

and organizing what appears in his writings as either fragment or aperçu—at all events scattered, hard to come by and, when taken in isolation, not readily digestible.

Originally housed in Sheffield, later in Reading, now once again in Sheffield, the rich holdings of the Guild of St. George include *inter alia* two drawings by Turner; copies of various Old Masters; studies of church architecture, picturesque village scenes, etc. by Rooke, Randal, Fairfax Murray, Alessandri, Ethel Webling; numerous studies in a variety of media by Ruskin himself, as well as an assortment of

memorabilia documenting the Guild's history. Mrs. Morley reproduces 67 items from the Sheffield collection (art works, furnishings, Hayball's plan for St. George's Museum) and in an Appendix to her book provides a meticulously annotated catalogue of the archive's entire contents.

Francis Golfing

*Some of the ideas Catherine Morley develops in chapters IX and X of her work were originally presented in JPRS, III/1, November 1982, under the title "Ruskin's Critical Method and Intentions: Towards a materialist Epistemology."

Simon Reynolds, *The Vision of Simeon Solomon*. Stroud, Glos., Catalpa Press Ltd., 1984. 183 pp. £ 20.00, \$40.00*

This is an important book. Mr. Reynolds has spared no pains in setting forth the facts of Solomon's life and detailing the circumstances out of which his artistic oeuvre grew—the latter quite as strange and almost as disconcerting as the painter's earthly career.

Solomon's art is peculiar on several counts. It shows no thematic or stylistic development in the usual sense: what we find is mere potentiation, its later stage carrying a heavier and more differentiated charge of symbolic meaning than the earlier stages did. It abounds from beginning to end in memories and "quotations"; yet it would be absurd to speak of it as eclectic, for the idiom is quite personal, notwithstanding Solomon's constant and patent borrowings. What is it, one wonders, that saves this artist's output from being merely brilliant pastiche? The answer, I believe, is to be found in Solomon's fierce self-determination, coupled with a highly idiosyncratic sensibility, power of image-making and great probity of craftsmanship.

We are faced, then, with a pictorial oeuvre

of undoubted distinction and almost hypnotic intensity (though not one embodying a radically novel vision, as has sometimes been claimed); an oeuvre very sound in all technical respects, no matter the medium; consistent in iconic strength, except for some slight falling off after 1893; one that would conflate, with engaging innocence, a multitude of earlier styles before receiving the artist's individual stamp—the stamp which will, of course, make all the difference.

I am not interested in influence-hunting, but it might be worth while to mention some of the diverse echoes from both past and contemporaneous painting which resonate through Solomon's work. In many of his drawings one is alert to a strong Quattrocento impact, especially that of Mantegna; some drawings and paintings are modeled on Fuseli (or on Mannerist themes and procedures filtered through Fuseli); a third category—consisting chiefly of interiors or single figures—replicates Rossetti in his various phases, at times almost to the point of parody. But this is not all. There are several watercolors and oils which mirror Dyce, and *via* Dyce the Nazarenes; a few striking sheets which a casual viewer might