

Modern architecture

(X) although we may have before us but the remnant of what existed. But no such impression ever arose in my mind in the contemplation of any building whether Roman, middle age or modern, but on the contrary a feeling of doubt and hesitation as to the conformity and correct adaptation as well as effect of some prominent feature, something obtrusively interfering with its tranquillity. With the Greek however independent of the dignified implicitly and beauty of composition as well as the just and surprising delicacy of execution in the minutest parts, I am inclined to attribute much of the immediate impression to the fact of not any circumstance as to general effect having been overlooked or not turned to account in respect to position, as well as correct adaptation of all its parts to the peculiarities of purpose and situation, a consideration which is seldom sufficiently attended to in modern works. It is in architecture as in music or poetry, while the subject is presented as an harmonious whole, expression is given to certain portions with a degree of delicacy which heightens the effect without disturbing the harmony. Let a modern architect copy as correctly as may be done, unless he possesses the requisite taste, feeling and science he will fail in expression in giving the just prominence and pathos to the proper portions of his composition, and hence the cold rigid aspect of our numerous imitations of Greek art, he places his copy for instance in an attitude or situation to which it is unfitted, a particular in which the Roman copyists failed as much as the modern.

Our modern architects generally adopt for imitation some admitted type of excellence, however much their copy may have to differ in dimension from the original, and they conceive that by a strict adherence to the relative proportions of the parts they can not err, and that if the original is beautiful so must the copy. But the ancients were somewhat more profound in their science, knowing that the proportions must depend on the size of the building and accordingly there are many remains of Doric Temples of different dimensions, where although the style is uniform, the relative proportions are modified to suit the size, a consequent weight of superstructure; the same rule we may