dominated by materialistic concerns. In art and literature Pre-Raphaelitism was a revolt against the rules of the academicians and a reassertion of faith in the truth of the creative expression of the individual artist as opposed to the stereotyped and conventionalized expressions of "classical" art. Pre-Raphaelitism emphasized the artist as creator rather than the artist as copyist. And to this end the Pre-Raphaelites insisted that the artist should follow nature, reproducing what he saw rather than what artists before him said he ought to see.

Philosophically, the Pre-Raphaelites, like most romantics, were idealists. Their "Medievalism," if the conscious employment of medievalisms can ever be so classified, was part of their revolt, a substitution by analogy for the materialism of English civilization in the 19th century. The reforms they advocated were aesthetic, and social only by implication. With the exception of Ruskin and Morris, whose social theories also rest on aesthetic and moral foundations, the Pre-Raphaelites were unconcerned with social reform.

Pre-Raphaelitism cannot accurately be considered in the restrictive sense of an anthology definition. In the first instance, most of these definitions are themselves inconsistent, limiting the movement historically to the P.R.B. and at the same time extending the aesthetic force of the movement as far as the fin de siècle. Pre-Raphaelitism cannot be easily defined precisely because an adequate definition involves placing the movement in both an historical and an aesthetic perspective. The Pre-Raphaelite Movement has at least two distinct phases. The first includes the activities, both literary and artistic, of the seven members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood from the incipience of the movement to about 1853, when Millais was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy. The second phase included the elaboration of the Brotherhood into a movement and extends from 1853 to approximately the

death of Rossetti (1882). Besides the original Brotherhood, who, with the exception of Hunt and Woolner, one by one abandoned the principles of Pre-Raphaelitism, the second phase also includes the Oxford group, especially William Morris and Burne-Jones, who together with Rossetti formed the nucleus of the new movement. The aesthetic of the original Brotherhood was extremely limited, including as its major positive aesthetic doctrine that the artist should follow nature. Implicit in this single tenet, however, was the seemingly incompatible postulate that motivated the second phase of the movement; namely, that the artist must maintain a fidelity to the truth of his own inner experience. It was this postulate to the basic aesthetic of the original group that enabled the movement to grow and develop, so that its influence on 19th century art and aesthetic thinking was of primary significance.

Thus, it is essential to distinguish between the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and the later phase in which the Brotherhood developed into a movement. To use the terms Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and Pre-Raphaelite Movement loosely and interchangeably as synonyms is inaccurate, for they are not mutually inclusive but sequential terms. The term Pre-Raphaelitism is generic in its implications when it is used to refer to the characteristics of the movement rather than to the movement itself.

Pre-Raphaelitism began as a reform in English painting, but the activities of the Brotherhood testify to the early application of their aesthetic tenets to literature as well as to art. The Germ contained "thoughts towards Nature" in both poetry and art. The explanation for their concern with literature and not merely art is to be found in the proximity in which they considered the two media. On examination, Pre-Raphaelite painting is seen to be essentially "literary," that is, either narrative or dramatic; and Pre-Raphaelite poetry, especially that of Rossetti, is often characterized by a marked pictorial quality. The experience of the artist in the creative process is essentially a poetic experience insofar as its basis lies in the imaginative portrayal of individual invention.

The ultimate influence of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement has been literary. In art it produced a number of technical advances in color, lighting, texture, and the truthful rendering of observed detail; but these technical contributions alone would not have been sufficient to insure the prominence of the movement. While the number of second-rate, if not first-rate, Pre-Raphaelite artists and poets would have made the movement important, the real reason for its continued influence on the history of aesthetics in the 19th century lay in the stress the Pre-Raphaelites put upon the individuality of the artist and upon the role

of the artist in society. Pre-Raphaelitism represents a middle ground between the extremes of Victorian art morality and Art for Art's Sake. More an aesthetic than an ethical movement in art and literature, Pre-Raphaelitism maintained the values of both. In an age in which the artist and the poet are isolated and art is relegated to an ivory tower existence, as in our own, a premium is often put upon sophistication. The Pre-Raphaelites were in comparison with the Aesthetes and the artists of the twentieth century unsophisticated and naive. For they had not abandoned the possibility of reforming public taste and reconciling the artist with his social environment. They believed that the artist had a role to fulfill even in a materialistic age, and, like Shelley, they conceived of the artist and the poet as legislators of taste.

The force of Pre-Raphaelitism was not spent by the excesses of the movement so much as by the failure of successive movements to realize the implications of their aesthetic beliefs. Although it was perhaps not the most important aesthetic movement in the nineteenth century, Pre-Raphaelitism served to preserve the principles of beauty and truth so vital to the development and continuation of art in an age that had itself reacted against Romanticism.

PART III

A PARTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF PRE-RAPHAELITISM

INTRODUCTION

The bibliography is divided into four major sections: Section I includes special bibliographies of works by or about the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and the later Pre-Raphaelites or about the movement. Standard bibliographical sources and annual periodical listings are taken for granted. Section II lists books not including separate chapters or parts specifically devoted to either the Pre-Raphaelites or to the movement. Those books which contain special sections, so entitled, appear in Section IV A; books with entire chapters or parts devoted to individuals associated with the movement are listed in Section III. However, books that are inaccessible and whose organizations cannot be conveniently examined are arbitrarily listed in Section II.

Section III is devoted entirely to individual authors. Subsections A and B are further subdivided for

each author, but in Subsection C an alphabetical arrangement is followed. For the original Pre-Raphaelites some selection of primary sources has been necessary: first, only standard editions and editions containing significant editorial material have been included; second, unpublished holographs are indicated only where they occur as part of another entry, most of them appearing in Section I; and third, primary sources not pertinent to this study have been excluded, including large parts of the copious writings of the two practising Pre-Raphaelite critics, William M. Rossetti and F. G. Stephens.

Secondary sources in all three subdivisions of Section III are also selective, since an exhaustive study of a single author lies outside the scope of this study. To avoid duplication, primary and secondary sources, with one exception, containing some form of the term Pre-Raphaelite in the title have been relegated to Section IV A. However, a single chapter in a work on a Pre-Raphaelite, such as "The PRB Phase" in Megroz' Dante Gabriel Rossetti, even though it contains a derivation of Pre-Raphaelite, appears in Section III. Compounded titles, such as Samuel Chews's "Rossetti and his Circle," in Baugh's Literary History of England, which clearly allude to the Pre-Raphaelites will be found in Section IV B. Section IV B also contains works by one Pre-Raphaelite on another Pre-Raphaelite, such as

F. G. Stephens' Dante Gabriel Rossetti; works treating the Rossettis as a family unit; and other books, articles, chapters, memoirs, diaries, letters, journals, and periodicals basic to a study of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement. Section IV A is non-selective and, though not complete, it is based on available bibliographical aids.

It must be apparent that the bibliography extends beyond materials considered in the preparation of this dissertation. The annotations, limited of course to the works actually considered, are intended to give direction rather than to provide extended or absolute critical judgment.

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A SURVEY OF PRE-RAPHAELITE SCHOLARSHIP

In the absence of a formal study of the scholarship of Pre-Raphaelitism, the student of the movement must depend on incomplete bibliographies and inadequate accounts of individual critics. Like so large a part of the Browning scholarship, much that has been written on the Pre-Raphaelite Movement is of little practical value. An attempt has been made in this study to bring together in a critical synthesis the major facts, the dominant ideas, and the salient critical attitudes relative to the movement. This survey of Pre-Raphaelite scholarship, together with the bibliography, is intended as a preface to a more extensive study that should further clarify the critical perspective in which the movement ought to be viewed.

Enough examples have been previously cited to indicate partially the scope of Pre-Raphaelite scholarship from 1848 to 1882. Primarily periodical, it reflects the vacillating reputation of Pre-Raphaelitism from its incipient stages to the death of Rossetti. Most of the early criticism is summarized in S. N. Ghose's useful volume, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Contemporary Criticism (1849-1882).

The limitations of Ghose's study are obvious, since he is primarily concerned with Rossetti and not with the movement as a whole. Ghose's method is simply to present in chronological sequence, with some continuity, excerpts from the critical articles and books on Rossetti between 1849 and 1882. But he does include considerable material on Pre-Raphaelitism, making the book vital as an introductory study of the criticism of the movement.

Between the year of Rossetti's death and the Rossetti centenary (1928), an avalanche of historical and biographical books and articles were published. Two biographies of Rossetti appeared in the year of his death: William Sharp's Dante Gabriel Rossetti; a Record and a Study and Hall Caine's Recollections of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Both were intended to take advantage of Rossetti's immediate popularity in the public mind; and neither can be considered a sufficient biographical study, even for 1882. Joseph Knight's Life (1887) is little better, though the bibliography by J. P. Anderson contains some items not listed elsewhere. In the Nineties three studies of importance appeared: F. G. Stephens' Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1894), F. M. (née Hueffer) Ford's Rossetti. A Critical Essay on his Art (1896), and H. C. Marillier's Dante Gabriel Rossetti; An Illustrated Memorial of his Life (1899). Stephens' Portfolio monograph, primarily a treat-

ment of Rossetti's art, puts but slight emphasis on either his writing or the Pre-Raphaelite Movement. The perspective of Ford's Essay, one of the better early studies of Rossetti's art (sketched in with biographical detail), is too narrow, overlooking Rossetti's importance as a writer and in general de-emphasizing the Pre-Raphaelite aspect of his art. Marillier's Memorial is valuable primarily for his comments on Rossetti's art, for the profuse photographic reproductions of his paintings, and for the long detailed catalogue of Rossetti's paintings appended to the work. Before 1928 only two major biographies of Rossetti appeared after the turn of the twentieth century: H. M. Rossetti's The Life and Work of Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1902) and A. C. Benson's Rossetti (1904) in the "English Men of Letters" series. Between 1882 and 1928 there were no biographies of the other members of the original Brotherhood. However, numerous periodical articles on the separate Pre-Raphaelites were frequent. Among the studies of Christina Rossetti deserving special mention are E. A. Proctor's A Brief Memoir of Christina Rossetti (1896) and Mackenzie Bell's Christina Rossetti (1898), which is still one of the standard works on her life. Also during this period was published J. W. MacKail's celebrated biography of William Morris (1899), F. M. Ford's life of his grandfather (1896), and Malcolm Bell's Sir Edward Burne-Jones. A

Record and Review (1898). Although these biographical studies contain numerous references to Pre-Raphaelitism and to other of the Pre-Raphaelites, in the main they are unimportant except for historical purposes, and in that respect they are duplicative. Special mention should perhaps be made of George Birbeck Hill's Letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti to William Allingham (1897), one of the earliest volumes devoted to Rossetti's correspondence, and to Elizabeth Luther Cary's The Rossettis (1900), an early and unsatisfactory example of critical biography.

Only a few important monographs on Pre-Raphaelitism were published between 1882 and 1928. Walter Hamilton's The Aesthetic Movement in England (1882) has already been discussed. Besides Hamilton's study, four of the monographs appearing before 1928 are essential to a study of Pre-Raphaelitism: Esther Wood's Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Pre-Raphaelite Movement (1894), G. S. Layard's Tennyson and His Pre-Raphaelite Illustrators (1894), Percy H. Bate's The English Pre-Raphaelite Painters (1899), and F. M. Ford's The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood; A Critical Monograph (1907).

Esther Wood's book was the first extensive attempt to examine critically the Pre-Raphaelite Movement. Relying heavily on secondary sources for her information, she did nevertheless consider the movement from a wider critical

perspective. The book contains, for example, sections treating the historical evolution of art culminating in the P.R.B., the period of the Brotherhood, the problem of literary and artistic influence, the psychological and aesthetic motives and aims of the Pre-Raphaelites, and the poetry of Rossetti. Miss Wood also recognized, as few earlier critics had, the continuity of the movement beyond the period of the Brotherhood. The weakness of her book lies primarily in her design "to deal with the Pre-Raphaelite movement more as an ethical than an aesthetic revolution."¹ As a result of her ethical concern the study places too much emphasis on the religious aspect of Pre-Raphaelite art and literature and is too overly sentimental to allow her to sustain a critically objective point of view.

Percy Bate's history of the Pre-Raphaelite painters is an important and pioneer work. Bate limited his short and profusely illustrated book to a study of the painting, considering besides the major Pre-Raphaelites the majority of their associates and successors. His analysis of the influence of Pre-Raphaelitism from its beginnings to his own day is perspicacious and accurate. Bate recognized the existence of what he called a "Rossetti tradition" in such painters as Burne-Jones, Spenser Stanhope, and Marie

¹Wood, op. cit., p. v.

Stillman. But even though his definition of Pre-Raphaelitism retained only the connotations of its application by the Brotherhood—he distinguishes between the true and popular definition of the term—he did not exclude the painters of the "Rossetti tradition" from the ranks of the Pre-Raphaelites.

G. S. Layard's "Book about a Book," as he subtitles Tennyson and His Pre-Raphaelite Illustrators, is a highly specialized study of the roles of Millais, Hunt, and Rossetti in the preparation of Moxon's edition of Tennyson (1857). In an introductory chapter he examines the status of book illustration in the mid-nineteenth century, and in tracing the history of the P.R.B. he makes some general comments on the Pre-Raphaelites as illustrators. Finally, in three separate chapters on each of the major collaborators, he outlines in detail the part each played in illustrating the edition and makes some observations on the quality of the illustrations and the general resemblance between Tennyson and the Pre-Raphaelites.

Ford M. Ford's The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood is in many respects an excellent study as far as it goes. He does not recognize, however, the breadth or scope of the entire movement, limiting his study only to the Brotherhood phase of their artistic and literary endeavors. He clarifies a good many debatable points in the history of the Brother-

hood; but he denies the influence of Pre-Raphaelitism on Rossetti's work and denies Rossetti's status as a genuine Pre-Raphaelite. Ford was a prolific writer who wrote a good deal relative to the Pre-Raphaelites and to the movement.

Two vast bodies of quasi-critical-historical-biographical writings appearing before 1928 form the most important nucleus of any study of the Pre-Raphaelites: the memoirs and the profuse publications of William Michael Rossetti. The tremendous bulk of memoir writing is no slight obstacle to the student of Pre-Raphaelitism, for there are major memoirs of nearly all the prominent Pre-Raphaelites as well as a considerable number of minor memoirs of their friends and associates. The memoirs of primary importance are The Life and Letters of John Everett Millais by his son J. G. Millais (1899); Lady Burne-Jones' Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones (1904); William Holman Hunt's Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (1905), expanded from his earlier articles in The Contemporary Review (1866); William M. Rossetti's Some Reminiscences (1906); and Amy Woolner's Thomas Woolner R.A., Sculptor and Poet (1917). These long volumes, only partially concerned with Pre-Raphaelitism (only Holman Hunt's volumes pretended to be a study of the movement) often indicate the changing attitudes that reflect the historical

and aesthetic course of Pre-Raphaelitism. Among the minor memoirs those of William Bell Scott, Anne Gilchrist, G. F. Watts, William Sharp, Frederick Shields, and the Diary of William Allingham—to list only a few—contain personal references, critical opinions, and much historical information about Pre-Raphaelitism.

The publications of William Michael Rossetti are probably the most important single group of writings on Pre-Raphaelitism before 1928. Although numerous references to his works have been made in the text of this study, a list of the works in chronological order will perhaps suggest the extent of his literary efforts: Dante Gabriel Rossetti as Designer and Writer (1889), The Family Letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti with a Memoir (1895), Ruskin: Rossetti: Preraphaelitism, 1854-1862 (1899), Præ-Raphaelite Diaries and Letters (1900), Rossetti Papers 1862-1870 (1903), Bibliography of the Works of Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1905), and The Family Letters of Christina Rossetti (1908). Besides the works listed here, William Michael Rossetti also wrote several prefaces and memoirs to the editions of Dante Gabriel and Christina's poetry as well as numerous periodical articles on the various members and phases of the Pre-Raphaelite Movement. William Michael is an honest if not always far-sighted critic. And to him must go most of the credit not only for preserving many of the records

of his brother and the movement but also for stimulating a continued interest in the literary and artistic productions of the Pre-Raphaelites.

By the time of the Rossetti Centenary the bibliography of Pre-Raphaelitism had grown to amazing proportions, although most of the published material was historical and biographical rather than critical, impressionistic rather than scholarly. The studies that have been made since 1928 have not altered the general complexion of the scholarship of the various aspects of the movement. Before 1928 there were two volumes of letters—exclusive of those scattered throughout the memoirs and a few privately printed, especially by T. J. Wise—relating to the movement. One was William M. Rossetti's edition of The Family Letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, the other was G. B. Hill's Letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti to William Allingham. In the past thirty years two more volumes of letters have been added: Oswald Doughty's The Letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti to His Publisher F. S. Ellis (1928) and J. C. Troxell's Three Rossettis; Unpublished Letters to and from Dante Gabriel, Christina, William (1937). Doughty's book, published in a limited edition of five-hundred and sixty copies, is now rare.

Two fictional biographies of Rossetti have appeared since 1928: Evelyn Waugh's Rossetti (1928) and Oswald

Doughty's A Victorian Romantic (1929). Although Waugh's biography contains flashes of genuine interpretative genius, it is a forerunner of the fictional studies discussed later in this section. Doughty's biography preserves too much of the romanticizing of the same sensational school. Both books are deficient in documentation and source acknowledgment. Only Holman Hunt, of the original Pre-Raphaelites, has had a biographer since 1928. A. C. Gissing's William Holman Hunt (1936) reflects Gissing's credulousness in accepting as truth everything in Hunt's retrospective memoir-history Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Wholly sympathetic with Hunt, Gissing offers a distorted interpretation of Rossetti and the Pre-Raphaelite Movement. Christina Rossetti, William Morris, and Swinburne have fared much better on the critical scales than any of the other Pre-Raphaelites, but their bibliographies are too extensive to consider here.

The texts of four of Rossetti's poems have been carefully edited. However, there is no satisfactory edition of the complete works of either Dante Gabriel or Christina. No edition of the minor poets is available. Perhaps two-dozen articles treating various phases of the movement, more often of Rossetti, have appeared in the little magazines and the scholarly journals: textual studies (J. A. Sanford's "The Morgan Library Manuscript of

'The Blessed Damozel;' " SP, 1938), source studies (D. and H. Culler's "Sources of 'The King's Tragedy;'" SP, 1944), interpretive and biographical studies (R. C. Wallerstein's "Personal Experience in Rossetti's 'House of Life;'" PMLA, 1927), historical studies (M. B. Cramer's "What Browning's Literary Reputation Owed to the Pre-Raphaelites 1847-1856;" ELH, 1941). Critical articles on the aesthetics of the movement appear only occasionally, such as Charles Carter's "The Pre-Raphaelites as Religious Painters" (QR, 1948) and Anna De Armond's "What is Pre-Raphaelitism in Poetry?" (Delaware Notes, 1946). Since 1928 only one incomplete bibliography of Rossetti has been made (Ehram, et.al., Twelve Victorian Poets, 1936). At the hands of artists and art historians Pre-Raphaelitism has fared even worse. The movement is treated as an insignificant episode in English art by too many art critics. Robin Ironside's Pre-Raphaelite Painters (1948) is the only important volume of reproductions since Arthur Fish published his Millais (1923).

Two volumes on the movement have appeared within the past seven years. D. S. R. Welland's The Pre-Raphaelites in Literature and Art (1953), an abbreviated handbook and anthology of the movement, brings no new critical perspective to the movement. The chapters relating to Rossetti, Morris, and the Pre-Raphaelites in Graham Hough's Victorian Romantics (1949) are perhaps the most

significant and stimulating writing on Pre-Raphaelitism to appear in thirty years. Hough sees the movement in a clear, critical, and sympathetic light that contrasts rather violently with so antagonistic a view as that of Geoffrey Grigson ("The Pre-Raphaelite Myth" in The Harp of Aeolus, 1947), who resents the myth that has developed about the Pre-Raphaelites. The myth had its origin in the thirties in the succession of sensational popularizations of the Pre-Raphaelites: Francis Bickley's The Pre-Raphaelite Comedy (1932); David Larg's Trial by Virgins (1933); Frances Winwar's Poor Splendid Wings (1933) and Oscar Wilde and the Yellow Nineties (1940); and William Gaunt's The Pre-Raphaelite Tragedy (1942) [titled in the American edition The Pre-Raphaelite Dream] and The Aesthetic Adventure (1945). These writers have placed their sights on the commercial market, capitalizing on a human interest appeal in martyrdom, revolutions, neuroticism, sexual perversion, dope addiction, tragic and/or unrequited love, disease, insanity, fornication, adultery, sentimental romanticism, and every other sensational aspect that they have been able to distort and squeeze out of the individual Pre-Raphaelites (and their Aesthetic successors) to satisfy the tabloidal interests of their readers. Dante Gabriel Rossetti staggers in a chloral stupor through book after book, plagued and haunted by the consumptive beauty of his exhumed wife

Elizabeth Siddal. All the aberrations, from Ruskin's impotency to Wilde's homosexuality, are paraded before the reader, who is reminded periodically that Pre-Raphaelitism is very tragic and that the horror of the Pre-Raphaelites is nevertheless strangely and exotically beautiful. The myth that these "popularizers" have created distorts and twists the real nature of the movement beyond recognition. Almost valueless from a critical, historical, or even a biographical standpoint, these books have served only to keep the Pre-Raphaelites before the public mind. But the impression of the movement which they engender makes their value highly questionable.

This survey should amply reveal the negative implications of Pre-Raphaelite scholarship. Despite the extensiveness of the Pre-Raphaelite bibliography, serious research is impeded by the lack of standard tools—editions, letters, biographies. Because Pre-Raphaelitism, as a movement in the Victorian Period, has only recently been re-examined, much basic scholarship still remains to be done. And it must be done if the movement is to be properly evaluated in the critical and historical perspective of its age and balanced against the aesthetic values of our own.

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APPENDIX

A CHRONOLOGY OF THE
PRE-RAPHAELITE MOVEMENTS

<u>Year</u>	<u>History & Biography</u>	<u>Literature & Art</u>
1848	Cyclographic Club P.R.B. founded (Aug. or Sept.)	Hunt's <u>Eve of St. Agnes.</u>
1849	First exhibitions of Pre-Raphaelite paint- ings. First entries in "P.R.B. Journal."	Hunt's <u>Rienzi.</u> Rossetti's <u>Girlhood of Mary Virgin.</u> Millais' <u>Lorenzo and Isabella.</u>
1850	Collinson resigned from P.R.B. Stephens became art critic on <u>The Critic.</u> <u>The Germ</u> (Jan., Feb., Mar., May).	Allingham's <u>Poems.</u> Hunt's <u>Christians Escaping from the Druids.</u> Rossetti's <u>Ecce Ancilla Domini.</u> Millais' <u>Christ in the House of his Parents.</u>
1851	Ruskin defended Pre- Raphaelites in his letters to <u>The Times</u> and in Pamphlet, <u>Pre- Raphaelitism.</u> Begin- ning of Ruskin's pat- ronage of Pre-Raphael- ite movement.	Brown's <u>Pretty Baa- Lambs.</u> Hunt's <u>Valen- tine and Sylvia.</u> Millais' <u>Return of the Dove to the Ark.</u>
1852	Woolner departed for Australia (July).	Brown's <u>Work (to 1865).</u> Hunt's <u>The Hireling Shepherd.</u> Millais' <u>Ophelia.</u>

<u>Year</u>	<u>History & Biography</u>	<u>Literature & Art</u>
1853	Millais elected to Royal Academy (Nov.) Hunt departed for the Holy Land (Dec.) Termination of P.R.B.	Ruskin's <u>Stones of Venice</u> . Rossetti's <u>Hesterna Rosa</u> ; <u>Dante Drawing an Angel</u> .
1854	Death of W. H. Deverell. Ruskin's Edinburgh lectures. (IV- <u>Pre-Raphaelitism</u>)	Bell-Scott's <u>Poems</u> . Hunt's <u>Light of the World</u> . Rossetti's <u>Found</u> .
1855	Founding of the "set" at Oxford. <u>The Crayon</u> begun in America by W. J. Stillman and John Durand. Millais married Ruskin's ex-wife, Effie Gray.	Brown's <u>Last of England</u> . Rossetti's <u>Paolo and Francesca</u> ; <u>"Hist! said Kate the Queen."</u>
1856	<u>The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine</u> (Jan.-Dec.). Morris apprenticed to James Street. Oscar Wilde born.	Hunt's <u>The Scapegoat</u> . Millais' <u>The Blind Girl</u> ; <u>Autumn Leaves</u> . Henry Wallis' <u>Death of Chatterton</u> . Rossetti's <u>Dante's Dream</u> .
1857	Oxford Union murals. "Pre-Raphaelite" Exhibitions in London and New York. Moxon's edition of <u>Tennyson</u> (illustrated by the Pre-Raphaelites). Beginning of second phase of Pre-Raphaelite Movement.	
1858		Morris' <u>Defence of Guenevere</u> . Morris' <u>La Belle Iseult</u> .
1859	William Morris married Jane Burden.	
1860	Rossetti married Elizabeth Siddal	<u>circa</u> . <u>Poems on Pre-Raphaelite Principles</u> by John Ferguson MacLennan.

<u>Year</u>	<u>History & Biography</u>	<u>Literature & Art</u>
1861	Founding of Morris and Company. Beginning of arts and crafts movement.	Rossetti's <u>Early Italian Poets</u> . Burne-Jones' <u>Clerk Saunders</u> .
1862	Death of Elizabeth Siddal Rossetti. Beginning of Cheyne Walk period (Rossetti, Swinburne, Meredith).	
1863	The Society for the Advancement of Truth in Art founded in America (the American equivalent of the PRB). The <u>New Path</u> (the journal of the American PRB's) started.	Woolner's <u>My Beautiful Lady</u> . Rossetti's <u>Beata Beatrix</u> , the first in a long series of women in Rossetti's painting.
1864		Christina Rossetti's <u>Goblin Market</u> . Rossetti's <u>Venus Verticordia</u> ; <u>Lady Lilith</u>
1865		Allingham's <u>Fifty Modern Poems</u> .
1866		Swinburne's <u>Poems and Ballads</u> . William M. Rossetti's <u>Swinburne, A Criticism</u> . Christina Rossetti's <u>The Prince's Progress</u> . Rossetti's <u>The Beloved</u> .
1867		William M. Rossetti's <u>Fine Art, Chiefly Contemporary</u> .
1869		Rossetti's <u>Rosa Triplex</u> .
1870		Rossetti's <u>Poems</u> . C. Rossetti's <u>Commonplace and Other short stories</u> . circa. Hunt's <u>The Shadow of Death</u> . Arthur O'Shaughnessey's <u>An Epic of Women</u> . Morris' <u>The Earthly Paradise</u> .

<u>Year</u>	<u>History & Biography</u>	<u>Literature & Art</u>
1871	Buchanan's attack on the "Fleshly School."	Swinburne's <u>Songs Before Sunrise.</u>
1872		O'Shaughnessey's <u>Lays of France.</u>
1874		Rossetti's <u>Dante and His Circle.</u>
1875	Suit against Morris and Company by Brown, Marshall, and Rossetti.	Bell-Scott's <u>Ballads, Studies from Nature, Sonnets.</u> Rossetti's <u>The Blessed Damozel.</u>
1876	Buchanan-Swinburne libel suit.	
1877	Opening of the Grosvenor Gallery by Sir Coutts Lindsay.	
1878	Whistler-Ruskin libel suit.	Swinburne's <u>Poems and Ballads (Second series).</u>
1881	Death of James Collinson. W. S. Gilbert's opera, <u>Patience.</u> F. C. Burnand's <u>The Colonel.</u> Both plays satirized the Pre-Raphaelites and Aesthetes.	Rossetti's <u>Ballads and Sonnets.</u> Woolner's <u>Pygmalion.</u> O'Shaughnessey's <u>Songs of a Worker.</u> Oscar Wilde's <u>Poems.</u>
1882	Death of Dante G. Rossetti. Wilde lectured in America on Pre-Raphaelitism and Aestheticism. Publication of Walter Hamilton's <u>Aesthetic Movement in England.</u> Termination of Pre-Raphaelite Movement.	Morris' <u>Hopes and Fears for Art.</u>
1884		Burne-Jones' <u>King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid.</u>

<u>Year</u>	<u>History & Biography</u>	<u>Literature & Art</u>
1887		Burne-Jones' <u>The Garden of Pan.</u> <u>Allingham's Irish Songs and Poems.</u>
1889		Swinburne's <u>Poems and Ballads</u> (Third series).
1890	Morris founded the Kelmscott Press.	Christina Rossetti's <u>Poems.</u>
1891		Morris' <u>News from Nowhere.</u>
1892	Death of Thomas Woolner.	
1893	Death of Ford Madox Brown.	Morris' <u>Socialism: Its Growth and Outcome.</u>
1894	Ruskin Commonwealth (Tennessee). Death of Christina Rossetti. <u>The Yellow Book</u> (edited by Aubrey Beardsley). Triumph of Aestheticism.	
1896	Death of William Morris. Death of Frederick Leighton, replaced as President of Royal Academy by Millais. Death of John Everett Millais. <u>The Savoy</u> (edited by J. A. Symons) started.	
1898	Death of Edward Burne-Jones.	
1900	Death of Oscar Wilde.	
1907	Death of Frederick G. Stephens.	
1909	Death of A. C. Swinburne.	

<u>Year</u>	<u>History & Biography</u>	<u>Literature & Art</u>
1910	Death of William Holman Hunt.	
1919	Death of William M. Rossetti.	
1928	Rossetti Centenary. Revival of interest in Rossetti and the Pre-Raphaelites.	
1936	Restoration of Oxford Union murals.	
1940	Final bankruptcy of Morris and Company	
1948	Centenary of the Pre- Raphaelite Brotherhood.	



