

AND ME

with regality in a world made only for them and for children who were taught mechanically to see them there.

I was constantly confronted with the magic of reality itself, wondering why one thing was built of exquisite curves and another of harmonic angles. It was not a scientific passion in me, it was merely my sensing of the world of visible beauty around me, pressing in on me with the vehemence of splendor, on every side.

I feel about the world now precisely as I did then, despite all the reasons that exist to encourage the change of attitude. I care for the magic of experience still, the magic that exists even in facts, though little or nothing for the objective material value.

Life as an idea engrosses me with the same ardor as in the earlier boyish days, with the difference that there is much to admire and so much less to reverence and be afraid of. I harp always on the "idea" of life as I dwell perpetually on the existence of the moment.

I might say, then, that my childhood was comparable, in its simplicity and extravagance of wonder, to the youth of Odilon Redon, that remarkable painter of the fantasy of existence, of which he speaks so delicately in letters to friends. His youth was apparently much like mine, not a youth of athleticism so much as a preoccupation with wonder and the imminence of beauty surrounding all things.