

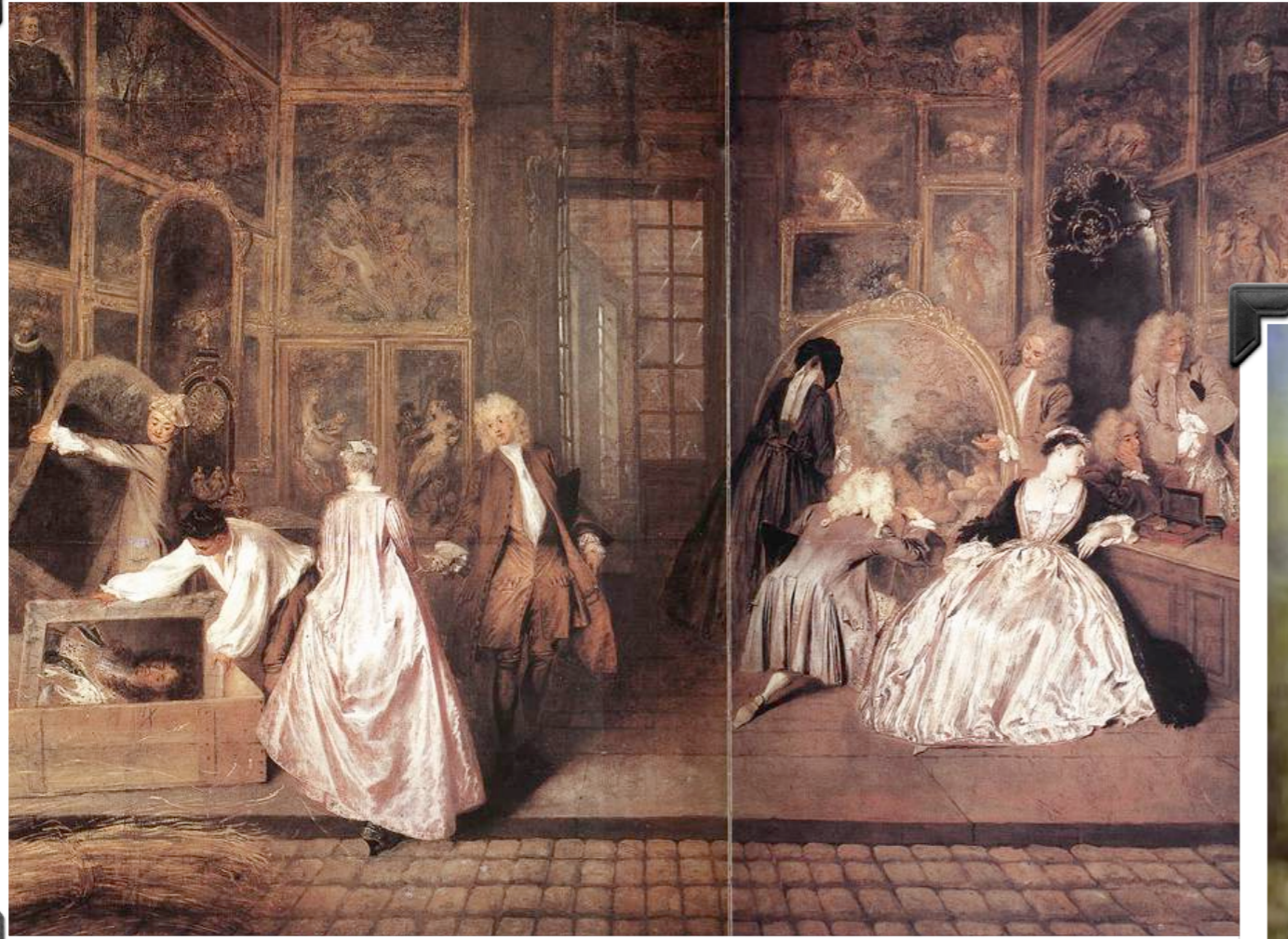
# Realism in George Eliot's fiction

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*“Mr. Gilfil's Love Story” (1857)*  
*pagination according to Oxford edition, 2015*

# The Picturesque

*“And a charming picture Cheverel Manor would have made that evening, if some English Watteau had been there to paint it: the castellated house of grey-tinted stone, with the flickering sunbeams sending dashes of golden light across the many-shaped panes in the mullioned windows, and a great beech leaning athwart one of the flanking towers, and breaking . . . the too formal symmetry of the front . . .” (84 mid).*



*Jean-Antoine Watteau's  
“The Signboard of Gersaint” (c.1720)*



*Jean-Antoine Watteau's  
“La Recreation Italienne” (1715)*

# Realism and Architecture

*“For the next ten years, Sir Christopher was occupied with the architectural metamorphosis of his old family mansion; thus anticipating, through the prompting of his individual taste, that general reaction from the insipid imitation of the Palladian style, towards a restoration of the Gothic, which marked the close of the eighteenth century” (106).*



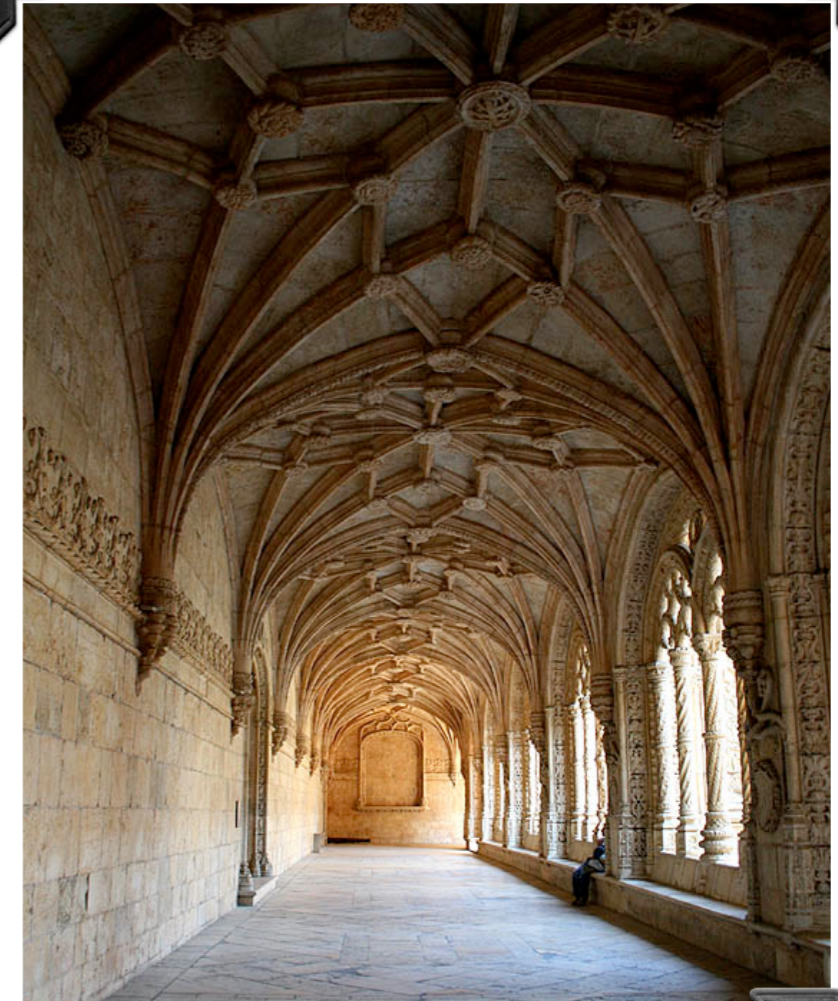
## The Palladian Style

*concerned with symmetry;  
inspired by classical temple  
architecture of the Ancient  
Greeks and Romans*



# The Gothic Renaissance Style

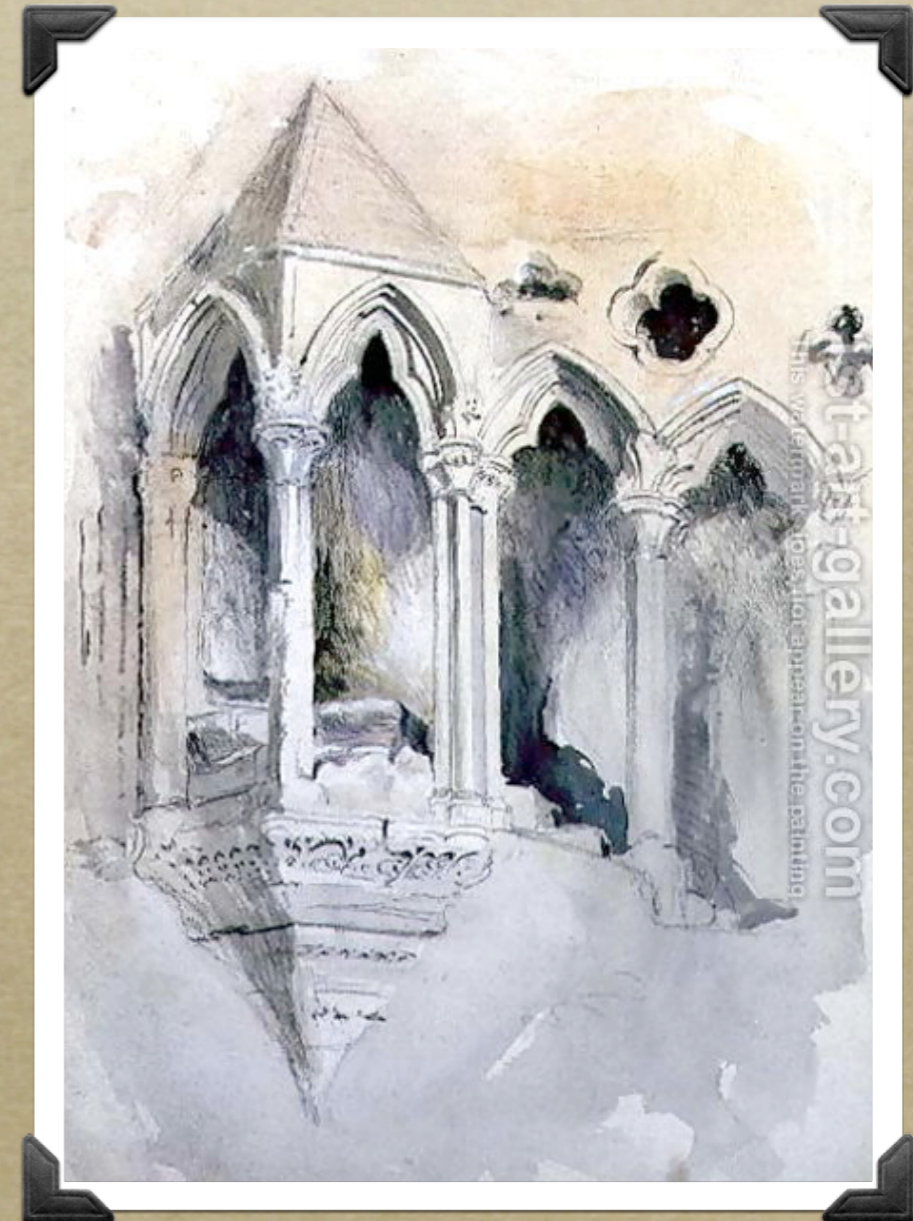
*inspired by medieval  
architecture*



# John Ruskin's "The Nature of the Gothic" (from *The Stones of Venice* (1851-53))

I believe, then, that the characteristic or moral elements of Gothic are the following, placed in the order of their importance:

1. Savageness
2. Changefulness
3. Naturalism
4. Grotesqueness
5. Rigidity
6. Redundance



# John Ruskin's "The Nature of the Gothic" (from *The Stones of Venice* (1851-53) **on Changefulness**)

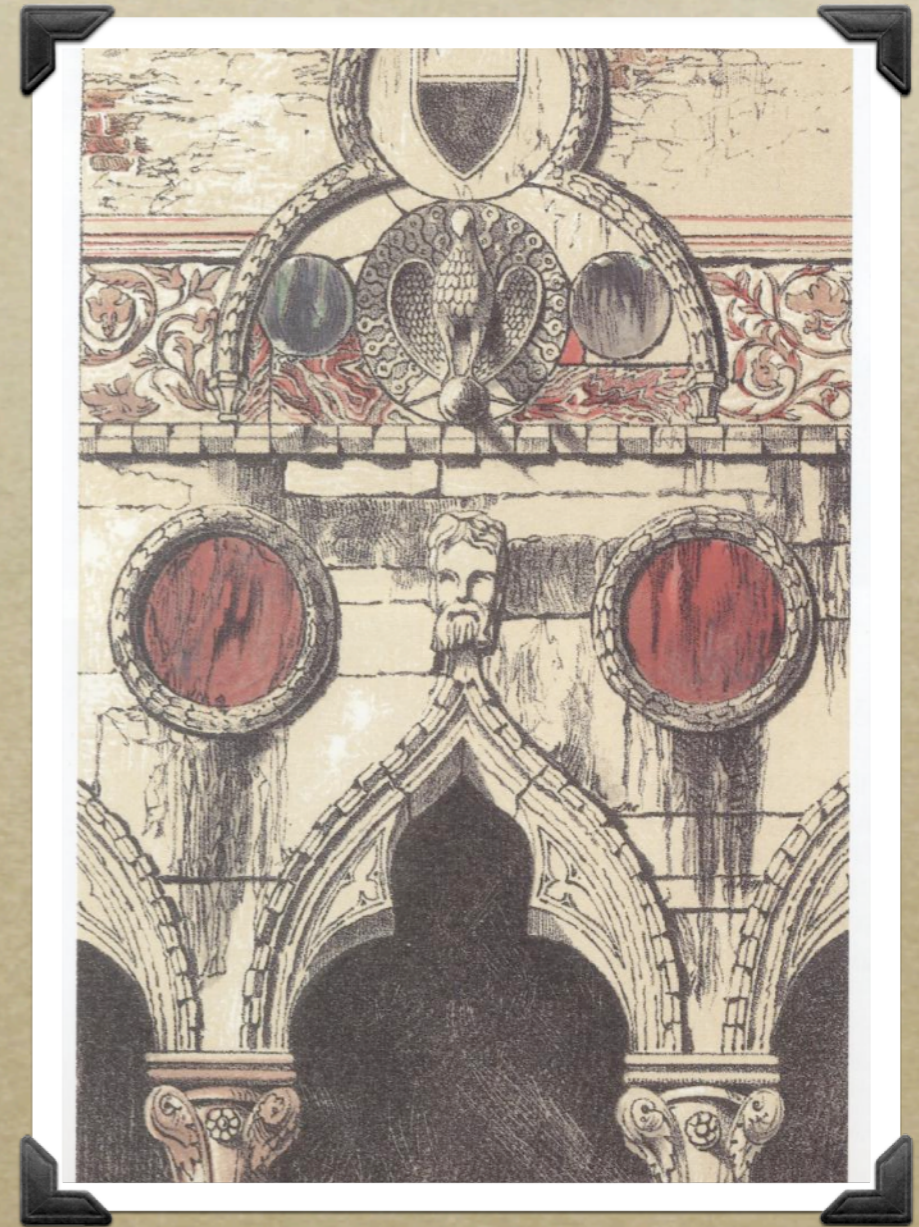
For in one point of view Gothic is not only the best, but **the only rational architecture**, as being that which can fit itself most easily to all services, vulgar or noble. Undefined in its slope of roof, height of shaft, breadth of arch, or disposition of ground plan, it can shrink into a turret, expand into a hall, coil into a staircase, or spring into a spire, with undegraded grace and unexhausted energy; and whenever it finds occasion for change in its form or purpose, it submits to it without the slightest sense of loss either to its unity or majesty . . . the Gothic builders . . . never suffered ideas of outside symmetries and consistencies to interfere with the real use and value of what they did. If they wanted a window, they opened one; a room, they added one; a buttress, they built one; utterly regardless of any established conventionalities of external appearance . . .



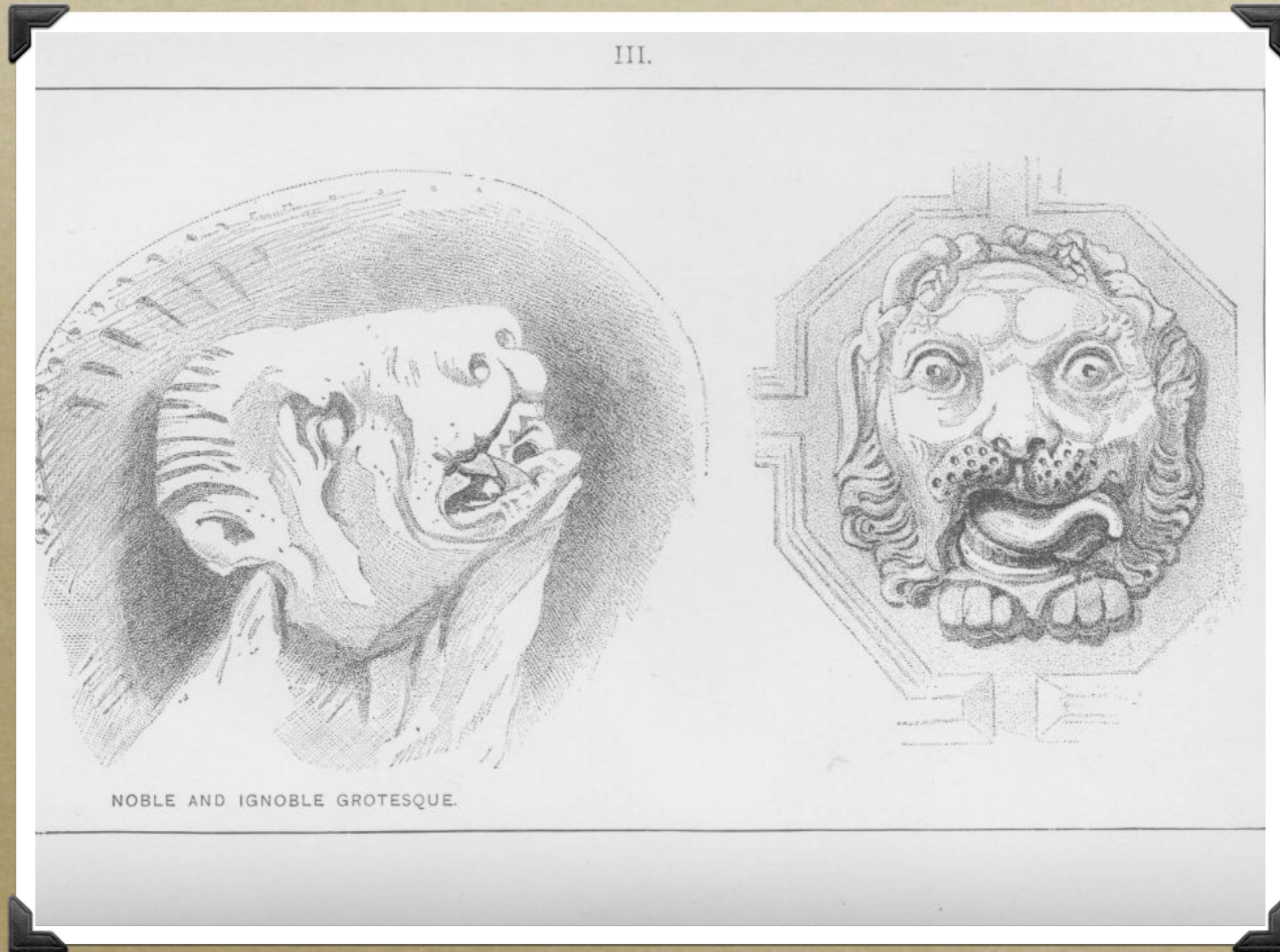


# John Ruskin's "The Nature of the Gothic" (from *The Stones of Venice* (1851-53) **on Naturalism**

Gothic work, when referred to the arrangement of all art, as purist, naturalist, or sensualist, is naturalist. This character follows necessarily on its extreme love of truth, prevailing over the sense of beauty, and causing it to take delight in portraiture of every kind, and to express the various characters of the human countenance and form, as it did the varieties of leaves and the ruggedness of branches. And this tendency is both increased and ennobled by the same Christian humility which we saw expressed in the first character of Gothic work, its rudeness. For as that resulted from a humility which confessed the imperfection of the workman, so this naturalist portraiture is rendered more faithful by the *humility which confesses the imperfection of the subject*. The Greek sculptor could neither bear to confess his own feebleness, nor to tell the faults of the forms that he portrayed (170-71).



John Ruskin's "The Nature of the Gothic"  
(from *The Stones of Venice* (1851-53) on the **Grotesque**



*“During Sir Christopher’s last visit to Italy with his lady, fifteen years before, they resided for some time at Milan, where Sir Christopher . . . then entertaining the project of metamorphosing his plain brick family mansion into the model of a Gothic manor-house, was bent on studying the details of that marble miracle, the Cathedral” (97).*



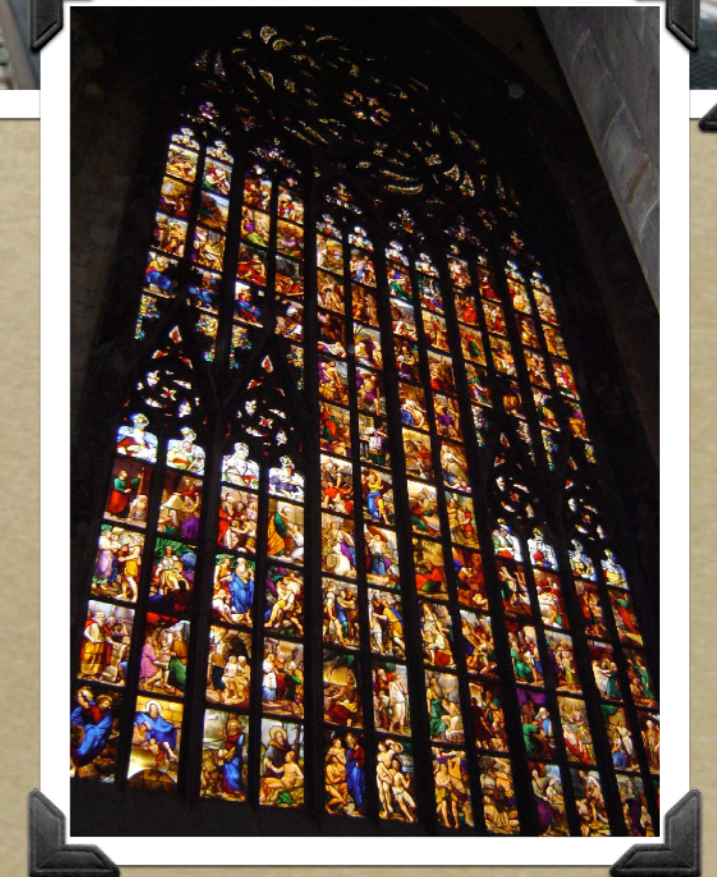
**Cathedral of Milan (Duomo): West Front**

*“Why, answered Mr Warren, ‘Sir Christopher, as I understand, is going to make a clean new thing of the old Manor-house, both inside and out. And he’s got portfolios full of plans and pictures coming. It is to be cased with stone, in the Gothic style--pretty near like the churches, you know, as far as I can make out . . .’” (104).*



**Cathedral of Milan (Duomo)**

*“Sarti . . . was very regular in his devotions, which he paid thrice a-week in the great cathedral, carrying Catrina with him . . . towards a little tinsel Madonna hanging in a retired spot near the choir. Amid all the sublimities of the mighty cathedral, poor Sarti had fixed on this tinsel Madonna as the symbol of Divine mercy and protection” (99).*



Cathedral of Milan  
*the choir*

Cheverel Manor: inspired by Arbury Hall in Warwickshire  
(GE's father was agent to the owner)



*front facade*

Arbury Hall was owned by Sir Roger Newdigate (1719-1806),  
who spent 30 years renovating his manor  
in the Gothic Renaissance style



*the estate*

*“The party entered the drawing-room, which, with its oriel window, corresponded to the library in the other wing, and had also a flat ceiling heavy with carving and blazonry; but the window being unshaded, and the walls hung with full-length portraits of knights and dames in scarlet, white, and gold, it had not the sombre effect of the library” (92).*



*the drawing room*



*“The bow-window was open, and Sir Christopher, stepping in, found the group he sought, examining the progress of the unfinished ceiling. It was in the same style of florid pointed Gothic as the dining-room, but more elaborate in its tracery, which was like petrified lacework picked out with delicate and varied colouring” (90).*



*the saloon*

*Arthur Devis's "Sir Roger Newdigate in the Library at Arbury"*



*exterior shots*

# Realism and the Social Hierarchy

# Religious Offices: A Hierarchy

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- chaplain (110 top): minister connected to specialized, often secular institution (e.g. ship, hospital, prison, home, etc.)
- curate (110 top): assistant to vicar or rector; exercises pastoral responsibilities; receives no tithes, & only small salary
- vicar (73 bot): receives “lesser” tithes only, but can be attached to many parishes. Appointed by a rector to administer a parish.
- rector (141 top): receives both a parish’s “greater” (rectorial) tithes—the product of arable fields & value of stock, and “lesser” (vicarial) tithes—raised from labour and minor produce (i.e. day laborers and cottagers). **[the only position Mr. Gilfil does *not* occupy at some point]**

Realism and the Mind  
*Human Psychology*

# Observations on Human Psychology

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- *repetition & intellect (72 mid)*
- *emotion & Nature's limited power (84-85, 113 bot)*
- *sympathy (85 top)*
- *passionate love & fear (101 mid)*
- *curiosity, anxiety, & bravery (106 mid)*
- *jealousy & attention (110 bot)*
- *exercise relieves stress (116 bot)*
- *feeling natures dismiss thought but heavily weigh words (119 bot)*