The English Character
as Reflected
in the English Gardens and Fine Arts

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by
Ryoichi Suzuki
( Student Number: M 83213 )
Hyogo University of Teacher Education

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

The main purpose of the study is to research into the English culture, and to refer to some aspects of the English character as revealed in the culture. It is difficult for us to make a brief mention of the culture as a whole, as it carries too long and glorious a history with it; various aspects of the English culture cannot be explained in a small space. Those who are deeply interested in England have published many books on the English culture and the Englishness of the English. Discussions have been going on among them about the English culture and they seem to have dealt exhaustively with them.

Our study here is forced to focus our attention only upon a limited field of study; our attention is paid to the discussion on the English culture mainly of the eighteenth century or thereabouts. We have adopted our main research materials from the English gardens and the English fine arts. Therefore the study can be called the treatise on the English culture through the English gardens and the English fine arts. The reason for taking up these subjects is that they are to be in close connection with the English culture. The English love nature very much; they regard their gardens as parts of nature, and as parts of their living. The gardens are subjects of their favorite landscape paintings. As a matter of course, the favor-
ite subjects of their landscape paintings are nature. Thus there are indissoluble connections among nature and gardens and landscape paintings.

Our attention is mainly paid to the study of the meaning of the English naturalness. What I mean by naturalness has two aspects; one is the naturalness of 'outward nature' and the other is that of 'inward nature' within our mind. Some aspects of the English character we will refer to in the main discourse are based on the idea of the naturalness. In addition to them, we will refer to William Hogarth's artistic works and William Wordsworth's poetry with a view to finding out an important aspect of the English character. There is something in common underlying the two types of art. As both Hogarth and Wordsworth can be reckoned as the representatives of the eighteenth century Englishmen, it can safely be said that that something common between the two will indicate one aspect of the English character. As to Hogarth's art, it helps us to understand the English social life of the eighteenth century, for his art is the mirror of the social conditions of the period. We can understand with this clue to go upon how the people were getting on in those days. Hogarth has something to say in his works. The case is the same with Wordsworth; he likewise tries to preach something in terms of his 'Resolution and Independence.' One more thing we would like to see is the fact that there is the same element running between the English landscape gardens and Hogarth's works; the same element underlying the two gives us an interesting idea of the English culture. We are going to make
mention of both of them in terms of the characteristic beauty. Both have the same lines of beauty; this is one aspect of the English culture.

Other research materials such as some of Jane Austen's novels and John Brett's painting *Stonebreaker* are to be taken into added account in order to make our explanation full enough.
CHAPTER II

The English Character in the English Gardens

A distinguishing English character of the eighteenth century can be found in a historical transition of English gardens. The remarkable character is that formal gardens introduced especially from France and the Netherlands changed gradually into informal ones in England at the period of the eighteenth century. The grand formal gardens of the privileged classes changed into English landscape gardens of the newly-risen classes of that period. The English regarded the beauty of nature as more important rather than that of art in gardening. The formal gardens could not be accepted by the English, because they preferred the beauty of nature to that of art. The English set much value upon the beauty of nature, and they thought that the real beauty was not in art but in nature. What the English wanted for gardening was nature and reality. For this reason, the informal gardens came into being in England. The attitude toward informal gardens shows one aspect of the English character. The informal gardens can be divided into two schools; one is Brownist, and the other Picturesque School. Both are the representative informal gardens in England. The term 'picturesque' indicates one aspect of the typical English character as revealed in the English culture. Definitions of the term 'picturesque' run as follows:
Like or having the elements of a picture; fit to be the subject of a striking or effective picture; possessing pleasing and interesting qualities of form and colour (but not implying the highest beauty or sublimity): said of landscape, buildings, costume, scenes of diversified action, etc., also of circumstances, situations, fancies, ideas, and the like.

(O.E.D.)

visually charming or quaint, as if resembling or suitable for a painting: having pleasing or interesting qualities; strikingly effective in appearance

(The Random House Dictionary of the English Language)

like or suggesting a picture; specifically, (a) having a wild or natural beauty, as mountain scenery; (b) pleasantly unfamiliar or strange; quaint; informal

(Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary)

The word 'picturesque' is derived from 'pittresque' (French), and it owes its origin to 'pittoreseco' (Italian). The word 'picturesque' means 'pictorial.' It is said that "standards of taste"¹ of the picturesque in gardening were formed by William Gilpin born in Carlisle, Cumberland. He was brought up in natural surroundings just as an English poet Wordsworth was, and studied at Queen's College in Oxford. He wrote a book of travels named Observations, relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty when he set out on a trip to seek after a fine scenery to a calm district far from human habitation. It is said that he wrote to Joshua Reynolds, famous as a portrait painter of that period, a letter saying that "With regard to the term

picturesque I have always myself used it to denote such objects, as are proper subjects for paintings. ¹ The picturesque beauty, as he thinks, can be seen not in straight trees but in old bent trees whose trunks are in decay. The picturesque beauty he sought is composed of the beauty to which variety gives birth. This way of thinking is represented by the standards of taste in gardening formed by William Gilpin.

We will refer to Jane Austen's picturesque here. It is generally understood that Jane Austen was a writer famous for little description of nature. But this does not mean that she had no use for nature; on the contrary, she seemed to have ample knowledge of the picturesque. We can obtain a satisfactory understanding of this from her Sense and Sensibility.

You must not inquire too far, Marianne—remember I have no knowledge in the picturesque, and I shall offend you by my ignorance and want of taste if we come to particulars. I shall call hills steep, which ought to be bold; surfaces strange and uncouth, which ought to be irregular and rugged; and distant objects out of sight, which ought only to be indistinct through the soft medium of a hazy atmosphere. You must be satisfied with such admiration as I can honestly give. I call it a very fine country—the hills are steep, the woods seem full of fine timber, and the valley looks comfortable and snug—with rich meadows and several neat farm houses scattered here and there. It exactly answers my idea of a fine country, because it unites beauty with utility—and I dare say it is a picturesque one too, because you admire it; I can easily believe it to be full of rocks and promontories, grey moss and brush wood, but these are all lost on

me. I know nothing of the picturesque.¹

The passage tells us that Jane Austen knew what the picturesque was like. This is a scene in which Edward, when he comes back to the house where Elinor and Marianne stay, gives them something of his feeling about the natural beauty around them. Edward says that 'I have no knowledge in the picturesque.', but his subsequent utterance is 'I shall call hills steep, which ought to be bold; surfaces strange and uncouth, which ought to be irregular and rugged.' What Edward says in reply to them proves that he knows much of the picturesque. The statement 'I know nothing of the picturesque.' is not true. He knows what 'bold' 'irregular' and 'rugged' mean. We may safely say that the author Jane Austen had enough knowledge to give expression to the idea of the picturesque. Another example of her description of natural beauty can be seen in her Pride and Prejudice. The example convinces us that the author was not poor at the description of natural beauty:

It was a large, handsome, stone building, standing well on rising ground, and backed by a ridge of high woody hills;—and in front, a stream of some natural importance was swelled into greater, but without any artificial appearance. Its banks were neither formal, nor falsely adorned. Elizabeth was delighted. She had never seen a place for which nature had done more, or where natural beauty had been so little counteracted by an awkward taste.²

The passage is proof enough to show us that Jane Austen has a keen interest in the picturesque beauty. The scene cannot be presented without full knowledge of the picturesque. She describes the banks as 'neither formal, nor falsely adorned.' She knows for certain what the picturesque is. The description such as 'a place for which nature had done more, or where natural beauty had been so little counteracted by an awkward taste' shows us that she appreciates the picturesque beauty. It cannot be said that Jane Austen is a writer who has no use for the picturesque beauty. Thus we can see the idea of the picturesque beauty in Jane Austen's works, not to speak of English landscape gardens. The term picturesque is one of the English character.

It was the eighteenth century when English formal gardens came to take the form of informal ones. Up to that time, gardens in England were mainly formal ones introduced from the Continent. Italian Renaissance gardens accomplished under the Bourbon Dynasty of France continued to develop steadily even under the Stuarts of England. Gardens of that period were lovely places and places for loving, and their image was of paradise. Gardens were originally laid out to supply some vegetables and fruit, so that they were small and practical. F. R. Cowell refers to the historical change of gardens in the following way:

... gardens were small and utilitarian, to supply medicinal herbs, some vegetables, and fruit. When gardens began to be developed for pleasure in the later Middle Ages and the early Renaissance, the slow penetration of 'sensate', pleasure-seeking motives produced 'idealistic' gardens in Italy, France, the
Netherlands and Germany. In England such 'idealistic' gardens were exemplified in 'Tudor' and 'Stuart' times down to the 'classical' period of Dryden, Addison and Pope in literature . . .

The garden is, as the dictionary tells us, "an enclosed piece of ground devoted to the cultivation of flowers, fruit, or vegetables." Gardens devoted to utility changed into grand ornamental ones loved by royal and noble families.

Hampton Court Henry VIII took from Cardinal Wolsey in 1529 was the first formal garden to take form in England. This garden was laid out after the model of Italian style ornamented with a geometrical flower bed, an artificial hill, a mount and a garden house. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, England reached the zenith of Renaissance. She was clever enough to prefer inexpensive fruit gardens to extravagant grand gardens. It was her courtiers who were bent on laying out grand gardens. As to courtiers of that period, Francis Bacon could be reckoned to be one of the representatives. He also had a deep interest in laying out a garden. Though he regarded Italian Renaissance gardens as ideal, it is remarkable to note that he insisted on introducing heath in the art of gardening. The heath introduced in gardening art came to be an important element of English informal garden laid out later. A representative garden of the middle of the seventeenth century was John Evelyn's Court. He designed his garden with a view to keeping his privacy

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undisturbed. As he thought of a garden as a microcosm, it should be separated from the world. In order to do so, he made a small island enclosed with fruit trees in the middle of a pond in his garden. This garden was designed as the place in which he took refuge. English gardens were under the influence of French gardens up to 1640, but most of formal gardens were destroyed by the Puritans. The reason was that the Puritans were unbearable to the extravagant grand gardens loved by the privileged classes. Famous gardens such as Wimbledon Garden, Greenwich Park and Richmond Park were their targets to destroy. After the Restoration, these famous formal gardens destroyed by the Puritans were soon repaired, and new formal gardens were designed in addition to them. Shortly afterwards a new spirit in gardening came about gradually. F. R. Cowell refers to this as follows:

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The first stirrings of revolt against the predominant French formality in garden design came at a time when traditional ideas in philosophy had been assailed ... Arguments then began about styles of gardening which were to continue, not without considerable bitterness and rancour, throughout the eighteenth century. The story is of the first importance in the history of civilization and culture, because it was in the garden that evidence was to be seen of that turning towards a greater delight in natural beauty mediated through the pleasures of the senses, then becoming paramount, from which the romantic movement in literature, art and music was later to emerge.1
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Under such circumstances, informal gardens were laid out. After the Restoration, the Royal Government began to lose its power,

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and so it was not what it had been. This was a social change from the monarchic government to the constitutional government. As England at that time was not in good financial circumstances, it became hard to maintain the formal gardens as they were. The formal gardens began to lose their own formal figures, and recurred to natural ones. The English formal gardens changed into ones fitted to natural features of England. The formal gardens were now free from artificial control. In this way, the typical English gardens were established. It is topsy-turvy that the Continental began to lay out their gardens after the model of the English landscape gardens. As to the beauty of nature in English gardens, it is very easy to find the picturesque beauty in them. The beauty of irregularity and of curved lines is there as the essence of the picturesque beauty. Judging from the historical transition of the English gardens, the way the English follow in gardening may be called the golden mean. The English gardens were the creation of the compromise the English are fond of. What the English found in the English landscape gardens is the beauty of irregularity and of curved lines, and what they did in gardening can be called 'compromise.'

Here are two figures which show us the way of thinking and looking.

Fig. 1

Fig. 2
As to figure 1, there is a sharp drawing of the dividing line between 'white' and 'black.' A straight line dividing white from black indicates 'extremes.' Figure 2, on the other hand, has no clearly defined line of demarcation separating them. A wavy line dividing the circle into two indicates 'compromise.' Slant lines mean that there is a compromise between white and black. The compromise between them produces 'grey.' The way the English like is the way shown as in figure 2. The English do not like to go extremes. It is not their way clearly to draw a straight line of demarcation between white and black. Metaphorically speaking, the English prefer a wavy line to a straight one. In the region of grey the English try to retain their mental balance and feel at ease. Here lies the English preference of compromise over extremes. It can be said that compromise is an important element of the English character. As regards compromise, we can afford another example in John Constable's Hay Wain. Hay Wain is a representative work the English are very fond of. This landscape painting is a realistic representation of an English country life. Constable painted the horse, the wain, the its driver, the cottage, the stream, the corn-field and the dog in detail. William Gaunt refers to Hay Wain as follows:

The finished painting of the Hay Wain gives more of an English air to the scene, no doubt because detail is more particularized and perhaps also because the first painting has been toned down to a milder level.1

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The realistic description of Hay Wain leads us to wonder what it is for. The eyes of painter seem to be focused not only on the wain but also on the other objects. The picture must be insisting upon the consequence of variety. Every detail is given much the same weight in the picture. The common sense shown in giving each object its proper weight is, in a very good sense of the term, compromise. Compromise is the sense of balance. This sense of balance is markedly illustrated in the Hay Wain.

![Hay Wain](image)

**Fig. 3**

The rural landscape between the heavens and the earth is the landscape of great variety. The idea presented in the painting is in full accord with the theory shown in figure 3; there is the same conception underlying the two. If it is possible for us to suppose that the heavens can be replaced with white, then the earth can be done so with black. It follows that grey can be regarded as nature. Constable was a painter who made much
of the movement of the Sun and clouds. In most of his paintings, we can see a variety of movement of clouds formed by the reciprocal action of the heavens and the earth. Constable painted clouds as one element of nature. The nature Constable painted in detail stands for the compromise we referred to in figure 2. Compromise is the very Englishness, because the English are very fond of it. We may say that the term picturesque indicates how devoted the English love to nature is, and that in the gardens of their making we can see compromise as a conspicuous element of their character.
CHAPTER III

The English Character in Hogarth's Art

The consideration of "the English tendency to preach and to reform by art"\(^1\) reminds us of William Hogarth (1697-1764). He was a representative Englishman who tended to preach the people and to reform society by his art. He had a deep interest in the society of the eighteenth century, and depicted the vices that could be seen among every section of the society. He displayed much interest in the noblemen and the bourgeois, the rich and the poor, judges and politicians, physicians and clergymen, madhouses and drinking bouts, boxing matches and cockpits, and criminals and prostitutes.

As for the eighteenth century life in England, there were plenty of vices and rough amusement on "the laxer moral standards under the Restoration."\(^2\) Hogarth, as a portrait painter of social life, mainly devoted his energies on the presentation of those subjects which were brought about through the vices of the immoral, such as drinking, gambling, duelling and a loveless marriage. These vices were the very targets in terms of which Hogarth could satirize the English society of the cen-
tury. As far as the social order is concerned, we can not deny that there were plenty of social violence, and that drinking was the prevalent vice among the English social life. A reference to the social violence in those days is made by J. S. Watson as follows:

Violence there was in plenty in the settled England of 1760. Riots and disorders were part of the way of life, a regular distraction from the drabness of the life of the poor, a release of emotion and energy . . .

Two more interesting things we are to touch upon here are drinking and gambling. Both of them were also the main targets for Hogarth's satire and caricature. Concerning the drinking habit, among all ranks alcohol consumption was high and as for the intoxication of many of the poor in London the gin craze was really fatal. Here is the fact in connection with alcohol consumption:

Early in the century 11.2 million gallon of spirits were being drunk in London a year (about seven gallon per adult), sold from 207 inns, 446 taverns, 5,875 ale-houses, and 8,659 brandy shops.

This fact shows us how much alcohol was consumed and how many ale-houses and brandy shops were there in London at that time. The craze for gin seems to be one of the big troublesome matters

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of those days. A remarkable illustration of the vice of this kind can be seen in *Gin Lane* of Hogarth's engraving. We will here look into *Gin Lane* in detail. *Gin Lane* is the engraving in which Hogarth depicted the starvation and poverty brought about by gin, and made a caricature of the poor. The engraving indicates death, starvation and ruin. To mention some examples, there is a slatternly woman who gets dead-drunk on the staircase. At the foot of the staircase, a dying person whose weakness is induced by starvation can be seen. At the entrance of the tavern next the staircase, a poem 'Drink for a penny, dead drunk for tuppence; straw free.' is written. At the open space a heavy drinker carried on a stretcher is given a last drink by two helpers. At the barber's shop, the barber has committed suicide upstairs on account of gin. At the pawnbroker, the carpenter pawns a saw to raise money. A woman who finds herself stooping a little beside a pawnbroker is seen to be carrying pots and kettles with her as articles for pawning. Hogarth's main theme of this work is to represent the poor who drink destructive gin.

Hogarth printed *The Cockpit*, in which he presented the
various kinds of people who were beside themselves with cockfighting. Cockfighting was one of the prevalent gambles of those days. A picture of how keen the people in the eighteenth century were on gambling and games is given by A. S. Turbervelle as follows:

From the reign of Anne till the beginning of the nineteenth century gambling was a national disease among the leisured classes of both sexes. Games of skill and games of chance, horse-racing, lotteries, and commercial speculations—all made an irresistible appeal. While the men spent most of the day, and sometimes of the night also, round the card-tables at the fashionable clubs of Almack's, White's, and Boodle's, the ladies occupied themselves in similar fashion in their own drawing rooms. Thousand of pounds would be won or lost at a single sitting. It is recorded that Charles James Fox would occasionally sit for night twenty-four hours at play, losing £500 an hour. Before he was twenty-five he had squandered £140,000, mostly at cards. He played whist and piquet very well, but it was the element of chance that really attracted him, and it was in such a purely gambling game as the popular 'faro' that he lost most of his money.  

The statements tell us that there were lots of people keen enough in gambling to lose £500 an hour at play; gambling then was a kind of "national disease." Gambling was prevalent especially among "the leisured classes." To this century Basil Williams gives the name of "brutal age," because the amusements especially in gambling in those days were such as bull-baiting, cock-throwing, badger-baiting, goose-riding and cockfighting. Of the

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last he depicted some aspects in his *The Cockpit*.

Hogarth born and bred in London as one of the most remarkable middle-class artists, shed a critical light upon the moral corruption of those who were vicious, and disapproved of the vices which were due to debauchery, idleness, drunkenness and gambling. His social disapproval gave birth to a social satire of his own, which was based upon his keen consciousness that doctors were most of all quacks, lawyers were mainly thieves and clergymen were largely bores. These kinds of people were the targets for his satire. Among his works representatives of this kind of satirical presentation are *A Harlot's Progress* (engravings 1732); *A Rake's Progress* (engravings 1735); *Marriage à la Mode* (engravings 1745); and *Industry and Idleness* (engravings 1747). These engravings are called 'conversation pieces'; that is paintings in which small groups of people are engaged together in conversation. The introduction of conversation pieces to England is attributed to Hogarth, and his success in the enterprise won the popular interest in the new style of painting.

Hogarth treated a picture as a stage, in which he tried to depict the various scenes of the social life he lived in. From his pictorial stages, we can learn a lot about the people living in the metropolis at that period. This is the reason why Hogarth's paintings are said to be not for being contemplated but for being read. Because of his readiness to devote himself to his cause of moralization in his engravings, his works can safely be called pictured morals; and thus the style of moral-
izing people in terms of his paintings is one of his characteristics, upon which Pevsner looks with admiration as follows:

... to Hogarth art is a medium for preaching and that the most effective sermon is the recounting of what the observant eye sees around.\(^1\)

We have given a general outline of the characteristics of Hogarth's art and of the artistic contribution done to the English painting by the artist. We shall proceed to a closer investigation of *A Harlot's Progress*, which is composed of six plates.

In plate 1 we see in the center the notorious bawd Mother Needham and a young innocent girl named Moll Hackabout from the York stagecoach. Moll has just arrived at the City of London, and she is going to meet her cousin with a goose. A rose on her breast seems to stand for her innocence and freshness. At the doorway the elderly gentleman observes both of them. In the background we see a country clergyman who is seeking after preferment, and a coach in which the other country girls sit still. The clergyman pretends to give no notice to the moral

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danger which is to be faced by Moll. There is an impending
catastrophe and a danger to the country girl's virginity, be-
cause the elder bawd is taking advantage of the innocence of
the poor girl. The fatal catastrophe into which she is going
to fall may be shown by the crumbling plaster. A closer inquiry
of the whole picture will lead us to give notice to the artist's
intention of giving more importance to the bawd than to the poor
girl. His focus may be on the viciousness of the bawd.

Plate 2 is a scene in
which Moll is leading
her apparently gorgeous
but lax life. Moll lives
in fancy surroundings,
because she is now the
mistress of a wealthy
Jew. Keeping on a maid
and a black houseboy, to-
gether with a pet monkey
is her pretentions to the moneyed class. An interesting thing
is that Moll is snapping her fingers and is upsetting the tea
table to make her lover's exit when her protector comes home.
But such position of hers is fragile just like the broken crock-
ery under the tea table. This broken crockery indicates Moll's
further catastrophe. In plate 3 we see that Moll has lost her
position as the mistress of the wealthy Jew, and that her life
One of the prostitutes behind Moll fingers her clothes and grins. Though Moll is still attractive and well-dressed, the atmosphere suggests that a lot of difficulties are waiting for her. Vices are seen even in the house of correction. In plate 5 the scene of quarrelling can be seen between the infamous doctors Rock and Misaubin over the efficacy of their pills in Moll's

is misery itself. Judging from a chipped punch bowl on the desk and mugs in the corner of the room, we can understand the fatal transition of her life. Moll is to be captured by the police detectives entering the room from the back. In plate 4 we find Moll in the house of correction named Bridewell. The prisoners here are all prostitutes except the wretched gambler. The punishment here allotted to Moll is to beat hemp to make ropes alongside the other prostitutes.
premises. The plastered wall, the broken table-ware and the upset chairs show her squalid life.
Before long Moll is destined to draw her last breath owing to her disease. In the final plate, we realize that nobody but the maid mourns over the coffin of Moll. The elderly bawd never seems to be in mourning, but to be lamenting the loss of revenue. In the background some weep or gossip, and other drink.
The clergyman is not absolutely faithful, because he is now intoxicated with his amorous occupation with the woman next to him screening her buxom lap with his hat.

Hogarth's emphasis was on the presentation of the realities of the City of London of the eighteenth century "within the framework of moralistic and dramatic narrative," as is well stated by William Gaunt:
It was his achievement to give a comprehensive view of social life within the framework of moralistic and dramatic narrative, this creation of a world being far more important than the system of ethics or the tale involved. He produced portraits which brought a fresh vitality and truth into jaded profession of what he called 'phizmongering'. He observed both high life and low with a keen and critical eye and his range of observation was accompanied by an exceptional capacity for dramatic composition, and in painting by a technical quality which adds beauty to pictures containing an element of satire or caricature.1

Generally speaking, art does not merely depict things as they are. It goes further than what things are. To go further and to make what things are more real than they are, requires the artist to have "a keen and critical eye." The eye leads to some kind of exaggeration. Though this may sounds strange and paradoxical, art ends in exaggeration to some extent. This kind of exaggeration may be clearly seen in Hogarth's works. We can see the way of life of the English at that period through his works. Hogarth seemed to seek after the natural way of living as a real human being. There must always be morals among people if they want to lead an orderly life of theirs. What Hogarth wanted for the contemporary people was morals, but he could hardly find them out in the society except in the middle-classes. That is the reason why he tried to make full use of his art as a medium for preaching morals. At the core of Hogarth's works pictured morals stand firm as the main subjects. What Hogarth did seek was morals.

The period of Romanticism ranges from the end of eighteenth century to the beginning of the nineteenth century. Roughly speaking, Romanticism makes it a principle to glorify unfettered freedom of individuality. The representative Romantic poets were Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley and Keats. Especially both Wordsworth and Keats among them seemed to think much of truth and common sense. As regards Wordsworth, he was surely a representative of the representative Romantics, in the sense that he sought after individual growth under the influence of Mother Nature separated from the vicious everyday life. There is a poem named 'Resolution and Independence' composed by the poet in 1802, in which he attempted through the medium of a poor but dignified old man to preach moral principles on which we live. To give a brief outline of 'Resolution and Independence, a poet meets with an old Leech-gatherer at a pool separated far from actual life. Though the poet is still young and healthy, he fears being old, and having an illness. The old man he meets with seems too old to work as a Leech-gatherer at a lonely place. It is very surprising to the poet to see such an old Leech-gatherer working alone at "a bleak world of loneliness."¹ The poet speaks to the old man with great interest. The old man answers to him feebly, but the answers are gentle and courteous. He has vivid eyes and his manner is mainly stately. Old as the Leech-gatherer is, he bases daily life on his life as it is, and never

complains of his daily life; he is willing to take his life as it comes. He has human strength of his own. The poet in disappointment is first shocked to find a strong mind in the old man, and finally finds the old man who teaches him how to live an honest life.

'Resolution and Independence' is a poem composed of twenty stanzas. Reference to the fifteenth stanza is good enough to give us a clue to the understanding of the poet's idea of human morals. The stanza reads as follows:

He told, that to these waters he had come
To gather leeches, being old and poor;
Employment hazardous and wearisome!
And he had many hardships to endure:
From pond to pond he roamed, from moor to moor;
Housing, with God's good help, by chance or chance;
And in this way he gained an honest maintenance.

The Leech-gatherer is 'old and poor,' and he earns a livelihood by gathering leeches. There are many hardships for him to endure, for it was 'hazardous and wearisome' to gather leeches. He roams to look for leeches here and there, therefore he has no place to settle down. He makes a bare living, but the way of his life is very honest. Not only the honesty but also other virtues the old man are given, and the poet tries his best to make an ideal man of the old man. The idealization of this kind in the poem is very conspicuous, which is clearly shown in the following stanza:

The old man still stood talking by my side;
But now his voice to me was like a stream
Scarce heard; nor word from word could I divide;
And the whole body of the Man did seem
Like one whom I had met with in a dream;
Or like a man from some far region sent,
To give me human strength, by apt admonishment.

The poet is aware of the importance of the human moral virtues, such as honesty, perseverance. David B. Pirie refers to the Leech-gatherer's honesty as follows:

The Leech-gatherer works amongst the tranquil world of animals, but he is paid by anxious people who consciously try to escape illness and delay death. Physically he himself has been deformed by 'pain' and 'sickness', and is visibly approaching death 'in his extreme old age'. Unlike the hare, 'running races in her mirth'(II), for whom life seems to be a merely instinctual game, the Leech-gatherer survives by conscious effort. He is proud of maintaining himself by 'honest' work . . .

There seems to be suggestion in the way of the old Leech-gatherer's life; we are not necessarily to strive against fate, and we have to lead a sober, hard working life according to our position. Namely, our life should be one of 'an honest maintenance.' Thus Wordsworth preached morals to us through 'Resolution and Independence.' The way of thinking the English usually follow is that however hard one may break away from the everyday world, one will always have morals with him. The way of thinking like this seems to be one aspect of the English character. It may well be said that Wordsworth as a romantic poet tried to safeguard morals at the risk of his life. It comes to

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this: that we can identify Wordsworth with Hogarth, for Wordsworth seems to have something in common with Hogarth. That something common is that they tried to preach morals by their artistic works. As a result Wordsworth may be said to have done the same thing as Hogarth did; both Wordsworth and Hogarth attempted to seek after morals in the same way. Thus the moral principles, that is moral virtues which both Wordsworth and Hogarth succeeded in describing, are characteristics which find their expression in the English character.
CHAPTER IV

The Serpentine Line of Beauty
in the English Culture

We have contemplated two different aspects of the English character; they are 'compromise' and 'morals.' To 'compromise,' as a middle way, in chapter II reference has been made in terms of the historical transition of English landscape gardens. In chapter III, we have touched upon 'morals' William Hogarth preached through his paintings; and in the chapter is cited another literary artist Wordsworth who is representative of the English character in the sense that his natural inclination is to the moralistic interpretation of life. His suffering from mental experience leads him to his appreciation of the blessings of nature, which teaches him to read through the blessings her moral lessons. His emphasis upon the moral virtues of, for example, honesty and endurance is clearly seen in his 'Resolution and Independence.'

A study of English landscape gardens and Hogarth's works will convince one that there is a common element characteristic of the English culture underlying the two forms of art. The one common element is 'a serpentine line of beauty,' with which this chapter is concerned. The 'serpentine line of beauty' is an indispensable quality of the English landscape gardens as well as of Hogarth's works. The 'serpentine' quality is clearly defined by Pevsner as follows:
The English garden is English in a number of profoundly significant ways not yet touched upon. First the simplest way: formally the winding path and the serpentine lake are the equivalent of Hogarth's Line of beauty, that long, gentle, double curve which dominates one kind of English art from the Decorated style in architecture to William Blake and beyond.¹

The phrase 'Line of Beauty' as referred to in the preceding quoted passage is taken from the famous book of art theory named The Analysis of Beauty, in which the author Hogarth sets store by the importance of line:

And I beg the same things may be understood of these serpentine-lines, that I have said before of the waving-lines. For as among the vast variety of waving-lines that may be conceiv'd, there is but one that truly deserves the name of the line of beauty, so there is only one precise serpentine-line that I call the line of grace.²

We will first refer to the English landscape garden from the standpoint of its curved line of beauty. Irregularity, as we have seen in chapter II, was the most conspicuous of the elements of beauty which were fitted to the general taste in the eighteenth century. The discovery of the beauty of irregularity in English landscape gardens means that the English found the beauty of curved lines in them. English gardens, in the beginning, were formal ones introduced from the Continent, and their planning was mainly based on straight lines. By and


by, these formal gardens changed themselves into informal ones whose basis was on curved lines. This gradual change is due to the English preference of moderation and smoothness over formal rigidity. The English formal gardens became the informal ones full of curved lines. Of the informal gardens a brief mention is made by Pevsner:

The English Garden, the Jarden Anglais, the Englischer Garten, is asymmetrical, informal, varied and made of such parts as the serpentine lake, the winding drive and winding path, the trees grouped in clumps, and smooth lawn (mown or cropped by sheep) reaching right up to the French windows of the house.1

The mention of 'the serpentine lake, the winding drive and winding path' reminds one of a scene presented in Jane Austen's Mansfield Park, in which the heroine cries:

Oh! you do not consider how much we have wound about. We have taken such a very serpentine course; and the wood itself must be half a mile long in a straight line, for we have never seen the end of it yet, since we left the first great path.2

A scene of this kind brings about a stretch of imagination of an English landscape with various curved lines in it. In English landscape gardens, curved lines of beauty form one of their necessary ingredients, and therefore these lines play an impor-


tant part in the Englishman's laying out his garden. The theory of 'the serpentine line' was originally presented by Hogarth. The painter gave a detailed presentation to his idea of 'the line of beauty,' meaning 'the serpentine line' in his *The Analysis of Beauty*. He gave to the line another name 'the waving line.' One can see what Hogarth means by 'the waving line' in the following passage:

There is scarce a room in any house whatever, where one does not see the waving-line employ'd in some way or other. How inelegant would the shapes of all our moveables be without it? how very plain and unornamental the mouldings of cornices, and chimney-pieces, without the variety introduced by the ogee member, which is entirely composed of waving-lines.

Though all sorts of waving-lines are ornamental, when properly applied; yet, strictly speaking, there is but one precise line, properly to be called the line of beauty . . .

A still more perfect idea of the effects of the precise waving-line, and of those lines that deviate from it, may be conceived by the row of stays . . . Every whale-bone of a good stay must be made to bend in this manner: for the whole stay, when put close together behind, is truly a shell of well-varied contents, and its surface of course a fine form; so that if a line, or the lace were to be drawn, or brought from the top of the lacing of the stay behind, round the body, and down to the bottom peak of the stomacher it would form such a perfect, precise, serpentine-line . . .

According to his idea, the waving line is compared to 'the row of stays.' This line is ornamental, and forms the essence of elegance; he regards this kind of line one of the most important artistic elements of beauty. Hogarth tries to give an explana-

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1 Hogarth, (1753), pp. 48-49.
tation to the importance by taking a horn as an example, that it is the easiest way to give a general idea of the qualities peculiar to the serpentine line. His general idea of the line is given as follows:

First, then, let him consider fig.†, which ‡Fig.56. represents a straight horn, with its contents, and he will find, as it varies like the cone, it is a form of some beauty, merely on that account.

Next let him observe in what manner, and in what degree the beauty of this horn is increas'd, in fig. * where it is supposed to be bent two *Fig.57. different ways.

And lastly, let him attend to the vast increase of beauty, even to grace and elegance, in the same horn, fig. ‡, where it is supposed ‡Fig.58. to have been twisted round, at the same time, that it was bent two different ways, (as in the last figure.)

In the first of these figures, the dotted line down the middle expresses the straight lines of which it is composed; which, without the assistance of curved lines, or light and shade, would hardly shew it to have contents.

The same is true of the second, tho' by the bending of the horn, the straight dotted line is changed into the beautiful waving-line.

But in the last, this dotted line, by the twisting as well as the bending of the horn, is changed from the waving into the serpentine-line; which, as it dips out of sight behind the horn in the middle, and returns again at the smaller end, not only gives play to the imagination, and delights the eye, on that account; but informs it likewise of the quantity and variety of the contents.1

(Analysis of Beauty. Plate II.)

1 Hogarth, (1753), pp. 51-52.
We will attempt to think of some of the serpentine lines in Hogarth's works one by one. Columbus Breaking the Egg can be taken up as a fine example. The whole composition of the work is designed to make clear his idea of the line of beauty, and serpentine lines of beauty themselves can be seen in the form of the two eels on the dish. At the back of this composition, there is a conscious imitation of Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper; the work is clearly a baroque transposition of Leonardo's masterpiece. It is an original idea of Hogarth to demonstrate the serpentine lines shown in the form of two eels set round an egg on a dish.

_Columbus Breaking the Egg_ (1752)

There are a number of his works demonstrating his idea of the serpentine lines of beauty. The striking examples of them are Calais Gate, or The Roast Beef of Old England, Strolling Actress in a Barn and A Country Dance. As regards Calais Gate, or The Roast Beef of Old England, Hogarth made this engraving in order to satirize French temperament and custom,
for he had once an unpleasant experience of being captured on suspicion of being a spy when he looked at a certain gate at the city of Calais in France. The work shows the contrast between a monk and a butcher in terms of bulk and thinness in the human figures. The serpentine line Hogarth tried to demonstrate here is in the figure of the butcher.

In Strolling Actress in a Barn, actresses are now preparing for a country performance of a play in the humble setting of a barn. The barn is small and uncomfortable for their preparation, but this limited space is one aspect of their reality of life. Every actress is shown in her own action; each one of them is acting as she likes. The whole of the composition is in confusion. But this confusion is what Hogarth aims, because
this confusion makes a special kind of unity. The unity is a theme which lies under the work. The theme is a striking contrast between the uncomfortable reality of actresses' life and the illusion which they show in their costumes and actions. One aspect of the contrast is clearly seen in the designing which even a crown is used as a mere table for a baby's gruel and in which the altar is used as a table for beer. In this engraving, Hogarth gives us an illustration of his idea of a serpentine line in the figure of an actress standing just in the middle of the whole picture; her dancing figure is symbolic of the particular kind of line. From a different angle from that taken in Strolling Actress in a barn is his idea of beauty shown concerning the serpentine line. In movements and poses of human bodies in a dance Hogarth found 'serpentine lines imaginable.' As it is very interesting to understand his idea of the 'serpentine lines imaginable,' we will look into them in detail. Hogarth's comment on the beauty of human bodies in a dance runs as follows:

No doubt, as the minuet contains in it a composed variety of as many movements in the serpentine lines as can well be put together in distinct quantities, it is a fine composition of movements.

The ordinary undulating motion of the body in common walking (as may be plainly seen by the waving line, which the shadow a man's head makes against a wall as he is walking between it and the afternoon sun) is augmented in dancing into a larger quantity of waving by means of the minuet-step, which is so contrived as to raise the body by gentle degrees somewhat higher than ordinary, and sink it again in the same manner lower in the going on of the dance. The figure of the minuet-path on the floor is also composed of serpentine lines . . .

The other beauties belonging to this dance, are
the turns of the head, and twist of the body in passing each other, as also gentle bowing and presenting hands in the manner before described, all which together, displays the greatest variety of movements in serpentine lines imaginable, keeping equal pace with musical time.¹

The passage proves that Hogarth's interest is in performers in a dance. The beauties which he found in their movements are in the 'serpentine lines imaginable.' Hogarth's idea of the 'serpentine lines imaginable' plays so important a part in the composition of this work that particular attention should be paid to a full appreciation of his idea shown in this engraving.

The serpentine lines of beauty are given much weight in Hogarth's works. We think it to be of great interest to notice that serpentine lines of beauty in Hogarth's works are much the same as the curved lines of beauty in English landscape gardens. "The winding path and the serpentine lake are the equivalent of Hogarth's Lines of Beauty"² is what Pevsner has

¹ Hogarth, (1753), pp. 147-148.
said. We are justified in saying that the common essence underlying English landscape gardens and Hogarth's works is 'the serpentine line of beauty.'

To return to Hogarth's The Analysis of Beauty; the book on the theory of his art was published in 1753; in the work the waving line and the serpentine line are mentioned as the key elements of artistic beauty. Antal's comments on this book read:

In 1753, in The Analysis of Beauty, Hogarth gave the theoretical grounds for his partiality for a gracefully undulating, moderately baroque or rococo line—a partiality that had been obvious in his works for a long time.1

The Analysis of Beauty was directed against an over-stressing of regularity, simplicity and symmetry, which Hogarth held to be justified only in so far as they evoked unity, but not to the detriment of variety. 'It is a constant rule', he wrote,'in composition, in painting, to avoid regularity.'2

The passage convince us that Hogarth is in favour of 'a gracefully undulating, moderately baroque or rococo line' and is against 'regularity, simplicity and symmetry'; Hogarth disliked 'regularity.' It is hard to discuss Hogarth's works without the knowledge of his idea of beauty whose essence is in the line of beauty; and therefore it is indispensable for us to understand what he has to say in The Analysis of Beauty; the book

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helps us to make out his theoretical grounds for his 'partiality' for serpentine lines.

We have made reference to both English landscape gardens and Hogarth's works in terms of their serpentine lines of beauty. A line of beauty of this kind may safely be said to be one aspect of the English culture. The reason is that the English prefer irregularity to regularity; the preference expresses itself in their liking for a curved line rather than for a straight line. To their mind the essence of beauty does not lie in regularity but in irregularity, and therefore not in a straight line but in a curved line. This kind of inclination is characteristic of the way in which the English see things.

We may give one more instance exemplifying the characteristically English way of seeing things as is especially seen in the field of painting. The example is John Brett's Stonebreaker.

![Stonebreakers](image)

**Stonebreakers**

The Stonebreaker in this painting does not show any kind of 'singleminded' character. Being 'singleminded' does not appeal to the taste of the English; to be 'singleminded' is an attrib-
ute of a specialist. A specialist is subject to 'a violent compulsion towards a singleminded self-expression to which a lifetime must be devoted.' An amateur is quite the other way; he has nothing to do with 'a violent compulsion towards a singleminded self-expression'; in this sense he is not obtrusive at all. Generally speaking the English have a liking for an amateur rather than for a specialist. Pevsner draws our attention to this aspect of the English character in the following way:

England . . . produces a nice crop of amateur painters from maiden aunts to Prime Ministers, and what the amateur painter must be lacking in, in order to remain an amateur, is a violent compulsion towards a singlemindedself-expression to which a lifetime must be devoted. The amateur is altogether characteristic of England, and not the specialist.1

As we see in this picture, there is an element of play in the whole atmosphere of its composition: a stonebreaker does not seem to be utterly devoted to his work; a dog beside him is also playing with the boy's cap. It is clear that the painter does not seem to be paying attention to the real profession of the boy as a stonebreaker, because there is a decisive element of play there which is moderate and which is not obtrusive. The decisive element of play is an element of moderation. Moderation plays a very important part in the English way of life and thinking.

1 Pevsner, (1955), p. 60.
John Brett's *Stonebreaker* reminds us of Courbet's *Stonebreakers*. Both paintings are much the same in their subject. In *Stonebreakers* the two stonebreakers are quite devoted to their work; there is no other motive for the painter than the presentation of the energy shown in these men; in this sense the subject is very obtrusive to those who see the picture; the painter intends to penetrate the very reality of the stonebreakers as they are. The picture has no element of play as Brett's picture does have. Here is a remarkable difference between the two painters' works. In short the difference depends upon the existence of the distance between a painters' eyes and their object: that is to say, upon the existence and absence of the direct and immediate relationship between a painter and his object. In Brett's *Stonebreaker*, metaphorically speaking, there is a curved line between him and his object, while in Courbet's *Stonebreaker* there is a straight line.

The main purpose of this chapter is to refer to the English culture, and we can say that the idea of the line of beauty is a very important element of the English culture, as is seen in English landscape gardens and Hogarth's works. The relation between both of them Antal touched upon runs as follows:

Hogarth appears to have been widely influenced by the ideas and terminology associated with the English garden. The word 'serpentine', after 1715 the favourite term for the leading motif of the informal garden, grew in popularity after the creation of the artificial lake in Hyde Park by Queen Caroline and Bridgman in 1753. It is an epithet as typical for the English landscape garden, baroque-realistic-picturesque, as it was for Hogarth's art. Curved and spirals were also favoured
motifs in this new type of garden. According to Horace Walpole, Kent's 'ruling principle' was that 'nature abhors a straight line'; the irregularity and naturalness of the landscape garden were further increased by Capability Brown. Apparently Hogarth, too, influenced the development of garden-construction.1

What is the English culture like as a result? The answer is that 'the serpentine line of beauty' is one aspect of the English culture, as far as English landscape gardens and Hogarth's art are concerned. Both English landscape gardens and Hogarth's art are very characteristic of Englishness, in the sense that both English landscape gardens and Hogarth's art include the serpentine line of beauty. We should like to end this chapter by saying that the serpentine line of beauty is very English, and therefore it is one significant aspect of the English culture.

CHAPTER V

Conclusion

We have attempted to research into the English culture, and to refer to some aspects of the English character as revealed in the culture. The main materials of the study are taken only from the English gardens and the English fine arts, and so they cannot cover the whole of the English culture. But we are convinced that a careful investigation of even the limited fields of the English culture has helped us to gain something of the essential qualities of the English character. The English character can be clearly seen in the Englishmen's insistence upon the virtues of compromise and moral principles.

As to compromise, we find it in the gradual process of transition of English gardens from formal ones to informal ones. The English changed formal gardens introduced from the Continent into informal ones, and the latter in their turn have spread over the Continent afterwards. This kind of the gradual transition of the English gardens involves the virtue of compromise which is characteriatically English; the English informal gardens are the creation of compromise.

As regards morals or moral principles, we have instanced examples of William Hogarth's works and William Wordsworth's work. As a number of Hogarth's subjects of his works are based on the English social life of the eighteenth century, we may obtain from his works a full understanding of the social con-
ditions of that period. What we can understand from his works is that he tries to preach to the people moral principles, with which he wished them to fight against the moral vices widely prevalent among almost all sections of the social classes. He tried to reform society in terms of his art. Wordsworth likewise tried to preach moral principles through his poetry; in this sense, the poet can be said to have done in poetry as Hogarth did in fine arts, especially in pictures. What he has to say in 'Resolution and Independence' is that one has to make one's honest living, that is to say, to live one's honest life; great emphasis is laid upon honesty and perseverance. Thus the morals both Hogarth and Wordsworth preached are characteristic of the Englishness of the English.

Something in common between the English landscape gardens and Hogarth's works is the serpentine line of beauty. We have referred to the English landscape gardens in terms of their characteristically curved line of beauty. The curved line of beauty is one of the important elements of the English landscape gardens. Great emphasis laid on the serpentine line of beauty finds its most eloquent expression in a number of Hogarth's works; the serpentine line of beauty is one of the characteristic ingredients of the beauty of his works of art. The curved line of beauty in the English gardens and the serpentine line of beauty in Hogarth's works are the very same in quality. Our reference to this kind of beauty has been made for the purpose of the presentation of one aspect which is characteristic of the English culture. So far as the English landscape gardens
and Hogarth's works are concerned, the serpentine line of beauty forms one of the important elements of the culture. As regards the idea of beauty in the English landscape gardens, the English have laid out their gardens with their idea that they should be natural. They have been successful in bringing natural beauty into their formal gardens; their inclination is to put much importance on the beauty both of curved lines and of variety, in their informal gardens. The idea of naturalness of their landscape gardens may be called the idea of the 'picturesque beauty.' The elements of the picturesque beauty are the beauty of curved lines and that of great variety. Thus the picturesque beauty is a most characteristic quality that pertains to the English culture.

As a result, we can say that compromise and moral principles are the virtues of the English character, and the picturesque beauty and the serpentine line of beauty are the indispensable qualities of the English culture.
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The English Character
as Reflected
in the English Gardens and Fine Arts

Abstract

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Abstract

The main purpose of the thesis is to research into the English culture, and to refer to some aspects of the English character as revealed in the culture. As England carries too long and glorious a history with it, various aspects of the English culture cannot be explained in a small space. And so we have decided to focus our attention upon the discussion on the English culture and the English character of the eighteenth century or thereabouts. We have adopted our main research materials from the English gardens and the English fine arts. Therefore the thesis is on the English culture and the English character through the English gardens and the English fine arts.

As to the English gardens, we have referred to their historical transition; in the beginning, the English gardens were formal ones, and they were introduced from the Continent. By and by, the formal gardens changed into informal ones, and the latter in their turn have spread over the Continent afterwards. We can see one aspect of the English character in the historical transition of the English gardens. What we see in the transition is the quality of compromise. We have given another example of the quality of compromise in John Constable's *Hay Wain*, with a view to explaining the quality; the example helps us to gain access to the way of thinking and looking the English usually follow; we can say that the English prefer compromise to extremes, and that their emphasis is laid on the natural
beauty of great variety. The English idea of laying out gardens is based on their belief in naturalness. The English have been successful in the introduction of natural beauty into their formal gardens. The idea of the naturalness of their informal gardens is closely synonymous with the idea of the 'picturesque beauty.' The picturesque beauty may be reckoned to be one aspect of the English culture.

We have referred to another English character through William Hogarth's artistic works and William Wordsworth's poetry. The character finds its expression in the marked inclination or liking to moral principles. As regards Hogarth's works, they are the mirror of the social conditions of the eighteenth century; a number of the subjects of his works are based on the English social life of the period. He attempted to throw satirical light upon the moral vices he saw in every section of the society of those days. The artist did his best to preach moral principles to the people through his works; he wanted them to fight against the moral vices. Wordsworth likewise tried to preach moral virtues through, say, 'Resolution and Independence. What he has to say in the poem is that one has to live his honest life; great emphasis is laid here upon honesty and perseverance. In this sense, it can be said that both Hogarth and Wordsworth have done much the same thing in the same way. Moral principles both of them preached to the people indicate one aspect of the English character.
There is a close similarity between the English landscape gardens and Hogarth's works, to which we have referred for the purpose of making clear another aspect of the English character as revealed in the English culture. The English landscape gardens are the congenial creations of the English, and Hogarth's works indicate one aspect of the typical English character. It follows that something in common between the gardens and the works must be something connected with the English culture. For this reason, we have referred to this point. As to the English landscape gardens, the Englishman has laid out his informal gardens with his emphasis upon their naturalness; he has set most store by naturally curved lines in his informal gardens. The English regard lines of this sort as the essential quality of the picturesque beauty. Lines of this kind can be seen in Hogarth's works; the artist sets much importance on the lines of beauty in his works: he made full use of the serpentine lines of beauty in order to represent the lines of beauty. The curved lines of beauty in the English landscape gardens are closely synonymous with the serpentine lines of beauty in Hogarth's works. Thus something in common underlying the English landscape gardens and Hogarth's works is the serpentine line of beauty. Therefore we can say that the serpentine lines of beauty are the requisites for the English culture.
## ERRATA

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